

# The Space Coast PC Journal

## Password Managers



By Dave Gerber, Windows 10 Forum, Sarasota Technology Users Club, Florida



July 2019

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A question about Password Managers came up during the Windows 10 Forum at the July STUG Meeting so I thought I'd share some info common to all of the best known and reputable programs ... Dave Gerber

Password managers are the most recommended tool by security experts to protect your online credentials from hackers. But many people are still hesitant to use them. Here's why password managers are safe, secure, and your best defense against password-hungry cyber criminals.

What is a password manager?

Think of it like a safe for your passwords. When you need something inside the safe, you unlock it. Password managers work the same for your online credentials.

You create a single, super-strong password, which acts like a key. Install the password manager app on your phone, computer, browser, and other devices. Your passwords are securely stored inside it. Anytime you need

to log in to an account, unlock your password manager and retrieve your login info.

With website vulnerabilities and security incidents on the rise, many people have grown to mistrust a tech tool to manage their passwords. What if the password manager gets hacked?

Reputable password managers take extra steps to lock down your info and keep it safe from cyber criminals.

A good password manager:

- Doesn't know your master password (so hackers can never steal it)
- Encrypts all your data
- Does not store any of your data on their servers
- Can generate strong, secure password

No privacy tool can completely guarantee your online safety. Even the most elaborate lock can be broken into. Yet we still lock our doors to our houses and cars.

The alternative to using a password manager is to rely on your own

Continued.....page 4

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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

Because we won first place in the APCUG Newsletter Contest last year we were not allowed to enter in this year's contest.

That being the case, Judy Taylour of APCUG asked if I would consider being a judge in this year's contest. I agreed and in late October I received the Newsletter Judging Sheet and the Judging Criteria-2019.

The Judging sheet was an Excel Spreadsheet with 19 User Groups listed. Five columns followed : User Group Info, Editorial Content, Layout/Presentation, Interesting Newsletter, and Logo.

The Judging Criteria expanded each of those to include 5,6,or 7 detailed items to consider. The scores I submitted on the Judging Sheet ranged between 23 and 36 points. The results will be announced later.

The groups ranged in size from 15-20 members to some larger than ours. Their newsletters ran from 10 to 30 pages in length. Some published monthly, others quarterly, some skipping the summer months altogether. Some had only input from their members, others relied mainly on PUSH articles from APCUG. You may have noticed tha we do some of each.

I was very glad to have the detailed guidance to assist me in rating

Ron Ingraham, Editor

The Space Coast PC Journal

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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!!!!

**IN THIS ISSUE**

**Feature Articles**

Password Managers.....1
LED Lights and Utilities.....4
Playlists - Use Them.....8
Virtual Machines.....10
Musing on Medicine.....16
Research Before Online.....18
Truth in Advertising.....19
Dentist Scams.....20
Firefox to Block.....22
Kim’s Take.....24
Tech and Your Eyes.....25
Birthday Forgotten?.....27
Let’s Be Safe.....28
Who Wants to Be Average.. .....29

**Regular Articles**

From the Editor.....2
Meeting Minutes.....5
From the Cashier’s Cage.....5
Dan’s Desk.....6
Webmaster Wanderings.....7
Brevard User Group.....30

**Notices**

PresentationsSchedule.....32
Calendar of Events.....32
Learning Center.....33
Computer Doctors .....34

**Presentation**

November 7, 2019

No Guest Speaker. Instead we will have a Round Table Q & A session with SCPCUG President, Mr. Dan Douglas (DataDan), moderating this informal computer meeting to address the audience’s computer issues/questions/problems.

**Bring Some Friends**

**Password Managers.....from page 1**

memory to remember all your credentials. This inevitably leads to recycling passwords or using variations — a bad habit that hackers love.

Password managers can be such an effective security tool because they help us improve bad habits. With a password manager installed on your computer and phone, it's a lot easier to take your logins everywhere so you can use unique, strong passwords on every account.

Password managers don't store all your credentials together in one place. Any data you store in a password manager — passwords, logins, security questions, and other sensitive info — is securely encrypted. Even if the password manager gets hacked, cyber criminals would not be able to see your logins.

The only way to access your data is with a single master password that only you know. You use this password to unlock the manager on your computer, phone, or other devices. Once it's unlocked, a password manager can fill in your logins to websites and apps.

Our memories sometimes fail us. Ever clicked a "forgot password?" link? It's very common to use variations of the same password to make them easier to remember. With a password manager, you don't need to remember any of your credentials. It can be installed on all your devices and will auto-fill your passwords for you. Once you get in the habit of using one, you'll no longer have to worry about forgetting your credentials.

Sure, it takes time to log all your credentials in a password manager. But you don't need to do it all at once. You can always start small and change just a few passwords at a time. Try installing a password manager and creating new, unique passwords for the websites you visit most frequently. Over time, as you log in to other sites, you can add others. □

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President's Column

**LED Lights and Utilities**

*Author: Andrew Cummins, President, ICON Users Group, MO*

**July 2019 issue, The ICON Newsletter**

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I can't tell you how exciting I think LED lights are. They're incredible in many ways compared to older incandescent bulbs. I recently took an LED bulb and

stomped on it. I wanted to open it up for a look. I then threw it down on concrete several times as hard as I could, and even took a hammer to it. Nothing, but some scuffing. I grabbed an axe that could take down a large tree. With one swing, the bulb flew some distance and I had merely dinged the aluminum base. I took another swing, and landed the axe up on the plastic dome. Success! The plastic dome split and popped half off of the aluminum base, exposing a dozen little LEDs.

Compare the resiliency of that LED bulb to your old bulbs, the ones that can shatter just from an accidental fall to the floor. Not all LED bulbs are that tough. Some are made with glass and can break rather easily. But, if you want an incredibly tough bulb, you can now get it.

Before the turn of the century, I had used a number of third-party utilities to keep my PC running. I'd have to restart my computer sometimes several times a day to overcome problems. Occasionally, I'd have to reinstall Windows to get it working. Windows now has become very resilient. I've never needed to reinstall Windows 10. I rarely need to restart it. And, I have almost no need for third-party utilities.

We recently had an ICON class that presented a number of utilities built into Windows to keep it running smoothly. You might be able to get by without ever going out of your way to use any of them. One such utility is CHKDSK to check your hard drive for errors. Windows 10 uses the NTFS file system, which is very reliable. Older versions of Windows used FAT, which is prone to errors. I've never needed to run CHKDSK on Windows 10.

Windows 10 has a utility to backup your hard drive. It's more than a good idea to backup your hard drive. The hardware won't last forever and Windows isn't perfect. And, you might even mess things up yourself, then a backup can save you. This you should backup before you need it. Keep a couple of backups, in case one fails. Enjoy the resilience. □





### From the Cashier's Cage

Financial Report for Month  
Ending October 31, 2019

#### CHECKING

Beginning Balance	October 1, 2019	719.47
Barbara Mead – September snacks		(10.00)
Snack fund – September donations		7.00
New Member		
Larry Landrigan		25.00
Ending Balance - Includes \$154.80 Snack Fund		
Balance		741.47

#### SAVINGS

Beginning Balance	October 1, 2019	404.55
Interest		.09
Ending Balance		404.64

**Total Account Balance** October 31, 2019 1146.11

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### Club Meeting Minutes October 17, 2019

President Dan Douglas opened the meeting at 2:00 p.m. Board Members present were Secretary Harry Pearson, Treasurer Irene Nelson, Webmaster Curt Potsic, Journal/Learning Center Ron Ingraham. Membership Chair Linda Glassburn. and Vice President Larry Bennett were absent. Attendance was 14

President- Dan said he did not have a report.

Journal/Learning Center –Ron said the journal had gone out. All present indicated they had received it.

Secretary – Harry said the Minutes for the September meeting are on page 5 of the November Journal there are no additions or corrections.

Treasurer - Irene gave the Financial Report.

Webmaster –Curt read his report

The Program was a presentation of the latest in Apple technology by Robert Hong of Best Buy.

The Drawing followed - the main prize of a \$10 Gift Card for Publix was won by Pete Haeghen. Other prizes were packets of popcorn..

3:45 p.m.— Adjournment

*I'm trying to drag the file to my desktop, but it won't go past the edge of the screen!*





## Dan's Desk

At a recent learning center meeting, the topic of what was better to get in my opinion – a desktop or a laptop? We agreed to include various other devices in the category of ‘laptop’ - tablets, chromebooks, netbooks, notebooks, etc. Let’s take a look at the various factors that should influence your decision.

**Performance** – This used to be the biggest differentiator between laptop versus desktop decisions, but this is not true any longer. The modern CPU (Central Processing Unit) chip designs have greatly reduced the heat generated and thereby eliminated one of the biggest problems with portable devices; the need to cool down the CPU effectively in a limited space within the case. The latest Intel and AMD CPUs are available in basically the same speeds and formats across both desktop and laptop motherboards. However, the smaller size of laptops does command a premium price over that of desktops due to higher manufacturing costs for the same performance, as a general rule. SSDs (Solid State Disks) are available for both and their performance will be similar in either PC.

**Storage Capacity** – This is the other major area that has dramatically changed. Desktops typically have had larger capacity hard drives for storage – a 3.5” width hard drive case is still the standard in desktops while laptops standardized on a 2.5” width form. Large capacity drives (1TB+) are cheaper and were only available in the desktop size until the last 2 years or so when SSDs became available at a competitive cost to traditional hard drives. When fitted into a desktop case, newer cases have drive bays sized for the 2.5” SSD case, while cheap brackets are available for fitting them into any 3.5” case opening.

The latest developments are to move away from both 2.5” and 3.5” sizes to a “stick” SSD. There are several sizes in use today; one of the most common is called m2.

These SSDs clip into a slot directly on the

motherboard, similar to how a memory stick would. This saves significant space that would otherwise be used by the storage drive in either a desktop or a laptop case.



Currently only traditional 3.5” drives have very large capacities available (4TB+), but as time goes by, SSDs will become cheaper and a much better alternative. Check out my journal article earlier this year where I compared the two for full details.

**Display** – This is an area where desktops can be a better value for the flexibility to connect to whatever size display you have. Whether it is a 4K UHD 75” panel or a 24” desk LCD panel, either will work on a desktop. Now, many laptops offer HDMI or other ports to connect to displays, but if the reason for the laptop is portability, then the size of the laptop screen is what you’ll be using most of the time, typically 13” to 17”. The larger the screen, the weight will also increase proportionally on a laptop.

**Graphics** – Without a doubt, desktops are better suited for gaming due to the flexibility to replace and upgrade the video card. Some laptops, such as those from Alienware, do offer several video card options to compete with the best desktop offerings, but these are limited and more costly. For non-gamers, the basic video in either laptops or desktops are sufficient 95% of the time.

In the December 2019 issue of Consumer Reports, there just happens to be an article about this very topic. They report that in a survey taken in 2009, about 72% of the households have a desktop versus the 52% reporting having a laptop. Jump forward to 2019 and the number are now reversed with more households reporting laptops than desktops in almost the same ratio – about 74% laptops and 52% desktops now. Check it out for their recommended models and other factors you may want to consider.

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 Protect Your Identity Online;
  - What is a GIF, and How Do You Use Them;
  - 7 Negative Effects of Social Media on People and Users;
  - How to Use SnapChat:
  - A Complete Beginner's Guide; The Best Tablets for Kids of All Ages;
  - Can You Upgrade from Windows 7 to Windows 10 for Free;
  - How to Use File History to Backup Files on Windows 10, etc.
- <https://apcug2.org/jerestips/>

#### 1 New Link

TechCrunch – Startup and Technology News. Categories include Startups, Apps, Gadgets, Videos, Audio, etc. <https://techcrunch.com/>  
[General Information Links page \(http://www.scpcug.com/infolink.html\)](http://www.scpcug.com/infolink.html) - [Miscellaneous Links](#)

TechCrunch is an American online publisher focusing on the tech industry. The company specifically reports on the business related to tech, technology news, analysis of emerging trends in tech, and profiling of new tech businesses and products. TechCrunch was launched June 10, 2005. Has articles such as: The Apple TV app arrives on Roku, ahead of Apple TV+ streaming service launch; Google overhauls Nest Aware cloud recording plan (for Nest Mini formerly know as Google Home Mini); Google's Pixel 4 ships October 24, starting at \$799, etc.

## Misc Items

### Windows 10 November Update

The next version of Windows 10 (19H2) is coming in November. The majority of new features are moved to the release of 20H1 next Spring, so the 19H2 update will be on optimizations, refinements, and some under the hood changes. Hopefully this will help with stability and give performance enhancements. 19H2 will be different from previous versions as Microsoft plans to release it in the form of a cumulative update that installs on top of 19H1. This change should allow for a smaller download and faster install. You can read much more about the Win 10 November Update in the informative article "[What to expect from Windows 10 November 2019 Update?](#)" by Shawn Abraham on the WindowsChimp website at <https://www.windowschimp.com/windows-10-november-2019-update-expectations/>. In the article Shawn takes you through a number of Win 10 19H2 features: Calendar event creation from Taskbar, Improved notification management, Online search in File Explorer, Other voice assistants on the Lock Screen, Performance Enhancements, Start Menu Tweaks, Narrator Improvements, and Enterprise Additions.

### Electric Vehicles

Have you wondered if your next car should be an electric vehicle as many of the auto makers seem to be jumping onboard to produce an electric vehicle. I ran across an excellent article on Terry White's Blog titled "[Is it finally time to get an electric vehicle? Answer these 5 questions to see](#)" at <https://terrywhite.com/is-it-finally-time-to-get-an-electric-vehicle/>. Terry did his research and in the summer of 2017 ordered a Tesla. This informative article details his experiences and told me a lot I did not know about electric vehicles. The 5 questions Terry puts forth with his explanation of each gives one a good basis for deciding based on your life style if you should buy an electric vehicle. The 5 questions are: What's your daily commute look like?, Can you afford it?, What about the cost to charge it?, What if you can't charge at home or have a charger installed?, Do you have to pay to maintain the car/ battery? In addition to answering the above questions Terry discusses a number of EV myths such as range anxiety, enviromental concerns, slow acceleration, cold climate use, being stranded, etc.

Continued.....page 8

Webmaster Wanderings.....from page 7

### **Tesla's Smart Summon**

Last month we had a Guest Speaker who talked about Artificial intelligence (AI). Self-driving cars were mentioned. To expand on the AI movement, Tesla has released a semi-autonomous feature called "Smart Summon." Tesla owners can now buy an over-the-air software update for \$6000. Smart Summon allows Tesla owners using a smartphone to command their Tesla to turn on, back out of a parking spot, and drive to their location if its within 200 ft. So far reviews have been mixed. Consumer Reports said it was glitchy and at times worked intermittently. Tesla owners had some wins and some crashes into foliage. It appears that Smart Summon still has to be operated in a controlled low-speed environment. Consumer Reports is calling it "a kind of science experiment."

### **New Alexa Features**

Amazon announced 12 new features for the Alexa digital assistant at its Sep 25, 2019 Amazon Devices & Services Event. Here are a few of them:

'Alexa, tell me what you heard' & 'Why did you do that?' (Alexa will explain why she performed an action)

Auto Delete voice recordings every 3 or 18 months

(Users can also tell Alexa to "Delete what I just said" or "Delete everything I've said today")

Neural Text to Speech (Improves Alexa speech patterns to be more "emotive and expressive")

Celebrity voices (Rolling out later this year)

Frustration Detection (Alexa senses user frustration when she gives a wrong response & apologizes with an attempt to clarify & recover)

Food Network features (Helps users cook meals via a Food Network collaboration)

Smart Screen SDK 2.0 (Allows richer interaction with displays for follow up questions with screen interactions)

For a complete list of all new features with additional details see the article "[12 new Alexa features to up your Amazon Echo game](https://www.cnet.com/how-to/new-alexa-features-to-up-your-amazon-echo-game/)" at <https://www.cnet.com/how-to/new-alexa-features-to-up-your-amazon-echo-game/>. □

## **Playlists – Use them to enjoy your music**

*Author: Phil Sorrentino, Secretary & APCUG*

**August 2019 issue, The Journal  
The Computer Club, FL**

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A Playlist is a list of files that can be played back on a media player. If the files are pictures and the media player is a picture viewer, you have a slideshow. If the files are audio files and the media player is a music player, you get music played for as long as the list continues. If the files are video files and the media viewer is a video viewer, you may get an afternoon at the movies. Typically with a play list, the files can be played back sequentially for an orderly experience, or in a shuffled order for a little more excitement.

Audio playlists are a great way of enjoying your digital music. Each tune to be enjoyed must be in one of the music file formats that are popular, .mp3, .wma, .wav, etc. .mp3 is probably the most popular. .mp3 is a lossy compressed format where the resultant files are about 1 tenth the size of the original file. But in the process of compressing the file some of the quality is lost. The quality that is lost is in the higher frequencies, where the human ear begins to attenuate as we age, so many of us older humans may not really be missing that much. (.wav files are lossless, uncompressed files, so if you want all of the quality, you should probably save your music in this file format when you get them; after all, nowadays storage is cheap.) By the way, Windows comes with a great application that you can use to get all of your music from your CDs - it's called Windows Media Player (WMP) and allows you to "rip" your music files from your CDs (which is absolutely legal). It defaults to creating .wma files, so make sure you change this



(in the Options) to .mp3 if you want .mp3 files. There is also an adjustment for the audio quality; the higher the number the better the quality, but the larger the file. So, once you have all of your music stored in a music database, you can start to create the playlists that will use the music files. WMP can also help you in this task. I've used WMP to create many playlists, some of which are called Love Songs, Assorted Favorites, Fun Songs, Songs from an Earlier Period, Folk Songs, Country Songs, etc.

So technically, a playlist is a file with a playlist file type. Many playlist file types have been defined such as .zpl used by the Zune Media Player (probably not many of those around), .wpl defined by Microsoft and used in WMP, .m3u originally created by WinAmp and used in the very popular free WinAmp music player, .vlc, a format used by the VLC Media Player which has the same format as .m3u except for the .vlc designation, .pls a format similar to the Windows .ini file type, and others. Currently, .m3u seems to be the most widely used file type. In my opinion, to keep your playlists most versatile, I would use the .m3u file type; but if you were going to only use WMP then .wpl would be a good choice. (WMP is setup by default to create the .wpl file type. If you want WMP to create a .m3u file type, you can change this after you have put together a list of tunes for a playlist. Right after you click "save list" you will have an opportunity to change the file type to .m3u.) In addition to being versatile, .m3u files can be easily modified, should you want to take on this tedious job. They are just text files with a simple format and can be opened with the "Notepad" word processor. To do this, just go into Windows Explorer and right click the playlist and then choose "Open with..." and choose Notepad. Each line in the file defines the location of a tune to be played, and comments can be added to the file because text lines that start with "#" are ignored. Any helpful information can be put in the comment line. Keep in mind, the tune file name used in the playlist must be exactly the same (character for character) as the tune file name in the tune database.

Here are a few lines from a .m3u playlist:

```
# John Denver
\MP3Music\PopMusic\John Denver - Annie's
Song.mp3
# Alabama in Country Folder
\MP3Music\Country\Alabama – Give Me One
More Shot.mp3
```

The first line starts with "#", so this is just a comment line and essentially nothing will be done. The second line defines the location of a tune. In this example, the tune is Annie's Song and it is by John Denver. (When you "rip" a song from a CD you have choices as to how the tune file will be named. I have chosen to title all of the tunes in my Music database as "Artist" – "Tune Title". This allows me to see all of the tunes from a particular artist in alphabetical order when I look at the Music folders using Windows Explorer.) When the music player gets to this line it will retrieve the file "John Denver – Annie's Song. mp3" from the folder "PopMusic" and start to play (process) it. Note that the "PopMusic" folder is in the MP3Music folder which is the name of the folder that holds all of my tunes. "MP3Music" also holds folders for many other music genres, such as "Country", "R&R", "PreR&R", "BigBands", "Holiday", "Jazz", "Classical"; you get the idea. So this line is like a road map to where the tune can be found. The third line starts with "#" so, again, it's a comment and nothing will happen. But the fourth line is another tune to be selected. This tune is in the "Country" folder which is also in the MP3Music folder. So when these four lines in a playlist are encountered, first "Annie's Song" will be played and after that is finished, "Give Me One More Shot" will be played. Fortunately, all the hard work of creating a playlist is done for you by the App that you are using to create and play your playlists. WMP is especially easy to use because gathering your tunes for a playlist can be done graphically by just dragging and dropping your selections from the tune (music) database into a playlist area, and finally clicking "save list", and then you are done. Now, all you have to do is start the play list and sit back and enjoy the music. □

# Virtual Machines

*Author: Dick Maybach, Member, Brookdale Computer User Group, NJ*

**August 2019 issue, BCUG Bytes**

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A virtual machine (VM) is a program on your PC (called a host in virtual-machine speak) that creates a box that appears to be a PC to an operating system (called a guest in virtual-machine speak) that resides in it. In Figure 1, the outer gray box is your PC hardware and software. The blue box within it is the program (called a hypervisor) that creates the software boxes that hold the guests, each shown as a light gray rectangle. Each guest has its own virtual hardware (in yellow) with which it communicates just as though it were a PC. Each guest also needs its own operating system (in orange) and applications (in green).

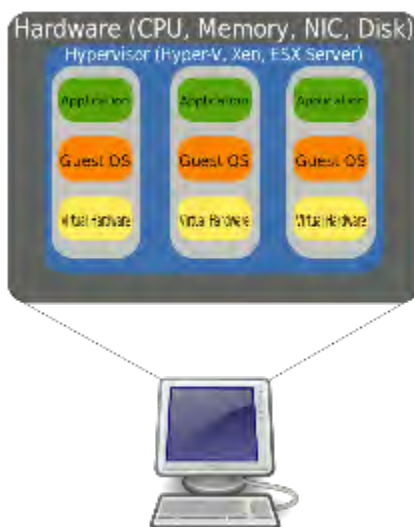


Figure 1. Virtual Machine Organization.

From the host's view each guest is just an application, and each can operate independent of other applications on the PC, which means you can have two or more operating systems live at the same time. Moreover, you can copy and paste data and transfer files between them at any time.

It's not shown in Figure 1, but the hypervisor has an interface to configure and control the VMs;

Figure 2 shows an example, in this case VirtualBox. Note that there are five different VMs here, Windows 7, FreeDOS, Tails, Ubuntu 18.04, and Ubuntu 18.10, and all are powered off. The right portion of the screen summarizes the characteristics of the Windows 7 guest.

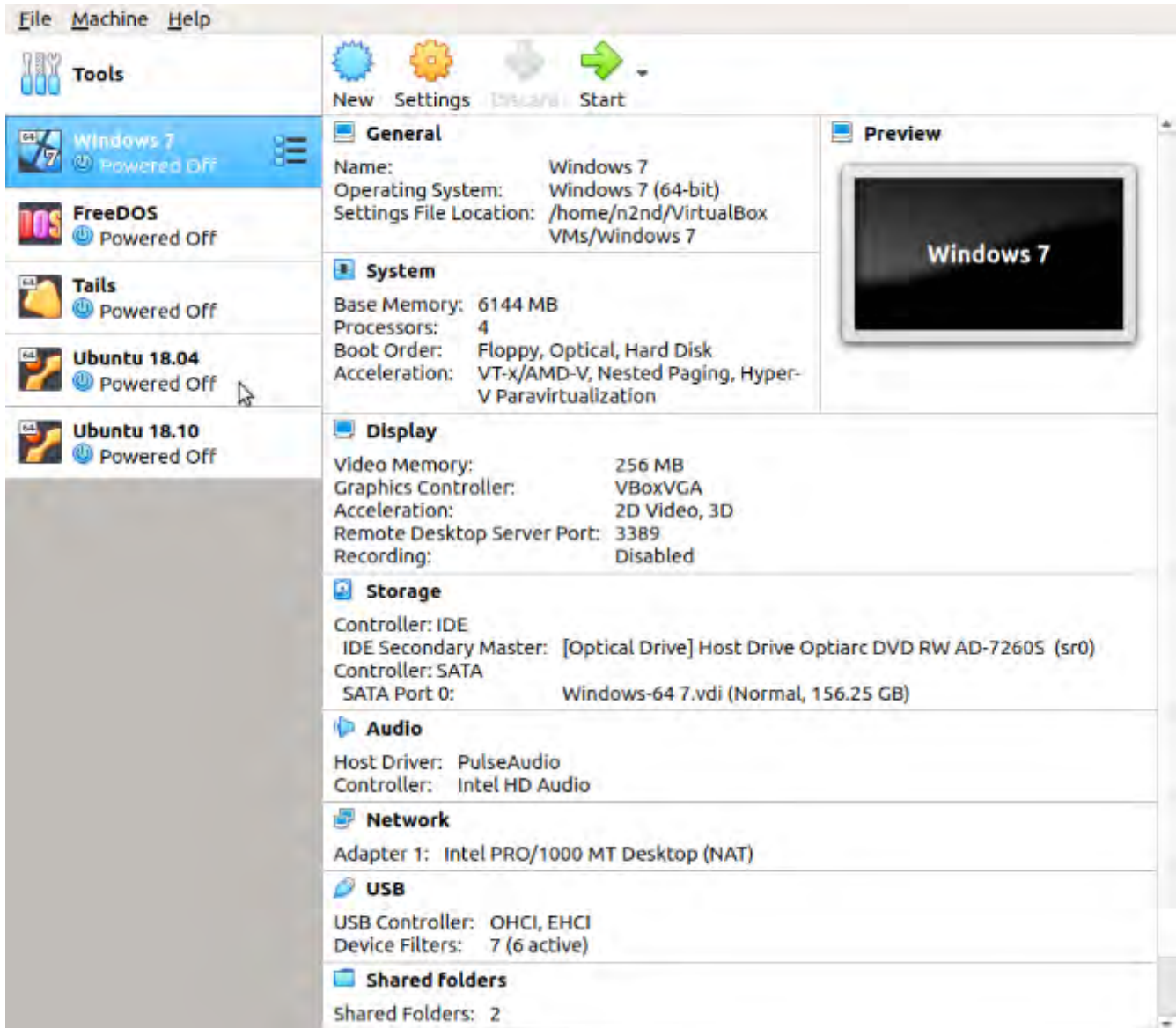


Figure 2. VirtualBox Administration Panel.

Continued.....page 12

## Virtual MACHines.....from page 11

Figure 3 shows Windows 7, running as a guest under VirtualBox.

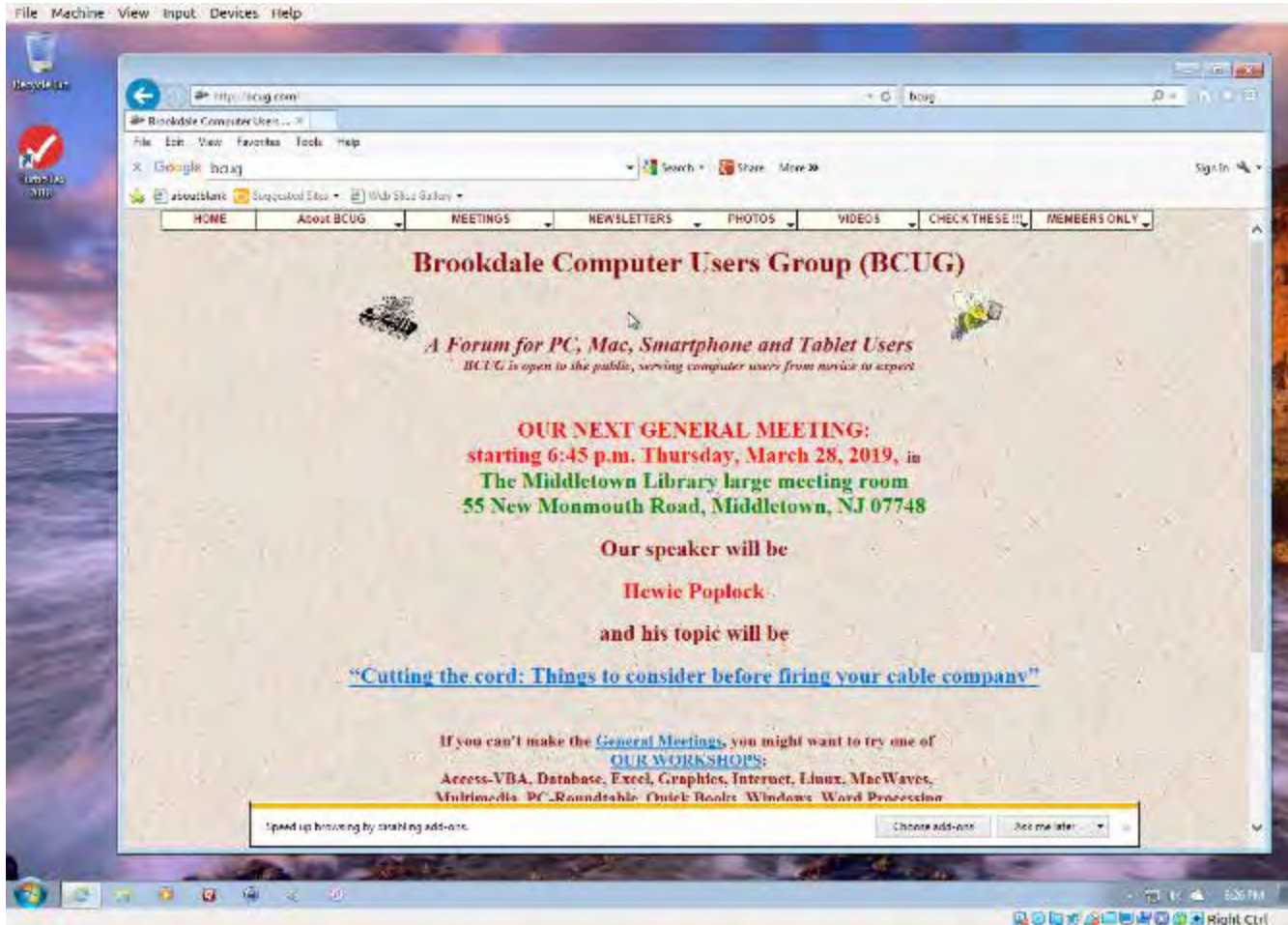


Figure 3. Windows 7 under VirtualBox.

As with most other applications, control follows the cursor. Place the cursor within the VM window and mouse clicks and keystrokes are sent to the VM. Move the cursor outside the VM window, and they affect something else.

Why bother with this? As you probably suspect, adding a software layer between the guest OS and the PC slows down the guest and complicates the host. Here are some possible uses.

- Run a different OS – my host runs on Linux, but there are a few applications available only on Windows, such as TurboTax and the software needed to update my GPS. If your host is Windows, putting Linux on a VM is far superior to running it from a live USB.
- Trial OS upgrades – I prefer to try a new version before I commit to it on the host,

as often some applications aren't compatible. In the case of Windows, free trial versions are often available before a new version is introduced, and a VM lets you play with these without risk.

- Test alternate configurations of your host OS – making such experiments on a VM can save you from serious, “It seemed like a good idea at the time,” calamities. This is more difficult
- with a commercial OS but look for ways around this. I've made a duplicate installation of Windows on a VM, and while it complained, it did run long enough for me to complete my tests.
- Trial applications – testing applications on a VM means you don't have to uninstall them when they don't work out. This is made easier with the VM snapshot feature. Before you install, create a snapshot (equivalent to cloning the hard disk). You can then revert to the snapshot if you decide to discard the application.
- Test live USBs or DVDs – much software is available on live media. You download an ISO file, burn it onto a medium, and boot your PC from it. With a VM, you just designate the file as being installed on the guest's virtual DVD drive, which now boots from the virtual DVD instead of its virtual hard disk. As a result, you don't have to burn the file to a medium.

Before I used VMs, I relied on dual booting for the similar tasks. Here, the alternate OS has direct access to the PC, which means it's substantially faster than when running as a VM guest. However, this requires repartitioning the host's hard drive, where an error can be catastrophic, and moving data between the two hosts is awkward.

There are many VM systems available, with the four most popular being VMWare (for Windows, OS X, and Linux), VirtualBox (for Windows, OS X, and Linux) Parallels Desktop (for OS X) and QEMU/KVM (for Linux). I've used VirtualBox for several years and have recently begun experimenting with QEMU/KVM, so everything I say about the other two is hearsay. From what I've read, it appears that VirtualBox is the easiest to configure and use, plus it's free for home users. VMWare, the oldest of the four, is possibly faster than VirtualBox, but configuring it requires some experience, and it's a commercial product. A free version is available, which is missing only a few unimportant features. QEMU/KVM is not for the faint-hearted, as it was designed by Red Hat for use in professionally staffed server farms. Also, although it appears to be quite fast it runs only on Linux. Making configuration changes such as, increasing the screen resolution and enabling host/guest file sharing involves working at the command line and being familiar with the Linux file organization and permissions. However, once set up, it's as easy to use as VirtualBox. GNOME Boxes (which I haven't used) allows Linux users to use KVM with a simple set-up process and user interface, although with more limited control of the virtual environment.

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

**Virtual Machines.....from page 13**

Figure 4 shows the QEMU configuration panel, which has essentially the same information as that of VirtualBox. After a VM has been installed, the day-by-day configuration is done from here.

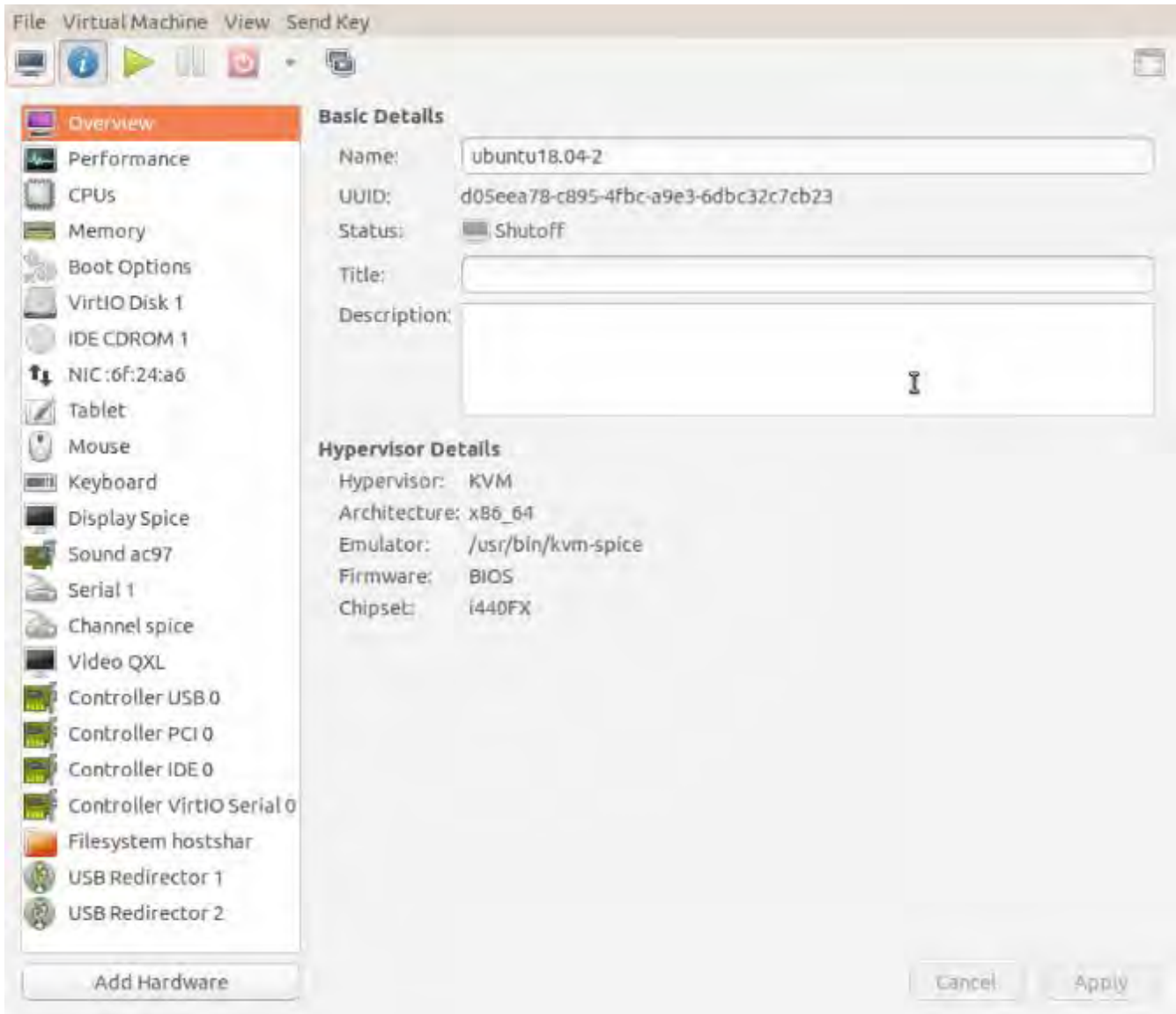


Figure 4. QEMU/KVM Configuration Panel.

A VM operating under QEMU/KVM appears in Figure 5, also essentially the same as it would appear under VirtualBox.



Figure 5. QEMU/KVM in Operation.

Running VMs requires a host with adequate resources. It needs four Gbytes RAM (absolute minimum, eight is preferable) and 12 free Gbytes disk space for each guest (again more is better). VM features on CPU are desirable (VT-x on Intel and AMD-V on AMD processors). Check your VM documentation, as these features may be disabled in your BIOS.

Guest speed will be lower than those of a host, but for most applications this isn't important. Of course, you should run any resource-intensive tasks on your host. Graphics in particular will be slower and probably have fewer features than your host hardware. Resources used by a guest are no longer available to the host. For example, if your host has eight Gbytes of RAM and you allocate four to a guest, the host now can use only four.

A VM is completely defined by its file, which is essentially an image of its virtual hard disk. If you back up this file, you've backed up the VM. This isn't an unmixed blessing, as any time you boot the VM there will be changes in the file, which typically occupies at least several Gbytes of disk space. As a result, your backups will take longer and occupy more space.

Guests are reasonably well isolated from the host, except for any shared directories, making you fairly secure against the common risks, such as operator error and software bugs. However, some malware attacks can get through to the host, which means a VM is not a good vehicle for investigating malware.

Although VMs are valuable, they do introduce complexity and add risk. I used VirtualBox for several years but noticed beginning with Ubuntu version

Continued.....page 16

## Virtual Machines.....from page 15

18.04 that after a few minutes Ubuntu guests would drastically slow, to the point of being unusable. This can be remedied by turning off VirtualBox's 3D display acceleration, which is enabled by default. The developers have acknowledged the problem but say they don't have the resources to correct it. After the last VirtualBox update, it refused to run my Ubuntu 16.04 guest at all, which is why I ventured into QEMU/KVM land, and fortunately the trip was successful. Using VMWare might also have solved the problem, but since my host is Linux, QEMU/KVM was a better approach.

Despite their disadvantages, VMs are a valuable resource for me, one I use almost every day. They allow me to run software experiments more easily and with less risk than do their alternatives. Without them, many of my articles would have been just cut-and-paste cribs from other folk's work. □

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## Musings on Medicine and Computers

*Author: Maryellen Amato, M.D., Member, ICON Users Group, MO*

April 2019 issue, The ICON Newsletter

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When Mary Phillips asked if I would be willing to write an article for the ICON newsletter, I didn't want to say no, even though I was a newbie. After all, Mary had done so much for me. When I attended the Mercy Seniors' Computer Course last year, she sat next to me, guiding me on my journey into Windows 10 which I had never before used. She was forever patient and encouraging.

Mary also introduced me to the ICON meetings at our local libraries, and I soon joined ICON and tried to attend as many of the meetings as I could. Month after month I would observe Mary arriving early and staying late, lugging equipment and paperwork in and out of these meetings, using her time and skills as a top-notch teacher to lead and guide our group into new worlds of technology. From Mary as well as from our guest speakers, I learned about things ranging from genealogy to drones.

I did not want to admit to anyone that I had worked with computers for many years in a limited setting.

You see, the computers that I used at the hospitals or out-patient facilities where I worked had already been purchased, set up, turned on, and preloaded with the programs and apps that we needed to use. In addition, there was a group of savvy computer information technologists at our beck and call if there was ever a question or problem.

So what can I, someone with somewhat "limited" computer experience, discuss in an article?

That got me thinking. Since I am trying to cultivate an attitude of gratitude, I thought I would share my gratitude for computers in Medicine, which have changed all of our lives, mostly for the better.

When I started medical school in 1977 (Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio), we had a refrigerated room full of large bulky computers tucked away somewhere, but we never worked with them. If I wanted to better understand something or look something up – in medical school or in my early years of medical practice – I had to make a mad dash to the medical library to search for a book that might have the information I



might need. (...and I would be praying that book was not checked out!) As I progressed in my studies and years of experience as a diagnostic radiologist, my mad dashes became less frequent, but occasionally a disease we didn't see too often or a pressing question caused me to hit the books. This was especially difficult when I was on call in the middle of the night, the only physician available, and was even worse if the medical library was locked. It was also very time consuming and took me away from my patients.

Voila! The biggest benefit of having a laptop or an iPhone connected to the internet was that medical information was now at my fingertips. The mad dashes to the library became things of the past.

In addition, when I was on call at night, for most of my career, I would have to physically be present at the hospital or drive in from home at 3 a.m. or whatever ungodly time I was called. Now I could sit in front of a computer screen at my home and call up the x-ray images I needed to read. I did not even have to get out of my pajamas or bunny slippers to make the harrowing drive through fog, ice, and snow.

Computers also translated into great benefits in a number of other helpful ways. When I started my career, patient requisitions for imaging tests were written out by hand and had to make it down to the X-ray department. Imagine the frustration we felt when we got a requisition for a test "to be done TODAY" at 6 p.m., particularly noting the test was ordered at 1 p.m. Computers did away with these delays.

Our reports of completed tests also got out sooner. For many years, after interpreting an x-ray, I dictated my findings into a machine that was transcribed by a pool of transcriptionists. It sometimes took a couple of days for the report to be typed. Toward the latter part of my career, this time was chopped since we were now typing our own reports or using voice dictation algorithms. Signing a completed report was also much easier. Back in the day when each report was typed using carbon copies, if we altered a single word on the page (such as changing the word left to right, a critical change), the entire report had to be retyped for just that one word and sent back to the typing pool. That might cause a delay of an additional few days. Now we could just pull up the reports on our computer monitors, make changes ourselves, push the button, and send the report on its way immediately.

The way that x-rays were taken and stored also evolved during my career due to computer technology. We went from using film (like film in your old camera, only bigger and heavier film) to using digital images that were quicker to acquire and easier to store and retrieve.

With our old-fashioned x-ray film, we had to take time to put the films up on lightboxes and take time to sort through dozens of old films in heavy folders to search for comparison views so we could assess for new or interval changes. Sometimes those old films were even stored in the bowels of the hospital and we had to wait hours to get them, delaying our final interpretation. Even worse, sometimes the old films were lost!

I had a ruler, a magnifying glass, and a "hot light" sitting next to me on my desk. My "hot light" was bolted down, but sometimes someone would "borrow" my ruler or magnifying glass and I would become irate. These tools are no longer needed since computers come with their own measuring and magnifying tools, and the background and intensity of images can be "dialed" up or down. This also slashed the need for radiologic technologists to re-take films if an image was over or underexposed. This translated into less radiation for the patient as well as great time savings.

Many computerized imaging studies which we use commonly today were also either not in existence or only being dreamt of in the 1970s. This includes the CT scanner, invented by British engineer Godfrey Hounsfield (a Nobel Prize winner that I had the privilege of meeting). The "C" in CT stands for computerized – and CT is shorthand for computerized tomography. This allows for making x-ray slices of body parts, improving our

**Continued.....page 18**

### **Musings on medicine.....from page 17**

diagnostic capabilities. Without going into all the computer detail and physics involved, let me simply say that this was revolutionary. Diagnoses are now made more quickly, more accurately, and often with less pain for the patient because of CT and computers.

When I started my radiology residency in 1981 at Washington University, it took an entire hour to do a CT scan on a patient's chest. This meant that the patient had to hold their breath multiple times and the images were more likely to be degraded by motion artifact. In addition, only a limited number of patients could be scanned in a day and there was a waiting list so we scanned into the night hours. Today, it only takes a matter of seconds or less to scan someone's chest (or other body part), so it can be done on a single breath-hold. It actually takes longer to get the patient on and off the scanning table than it does to do the scan itself! This means quicker diagnoses and increased patient "throughput."

Virtually all of our current imaging modalities are dependent on computers, ranging from digital mammography to MRI (magnetic resonance imaging).

I have just touched the tip of the iceberg here, but I think you get the idea. Computers in Medicine have been extraordinary and they are here to stay, unless they are replaced by another technology that is currently in someone's imagination.   □

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#### President's Message

## **Research Before Online Shopping**

*Richard Durand, President, Wisconsin All-computer Users Club, WI*

**June 2019 issue, WAUCtalk**

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As the old saying goes, "When the going gets tough, the tough go shopping." Here in the 21st Century, we don't have to be as tough to be shopping because now a lot of shopping can be done online. In terms of placing orders, methods of payment, shipping, etc., I really don't have anything to contribute. But the browsing and research necessary to make a selection has been radically transformed and enhanced in a lot of unexpected ways.

Here are a few. One of the nice things about going to an old-time store was to be able to pick up and inspect an item. That was a plus for in-person shopping, though maybe not enough if the item was sealed and/or shrink wrapped. Something I discovered that I found to be much, much more useful and better was to do a search on a potential selection in the YouTube search box, and add this word, "unboxing." Then, click on one of the search results and watch a video on the selection. Oftentimes, the video will be done by a store salesman with not only product knowledge but practiced communication skills that he will use to describe things understandably. He'll hold up the contents one by one and identify them for you. It just might help.

Another useful online research technique is to look at the reviews for an item on Amazon. From what I've seen, Amazon allows just about anyone, not just the pros, but actual users and customers, to compose and upload a review of just about any item posted. The reviewer has to give a rating from one to five stars and then has space for further explanations. Many leave only very terse comments, if any, but there are a surprising number who offer long stories and multiple reasons for their ratings. These authors seem to have acquired a purpose in life of informing the rest of the world about their experiences with a product or a company's customer service.

Personally, I've got better things to do, but I'll gladly take advantage of the reviews of others.

And the one final method of research, which is blatantly obvious, but still worth mentioning, is to just enter a product name or even just a general category, such as "scanner" or "RAM," into the box of a browser search engine, such as good old Google, and add this word, "reviews." There might be lots and lots of search results, some of which might prove to be very useful. One I like to see is something along the lines of "What to look for in a ? (whatever)." Or there might be a result along the lines of "Top ten headsets, or widgets, or whatever." Even if there is no worthwhile product to select, such searches might reveal some very important information, such as what critical attributes to look for, what price range to expect, and what local establishments have this type of product available.

For me, positive or negative reports are less important than the information provided. Something that's praised to the skies might not be what I'm looking for, and something else that's condemned in a review might be just what I need. Numerical ratings are just opinions, at best, starting points, and are secondary. The internet empowers one to make up one's own mind about shopping and about a lot of other things, so one might as well use one's own mind. And if enough of us do our online shopping with these methods, I am convinced that the vendors will be motivated to improve in price, quality, and customer service. For them, it's getting more and more competitive. And for us, all of this can be done from one's own computer, tablet or smartphone.

Happy shopping! ☐

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President's Column

## Truth in Advertising

*Author: Andrew Cummins, President, ICON Users Group, MO*

**August 2019 issue, The ICON Newsletter**

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I saw in a store PCs being sold which boasted of incredible amounts of system memory for their price, such as 24GB. Looking at the smaller print, that 24GB is 8GB of RAM plus 16GB of "Optane memory." Optane memory is just a small SSD to cache a large HDD. It gives the PC the performance similar to an SSD for not much more than the cost of a cheap HDD. Don't be confused by my jargon, and don't be fooled into thinking Optane is system memory, or RAM. At least Optane memory does what it does well and so shouldn't be avoided.

I'm really excited about LED lights, but if you go out to buy high-powered LED lights, they often are advertised with false wattages, such as 600 watts for something that actually uses 60 watts. Sometimes you can't even find the actual wattage used on the packaging. They want you to think you're getting more light for your money than you're actually getting. At least the power savings of LED lighting versus older technology is incredible, regardless of advertised power.

If you've ever checked with Windows to see how large your PC hard drive is, you've always been presented with a smaller number than the advertised capacity for your hard drive. Hard drive capacities are advertised with redefined terms to make them appear larger. At least it's not a large difference between advertised and actual capacity.

**Continued.....page 20**

## Truth in Advertising.....from page 19

When you look into it, there's an incredible amount of misleading, if not false, advertising. It's not just the tech industry. Go buy a flowerpot and see if it's really the gallon capacity advertised. It's almost certainly smaller. At least pots are often sold by inches in diameter, a less abused measure of pot size.

If you want help finding something to buy, ask at your tech group meeting. I have people often asking more for buying advice. You can read user reviews online for advice. Make your decision on themes you find in comments, not on any one person's review. You can ask the salespeople for advice. Remember, salespeople are trying to sell you something, even if they don't have what's best for you. At least these days, technology is so advanced that you're still getting a great product in spite of dubious advertising. □



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## \$12.5 Billion Annual Price Tag for Dentist Scams

*Author : Keith at Scambusters.org*

Visiting the dentist can be a painful experience — but how much worse would you feel if you discovered you were also being ripped off?

When you visit the dentist, it's a lot like taking your car into a shop for repairs or service — you take whatever you're told by the “expert” on face value.

We all know that, in both cases, the final bill is rarely if ever less than we expected. More often, it threatens to break the bank!

And just as with auto mechanics, there's also a bad breed in the dentistry profession — people who perform unnecessary procedures, sometimes even causing damage to our teeth along the way.

Last time we wrote about dental fraud, back in 2015 (see [5 Biggest Dental Fraud Scams](#)), we told of a researcher with healthy teeth who visited 28 different dentists and got cost estimates ranging between \$460 and \$30,000! Things don't seem to have changed much since then. In some respects, they've worsened. One reason cited by dental fraud experts is the drive by younger dentists to pay off their [student loans](#).

While that may evoke a tad of sympathy, enough to fill a tooth perhaps, there's no way this is acceptable. It's unprofessional, it's illegal, and it breaks the professional code of dentistry.

Sometimes, dental offices have been known to lure patients into a fraud conspiracy where the patient agrees to

sign off on more work than was actually done in return for skipping copays.

All in all, the National Healthcare Anti-Fraud Association estimates that dentists are cheating customers and insurance companies out of about \$12.5 billion every year.

### More Scams

In addition to the five scams we reported last time — unnecessary work, overbilling, incomplete procedures, selling worthless [dental plans](#), and being unlicensed — here are four more dental scams currently in operation:

1. **Causing damage to teeth and gums in one procedure that later requires further work later.** This may be done accidentally or intentionally, but the result is the same: you end up paying more than necessary.
2. **Replacing silver fillings.** This is a controversial subject. Silver-looking “amalgam” fillings contain tiny amounts of mercury as well as other metals, and the dentist might claim the mercury, which is poisonous at certain levels, is leaking.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends replacing of amalgam only if the wearer is allergic to any of the metals.

If you’re worried about mercury in your fillings, see this FDA guidance: [About Dental Amalgam Fillings](#).

3. **Upselling.** In this case, the dentist outlines the procedure and materials he plans to use and then offers some sort of additional work which he/she says will considerably enhance the result.

This is not strictly illegal, since the dentist is simply offering options, but you may feel under pressure to accept his “recommendation.”

A common trick is to tell patients their teeth need “deep cleaning,” which requires several visits to the hygienist. Unless you haven’t visited the office for a considerable time, deep cleaning is probably unnecessary.

Some dentists have been accused of bullying patients into accepting more expensive procedures.

4. **Unbundling.** This trick is aimed at insurers rather than customers. Complex procedures are normally billed as a one-cost complete package. However, in this case, the unscrupulous dentist breaks the whole process down into its individual components and bills separately for each of them — which usually adds up to considerably more than the single, bundled cost.

The process is regarded as illegal by the American Dental Association.

### What To Do

The scale of the losses to fraud suggests that dental malpractice and cheating happens quite often.

The most important step is to check out the reputation of your dentist. Even if you’ve been seeing them for quite a

**Continued.....page 22**

while and they're really nice folk, that doesn't mean you're not being ripped off.

See what other people are saying about your favorite dentist as well as any new provider you're considering using. If you have [dental insurance](#), your insurer may provide a list of approved and recommended dentists. Or you can use the search service offered by the [American Dental Association](#).

You should also check that your dentist and their staff are fully licensed and insured for the services provided. You can check this with your state's Board of Dentistry.

For more information about dental fraud, [check this useful site](#) operated by the corporate website (i.e., not a non-profit site) from the Dental Health Alliance.

If you're unsure about a diagnosis or whether you need the treatment that is being recommended, get a second opinion. You're free to go to any other dentist (or one within your insurer's approved list).

If you still feel uneasy, you can talk to your insurer or, if you don't have insurance, file a complaint with your state's Dental Board.

### **Alert of the Week**

You send an email to a friend who replies that they're out of town at the moment and can you do them a favor? They want you to buy a gift card for a relative and will repay you when they return.

Seems reasonable? But if you buy it, the "friend" will want you to send them the card security number. They'll immediately spend the money, and you'll never hear from them again.☐

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## **Firefox to Block Infuriating Notification Requests Firefox to Block Infuriating Notification Requests**

*by John Lister on November, 6 2019*



Mozilla is reducing the likelihood Firefox **users** will be bothered by website notification requests. It will make browsing a lot less frustrating, but will upset some website owners.

## What are Website Notifications?

Notifications in web browsers work in a similar way to notifications from **apps** on a mobile phone or tablet. As an example, a user of a streaming video site might agree to **accept** browser notifications. They could then get notifications whenever the site adds a new episode of a TV series they've previously watched on the site. On Windows 10, this notification might appear in the Windows 10 Notification Center, on the tray bar to the right of the system clock.

What makes notifications appealing to sites and annoying for some users is that, once transmitted, they appear immediately (or as soon as the user next opens their browser). They also appear regardless of whether the user is logged into or visiting the site in question.

## Most Requests Rejected Or Ignored

Sites have to ask permission before a **user** gets notifications, which usually comes as a popup window as soon as the user visits the site.

It's safe to say users aren't generally happy about this. According to Mozilla, only one percent of notification **requests** are accepted, with users clicking to reject the request 48 percent of the time and simply ignoring it altogether in 51 percent of cases. They also say repeated requests are even less likely to be accepted. (Source: [mozilla.org](http://mozilla.org))

Under the new Firefox system, notification requests won't appear as popups at all. Instead, there will be a new icon that appears in the address bar, similar to the lock icon that indicates a secure site. The icon will look like a speech bubble and only if users **click** on the icon will the request appear.

“Not Now” Becomes “Never”

Sites will still be able to show notification requests if there's “user **interaction**.”

For example, they could have a link in the text on the page along the lines of “[click here](#) to [sign up](#) for notifications.» It's only automatic **popup windows** with a request that are being blocked.

The changes will take place in January, though Firefox has already changed the existing notification popup system. An existing option called “Not Now” which allows the site to ask again on a future visit has been replaced by “Never Allow” which should banish notification requests forever. (Source: [theverge.com](http://theverge.com))

## What's Your Opinion?

Do you find browser notification requests irritating? Have you ever intentionally accepted a request? Is Mozilla's response a good **move**?

## Kim's Take: Social media becomes more popular than newspapers

*By Kim Komando, Komando.com*



There used to be a time when we'd trust what newspapers wrote, believed what the television news reported and joked ironically that if it was on the internet, it must be true.

Now, the joke is on us.

For the first time ever, more Americans now get their news from social media sites than from newspapers. Our country and voters are relying on what they [read](#) on Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and other sites to know what's happening in Washington, the world, in science, [health](#), and of course, the top category entertainment.

What's a day without checking in with the Kardashians?

Television remains popular – 49% of adults polled still get news there. And what about radio? Turns out 26% prefer getting their news on the radio, and that's up a percentage point from last year.

Take that Facebook.



Making Your Tech “Fit”

## Tech and Your Eyes

*Author: Debra Carlson, Technical Advisor, CVC Computer Club, CO*

**Q1 issue 2019, Tech-Notes**

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Words like “ergometrics” and “accessibility” fly around when talking about tech devices but what does that mean practically – to the user?

### **First, a definition:**

Ergometrics is an applied science concerned with designing and arranging things people use so that the people and things interact most efficiently and safely

— called also biotechnology, human engineering, human factors

[merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ergonomics](http://merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ergonomics)

### **This quarter we’ll talk about how tech interacts with EYES.**

COMFORT can be an important guide for dealing with eyes and tech.

1. Ambient lighting should complement light from the screen.

Lamps pointed directly at the screen cause reflection making it harder to see what is printed. If you are typing from notes, however, it is important to have that document well-lit to prevent eye fatigue. Avoid setting a monitor where it will get direct sunlight for the same reason.

2. Most monitors (hardware) and operating systems (software that controls how interactions occur within various computing components like hardware or programs used to browse the internet or create documents) have light level controls in addition to color and size settings. Tempering the background color and complexity of any graphic that “shows through” your viewing windows will lessen the need for more lumens (the amount of light). Sometimes changing to dark background and yellow or white print is less taxing to the eyes ... making it easier to see.

3. The position and angle of the monitor are important! You might be surprised how much raising the monitor, or tipping it slightly, will improve screen visibility.

4. Some find “computer glasses” help arbitrate the distance to a monitor if using a desktop or laptop regularly ... and some find glare is cut (particularly with cataracts) by using “yellow lens” sunglasses (slipovers or clip-ons).

Safety is assisted by comfort, but it is a DISCIPLINE. Eyes, balance, circulation, joint health, and physical health in general benefit from:

1. Adjusting the monitor so you can see it easily. Perhaps getting a riser for it (if you are taller) so you will sit straight in the chair.

2. Look away from the screen often. When you look away from the screen, shake out your hands.

3. Plan to stand and walk regularly – some suggest every 10 minutes ... most at least every half hour.

**Continued.....page 26**

## Making Tech Fit.....from page 25

Don't be afraid to experiment with screen resolution or font size. Just remember the following:

1. Before a change, take note of what it is you are having trouble seeing. Every solution makes "changes." But making the most efficient change for your problem will be the most helpful. It also makes it easier to "undo" if your needs evolve.
2. Make one change at a time and see if (or how well) it works for you. This may seem pedantic, but it will assist you in knowing what part of the system, changed, helps you most.
3. Don't forget – color change can be as or more effective than size change in some circumstances.
4. Many programs have "options" or "preferences" that can be set to make viewing easier. Where these do not exist, third-party "extensions" can provide additional modifications not included by the developer.

Don't forget about using ZOOM to make individual pages larger or smaller when needed, rather than changing the entire machine unnecessarily.



Hopefully, you got an idea or two in this. In coming issues, we will talk about:

- Does size matter?
- Things in your hands
- Cords, Voice, Sound, and other hazards ☐

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## A Birthday you might have forgotten :-)

*Author: Art Gresham, Editor, Under the Computer Hood UG, CA*

**September 2019 issue, Drive Light**

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September 19 is the birthday of something you might use every day. At the very least you are familiar with it even if you do not text, write emails, handwritten notes or communicate with other humanoids. In fact, it came into existence before there even existed text messages, the Internet, or email

Back in 1982, none of our modern digital communication methods, or even the networks that evolved, existed. On university campuses there existed something called USENET boards. USER Network message boards on which the locally connected users could carry out discussions, some scientific, some not as much.

Well... It all started on a Usenet message board on September 16, 1982 because some guy wanted to know how a drop of Mercury would react in a falling elevator. (Evidently the Physics department guys had a strange sense of humor.) After several rounds of remarks, some of them with attempts at humor, there de-

veloped a discussion about how to indicate to the readers that the message should be read as a playful joke, and not so seriously interpreted.

You can read an excellent summary of the message board conversation here:

<https://www.ttlg.com/forums/showthread.php?t=73941>

The key entry was on Sunday, September 19, 1982, by Professor Scott Fahlman of Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh

401298269,0,0

19-Sep-82 11:44 Scott E Fahlman

I propose that the following character sequence for joke markers:

: -)

Read it sideways. Actually, it is probably more economical to mark things that are NOT jokes, given current trends. For this, use:

: -(

These symbols, composed of normal keys used in standard text, and available on our keyboard, have long been used, albeit in simpler forms, for a very long time.

A summary discussion of the Emoticon at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emoticon>

An entertaining version, at <https://www.kidscodecs.com/history-of-emoticons/> credits Victor Hugo with perhaps the first digitally transmitted emoticon

in 1862, Victor Hugo sent a telegram to his publisher with a single character, ?, to ask how his new book *Les Misérables* was selling. The publisher, equally clever, sent a single character telegram back, !.

So happy birthday to the smiley face Emoticon :- ) ☐

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## Let's be safe out there

*By Matt Batt, President, The Computer Club, FL*

<https://www.sccccomputerclub.org>

mbatt453 (at) gmail.com

We've all heard about all the hackers and the data breaches that have happened to so many on-line sites. We shudder when we hear the names of the sites. But, what we don't know is if our own email address and passwords were actually compromised.

There is a website, [haveibeenpwned.com](http://haveibeenpwned.com), that has collected the information published by hacked companies when they disclose those email addresses that have been compromised. This website has been operational for five years, gets about 60,000 visitors a day and seems to be a safe site to use. Its purpose is to provide the general public a convenient way to see if their private information has been leaked or compromised.

When you bring up the [haveibeenpwned.com](http://haveibeenpwned.com) site, you are greeted with a field to type in your email address and instructions to "Check if you have an account that has been compromised in a data breach." It is safe to type in your email address. You aren't disclosing any

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

## Let's Be Safe.....from page 27

information that isn't all over the web already.

After you type in your email address and click on "pwned?", you will either get Oh ho – pwned! Or Good news – no pwnage found! If you have been part of a breach, you will see a description of each breach along with the date of the breach and what was compromised. In my case, my email address and password were compromised in the Adobe breach of 2013 and in the Zomato breach in May of 2017. It suddenly seemed like a really good idea to change my password.

You can select an option for the site to notify you if your email address shows up on any new list of breaches email addresses. When you select "notify Me" from the page menu, you'll get to prove you are not a robot and you'll be sent a verification to confirm that you are real.

If you discover that you have been breached, do change your password on that email account. Also, if you use that same password on other accounts, change them also.

"Let's be careful out there!"

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President's Corner

## Who Wants to Be Average?

*By Greg Skalka, President, Under the Computer Hood Users Group, CA*

**July 2019 issue, Drive Light**

www.uchug.org  
president (at) uchug.org

A newspaper article on June 6 caught my attention: Mobile Devices Used More Than TV. This premise did not surprise me much, considering how often I see people holding or manipulating their phones while driving. Still, since I'm interested in tech trends in general, I had to read it. While it was informative, it left me feeling that I am not at all an average American adult, and based on the information presented, I don't think I want to be.

The main point of the article was that according to a research firm, American adult use of mobile devices (smart phones, feature phones and tablets) will exceed the time they spend watching TV for the first time this year. The firm, eMarketer, predicted that time spent this year on mobile devices would exceed that of watching TV by 8 minutes per day. Mobile use was cited as a growing trend, as eMarketer claimed that American adults spent 9 minutes more in watching TV than on mobile devices last year, and two hours more than on mobile five years ago.

As I mentioned, this does not surprise me at all. While I do have a smart phone (which I've now had just over two years) and do find it a useful and in some instances an indispensable tool, I do feel the use of mobile phones by some people, and people in general, has become excessive. In some cases, it is way overboard, almost like an addiction. Perhaps my interest in technology and my relative detachment from mobile devices has made me more sensitive to those situations where people around me have become "mobile-excessive".

My wife has motion sensitivity issues and prefers to drive when we are in the car together, so I get frequent opportunities to carefully observe those operating motor vehicles around us. In spite of laws prohibiting their use while driving, it is amazing how often I see drivers blatantly holding their phones or driving with one hand in their laps while constantly looking down there (at hopefully a phone). It is especially telling at night when a glow

can be seen coming from the driver's crotch.

Any public venue can be an opportunity to see unrestrained mobile device use. At the ball game, the fair, the movies or a concert, there will always be a large percentage of the people you see doing something with their phones. And not just casually, but often to the exclusion of what is going on around them. Do people really buy tickets to a baseball game, and then spend the evening in the stands on Facebook? The most absurd scene, which I have seen several times, is the family out to dinner in a restaurant, and every family member is devoting all their attention to their own mobile device (and probably not texting each other). Thus it is not at all out of line to think that mobile device use is way up, as compared to TV use.

What was a bit shocking to me was the total number of hours cited in the article for daily use. eMarketer claimed that this year the average American adult would spend 3 hours and 43 minutes on a mobile device, and an additional 3 hours and 35 minutes watching TV, PER DAY. That's 7 hours and 18 minutes per day that an average American adult spends playing with a phone or tablet and watching TV. eMarketer predicts that in 2021, average TV usage will be down to 3 hours and 22 minutes, while mobile will be up to 3 hours and 54 minutes (remarkably down in total by 2 minutes). The article stated further that the mobile times did not include any voice call time. How does the average American adult manage to function in life while spending over seven hours a day on these devices?

To back up these crazy numbers, Nielsen, the data and measurement company (Nielsen TV ratings) provided similar numbers in the article. They listed four hours and 14 minutes of TV and 3 hours and 14 minutes of mobile device use by the average American adult in the third quarter of 2018. What is the average person doing on their smart phone for over three hours each day?

The article fortunately shed a bit of light on this, as eMarketer said they found that 30% of the mobile device time was spent on audio-related apps (radio, music, podcasts), 24% was on social networking and 19% was on video apps. It did not say what the remaining 26% was (again, not voice calls).

Keep in mind that these numbers are averages, so while there are some that use less, others amazingly will use more. In thinking about my own usage, I feel there must be someone in this country cursed with most of their day in front of these screens, as they must make up for my way below average usage. I estimate I only watch one hour of TV a day on average, and maybe spend 30 minutes a day on my phone. I am no doubt an outlier, as I don't go on the internet much on my phone. I find the screen is just too small for most web use. I choose to not receive emails on my phone for the same reason. I do text and use mapping apps. I'm not sure if having Google Maps running on my phone for the 20 minutes each way of my workday commute constitutes 40 minutes of mobile device use per day or not. I guess that if eMarketer counts time listening to music on a phone, then perhaps my daily mobile usage is more like an hour.

It is also possible that the TV viewing numbers are inflated by the way people use it as well. When I watch television, I give it my full attention, so my numbers are low, but I've seen from my wife that my way is not the only way. She tends to have the TV on as background sound. Even when "watching", she is doing it while performing other activities (on the computer, cooking dinner, etc.). I'm pretty sure she has the TV on for more than four hours per day, but I can't be sure she watches it the whole time.

Even if that 7 hours plus of TV and mobile device use can be discounted somewhat by not having a person's full attention on the device, this total does leave off another tech device, the computer. By this, I mean a desktop or laptop, any computing device with a real keyboard (including Chromebooks). I would guess I spend an average 4.8 hours on a computer per day (6 hours per workday and maybe 2 hours each weekend day). If this is "average", then that poor average American adult spends about half the hours in a day, and 3/4 of their waking hours, with their face in front of a screen.

**Continued.....page 31**

**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, October 14, 2019

1. The meeting was called to order by President, Bill Middleton at 3:30 PM.
2. Members were urged to pay their dues and make sure their registration details were up to date. . 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. We've almost got the mailing list for this newsletter straightened out, but one member reported he didn't get last month's newsletter. We'll try again...
3. The ever-ongoing Windows 10 updates were reviewed. No one reported any major
4. problems with Updates, but not everyone had the 19-03 Feature update installed, yet. The President gave a short presentation on ergonomics and home computers. He related his experience with Tenosynovitis in his hand – he blamed the Mouse rather than keyboard use as the most likely cause. Resolution came from physical therapy and purchase of an IBM Think Pad with the little eraser-head tracking gadget. No Mouse-No Pain. A multi-year collection of Mice, including the latest, vertical, ergonomic type were shown and demonstrated. Use of vertical and Arc type mice has so far prevented recurrence

of the Tenosynovitis. A gaming type keyboard with back-lit keys was shown and appreciated by the non-Touch Typist President. Chairs designed for Computer Gamers were also discussed.

- 5. In response to a query about changing the default font in Win10, Chuck demonstrated several of the "Personalizations" available in the Settings menu. This was in addition to changing the Club Computer's cursor to Pink he showed last month. A few other, previously-discussed problems were revisited
- 6. The meeting was adjourned shortly after 3:30.
- 7. Respectfully submitted by Bill Middleton, Secretary.

Hi,

Our November schedule will vary a bit from our regular pattern - once again somebody scheduled a Holiday on a Monday. Our Viera meeting will be on Monday, Nov. 4 at 2PM. The General Meeting at Eau Gallie will be on Wednesday, Nov. 13 at 2PM. The Fee Ave. meeting will be on Monday, Nov. 18 at 1PM.

This month's Directed Discussion will be on a safe way to go on the Dark Web and why you might want to...

Hope to see you at a meeting or two.

Bill M

**Who Wants to be?.....from page 29**

All of these devices be they mobile or fixed, computer or TV, are useful and beneficial when used in moderation. Misuse and overuse of anything can become a disorder and an addiction. Technology addiction is a real disorder, characterized by obsessive use of tech devices despite negative consequences. Too much video gaming, too much Facebook, too much internet can be an indicator of technology addiction.

When I come home after a workday spent

**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

predominantly on a computer, the last thing I typically want is to have another screen in front of me. We should all prefer to watch a nice sunset, rather than sunset videos. We should want to go home and play with our pooch, not watch puppy videos. We should all have more real face time with others, without screens and tech in between.

Forty years ago, when our group was started, people gathered together to ask questions and exchange information. Maybe there were a few Heath H-89 addicts, but they would have been the exception. Today the average tech user would rather perform a Google search for answers than ever ask a real person for help. I'll admit that the internet has way more information than any person or even a group, but it can be nice to just talk to someone. Talking to Alexa does not count. □



# 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

**November 2 , 2019 - Learning Center**

**Merritt Island Library**

**12 - 3:30 PM**

**November 7 , 2019 - SCPCUG Meeting**

**Merritt Island Library -Co0nference Room  
2:00 PM**

**November 30, 2019 Deadline for Journal Input**

**December 7, 2019 - Learning Center**

**Merritt Island Library**

**12 - 3:30 PM**

**December 14, 2019 - Annual Christmas**

**Party Merritt Towers Clubhouse**

**12-4 PM**

**December 31, 2019 - 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

**November 7, 2019**

No Guest Speaker. Instead we will have a Round Table Q & A session with SCPCUG President, Mr. Dan Douglas (DataDan), moderating this informal computer meeting to address the audience's computer issues/questions/problems.

**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 <sup>CPU</sup> Bewildered?**

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

SIZE	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months
1 Year	~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**  
**November 7, 2019**

Merritt Island Library Conference Room 1185 North Courtenay Parkway, Merritt Island,  
FL

To get to Conference Room after entering the front door, go to the first door on the left.

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

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