

# The Space Coast PC Journal



## Thumbs Up, Downie

By Frank Petrie, June 2018

TMC-NLC (at) yahoogroups.com

If you love collecting video or audio media from the internet for your personal use, this is the app of your dreams.

When on the internet, we barely scratch the surface of all the media that is out there to feast on.

Personally, I have become addicted to rare sound clips, bootleg sound clips, and occasionally I find obscure movies or television programs.

In the last year, I have come across a wealth of material on You Tube. From rare songs that were on indie label albums that I lost long ago, isolated tracks from Queens' vocals, Jimmy Page lead riffs to the full version of the theme from The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson.

To capture these gems, it used to take a plethora of steps involving several pieces of software and you had to think through everything thoroughly to achieve results that were very good. Fortunately, some developer felt my pain.

Downie lets you download from YouTube, Vimeo, Facebook, Instagram, and over 1,200 other websites.

If there's video content on a web page, you can trust Downie to save it onto your Mac.

If you don't need the entire video file, Downie can save only the audio track from that file. Or, if you want all your videos in the MP4 format, you can set Downie to convert them automatically.

Using [Downie] (<https://software.charliemonroe.net/downie.php>) is a breeze. Select a video to download. There are then several ways to proceed; you can drag and drop the link into the app, install the Downie

**The Monthly Publication of the  
Space Coast PC Users Group, Inc.**

**Visit Our web Site at [www.scpcug.com](http://www.scpcug.com)**

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March 2020

Vol. XXXVI Issue III

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All work on the Journal is performed by unpaid volunteers.

Submitting Articles to the Journal

We encourage all of our members to submit original computer-related articles for publication in The Space Coast PC Journal.

Writing a Product Review

It is really not that difficult to write a good review for The Space Coast PC Journal. These guidelines will help you get started:

Product information

- List the product name, release level, and manufacturer.

Use

- What does this product do?
- How easy is it to learn and use? Is it for beginners or does it have advanced features?
- List and describe some of the features. If this is an upgrade, what is new to this version?
- What did you like or dislike about it?
- Did you have to call Customer Support? What for? Were they helpful?

Installation

- How much disk space did the product take?
- How long did it take to install?
- Was it difficult to install?
- Specify requirements such as: DOS level, Windows level, Windows type, etc.

Recommendations

- Would you recommend this product?

Remember these are guidelines. They are not meant to be all-inclusive, nor should they limit your creativity. But all of them should be included as part of your article. Then the review will practically write itself!

Preparing Your Articles

To assist us in incorporating articles into the Journal, it would be helpful if certain minimum standards were followed. Use this quick-step guide:

Format: The preferred format is ASCII text files. We can also work with other formats, but check with the editor before using them.

Text: Single-space the text—even between paragraphs. Don't indent paragraphs. Use hard returns only at the ends of paragraphs. Use only one space after periods, colons, and question marks. Follow standard capitalization rules.

Use left justification only. Do not right justify or block your text. (Word processors add extra spaces between words to justify the text and each of those extra spaces must then be removed.)

Graphics: The preferred format for graphics accompanying your text is TIFF—in separate files from the text. Embedded graphics are not useable. Most image editing programs have a "resize" option to alter the size of graphics. Please try to keep your graphic file sizes to around 1 meg in size. Call the editor if you have questions.

Be sure to include your name and phone number so we may contact you if we have any questions. Anonymous articles will not be published.

Submit your article by uploading the file to ringram728@earthlink.net or bring your disk and hardcopy to the Monday meeting or mail to:

Editor, SCPCUG Journal  
Space Coast PC Users Group, Inc.  
1360 Mayflower Avenue  
Melbourne, Fl 32940-672

3Articles must be received by the 28th of the month to appear in the next issue, and all are, of course, subject to editing. □

From The Editor

Once again, putting this newsletter together has become something of a hectic scramble. Sources I've had in the past have become smaller or disappeared altogether.

There was a period when I could always count on checking Newsletters from other User Groups for articles to reprint here. Unfortunately, those other groups are having the same difficulty as I am. When I check those from multiple others, I find they are all reprinting the same articles as I am.

Many of these other groups are losing membership at an alarming rate. Some are folding altogether. I see this as a reflection of the current switch from PC's and laptops, to phones, and tablets as the source for web connections. These users see no benefit in group membership.

It's fortunate that I still have online sources for articles such as Kim Komando, Leo Notenboom, Dennis Faas, and Fred Langa . You'll notice as you read this issue that they have provided a significant amount of content here. □

Ron Ingraham, Editor

The Space Coast PC Journal

Published monthly by the  
Space Coast PC Users Group, Inc.  
1360 Mayflower Avenue  
Melbourne, Fl 32940-6723

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Professional also includes DriveScrubber, a utility that can securely

If there is a program not listed that you feel comfortable with, let us list you as one of our helplines contact ringram28@cfl.rr.com

The SCPCUG Home Page is at:
http://www.scpcug.com
Check it out!!!!

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**Presentation**

February 20, 2020

In the absence of a
scheduled speaker
this will be a
Q and A
session

**Bring Some Friends**

## Thumbs Up, Downie.....from page 1

browser extension for your browser of choice and click on that, you can drag the video onto the Downie icon in your dock, or use File\>Open URLs ... from the Menu Bar.

If you'd rather, you can type your search query into the app's search field and it will promptly locate the video for you. Even if there's text or other content on the page, Downie will detect the video and save it for you.

You can download high-quality, high-definition videos from across the web. Downie can even handle 4K resolution You Tube videos! And for those requiring Accessibility, it also downloads Closed Captioning.

But suppose, as in my case, you don't want the entire video but merely the audio? Downie can save only the audio track from the selected file. If you'd prefer all your videos in the MP4 format, you can set Downie to convert them automatically by going to Settings in the Menu Bar. There you can quickly choose None, Convert to MP4, Extract Audio Only, or Send to Permute for post-processing (more on that later).

Downie is extensively customizable. Go to Preferences and the panel has anything that you would want to access. You can go through the usual General settings, but you can choose your browser's extension, set Parental Controls, and skim the multitude of websites that Downie works with.

The most fascinating feature that I found was one of the small icons located in the lower right corner of the main window. It's labeled Search and Top Downloads. Search is self-explanatory. But Top Downloads is the equivalent of what's trending on apps like Twitter. An amazing number of downloads to choose from! (NOTE: This is where Parental Controls will come in very handy. Particularly Tumblr videos...)

I've been using Downie for a couple of weeks now and with every use I find another valuable feature. And it's usually an indispensable feature, it inevitably led to another one. It feels like I'll be learning new features for months on end. But I love it!

You can even set Downie to perform downloads while you sleep so you don't clog up your bandwidth while working on other projects during the day

Files are downloaded in their own pane. When finished downloading, they were sent, at least in my case, to my Downloads folder. In fact, you can have the app send your downloads directly into your iTunes library. And as I said earlier, I'm sure I'll stumble upon another feature that lets me customize that.

Apparently, Charlie Monroe isn't sleeping nights.

Downie is updated about once a week with new features, sites supported, etc. Extensive support on their website and through their Menu Bar.

Post-processing is achieved with [Permute] (<https://software.charliemonroe.net/permute.php>), another of Charlie Monroe's creations.

Downie seamlessly integrates with Permute, a powerful media converter. To convert the video, you've just downloaded to a different format or stitch parts of it into one file just send it to Permute and pick it up in that app.

So, as an example, you can convert formats to enable you to achieve the ideal file size to fit as many video and audio downloads onto your iPad or iPhone as is possible.

As addictive as this will become, remember one caveat. If not for your personal use, make sure that you have consent from the copyright holder before downloading copyrighted content.



## From the Cashier's Cage

Financial Report for Month  
Ending January 31, 2020

### CHECKING

Beginning Balance	668.46
Barbara Mead – January snacks (10.00)	
Dan Douglas - brochures (107.00)	
Dan Douglas - Christmas (144.38)	
FL Dept of State - Annual report (61.25)	
New Member Machelley Eyer 25.00	
New Member Rose Burke 25.00	
New Member James Judson 25.00	
Snack Fuund Donations 5.00	
Ending Balance - includes \$2.41 snack fund balance	<b>425.83</b>

### SAVINGS

Beginning Balance	404.81
Interest	.09
Ending Balance	404.90
<b><u>TOTAL ACCOUNTS BALANCE</u></b>	<b>830.73</b>

Downie can be found in your [Setapp] (<https://setapp.com>) folder or purchased for USD \$19.99 on [Charlie Monroe Software's website] (<https://software.charliemonroe.net/index.php>). And you can bundle Downie and Permute for USD \$24.99 and save USD \$5.00.

Of course, there is a [free trial] (<https://software.charliemonroe.net/downie.php>), as well. So, give it abash.

*Always do right, that will gratify  
some and astonish the rest.  
-Mark Twain*

## Club Meeting Minutes January 16, 2020

The meeting was opened at 2:10 p.m. by President Dan Douglas. Present were 5 Board members, 8 members. Among the members was Dan's brother-in-law Robert who is visiting from Canada.

Dan, Curt Potsic, Ron Ingraham, Irene Nelson, and Linda Glassburn were the Board members present. Absent were Larry Bennett, Vice President, and Harry Pearson, Secretary. Irene gave the Treasurer's report for December 2019. Curt Potsic gave the Webmaster report.

The Roundtable discussion provided much humor and laughter, a great way to start off the new year. Various issues were brought up and discussed, inclusive of where to get legitimate apps, syncing phones and computers, aspects of growing artificial intelligence, smart phone updates, cookies in relation to online shopping. When donating a computer to a charitable organization, it was suggested by Dan that the safest way to wipe the hard drive of personal data is to remove and destroy the hard drive. The charitable organization which takes it for repair and new use can replace the hard drive inexpensively.

The monthly drawing was held, with varioous and sundry prizes.

Barbara Mead provided snacks and her delicious coffee.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.



## *Dan's Desk*

It was suggested that I discuss what 'streaming' is all about this month. Happy to oblige!

On the surface we have been 'streaming' since the days of radio. Basically you have a receiving device, like a radio, and a 'broadcast', like a radio frequency that you use the device to select and play. The same concept applies to TVs as well. You select a particular channel on the TV to play a selected broadcast frequency received through an antenna.

Streaming in the current sense is very similar; we use an application (app) to select a particular stream of data through the internet. In effect, we use the app to communicate to a remote server to request that a particular file is sent to our device. The app and the device then decode that file in a way that is appropriate for the user. On a smart TV/Roku/Apple TV/Fire TV stick/Chromecast/etc., an app like ESPN will allow you to select a particular show (like a channel or data stream) for playback on the TV. For a computer, it is the same; the app will select a particular data file to be displayed on the monitor and/or played through the audio system. The advantages of subscribed or paid apps versus free ones is usually two factors: fewer or no commercials and access to more content. Many apps, such as Hulu have multiple tiers of use: Free, limited commercials, no commercials, live TV channels. Some apps such as CBS All Access, may offer shows such as Star Trek Discovery or Picard to only the subscribers of that channel.

### ***Common Streaming Devices***

Smart TVs – TVs connected to the internet that have apps available to playback content from free or subscribed providers.

ROKU, Apple TV, Fire TV Stick, Chromecast, etc. - a standalone box that connects to a display of some sort, like a TV, that contains access to various apps that provide for streaming content from free or subscribed

providers.

Web Browsers (Microsoft Edge/Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Firefox, Safari, etc.) - the web browser is really an app running on a PC Operating System (Windows, Mac OS, etc.) that allows you to select a server to connect to through use of the Uniform Resource Locator (URL), or more commonly called the web address. The address itself can be the actual stream that is then played through various web browser functions.

### ***Popular Apps***

Here is a list of *some* of the frequently installed and mentioned apps across all devices in no particular order. You can go to the website for each for details on content, pricing, etc.:

#### Movie Streaming

Netflix, VUDU, Movies Anywhere, Amazon Prime Video, Hulu, Disney +, Apple TV +, Fandango Now, Tubi (free), Google Play Movies & TV, Roku Channel (free), Acorn TV, BritBox, YouTube (free), Crackle (free)

#### Live TV Watching

Hulu, AT&T TV, Sling TV, YouTube

#### TV Channels on Demand

CBS All Access, PBS (free), Showtime, NFL, ESPN, HBO Go, A&E, ABC, Fox, NBC, SYFY, USA, BBC America, AMC

#### Music

Amazon Music, Stingray Qello Concerts, Sirius XM, Pandora,

Plus literally thousands of others with more being created every day it seems. No matter what your tastes are, there is an app for it! I hoped this served as a general introduction to streaming and now enjoy!

If you have suggestions for topics that you would like to see explained, please let me know!



## Webmaster Wanderings

### Jere's Tech Tips -

Windows, Android, Linux tips from Jere Minich, Advisor, Region 5 (AL, FL, GA, SC).

#### New items include:

How to Make the Switch from Windows to Linux;  
Sending Photos via Email;  
Share Photos with Google Drive;  
Share Photos with Google Photos;  
How to Disable Web Notifications;  
How to Clean a Computer Screen Safely and Easily, etc.  
<https://apcug2.org/jerestips/>

**2019 Holiday Party** - Our 17th Annual Christmas Party was held Dec 14. Page has a summary of the event along with a link to 27 party photos. Clicking a photo thumbnail gives a full size 1280 x 720 pixels image. Right clicking the image allows you to save a copy. The photo page also includes instructions for viewing previous party photos for the years 2013 thru 2018

#### 1 New Link

**GetHuman** - Call Companies and Fix Customer Service Issues Faster. Site has All-time Most Popular Phone Numbers and Advise on Getting Results  
<https://gethuman.com/>

**General Information Links page** (<http://www.spcug.com/infolink.html>) - **Miscellaneous Links**

Going to a Company Phone Number page has much additional info such as popular customer problems and how to solve them plus reasons customers called recently. GetHuman walks you through with there best tools, fastest contacts, reminders & follow-up! They cover items such as: Recover Account, Tech Support, Refund or Suspicious Charges, Update Account info, Complaint, Cancel Services, Missing Delivery, etc.

### Misc Items

#### Google Will Support Chrome on Windows 7 Until at Least Mid-2021

Windows 7, still in use by about 500 million people, has Microsoft ending its support Jan 14. Google recognizes this and has pledged to support Chrome on Win 7 for a minimum of 18 months from Microsoft's End of Life date, until at least July 15, 2021. Google says "Chrome will continue to provide built-in security capabilities that help keep users safe while on the web. With Safe Browsing, Site Isolation, and new advanced password and phishing protections, Chrome proactively helps protect users working in the cloud." Google recognizes that with several hundred million users, the Win 7 retired platform is too big of an opportunity to ignore.

#### Your 4K TV May Already Be Out Of Date

Television makers have been selling consumers 4K Ultra HD televisions. However, they're already planning to sell us 8K TV sets. LG Electronics, Samsung, Sony, and TCL were already showcasing 8K TV sets ahead of CES 2020. The 8K TVs display hyper-realistic images & deliver 4 times more pixels than 4K TVs. Downside is their high price and lack of content. LG has highlighted its "real 8K" OLED televisions that have greater clarity of individual pixels than rival 8K TVs. And there is a Filmmaker Mode to present movies as the filmmakers intended.

**Continued.....page 8**

## Webmaster Wanderings..... ..from page 7

### Microsoft Windows 10 Driver Update Change

Windows Update occasionally installs drivers that don't work with new versions of Win 10. Microsoft (MS) plans to change the process it uses to handle incompatible drivers in an effort to avoid such issues. Currently MS identifies incompatible drivers & withholds Win 10 driver updates from such systems to avoid any malfunctions. This is reactive. The new plan is for companies to be able to request an upgrade block. Thus they don't have to wait for MS to identify the issue before action is taken. Once companies have resolved problems such as driver crash, BSOD or data loss, security issues, connectivity loss, etc., they can request the upgrade block's removal. Customers will then be able to upgrade Win 10 without breaking anything. MS will also be more cautious with driver updates. They will not push drivers in the days before or after Patch Tuesday or within 2 days of a Win 10 feature update.

### Alexa Guard Recognizes More Sounds

In 2018 Alexa Guard was introduced which allowed an Echo speaker to alert homeowners or their alarm system provider to the sound of broken glass or smoke alarms. Alexa Guard now recognizes the sound of footsteps, doors opening or closing, and the sound of chopping on a cutting board. More event detection, working with & without Ring video doorbells and alarm systems, is likely to grow for security events both related and unrelated. Amazon keeps working on improving Alexa's Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI for detecting frustration in a user's voice came out in the Fall. Amazon AI researchers are now working on detecting emotions like happiness and sadness.

### Google Assistant Scheduled Actions

At CES 2020 in Las Vegas, Google announced several improvements to its Google Assistant. A new feature called Scheduled Actions is coming out later this year. Users can ask the assistant to activate or stop a smart device at a scheduled time. As an example one could say, "Hey Google, start the coffee machine at 6 a.m." ☐

## Miss the look of Windows 7? Change these settings

BY JESSICA LANMAN, KOMANDO.KOM

JANUARY 26, 2020

It's official. Microsoft is no longer offering any support for Windows 7. Support ended on Jan. 14, 2020.

This means Windows 7 will no longer have support specialists backing it up or updating, and in order to have a safe computer, you'll need to upgrade your OS to Windows 10. [Tap or click here to learn how to get Windows 10 for free.](#)

But what if you really like the look of Windows 7, and Windows 10 has features you don't want? Well, if you're willing to learn a few tech tricks, we can help you make your computer look and act like it still has Windows 7, starting with the Start menu.

### Change the Start menu

The Windows 10 Start menu introduces a new tile format in addition to the traditional, alphabetical, menu list. If you hate this layout, you can get the Windows 7 style back in two ways.

The first involves the removal of pinned apps. It's not a perfect recreation of Windows 7, but it's the simpler way to get the *idea* of the old Start menu back. It also serves as a great visual transition from 7 to 10.

To unpin applications from the Start menu:

1. Click on Start (the Windows icon), and right click on any of the apps to the right of the list of applications.
2. Select "Unpin from Start" from the top of the menu that appears.
3. Repeat for all applications, until you're left with just the alphabetical menu list.

The second way to get Windows 7 is to download the third-party app Open Shell, once known as Classic Shell. This way is much more technical, but it'll get you the exact Windows 7 Start menu look you want.

To get and use Open Shell:

1. Download [Open Shell](#).

2. Your download should start automatically.
3. Run the .exe program you downloaded, agreeing to the conditions laid out for you.
4. Open the program and select the “Start Menu Style” tab.
5. Click on the “Windows 7 style” option to get the Windows 7 Start menu.
6. Now, go to the “Skin” tab in Shell, and select “Windows Aero”. Things will really look like Windows 7 once you click “OK.”
7. To also get the old Windows 7 Start logo, in “Start Menu Style,” check the “Replace Start button” box.

1. You will now need to download an image of the old Start menu button. [Click here](#) to find some Windows 7 and Vista Start button options, right click on your favorite and select “Save image as....” Save it as a name you’ll remember.
2. Back in Shell, select “Custom” under “Replace Start button,” then click “Pick image...”
3. Find the Start button image you saved, and select it. Click “OK.”

If you miss the aesthetic of Windows 7, as well as the Start menu functionality, we recommend learning how to use Open Shell. If you just want a simpler menu that’s similar to Windows 7, the unpinning method should do the trick.

### Use the File Explorer you like

File Explorer is only slightly different in Windows 10, but there are still new features like the Ribbon. As above, there’s a way to get the *idea* of the Windows 7 version back, and a way to make things look exactly the same with a third party program.

To get the basic Windows 7 File Explorer structure:

1. In File Explorer, click on **File**, then **Change folder and search options**.
2. Change the menu next to **Open File**

### Explorer to This PC.

3. Uncheck both boxes under the **Privacy** section, then click **OK**.
4. Right click on any pins under Quick Access you won’t use, and click on “Unpin from Quick access”.
5. Things should act more like Windows 7 now!

If you hate the ribbon from the Windows 10 File Explorer, and want the Windows 7 look back entirely:

1. Download the Ribbon Disabler app by [clicking here](#) and clicking **Download Ribbon Disabler** at the bottom of the page. Run the installer.
2. Run the program by double-clicking on it, and select **Disable Ribbon Explorer**. If you want to return to the Windows 10 look, click on **Enable Ribbon Explorer** instead.

**Note:** Ribbon Disabler makes a backup of the original File Explorer program files, but also replaces them. Meaning this app affects your computer’s core programming and should be downloaded with extreme caution.

### Hide the newbies

Windows 10 really pushes Cortana, (its built-in AI helper), its bottom search bar and OneDrive, its cloud storage system. [Tap or click here to learn about other great cloud storage programs.](#)

If you have no interest in these new features, you can get them out of your way pretty easily, and this time you can do it without third-party software. Let’s start with clearing up your view.

### To hide things in the task bar:

1. Right click on the taskbar at the bottom of your screen, and click or mouse over the **Search** option.
2. Click **Hidden**.
3. Right click on the task bar again, and deselect **Show Cortana button** and **Show Task View button** by clicking on them.

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## Miss the Look.....from page 9

If you have a Cortana menu instead of Search, click **Hidden** to make that button go away, and just deselect **Show Task View button** to make that disappear.

### To disable Cortana, and not just hide her, do the following:

1. Go to **Settings**, then click **Cortana & Search settings**.
2. Click on the **Talk to Cortana** tab, and set all the switches there to **Off**.
3. To make sure Cortana can't track your data as well, click on the **Permissions & History** tab, and set all options here to **Off** as well.

### To hide OneDrive:

1. In **File Explorer**, right click on **OneDrive** and click **Properties**.
2. In the **General** tab, check the **Hidden** box. This hides OneDrive from File Explorer.
3. To hide the OneDrive icon in your taskbar, see how to disable OneDrive.

### To disable OneDrive:

1. Click the blue or white **OneDrive cloud icon**, or search for OneDrive in the Start menu, and select **More**, then **Settings**.
2. Under the Account tab, click the **Unlink this PC** or **Unlink OneDrive** option.
3. Click **OK**, then click **OK** in the Settings box too.
4. To fully uninstall it, click on **Start**, then **Programs** and click on **Add or remove programs**.
5. Under **Apps & features**, select **Microsoft OneDrive**, then click **Uninstall**. Input your admin password and confirm your choice.

So to all the Windows 7 lovers: You're going to be OK. You can get back more of the classic aesthetic by downloading Windows 7 wallpapers and playing with Open Shell skins.

Updating your OS is important for your computer's health. [Tap or click here to learn more about why that is](#). It doesn't mean losing your favorite features though, so long as you're a little tech savvy ☐



## OK, Boomer: Why Computer Literacy Matters to You

Computer literacy is no longer a choice, no matter how old you are. Embracing it is an important part of participating in society today.

Years ago, I used to say that while I worked hard to learn the skills I needed to be successful with technology — loving every minute of it, by the way — those behind me would have an advantage I never had: they'd be steeped in what we'd call computer literacy almost from birth.

As technology advanced and has become pervasive, it's clear I wasn't wrong. Those generations take technology for granted, and leverage it without a second thought.

Those of my generation (I'm a proud "boomer") and older are left needing to work to stay on top of it all.

Not only do I think that's a good thing, I think it's critical.

### Quit complaining

I hate to have to start with this, but honestly ... it's an epidemic. I see it all the time.

"Why do I have to...?"

"The old way was better."

"Why can't they leave well enough alone?"

"Who would ever want to ...?"

"I don't like..."

"I hate that they..." and on and on.

**“Kids these days.” “Get off my lawn.”**

Seriously, the message others hear from all that complaining is not that things are bad, or that old ways were better, or even that we’re frustrated ... what they hear is that we’re a generation of grumpy old farts who stopped learning years ago and don’t want to be part of current society.



Seriously. That’s the takeaway from all your complaining.

Even if your complaints are completely justified, complaining doesn’t help. It’s not good for you, and it discourages others from helping you when you need it. And yes, I’m ashamed to admit, sometimes it discourages me.

**Progress is nothing new**

Society and technology moves forward whether we like it or not.

And here’s the kicker: this is nothing new! This is one thing that hasn’t changed; it’s always been this way. When you and I were young, things were moving at a pace that amazed our elders. We embraced it. We

enjoyed it. We leveraged it. They suggested we get off their lawns. In a world of seemingly never-ending change, this is one thing that hasn’t changed at all: things move forward. You embraced it then. Embrace it now.

**Computer literacy**

You don’t even hear the term “computer literacy” that often anymore, because it’s more of an assumption than a skill people have to learn. It’s become almost synonymous with generic literacy.<sup>1</sup> As I said, it’s something that kids just grow up with today. But for many, it’s still a separate, important skill that needs to be developed. I urge you to develop it. There are two important reasons why you must.

**It’s good for you**

Today’s technology empowers you in ways you simply can’t imagine until you’re using it.

Remember video phones? They exist — we just call them “Skype” now. Oh, and they’re free. Dick Tracy’s wrist-phone? That exists too, though to be fair, the larger version in everyone’s pocket instead is probably more useful.

**The future is here today.**

Learning new things is great for your brain, and learning to use the technology around you is good for your connection to the rest of the world.

The less you know of computers and tech, the more isolated you’ll become. Which leads to the second important reason you must develop the skill.

**It’s required**

Your ability to be technologically literate is now a basic requirement to participate in society.

From online banking, to services that no longer provide paper or have reduced the number of people you can actually talk to, to just connecting to your friends and

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**Ask Leo.....from page 11**

family who never answer their phone, the pragmatic reality is that you need to be the one to take the initiative and come up to speed on how to interact with the changing world.

They're not going to change. That means the only thing that remains in your control is how you respond.

**“Get off my lawn” is not the answer.**

You don't have to like it, and complaining about it won't help. “You embraced it then, you can embrace it now” is the best attitude toward technology and change you can take.

“OK, boomer”

In recent months, the phrase “OK, boomer” has become a bit of a meme. It's nothing more than a dismissive response by the member of a younger generation to something that a member of the baby boom generation has stated.

It's the equivalent to an exasperated “Whatever!” — completely ignoring what someone else has said instead of pointlessly arguing about it.

That it has gained notoriety shows me that my generation has developed a reputation for inflexibility, intolerance, and an unwillingness to listen to the opinions of others.

That may or may not be true elsewhere, but nowhere do I see it more than when it comes to technology and computer literacy. The reputation is sadly justified.

The meme may pass, but the opinion it reflects will remain.

Instead, I aspire to emulate the 95 year old who's been teaching computer literacy at a local senior center, or the 93 year old who's been blogging about her challenges in aging. Rather than rejecting technology, they're finding ways to make the world a slightly better place by embracing it.

And they're happier people for it.

They're who I want to be when I grow up. They're who I want you to be. You, and I — and, honestly, most everyone else — will be happier for it as well. □

Footnotes1:I'm told “information literacy” is the new version, and it's not something those tech-leveraging youngsters know automatically. Schools and libraries are having to teach it from the start.

I'm Leo Notenboom and I've been playing with computers since I took a required programming class in 1976. I spent over 18 years as a software engineer at Microsoft, and after “retiring” in 2001 I started Ask Leo! in 2003 as a place to help you find answers and become more confident using this amazing technology at our fingertips.

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## **A New Can of SPAM?Or a Polish sausage?**

*By Art GreshamEditor, UCHUG Drive Light*

Here are some email subject lines. See if you think they have anything in common....

Congratulations,You have been selected to get an exclusive Reward

How These Genius Insoles Cured My Foot Pain For Good.

Never pay for another car repair

Dear Costco Shopper Reward Expiring

Notice!Suffering from pain or anxiety? TRY CBD Oil

Your Experian TransUnion & Equifax Credit Scores Changed - January 1, 2020

Perhaps you may guess that I have some kind of health, auto, finance or shopping problem. Or you may more correctly guess that these are all SPAM. Well, that second guess is half right. Actually it is totally right, but only half of this story.

The one thing that all of these emails have in common is the sender addresses. Not all from the same sender, but all from the same domain.

I have, as many of you might, a gmail address (orthree). And they are of the standard form art@gmail.com(not my real ddress!)

But all of these had a different common domainaddress,

that is from @googlemail.com.



Naturally these emails above are not the only spam I receive on any day. And I can usually determine the ones that are SPAM rather easily. Occasionally one looks legitimate so I will give it a second look. First looking at the actual "FROM" address portion of the email header. Mine (in Thunderbird) looks something like this

From: Your-Credit\_Score <brunsvodylas36@googlemail.com>

Subject: Your Experian TransUnion & Equifax\_Credit-scores have changed!! January 1 2020

With a "Click Me" Link in the body text.  
STANDARD WARNING. DO NOT CLICK THESE!!

The reason I initially noticed this one was because it (supposedly) comes from Experian TransUnion. And since I do actually check every month or so my Experian account/score I almost fell for this one. But that address definitely does not look like a business address. <brunsvodylas36@googlemail.com> ! Obviously a questionable name before the @ symbol, but what is that at the end.... googlemail.com ?? I ain't falling for that! Do they think I will mistake that for a normal 'gmail.com' ?

So some more interesting facts as I began checking this out. For starters, this particular email came to me on January 1st, 2020. And as I did an email filter and search for 'googlemail.com', I now notice that I have had several (as initially listed here) which all began after the new year. Coincidence? (Gibbs Rule 39).

With a little research I discovered that, contrary to my

instinct, "googlemail.com" is a real thing... But....it has an interesting history behind it, and why it exists at all. It is all a Russian Plot.... No, Not really. But it does involve Russia, Poland, and Germany. Here is what I found with a GOOGLE search (Naturally!)

According to the firm Gmass.co (a mass mailing service utilizing features of gmail) at their blog: <https://www.gmass.co/blog/domains-gmail-com-googlemail-com-and-google-com/>

**googlemail.com** is for Gmail users of a particular country where "Gmail", as a trademark, was already taken. Those countries originally were Germany, the Russian Federation, and Poland. In each case, the Gmail trademark was unavailable, so Google was forced to use "googlemail" and therefore **googlemail.com** instead.

In Poland, the Gmail trademark domain is owned by a Polish poet group, Grupa Młodych Artystów i Literatów—which is abbreviated "GMAIL". In the Russian Federation, the trademark is owned by a Russian mail redirect service, Gmail.ru. So, with the Gmail trademark already taken, users there were assigned an email address of the format: name@googlemail.com

The problem for Germany has since been resolved. And functionally for everyone, the two addresses can be used interchangeably as destinations. As Gmass says:

In fact, **name@googlemail.com** and **name@gmail.com** point to the same mailbox. You can test this out right now by sending an email to yourself by taking your normal email address and using the googlemail.com domain. You'll get the email instantly, proving that these domains are the same.

I tried it by sending TO: my account and can verify that it works. BUT, what about those emails I received FROM a googlemail account? I can only speculate, but I believe that it indicates an email sent FROM an account either in Russia or Poland. Does that sound suspicious to you? It does to me.

So My verdict? I pause when I receive mail with a From address that is GOOGLEMAIL.COM. I very carefully inspect, ignore and delete. Except.... As in life, there are often exceptions, and here too. The valid

**Continued.....page 14**

## A New Can of SPAM?.....from page 13

exception I have found seems to be a function internal to Google Mail processing. If you send an email TO a gmail (or googlemail) address that does not exist you get what I call a Bounce message. They are letting you know you messed up. It can look something like the following (and multiple variations)

From: Mail Delivery Subsystem <mailer-daemon@googlemail.com>

Subj: Delivery Status Notification (Failure)

Your message wasn't delivered to someaddress@mail.com because the address couldn't be found, or is unable to receive mail.

Naturally these emails are credible, and I had never really paid much attention to the from address. However examining my history of emails back several years I have never before received anything FROM any googlemail.com address except those Delivery Status Notifications. Until that first 1 January 2020 email, and those that have flooded my mail box since.

Final Verdict. Guilty. Remove 'em, Just another can of SPAM ☐.

This article was written by:

Art Gresham,  
Editor of the UCHUG Drive Light since 1996  
Member since 1982

## “Critical” Windows Update Message is a Fake

*by Scambuster Keith*

**Scambusters Newsletter #894**

Those of us who use Microsoft Windows are so used to getting messages about Windows updates that we probably don't give them a second thought and let things take care of themselves.

So, when you receive an email notification that reads, “Install Microsoft Windows update now!” or “Critical Microsoft Windows Update!” you might be inclined to take it seriously.

However, when you think of it, that's not the way

Microsoft works. Updates either take place in the background automatically or you receive some kind of onscreen notification of an impending update. You definitely don't receive emails from Microsoft.

So, it's a scam. The email generally has a single line urging you to “install the latest critical update from Microsoft attached to this email.”

But the attachment is actually a malware-bearing file that will likely lock up your PC and demand a ransom, according to the technology intelligence site TechRadar.

This isn't the only convincing, but flawed, new attempt to trick users into following links.

A new scam, only spotted recently, uses text messages notifying recipients of an upcoming package delivery. Because text messages use just simple typography, it's next to impossible to tell if a shipping or delivery notification is genuine.

Again, many of us are used to receiving this type of message on our phones about deliveries. They may come from the sender — such as Amazon — or delivery organizations like UPS, FedEx or the USPS.

Tech site HowToGeek explains that the scam messages contain a link that can be activated by touch. It takes victims to a fake Amazon site where they're asked to complete a survey in return for an “expensive” reward.

All recipients have to do is to pay the shipping cost, which means, of course, providing credit card details.

But, says HowToGeek, the real scam is buried in the fine print. This states that by agreeing to pay for shipping for the “gift,” the user is also agreeing to receive products every month, for which their card will be charged almost \$100 a time

In both the above cases, the simple solution is the same one we always recommend — be ultra-wary about clicking or tapping links or attachments in messages. Better to go to the supposed source's real website and check out delivery and shipment notifications there.

We have a few couple other scam Snippets to alert you to this week:

### Beware Parking Lot Mechanics

This is a clever trick. You leave your car in a large mall parking lot and return to find an apparent problem; there's brake fluid all over the ground beneath your

auto. If you didn't spot it, a passer-by (who is really a scammer) draws your attention to it.

They claim they just happen to know a nearby repair shop where you can get it fixed. But drive slowly and carefully, they warn. This is just a ruse to make them seem more genuine.

They offer to phone ahead and you make your way to a nearby repair shop or lock-up unit. There's a guy outside, waiting for you. You're still near the mall, so he suggests you leave the car with him and go have a coffee.

You hand over your keys and that's the last you see of your car. The second scammer has nothing to do with the repair shop he's standing by.

The message is clear: don't trust parking lot mechanics. If you seem to have a dangerous and urgent problem with your car, call out your roadside assistance service. If you don't have one, find a nearby reputable repair shop independently and take your vehicle there or ask them to come check your car.

### Don't Fall for this Big Grant Trick

Facebook scams are a dime a dozen. But one of the latest tricks is causing victims a lot of trouble and losing them a few thousand dollars.

Victims receive what looks like a genuine message from one of their FB "friends." It claims they paid \$4,000 to get a \$150,000 grant.

In case they're skeptical, the message includes photos of the friend, seeming to confirm they sent it.

In reality, the "sender's" account has been hacked and photos copied from the Internet.

Like all of these fake grant scams, the aim is to hook the individual and then ask for successive amounts of money for handling, taxes, and so on. In one case, a victim was even told the grant was related to a lottery program and that the more money she paid to collect, the more she would receive!

This might seem a pretty obvious scam to most of us, but it's being targeted at older people who tend to be more trusting.

The truth is that grants of any sort are not easy to obtain and recipients generally have to jump through hoops and fill in all sorts of forms to even be considered. An instant grant of \$150,000 to an individual is unheard

off. And a request to pay a fee to get the money is a big red flag.

### Alert of the Week

Coming back to the topic of Amazon and phishing scams, there's another new trick targeting members of the retailing giant's Amazon Prime service.

If you use this service, don't fall for an email notification that your membership is about to expire, your card details are no longer valid, and you need to update them by following a link.

It's a fake of course, so ditch it. If you worry the message may be real, go to Amazon.com and check your account there.

Time to close today, but we'll be back next week with another issue. See you then! ☐

## Scammed by PayPal Technical Support? Here's What to Do

*by Dennis Faas  
Infopackets Newsletter  
on January, 17 2020*



Infopackets Reader Kathleen S. writes:

"Dear Dennis,

I really need your help! I have been scammed by fake PayPal technical support.

Here's how it happened: beginning some time in March, 2019, I received invoices from PayPal claiming that I paid for some kind of technical support for my computer.

I have no recollection of this, so up until now I've kept deleting the emails, thinking they were sent in error. Flash forward to January 8, 2020, and I received another message stating that if I don't pay the original invoice (\$399), I'm going to be charged an additional <\$500 late fee,' and subsequent 'fees' if I don't take

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## Fake PayPal.....from page 15

immediate action.

That's when I decided to call PayPal. **The people I spoke with had a very thick Indian accent.** From there, 'PayPal' connected to my machine and then had me login to my account. After that, they started asking questions about my bank and credit cards. This went on for over an hour. At this point, I figured something wasn't right and so I hung up the **phone**.

I then realized that the phone number I called (displayed in the fake invoice email) wasn't the real PayPal, but **scammers in India**. In the last 24 hours, the scammers have tried to purchase \$1800 Australian dollars worth of cosmetics from a website I've never heard of, and a \$250 Home Depot gift card. Life Lock has also alerted me that **they also tried to open a credit card in my name!**

After coming across your article on [Easy Net Experts](#), I am scared to death that the scammers still have access to my machine and all my financial information. I've already called the real PayPal and they reversed the charges, but now **I need to have the remote access removed from my machine** as it's my life line. As an elderly lady, I can't get out and need to use this machine. I've also tried to access my credit cards online, but I keep getting an error in my web browser. Something is definitely not right! Can you PLEASE help!?!? «

### My response:

This is yet another twist on the [Microsoft tech support scam](#); this time, scammers in India are posing as PayPal agents. Of course, the real PayPal will never, ever ask to connect to your machine in order to login to your account to "check things over."

Unfortunately, the email that Kathleen received was incredibly convincing. The mistake she made was calling the phone number in the email, where she got in direct contact with scammers instead of PayPal. From there, they were able to acquire all her financial information, including her bank accounts and credit cards attached to her PayPal account.

But, as I've mentioned many times before - this scam goes much deeper than that!

Here's What Really Happens When You Let Cyber Criminals into Your Machine

Based on my experience in dealing with this scam and similar scams like it over the last 6 years, it goes WAY deeper than handing over your PayPal login and financial information to scammers.

Here's what really happens:

When you call the fake PayPal technical support, they will ask to connect to your machine to "check things over". When this is done, they will then tie you up on the phone for as long as possible (sometimes for hours), **switching** you in between «agents», claiming they are «examining the problem».

The most obvious part of this scam is to get you to login to your PayPal account and/or ask for your password. When they have this information, they can use your PayPal account / bank account / **credit card** to rack up unauthorized charges. This usually happens immediately.

What most people don't realize is that while you're being tied up on the phone, scammers are rifling through your machine (remotely) for financial information, including tax and bank statements, passwords to important websites, and similar. They can do this without you even seeing what's happening (using an administrative command line via SSH **secure** shell). They then download as much of your information to their servers for later processing. I've mentioned this many times in my tech support scam articles, including the latest one by [Easy Net Experts](#).

The pain doesn't end there, however.

**Scammers will also install multiple remote access backdoors on your machine**, so they can get back in whenever they want in order to monitor your activity. They can do this without you even knowing they are connected to the machine. They will also install malware that is capable of recording your keystrokes, which means any passwords you use to access financial

institutions goes right back to them - even after you've changed your passwords.

**The remote access backdoors and malware that are placed on the PC / laptop must be removed PRIOR to having the bank or credit card company issue you new cards, otherwise you'll be feeding this new information right back to the scammers.**

With the remote access enabled, scammers will also infect your machine with a fake virus alert. The alert may not appear right away, but two days, two weeks, or two months later you'll be on Amazon.com's webpage, when suddenly a red screen will appear, claiming your PC has been hacked. The fake alert will then prompt you to call a 1-800 number to "fix" the "problem". This will inevitably lead you more scammers that will try and sell you fake tech support for ridiculous amounts of money - usually hundreds or thousands of dollars. This scam will repeat indefinitely until you run out of money, your bank accounts are drained, or you wise up .

### **Scammed by PayPal Technical Support? Here's What to Do**

Now that we know what's really happening, here's what you need to do.

1. First, power down the machine and do not use it until it can be properly cleaned. If it's powered off, scammers cannot connect to it.

In terms of having the machine cleaned: you are free to take your PC or laptop wherever you prefer, though please be advised that **most computer geeks / computer stores have absolutely no clue where to look to undo the damage caused by the scammers.**

As a senior systems administrator ([view my resume here](#)), I've been dealing with this scam for over 6 years. I can tell you that based on my experience, the scammers don't make it easy to remove their remote access backdoors on purpose - they want your money and will do everything in their power to get it.

With my experience, I know exactly where to look to undo the damage caused by these scammers; I will also advise you on how to keep your money safe. The same is not true if you take it elsewhere. Oftentimes it's a crapshoot as to who is working on your machine - this is especially true if you take it to **Best Buy (Geek Squad)**, for example.

I had one client take his machine to Best Buy and specifically asked them to remove the remote access and malware. It didn't cost him anything extra because he had already paid for a yearly service to Geek Squad. When he got it back, I connected to the machine and looked at it. Geek Squad missed 5 remote access backdoors, and they didn't even remove the malware that was still on his desktop. He was no better off than before he gave them the machine to work on! **You have been warned!**

2. If you hire me: once the machine is cleaned and remote access backdoors have been removed, I will consult with you on how to retrieve your funds and secure your accounts. If you don't hire me, you won't get this service - that's because Geek Squad and similar places simply don't have this knowledge or years of experience like I do in dealing with this scam.
3. Don't answer the phone if "PayPal" calls you back - *and believe me, they will!*

Based on my experience in dealing with tech support scams, scammers like to do fake follow up call to make sure you're happy with their fake technical support services. This is all part of the illusion to make you feel like you've been in contact with a legitimate firm. If they call you - don't answer the phone, even if the name says it's PayPal, because they can spoof the caller ID to make it look like the call is coming from "PayPal".

The only time you should be in contact with the real PayPal is when you call them using PayPal's website via the «call us» button. It's also worth mentioning that scammers also flood search

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## Fake PayPal scam.....from page 17

engines with fake 1-800 numbers and fake websites in hopes of duping people into calling them - for example: «paypaltechnicalsupport.com», or such. Please understand the difference here - you should ONLY get in touch with PayPal via the paypal.com website and none other - ([the link is here if you need it!](#))

1. Also be advised that your name and phone number will be shared with other scammers. Don't be surprised if the "IRS" calls you in the next few weeks, claiming that your account has been hacked and they need the last 4 digits of your bank account to "prove your identity". This is yet another scam! If the repeated harassing (scam) phone calls bother you, consider changing your phone number.

2.

Moving forward, never, ever give ANY financial information over the phone and certainly don't let anyone connect to your PC / laptop to perform "technical support services" - especially if it's someone with an Indian accent!

## Feeling Overwhelmed? I'm Here to Help

If you're reading this right now and you've been scammed by fake PayPal technical support scammers - don't worry, you're not alone. I have been helping clients with this scam for over 6 years and can help you **recover** your funds, make your machine safe to use, and advise you on any concerns you may have. If you need help, simply [send me a message](#) briefly describing the issue. Don't forget to include your phone number and I'll email or call you back as soon as possible - typically after 1 PM EST as I'm on the midnight shift, busy helping my many clients around the world.

"But, Dennis - How do I know you're Not a Scammer, too?"

I've been publishing online since 2001 and have written 6 books on MS Windows, Internet and Security - that's how you found this article. I get emails all the time about this scam and other scams like it; some people even ask me "How do I know you're not a scammer, too?" My response to this is that you can [read my](#)

[articles](#) I've published over the last 19 years and also [review my resume](#). I can also provide legitimate photographic evidence that I am who I say I am.

Based on that, you should be able to understand that I am in fact legitimate, compassionate, and am more than willing to lend a hand - simply [contact me](#), briefly describing the issue and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

## About the author: Dennis Faas

Dennis Faas is the owner and operator of Infopackets.com. With over 30 years of computing experience, Dennis' areas of expertise are a broad range and include PC hardware, Microsoft Windows, Linux, network administration, and virtualization. Dennis holds a Bachelors degree in Computer Science (1999) and has authored 6 books on the topics of MS Windows and PC Security. If you like the advice you received on this page, please up-vote / Like this page and share it with friends. For technical support inquiries, Dennis can be reached via Live chat online this site using the Zopim Chat service (currently located at the bottom left of the screen); optionally, you can contact Dennis through the website contact form.

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## Thoughts from a Clicker

*Author: Tiny Ruisch, Member, Cajun Clickers Computer Club, LA*

**August 2019 issue, CCCC Computer News**

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This month I'm going to rant, rave, criticize and complain just a little. About a year ago, before I moved to the Baton Rouge area, my wife and I were in one of the home improvement stores. I thought that it would be a good time to pick up a new water filter for our refrigerator. I went over to appliances and told them I needed a new filter for a Whirlpool. He immediately asked me which of the nine filters I needed. Of course, I didn't have the filter number memorized. So, I found our refrigerator on the sales floor and told the

salesman, “One to fit that model.” I got home and found that it was the wrong size filter. When I went back to exchange it, I found out that a different model year almost always uses a different filter.

What does all that have to do with computers and electronics? It got me to thinking about some things I hate about technology. I’ve probably got 10 or 20 different USB cables in the junk box in my computer room. Every time you buy something that is USB supported, you get another cable. Why is this? It’s because each manufacturer has their own proprietary plug. They have to include a cable because none of my other 20 cables will work with the darn thing. I recently got a new cell phone. Same manufacturer, different model. You guessed it. I’ve got another USB cable in my collection. Wouldn’t it be nice if everything had a standard plug and didn’t have the cable included? Think of the money that could be saved. Wait a minute! Then they couldn’t sucker people into paying \$20 for 3 dollars’ worth of wire.

Another thing that makes me mad are End User License Agreements (EULA). I’m one of the few people who research them before installing anything on my computer. My complaint isn’t the fact that lawyers write them by lawyers. I can use the internet to explain the legal terms. My objection is that I have seldom found a EULA that can be read full screen. Instead they write them in a little window that usually covers about a tenth of my screen. I think this is done to discourage people from reading the agreements. Just get them to click “I agree” and get it over with.

I can live with SPAM (I usually don’t even see it). I don’t mind getting bombarded with internet advertisements (I can always go to other sites). What I hate it when websites pop up a window asking for information that they will likely never use. For instance, there is a website that I won’t name that wants to know my age, sex and country. They then store the data in a cookie on my computer. When I tell them that I’m a 28-year-

old female, I get the same advertisements as the dirty old men get. Why do they waste my time? I also dislike software that isn’t user-friendly. Some programs have windows that can’t be resized. I’m getting older and my eyesight isn’t what it used to be. If I can’t make the window bigger and read the font, I likely won’t use the software. Then there is software that won’t let you choose where to install it. I don’t install all programs into “program files”. Many times, I don’t even install them on the C drive.

I wonder if Microsoft will ever fix one little thing that has bugged me for as long as I remember. When you use file explorer to copy, move or delete a list of files; Windows estimates how long it will take. If you’re doing an operation on a lot of files, the estimated time will change every time you check it. On older systems it can be even more aggravating. Wouldn’t it be nice if the estimate was close once in a while?

Hate might be too strong of a word, but I’ve always disliked how companies will use a proprietary document format. The perfect example is word processing. Why must each program have a different extension? Is it good for a business to make consumers remember .doc, .odf, .wps, .docx, .odt, .txt, .rtf, .abw, .abi and hundreds of others? Almost all word processing software has a save as feature to save files to other formats. They can’t be that much different. Why isn’t there a standard where all programs save in a standard format? After all, this idea seems to work well for HTML internet files.

That’s enough ranting and complaining. Next month I promise to write something useful for the newsletter. By the way, did I mention that the two water filters had two different prices? Does that remind you of anything else technology related?

Keep on clicking and thanks for reading. □

## Stellarium – A Home Planetarium

*By Dick Maybach, Member, Brookdale Computer User Group, NJ*

www.bcug.com  
n2nd (at) att.net

This free software for Windows, Linux, and OS X (<http://stellarium.org/>) turns your PC or Raspberry Pi into a planetarium to display the stars in the sky, the constellations, and individual and groups of stellar objects. There is a Web-based version you can access with a browser (at <http://stellarium-web.org/>), and variants are available for cell phones (usually for a small cost). Available on the home page is a 355-page user guide, and you should read this if you want to do more than take a casual look at the night sky.

### Features

- Over 600,000 stars from the Hipparcos Catalogue and the Tycho-2 Catalogue, with extra catalogues available containing more than 210 million stars
- Illustrations of the constellations, from the Western and other cultures
- Images of nebulae (full Messier catalog)
- Realistic Milky Way
- Realistic atmosphere, sunrise and sunset
- Planets of the solar system and their major moons
- Ability to display stars and other celestial objects as seen from reference points other than the Earth

### Visualizations

- Equatorial and azimuthal grids
- Star twinkling
- Simulations of meteors and eclipses
- Deep sky objects



Figure 1. Stellarium Day View.

If you are connected to the Internet, Stellarium will configure itself on startup by loading your location, although you can fine tune this. It starts in full-screen mode, which you can turn off from the menu bar, visible when you move the cursor to the bottom of the screen. A second menu bar appears when you move the cursor to the left edge of the screen (both are shown in Figure 1). Stellarium shows the sky for a given time, which by default is the current time. This was 7:30 pm. on a summer day for Figure 1, and of course, the stars weren't visible, because our atmosphere scatters sunlight which overpowers light from the stars. Stellarium allows you to turn off this effect so you can see the stars during the day. (The sun still appears as a very bright star.) The program also allows you to remove the ground to view stars below the horizon.

Advancing the time past sunset, results in the more satisfactory view of Figure 2, where the field of view has also been increased to show more of the sky. By default, only the major objects are labeled. (The two objects labeled "Aquiriids" are meteor showers.)



Figure 2. Stellarium Night View

You move around the sky with the mouse and zoom with the mouse wheel (or the Page-up and Page-down keys). Because your PC screen is flat and relatively small, you will probably display only a portion of the sky. (Stellarium's default is to show approximately what appears in your normal field of view.) However, you can zoom back to see everything above the horizon, as shown in Figure 3.

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Stellarium.....from page 22



Figure 3. Full Sky View.

You can add the constellations as lines connecting their stars as shown in Figure 4, and you can also see their artwork as in Figure 5. The constellations and artwork shown are those used in the western world, which are the defaults. The program can instead display the constellations of many other cultures.



Figure 4. Constellations.



Figure 5. Constellation Art (Western Traditional).

Selecting an object displays information about it; Figure 6 shown this for Polaris. Most users will configure the program to show fewer data, as much of what is shown here will interest only astronomy enthusiasts.



Figure 6. Information Displayed About Polaris.

You can zoom in to view individual objects, such a Saturn in Figure 7. By default, Stellarium shows the sky in real time, and at high magnifications individual objects will rapidly move off the screen, but you can correct this by stopping its clock.



Figure 7. Saturn.

If you have Stellarium on a laptop or other mobile device, you can use it outside to help you identify features in the actual sky. In this case, you'll want to use Night Mode, which displays everything in red to preserve your night vision; see Figure 8.

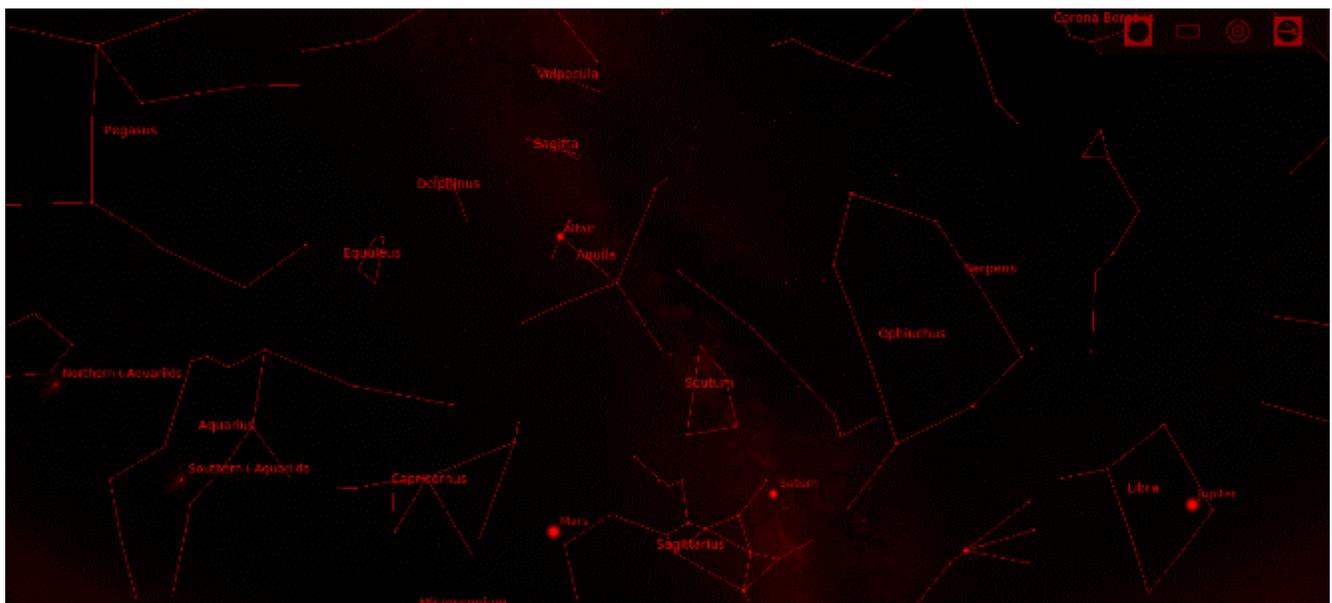


Figure 8. Night Mode.

In addition to the visible stars and planets, Stellarium can also show artificial satellites and deep sky objects (DSOs). The term is used for the most part by amateur astronomers to denote faint objects such as star clusters, nebulae, and galaxies. It can also show exoplanets (planets that orbit other stars than our sun). As Figure 9 shows, if you display both satellites and deep sky objects, the screen becomes quite cluttered. Especially, since the satellites except those in synchronous orbits are in rapid motion. (In the figure, the synchronous satellites appear in an arc about one-third down from the top.)



Figure 9. Satellites and Deep Sky Objects.

Folks now know far less about our night sky than in the past, when nights were darker and the stars more visible, and we also tend to spend our nights indoors. Most of us can identify only the big and little dipper constellations. Stellarium offers you a way to expand your knowledge without even leaving your chair, although stepping outside on a clear night to look at the actual sky is always rewarding. □

## BACK TO BASICS

**Traveling With Your Devices (Computers)**

*By Jim Cerny, Forum Leader, Sarasota Technology Users Group, FL*

**MARCH 2019 ISSUE, THE STUG MONITOR**

www.thestug.org  
jimcerny123 (at) gmail.com

You are probably used to using your computer devices at home, but what about traveling? Taking your devices with you can make your trip much better with directions, shopping, gas, emergency needs, entertainment, and much more. Whether you are traveling with your smart phone, tablet, or laptop here are some important tips to remember.

1. Backup your device and/or data before you leave. If you are using the “cloud” as your backup, that’s fine. But it is wise to check to make sure that you are putting all your important things on the cloud or whatever backup system you use.
2. Bring charging cables and power backups with you, along with ear buds for private listening. You should have a cable in your car as well to keep your devices charged.
3. Check that your destinations have free Wi-Fi. Even if they do, be prepared for much slower response than what you get at home.
4. Take your needed account IDs and passwords with you! If you use another computer or need to access your email in a different way, you will need your IDs and passwords. At home you may have your device remember your ID or password, but when you travel it may not work that way, especially if something goes wrong.
5. Keep your travel information handy – in your smart phone for example. Have an “emergency” note in memory with your medications, doctor information, emergency contacts, etc. You should also have a list of your destination phone numbers, travel club memberships and phone numbers for general travel needs such as hotel chains, airlines, car rental companies, etc.
6. Do a test before you leave on your trip. Go to your local library or coffee shop and test how to get your email or important things on the internet. It is nice to see how things work differently when you are not in a hurry and when you are NOT using your home Wi-Fi network.
7. If there is no Wi-Fi network, you may be able to use your iPhone/smart phone as a “hotspot,” so your laptop can connect to the internet using your phone as a Wi-Fi. Note that you will be using the cellular network and such use may use your data and/or add to your monthly phone bill (depending upon your phone contract). You can ask Google how this is done on your particular smart phone and/or contact your cellular provider for help and possible use charges that may be billed to you. Again, do a test of this before you leave.
8. Be aware that using a “public” Wi-Fi network is, well, not private. In other words, others using the same network may be able to see what you are doing. Try to avoid entering passwords, account numbers, and credit card numbers on public networks.
9. Test how you will use Google maps (or other travel apps) before you leave on your trip. Try them around town in your local area when you are not in a hurry to see how they would work, especially if you will be using them in your car. Can you drive using the audio voice directions? Do you need to touch the screen on your device while

driving? Do you understand how your travel app displays bad traffic, accidents, gas stations, hotels, etc.? It is ALWAYS better to have a passenger help you navigate with your device while driving. Any distraction taking your eyes off the road is dangerous. If you are driving by yourself pull off the road and stop to use or adjust your device.

10. If you are traveling out of the USA, you will have to get adaptors and arrange for special usage for your devices in other countries. Ask Google or your provider for help and costs.

In summary, it all comes down to being prepared and to “know before you go.” Besides, it can be fun to discover some of those wonderful things those apps can do before you are in a bind with problems on the road. Happy safe travels.

The following .jpg image is optional, but I think it’s fun:



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## Phishing Expeditions

*By Dorothy Fitch, Editor, Green Valley Resort Computer Club, AZ*

**April-August 2019 issue, Green Bytes**

www.ccgvas.org

Newsletter (at) ccgvas.org

February’s *Green Bytes* included an article about «Phishing» ([click here to read it](#)).

A “phishing” email is one that attempts to obtain your personal account information to use for unauthorized purposes. When I included that article in *Green Bytes*, I hadn’t personally received a phishing email. But this month I did -- twice! Both appeared to be from familiar companies (Amazon and American Express), but there were several clues that they were attempts at phishing. Here is how I knew.

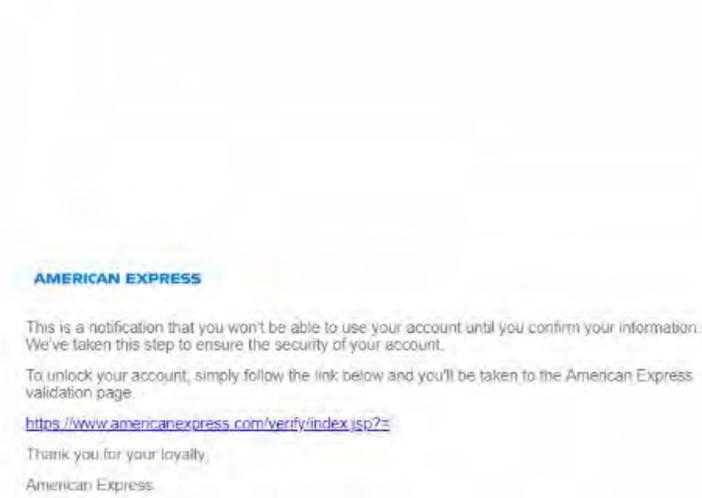
1. Both messages came to an email address I use for a non-profit organization. I know that the email address these messages came to have **never had an account or been associated in any way with either Amazon or American Express**.

2. Both messages looked as though they had come from the named company. The logo and color schemes were appropriate. They both were similar in that they said that my account had been disabled or locked. They both wanted me to update or confirm my account information. (No way was I going to do that!)

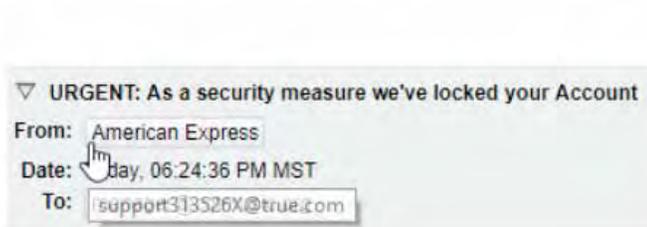
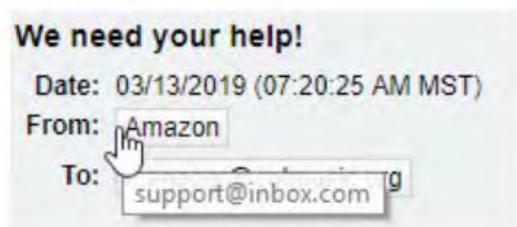
You can safely click the images below to enlarge them. They won’t take you to a website.

**Continued.....page 28**

### Fishing Expeditions.....from page 27



3. Then I looked at the email address of the sender.



The Amazon email was sent from [support@inbox.com](mailto:support@inbox.com).

The American Express email was sent from [support313526X@true.com](mailto:support313526X@true.com).

Neither of these email addresses appeared to have any connection to the companies they were supposedly from.

4. I looked at the link in the email from American Express (but I didn't click it!).

If you hover your mouse pointer over a link, you can see before you click where it will take you. Just look at the lower left of your computer screen to see the link information.

The link in the American Express link was this (note the letters amx in the link):

Although I didn't click on the link, I was brave [stupid?] enough to go to [www.ahmetcaglar.com](http://www.ahmetcaglar.com) to see what was there (so you don't have to do it!). When I got there, Google suggested that it translate the website into English (it was in Turkish), so I did.

What did I find there? The bio of a Turkish computer science student! He used his name for his website. I guess he doesn't care about keeping under the radar. Perhaps he was just experimenting with a concept without any intention of causing harm, but we'll never know....

I found it very interesting to take a closer look at these phishing emails. The lessons for everyone are:

- Look at the sender's email address. Does it seem to really be from the individual or company you expect?
- Don't click on any links, if you aren't 100% sure who the email came from.
- Absolutely do not give out any account information to anyone who contacts you.
- If you want to verify if an email is for real, call the company; don't reply to the email. You can probably see if your account has been locked by going directly to the company's website, the way you normally would, and see if all is well.

## A Great Photoshop Alternative

*By Sheila Swaikowski, Webmaster The PCUG of Connecticut*

Gimp is a great free image manipulation program much like Photoshop. Here is a YouTube link to a 13+ minute video of a basic beginners' guide that I found very helpful: Q8C0LJPpr64.mp4. It is entitled 'How to Use Gimp (A Beginners Guide)' and produced by TechGumbo. According to the instructor, Gimp is one of the top five best free Photoshop alternatives and his favorite.

The video begins by showing where to go ([gimp.org](http://gimp.org)) to download Gimp and walks you through the whole download process. Then it goes over the layout you should see when you start Gimp: the primary window in the center, the toolbox on the left and the layers window on the right.

The instructor starts a new project by creating a new image from the file tab at the top. He shows how to scale it down (resize it) and add a background color.

Gimp works with layers, which is a new concept for me. Changes are made on individual layers which become part of the whole exported image at the end. If a change has to be made, you can go back to that particular layer which has what you want to change. You create a new layer from the right layer window. The video shows how to create text in a new layer by going to the toolbox, selecting the text tool, then selecting a different text color and changing the text size. It shows how to use the move tool to move the text anywhere in that layer.

If you don't like what you produced, you can go back to a previous step or steps by going to the Edit tab at the top and choosing Undo Move Text Layer which will undo the last operation or using the shortcut, ctrl z, until you get back to the step you want.

The instructor creates an oval in a new, second layer, by selecting an ellipse tool from the tool box; other options are the rectangle tool or circle tool. He also shows how to use the blend tool in the background to show a color variance in the background.

In this video there are three levels: the background image, the layer with the text and the layer with the oval drawn on it.

When you are done, it's time to export the created image by going to the File tab and clicking on Export As and exporting the image in the file type you want, png or jpg being the most popular. Even though you work with each level separately in Gimp, they become one image upon exporting.

If you choose the Save As option in the File tab and also save the image as an .xcf file type, you can retrieve and work on the image later and make changes in the different layers. It seems to me to be a good idea to also save an .xcf file.

So there you have it, a very good basic beginners' video introduction to Gimp. There are other You Tube videos you can find by searching for Gimp that will show you how to do specific things, such as rounding corners in a photo. If you've ever wanted to do photo editing, but hesitated because of the cost of Photoshop, this Gimp tutorial is just what you may need.

From the March issue, The Program, [www.TPCUGCT.org](http://www.TPCUGCT.org), [sswaikowski@yahoo.com](mailto:sswaikowski@yahoo.com). □

**B U G Officers**

**President**

Bill Middleton

President@bugclub.org

**Treasurer**

Loretta Mills

Treasurer@bugclub.org

**Secretary**

Bill Middleton

Secretary@bugclub.org

**Member At Large**

Jim Townsend

**Webmaster**

Chris Crisafulli

Webmaster@bugclub.org

**Special Interest Groups**

**Beginners' SIG:**

beginners@bugclub.org

**Hardware (Tinkers) SIG:**

Bob Schmidt 952-0199

hardware@bugclub.org

**BUG Web Page**

<http://bugclub.org>

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**Brevard Users Group Secretary's Report**

By Bill Middleton

Monthly General Meeting Report, January 13, 2020

The meeting was called to order by President, Bill Middleton at 3:30 PM.

Members were urged to pay their dues and make sure their registration details were up to date. A couple members still reported not getting the Space Coast Newsletter. The newsletter guy will again be notified. Dues may be paid at any meeting or mailed to the BUG Club, PO Box 2456, Melbourne, FL 32901. Please make sure your current email is included with any mailed-in dues.

Thanks to a few latecomers, the arbitrarily determined quorum of 12 was exceeded and the

annual elections were held. Without opposition, the following officers were elected for 2020:  
Pres.: Bill Middleton (wearing Red Hat)  
VP: Rocco Donadio  
Treasurer: Soolay Kantz (Loretta is retiring to the Northland with our thanks for her years of looking after our finances.)  
Secretary: Bill Middleton (wearing other hat).  
Member at large: Chuck Boring.  
Member at large: Jim Townsend.

The ever-ongoing Windows 10 updates were reviewed. No one reported any major problems with Updates, we still await the next Feature Update in the spring with trepidation.

At a previous meeting, Chuck had told us about the new Microsoft Media Creation Tool. This free software facilitates re-installing the Windows 10 operating system on a computer or installing it on a clean computer. The president has been slowly attempting to resurrect his 10-year-old, fairly high level, laptop. After failing to install the operating system by the old method (download to a disk, etc.) He tried the media creation tool and the installation went quite quickly and painlessly. The tool is therefore highly recommended for anybody else wishing to install or reinstall Windows 10. We look forward to sharing the experiences of members upgrading from Windows 7 or 8 now that

official support has been terminated for Windows. The meeting was adjourned shortly after 3:30.

Respectfully submitted by Bill Middleton,  
Secretary. ☐

Hi,

Despite the presence of one of those pesky holidays on the calendar, our February meeting schedule will (probably) be "Normal". Viera will be on Monday, Feb. 3, The General Meeting at Eau Gallie will be on the 10th and Fee Ave. will be on the 17th. All meetings are at 2:00 PM as usual. Presidents' Day is on the 17th, but the Library said they would be open. I will check again in the second week to make sure they haven't caved in to White House pressure....

This month's DD will be the Chroming of Edge and the untitled Goose app.

See you all at a meeting or two.

Bill M

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## Interesting Internet Finds

*Steve Costello*

scostello (at) sefcug.com

*How To Reinstall Windows Without An Installation Disc*

<https://askleo.com/how-to-reinstall-windows-without-an-installation-disc/>

This question comes up all the time at user meetings. Leo Notenboom provides several excellent answers.

## Bug Club Treasurers Report

By Loretta Mills , Treasurer

Checking Account	July 1, 2019
Beginning Balance	\$ 1052.36
Ending Balance	\$ 1052.36
Saving Account Balance	\$ 1087 65
Combined Balances	\$ 2140.00

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Basically everything he says in the post boils down to being ready before the need comes up.

*How (And Why) To Use Google's Chromebook Simulator*

<https://www.howtogeek.com/439256/how-and-why-to-use-googles-chromebook-simulator/>

If you are like me and considering buying a Chromebook, you should check out this post.

*4 Things To Look For When Buying A USB Hub*

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/things-look-out-for-buying-usb-hub/>

There are still a lot of USB devices around, and less USB ports on computers these days. If you don't have enough ports on your laptop, or desktop, you will need a USB hub. This post tells you what you need to look for to make the best purchase. (Note: I have several hubs that I use often.)

*How To Optimize Your Google Drive Storage*

<https://www.online-tech-tips.com/google-softwaretips/how-to-optimize-your-google-drive-storage/>

If you use Google Drive storage (and if you have a Google account you should) it should be optimized. This post explains how to optimize the storage.

*Encrypt Public WiFi With Firefox Private Network For Secure Connection* ☐

# Calendar of Events

**Going North for the summer or coming back?  
Don't miss a single issue of your  
Space Coast PC Journal**

**If your email address will be different**

**Please give us the correct email**

**For your temporary location**

**\*\*\*Reminder\*\*\***

**We need your e-mail addresses!**

We'd like to keep in touch with you, especially if there is a last minute change in venue for the club meeting.

Please send e-mail addresses and changes to Linda Glassburn glassburn@earthlink.net

**February 15, 2020 - Learning Center  
Merritt Island Library Conference Room  
12 - 3:30 PM**

**February 20, 2020 - SCPCUG Meeting  
Merritt Island Library Auditorium  
2:00 PM**

**February 29, 2020 - Deadline for Journal Input**

**March 7, 2020 - Learning Center  
Merritt Island Library - Conference Room  
12 - 3:30 PM**

**March 19, 2020 - SCPCUG Meeting  
Merritt Island Library Auditorium  
2:00 PM**

**March 31, 2020 Deadline for Journal Input**



**Are you having problems with your hardware or software?  
Did you find the solution yourself?**

How about sharing that information with your fellow club members? Sit down for a few minutes open up that word processor and put your ideas to paper. Aside from the value to the members, you'll get your name in print!

**Don't worry about the details, we'll edit it for the best appearance and presentation.**

## Presentations Schedule

**February 20, 2020**

In the absence of a scheduled speaker  
this will be a  
Q and A  
session

**Bring Some Friends or Neighbors**

**Beginners or Advanced  
Bring Your Questions  
Get Technical Help  
Share Your Knowledge**

at Your SCPCUG

## Learning Center

**Open 1st, 3rd, 5th Saturdays,  
12 to 3:30 p.m.  
Merritt Island Library  
Conference Room**

Please restrict your visits to  
these times.

Bring your hardware or  
software problems,  
We'll do all we can to help.

If you bring a desktop computer  
please bring the keyboard, mouse,  
and power cord

Call Ron Ingraham, 321-777-2578,  
for more information.

## *The Space Coast PC Users Group Journal*

*is produced using*

***Adobe InDesign CS3***

*All SCPCUG club members are entitled to  
receive the electronic version of the Journal  
in pdf format. You'll need Adobe's widely  
available Acrobat Reader X.X (free) to view the  
eJournal.*

Contact Ron Ingraham  
ringram28@cfl,rr.com to get on the  
eJournal mailing list

***Space Coast PC Users  
Group is proud to be a  
Charter***



The Space Coast PC Users Group's  
Computer Doctors  
Make House Calls

**Free to**  
SCPCUG Members!

Dan Douglas, owner of  
DataDan Computer Services,  
will accept phone requests  
for computer assistance  
(321) 301-1075

After a phone call, a house call may be  
made within 5 miles of Merritt Island

Free Remote Support  
For those using Windows 10  
Quick Assist



The above member will help you with *a particular* computer glitch on your personal (not business) computer. In some cases, he may even make a house call. But, please do not expect him to install your computer nor teach you how to use it. If you have continuing problems or need additional help, please take a class, or check the ads in the *Journal* and hire a consultant, etc.



Computers 4 Kids

C4K Volunteers Need  
Donated

Computers, Keyboards, Mice  
etc

for

Building PC Systems

complete with software  
for

Needy School Children

Call

Ken Clark @ 223-7402

To arrange pickup

# Space Coast PC Users Group, Inc.

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

**Membership Dues**  
**\$25.00** [ ] Check [ ] Cash

Check No. \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ [ ] New [ ] Renewal

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to attend: a class for BEGINNERS? [ ]  
 an ADVANCED DOS class? [ ]  
 a WINDOWS class? [ ]  
 an ADVANCED WINDOWS class? [ ]

What other topics would you like covered in a class? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have expertise that you would like to share? Please describe.

Would you be willing to be listed in the Helpline of the *Journal*?  
 If so, what subject? \_\_\_\_\_ Calling hours: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to help the Club in the following areas?  
 Resource Center Staff \_\_\_\_\_ Journal Staff \_\_\_\_\_  
 Computer Doctor \_\_\_\_\_ Room Setup \_\_\_\_\_ Teach Class \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

What topics would you like to see for monthly programs?

What can the SCPCUG do to help you and others?

If you were told about the SCPCUG by a club member, write that member's name here \_\_\_\_\_

**Make check payable to: Space Coast PC Users Group**  
**Mail to: SCPCUG , 801 Del Rio Way, #304, Merritt Island, FL 32953**

**Are You CPU**

**Bewildered?**

DRAM
Windows
Modem

HTML

Join the

**Space Coast PC Users Group**

and learn the lingo!

**Membership benefits:**

The *SCPCUG Journal*  
 Computer Literacy Classes  
 (e.g. Windows 7-10)  
 Seminars and Workshops  
 Computer Doctors - computer  
 help - **FREE!**  
 Group Purchases, Raffles, and  
 Door Prizes!  
 Helplines - get help from the  
 experts

**Join Now!**

### ADVERTISING RATES

	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months
1 Year			
SIZE	~10%*	~15%*	~25%*
Full Page.....	\$90.00.....	\$243.00*.....	\$459.00*.....
Half Page..	45.00.....	123.00*.....	230.00*.....
1/4 Page.....	23.00.....	62.00*.....	117.00*.....
Business Card.....	35.00.....	59.00*.....	105.00*.....

\* = Discount from regular monthly rate. Discount applies to ads running in consecutive issues.

Payment **must** accompany order. Make checks payable to:

Dimensions (W x H) for ads are as follows:

- Full page: 7" x 9 1/4"
- Half page: 7" x 4 3/8" or 3 3/8" x 9 1/4"
- Quarter page: 3 3/8" x 4 3/8"
- Business card: 3 3/8" x 2"

Camera ready ad copy is due by the 28th of the month to ensure that the ad will appear in the next issue. Mail ad copy to the Editor at 1360 Mayflower Avenue, Melbourne, FL 32940-6723 Prices will be quoted for design work. Questions? Call (321)777-2578.

All advertisements are subject to the approval of the Editor.

**SPACE COAST PC USERS GROUP, INC.**  
**801 Del Rio Way, #304,**  
**Merritt Island, Fl , 32953**

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The Space Coast PC Users Group is an independent, not for profit, computer group open to anyone interested in computers. It is not affiliated with any business. Our purpose is to serve as an educational, scientific, and literary organization designed to enhance computer literacy.

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**Initial Membership \$25 . Annual Dues have Been Suspended**

**BENEFITS:** Members get the monthly *Journal*. In addition, *only* members can:

- copy from the Shareware library
- participate in meeting drawings
- attend special seminars/workshops
- talk to one of our computer ‘doctors’
- use the Helplines

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**NEXT MEETING**  
**February 20, 2020**

Merritt Island Library Auditorium 1185 North Courtenay Parkway, Merritt Island, FL  
To get to Auditorium after entering the front door, go to the second door on the left.

Guests are always welcome at the Space Coast PC Users Group meeting.