

March 2015

User Friendly



IN THIS ISSUE

March General Meeting	1
February General Meeting Report	2
From Your Editor	3
Smartphone SIG Report	4
Zamzar - A Review	5
Merging Photos	6
Data Creators and Consumers	6
Welcome All	8
General Meeting Presentations	8
General Meeting Snack Schedule	8
Calendar	9
Members Helping Members	10
Officers, Directors & Leaders	11
Google Chromecast	12
Amazon Prime Streaming	
Media Takes on Netflix	15
Laughing Out Loud	18
Membership Information	19
Map and Directions	20



MARCH GENERAL MEETING

HOW LARGE AND RELIABLE IS THE INTERNET?

PUTTING RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

Speaker: **John Heidemann**

Professor and Project Leader at the University of Southern California- Information Sciences Institute



How do ideas translate from research to practice? Since 2004 USC-ISI has been carrying out an Internet census. This work was begun to answer a simple question: "How big is the Internet?" Professor Heidemann and his colleagues are counting Internet Protocol version 4 (IPv4) addresses with scientific rigor. The process of finding this answer has resulted in many datasets that are widely used. This data leads us to a second result: active probing can detect outages in the Internet. Today, the USC-ISI Trinocular system allows a single computer to track outages across 4 million subnetworks in the public Internet. They are working with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The research on IP addresses conducted thus far helps the understanding of how reliably the Internet reaches segments of our global community. Further analysis of this data will inform us of network reliability, security, protocols and critical services. The issues related to maintaining the Internet and utilizing its vast reach will be discussed using the IPv4 censuses and outage detection to illustrate how DHS support has helped ideas transition from research to practice.

Professor Heidemann is a senior member of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) and a fellow of the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEEE).

Tuesday, March 10, 2015, 7 - 9 PM

**Fellowship Hall, 8065 Emerson Ave.
Westchester 90045**

An informal Computer Forum meets from 6:00 to 6:50 P.M. to answer individual questions. All are welcome.

After the meeting some members may meet at Dinah's Family Restaurant at Sepulveda and Centinela.

More info at <http://www.lacspc.org> or at 310-398-0366

FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING REPORT

By **Leah Clark, LACS**

eBooks - How to get and Read Them on Your PC or Device

Speaker: **Kathy Lindemann**

Kathy has loved technology and libraries all her life, and she has been with the Los Angeles Public Library for 13



years. She worked as a key punch operator when in high school! During this presentation she showed us how to borrow eBooks, audiobooks, video and more from your local public library – anywhere, anytime. All you need is a library card and the OverDrive app.

First, you need to download and install Adobe Digital Editions on to your computer. This is free software that allows you to download and read ePUB (as one long scroll) and PDF (as a snapshot of each page) ebooks on your computer and to transfer them to e-book readers.

From the Los Angeles Public Library home page (www.lapl.org) select the e-Media tab under **Collections and Resources**.

Collections & Resources	
<input type="checkbox"/> Overview	Español
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Catalog	Get Your Diploma
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Photo Collection	Kids
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visual Collections	Teens
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> e-Media	Parents
OverDrive e-Media	Teachers
hoopla	Job Seekers
Zinio (magazines)	Adult Literacy
Axis 360 e-Books	Citizenship
OneClickDigital	Veterans Resources
EBSCOhost e-Books	Health Matters
Freegal	Money Matters
Comics Plus	Online Learning
Podcasts	ADA Services
L.A. in Focus Videos	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LAPL Reads	How Do I? >
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LAPL Writes	My Library Account >
<input type="checkbox"/> Web Resources	Ask a Librarian >
<input type="checkbox"/> Research & Homework	Book a Librarian >
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LAPL Indexes	Reserve a Computer >
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Research Guides	Find A Library >
<input type="checkbox"/> Government Documents	
<input type="checkbox"/> Job & Money Guides	
<input type="checkbox"/> Library Blogs	
<input type="checkbox"/> Word Processing	

Select **OverDrive e-Media** from the list on the left. Click on **Sign In** and enter your LAPL card number and pin. From the e-Media tab you can see everything that is available and how to access it. Install **Freegal** to legally download music with no expiration dates; **hoopla** for movies and other entertainment; **OverDrive** for downloadable e-audiobooks; **zinio** for e-magazines; and many more resources.

When you sign in, you can see your Bookshelf, Wish List and when items are due. You can renew books, select maturity level, or read a short synopsis of a book. You can see how many people are waiting and opt to auto check out an item when it's available. Kathy went through each page and options to show us what's available.

On your **Bookshelf**, you'll find options for enjoying each borrowed title, like **Read** (read an e-book in your browser using **OverDrive Read** or **MediaDo Reader**), or **Play** (stream a video in your browser), and **Download** (available for eBooks, e-audiobooks, music, and some videos).

Zinio is a source for on-line magazines. If you go through zinnio.com it will cost money - you must go through the library for free access. To create an account you need a library card number. There is no wait period or expiration for magazines, and there is no time limit. You may ask to be emailed when the next issue is available. You have to be at the library to download newspapers. Magazines take up a lot of room on your device.

Kathy recommended not downloading Adobe Digital Editions through the Apple Store: it's better to stick with OverDrive. She sees no reason to download from Kindle unless you have a Kindle device.

You may get the **LAPL To Go** app to have access to the library at your fingertips.

In OverDrive, go to the help pages where it tells you everything you need. Kathy gave us flyers with instructions for getting started with OverDrive, and for various formats including Android, Nook, Kindle and iOS. These are also available at the library. Call ahead to schedule and Kathy will meet with you one-on-one if you bring in your device.

You may hear a podcast of this presentation at www.lacspc.org. ♦

FROM YOUR EDITOR



Our own LACS member and treasurer, Elliott Stern, from Maestro Computing Services, gives an outstanding presentation on 'Perfecting Your Computer Backup.' He spoke to us in April, 2014; see *User Friendly*, May, 2014. Recently he presented at the Big Bear Computer Club, where he received excellent press coverage. Here are links to two of the local Big Bear and mountain area newspapers with info about his visit and presentation.

[Rim of the World News](#)

[Big Bear Grizzly](#)



We thank Elliott for sharing his expertise with LACS and other User Groups.

Parking at Santa Monica College, Bundy Campus

Our SIGs and board meetings are mostly held at Santa Monica College's Bundy campus. Please park in the farthest lot, behind (west of) the four-story building (where the meetings are held), and not in staff or other reserved parking spaces. Two of our members learned the hard way that they issue \$53 tickets for not having the front of your car in the front of the space. A sign at the entrance that some of us have not noticed says something like "Head-in Parking only." They enforce it!

Updated LACS Roster

The new roster is included in the center of this User Friendly issue. Please file it or scan a copy to your computer where it will be easy for you to refer to during the year. For security reasons it will not be available on our website, nor in issues received by non-members.



2015 Southwest Technology and Computer Conference

June 12-14, 2015

Kellogg-West conference Center & Hotel, Pomona, California

Attendees can expect everything they have enjoyed with the longest running User Group Conference:



- Informative presentations and workshops
- Door prizes, raffle items, a SWAG Bag filled with goodies
- Conversation with friends they see once a year, making new friends
- Up-close-and-personal time with sponsors
- Presentations, Seminars, a Vendor Expo.

The Southwest Technology & Computer Conference always brings new and innovative technology to its attendees. There will be something for everyone, regardless of your preferred platform or level of expertise. You will have many networking opportunities with PC, Mac & Linux attendees, and with computer, tablet, and smartphone users. Take your pick of conversations!

Are you having challenging situations with your user group or computer club? This is the place where you can talk with others who might be experiencing the same challenges. You may find useful ideas from others to help.

The environment is relaxing and friendly PLUS the food is amazingly delicious! ♦

FOR EACH PETAL ON THE
SHAMROCK.
THIS BRINGS A WISH YOUR
WAY
GOOD HEALTH, GOOD LUCK,
AND HAPPINESS
FOR TODAY AND EVERY
DAY

2015 APCUG International Computer & Digital Technology Conference

September 25-27, 2015

Palace Station Hotel & Casino

Las Vegas, Nevada

Whether you are a computer or mobile device user, you will find sessions that will be beneficial to you. It doesn't matter whether you are using a Windows-based, Linux, and-or Mac computer or an Android or Apple mobile device. Many programs and applications have cross-platform functionality: there will be something that piques your interest. LACS will have an opportunity to win a KINDLE for the group.



For more information about the conference, costs and registration go to: <http://apcug2.org-node-1867>

Conference reservations will be handled through Eventbrite at:

www.apcugvegas2015.eventbrite.com

Hotel reservations can be made at:

<http://tinyurl.com-2015APCUG-Hotel>

SMARTPHONE SIG REPORT

By **Stephanie Nordlinger**, LACS

Our February 2nd meeting was devoted to “apps” (applications), the software that runs on smartphones and other small computer devices like iPads, iPods and tablets. The sources of the many thousands of apps available include:

- (1) what came on the phone when you bought it
- (2) Google Play Store for Android apps
- (3) Apple for Apple products
- (4) Microsoft or other companies that developed less popular operating systems for their devices
- (5) Independent program developers
- (6) Businesses
- (7) Web libraries online
- (8) Places you visit like art galleries and museums.

Recommended web libraries include:

www.freewarelovers.com-android-apps

www.download.cnet.com

www.appbrain.com

I recommended getting an app that recognizes bar codes (including squares), which can let you directly access an app or comments about exhibits in a museum without renting a head-phone. Click on a square bar code (QR Code) in an advertisement or store, and you will get more information on product details, reviews, and prices at various locations.

We next discussed the download process. You need to set up an account with the entity providing the app first, even if the app is free. You may want to set up an account with www.paypal.com to pay for some apps. Many apps are free, and the others are mostly cheap (e.g. \$10 or less). Many have been reviewed or rated by either magazine or website editors and-or users. Many do similar things, so you usually have a choice of apps to cover a particular need. You should update your apps regularly - to fix security flaws and to get the best performance. If set up correctly, your phone will tell you if an app is out of date and prompt you to click to update it. Since these programs are usually quite small, this takes very little time.

You must give up some privacy to use certain types of apps effectively. Google can give you much better answers to a search for a “Basque restaurant” if it knows where you are. You will be prompted during the installation or update process to agree to let the app send back information on where you are and other matters. If the information doesn't seem relevant to what the app is supposed to do, you can and perhaps should be suspicious, not provide the information, get a different app to do the job and uninstall the original app. You can remove or delete an app by clicking and holding your mouse over its icon until the icons on the page start wiggling and then drag the unwanted program's icon into the trash can (at the top of your screen) and then release the mouse button.

You should probably set your Security settings (under the Security icon) to require that apps be verified in order to be downloaded and

(Continued on Page 5)

(Smartphone SIG Report)*(continued from page 4)*

installed. "Allow installation from unknown sources" should ordinarily NOT be checked. Look at your current apps to see if you recognize any security app. I also looked at the Manual or information I downloaded from my ISP (Internet service provider). For my phone, Verizon offers **VZ Protect** which scans for malware, blocks risky websites and locks and erases a lost phone. Default: not to opt in. While I like the first two uses, I want to understand the third in detail before I agree to it. I don't want to risk having all of my smartphone data destroyed accidentally because I have not used the phone for several weeks while on a vacation or if I lost it around my home. We might have a future meeting on smartphone security software.

We were then going to demonstrate the downloading process, but the person who volunteered didn't remember his Google Play Store user name and password. We did list a large number of subjects for apps, including the following, to whet your appetites: favorite radio stations, Pandora or other music playing and acquisition apps, various news publications, companies in the financial industry, financial publications, hobby websites, social media, politics, science, nature and mathematics, travel, organizations, government agencies, movie databases, computer games, health and fitness, puzzles, Facebook, YouTube, Flipboard, bar code readers, caller ID, weather, etc. There's a lot to play with!

We will probably discuss specific apps in one or more future meetings. If anyone wants to help with such a presentation, please contact me if it's an Android app and contact Paula if it's an Apple app. Nine members attended this meeting.

On Monday, March 2, at 7 PM, Paula Van Berk-om will discuss Apple phones and devices in Room 235 of the Bundy campus of Santa Monica College. She would appreciate learning about your questions and preferred topics in advance, if possible. Please see the *User Friendly* "Members Helping Members" or the "Officers, Directors and Leaders" pages or the Roster for her contact information. ♦

**ZAMZAR - A REVIEW**

By Leah Clark, LACS

I recently received a few Word Perfect (.wpd) documents. I was unable to open them because I use Microsoft Word. I went to Google to find an easy way to open them. I came across **Zamzar**. It worked so quickly and easily that I decided to share what I learned with LACS members.

Zamzar is a web application to convert files. Its name comes from Franz Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*. Its main character is Gregor Samsa. It is from his surname that Zamzar is derived.

It allows users to convert files without downloading a software tool, and it supports over 1,000 different conversion types. These include document, image, music, video, e-book, CAD and compressed formats.

Users can type in a URL or upload one or more files (if they are all of the same format) from their computer. Zamzar then converts the file(s) to another user-specified format. For example, you can convert an Adobe PDF file to a Microsoft Word document, or from a Word Perfect file to a Microsoft Word file as I did. Users receive an email with a URL from where they can download the converted file. It is also possible to send files for conversion by emailing them to Zamzar.

Zamzar is currently free to use. However, users can pay a monthly subscription in order to access preferential features, such as online file management, shorter response and queuing times and other benefits.

You can learn all about Zamzar at <http://www.zamzar.com>. ♦

Step 1 Select files or URL to convert (up to 100MB - want more ?) <input type="button" value="Choose Files..."/> or drag and drop files	Step 2 Choose the format to convert to: Convert files to: <input type="text"/>
Step 3 Enter your email address to receive converted files: <input type="text"/>	Step 4 Convert your file now (agree to our Terms ?) <input type="button" value="Convert"/>

MERGING PHOTOS

By **Larry Piper**, President
Midland Computer Club, MI
Bits and Bytes Newsletter, April 2014
mcc.apcug.org
webbyte@yahoo.com

Ever see a row of photos at the top of a Facebook or website page? I'll bet it crossed your mind that this would be a good idea for one of your own projects.

I'll bet your next thought was that it would take a powerful photo editing tool, most likely Photoshop, to accomplish this horizontal photo montage. Sure enough, when you did some cursory checking, words like 'layers' and 'flattening' began to appear. Or maybe you found how-to ideas for creating a photo collage, which is NOT what you had in mind.

I too went down this same road. I also discovered that the most recommended solution is to use Paint, a free program that comes with Windows. I found the Paint solution not very intuitive and a little time consuming to use. Then I discovered another solution that had been right in front of me for a number of years. It is also a free program, **IrfanView**. This little utility has been around since the days of Windows 95. It will open virtually every graphic file type - as well as most sound and video file types. I use it as a fast image resizer. But right there in the opening screen under the Image drop-down menu is the choice **Create Panoramic Image**. Perfect!

IrfanView gives you the choice of horizontal or vertical merging of photos. You add the photos you want, rearrange their order and then hit the Create key. Save the resulting photo-merge, give it a name and you are good to go. You could even resize the final image if it is too big or too small for your application.

So what about merging photos of different pixel size or resolution. No problem. I ran a few tests where the height dimensions were five times different. IrfanView makes the horizontal photo montage a constant height. The same thing occurred when merging photos of very different resolutions. Again, the merged photos were a nearly constant total pixel size. The overall picture quality had been reduced

substantially, but who cares when it is being viewed over the Internet?

IrfanView is the product of Irfan Skiljan, who lists himself as graduate of Vienna University. Be sure to get the latest version which is 4.38 as of this writing. ♦

Data Creators and Consumers - In a Mobile Computing Environment

By **Phil Sorrentino**, Staff Writer
Sun City Center Computer Club, FL
The Journal, August 2014
www.sccccomputerclub.org
philsorr@yahoo.com

Some computer devices are good at creating data and some others are better at consuming data. This is only a consideration now that we have a selection of devices to choose from, and that the devices have become smaller, lighter and therefore, mobile.

In the beginning, when all we had was a computer, it was both the data creator and the data consumer. We really didn't think about creating or consuming; when you wanted to work with, or look at, a document or picture, you went to the computer, which was usually in some area set out just for the computer.

Nowadays we want to have the benefits of the computer wherever we are; we don't want to have to go to the special location, where the computer used to be. Now we have laptops, ultrabooks, netbooks (a few of us have these), tablets and smartphones that go wherever we go. All of which can be considered platforms for mobile computing. Now it's all about Mobility, or computing on the go.

Mobile computing is having access to, and being able to, view or create data whenever and wherever you want. Mobile computing requires mobile hardware, software, and communications networks. Mobile computing is "taking a computer, with access to all necessary files, out into the field" for use on the go. This type of computing, unlike computing at your computer workstation, is subject to a few considerations and maybe even limitations.

Good wireless communications becomes a critical factor in mobile computing. The network type, the communication properties, protocols,

(Continued on Page 7)

(Data Creators and Consumers)

(continued from page 6)

and data formats become considerations for success. Most of these considerations are handled by our Internet Service Providers (ISP) through their routers; or Commercial cell phone providers through their cell phone towers. But mobile computer users should be aware of some of the basics and some of the limitations of the communications networks that are providing the linkage.

Typically your mobile computer or tablet is at the end of a wireless network, either Wi-Fi, or the commercial cell phone network. Wireless communications networks are subject to certain limitations that are not present in a wired computer network. Range (distance) and Bandwidth (data transfer speed) are two limitations associated with wireless communications networks. For successful mobile computing, your computer has to be within range of either a Wi-Fi access point or a commercial cell phone tower (and, of course, you have to have the appropriate wireless radio functionality built into your hardware).

When using Wi-Fi, the Wi-Fi portion of the communications is typically not the limiting speed factor. Wi-Fi typically operates at greater than 50 Mbps. The limitation is typically the ISP upload speed, which may be only around 1 Mbps.

When using the commercial cell phone network, the network is a limiting speed factor in that a 3G network can only transfer data at approximately 2Mbps. (However, the newer 4G networks are less of a limitation because they transfer data somewhere around 10Mbps.)

Transmission Interference is another limitation associated with wireless communications networks. Cell phones use radio frequencies where weather, terrain, and objects (like mountains) can affect signal reception. Reception in some buildings, and in rural areas, can often times be limited.

Power consumption is a mobile hardware limitation. Mobile computers rely typically on battery power. Laptops may operate on battery for only 3 to 5 hours. Tablets, on the other hand, have operating times close to a day's work, maybe 8 to 10 hours.

Security is a mobile computing software consideration. Mobile computing on Wi-Fi public net-

works can be a security nightmare. Virtual Private Network (VPN) software is a must for all secure mobile computing.

Now that we are aware of some of the limitations of mobile computing due to the nature of the wireless network or the size and power constraints of the devices, we can look at which devices could be used for what tasks. Laptops and ultrabooks, (and desktops for those few of us who still have them), with their hardware keyboards, larger display screens, and in some cases more abundant USB ports, are probably the best candidates to be data creators. Data creators will typically have more sophisticated software installed that will let the user create lengthy document, spreadsheet, PowerPoint, graphical and image files. Looking at the big picture, scanners and cameras are also data creators. Scanners are typically found connected to a Desktop or Laptop computer in a fixed location, but there are a few small portable scanners available. Cameras are, by their very nature, portable data creators.

Tablets and smartphones, on the other hand, with their lower battery usage, smaller size, and lower weight, are probably the best candidates to be mobile data consumers. Tablets are good for viewing data and maybe making small modifications or changes, like adding a sentence to a document or placing some data into a spreadsheet. But a tablet, with its virtual keyboard, is certainly not the device to use if you are writing your memoirs. Tablets are ideal for storing large numbers of documents, pictures, and videos, using their onboard memory and their micro SD memory devices (if the tablet supports this). Tablets are also perfect for accessing large databases in the cloud or on a home computer. (Remember TeamViewer?) The tablet can be a way of bringing large amounts of data to be viewed or reviewed by people on the go. This convenience has found its place in many areas such as the medical profession, and in providing User or Diagnostic information to users or technicians.

These categories of Consumer and Creator are, by no means, hard and fast, but only help to provide a way to decide on what device to use in a particular situation. ♦

WELCOME ALL**Gene Jacobs**

Data Base Manager, LACS

New Members (0)**Renewals (16)**

James Andrews

Milt Ash

Kent Francisco*

William Garber

Judith Garellana

Gilbert Ialongo

Karen Johns

Robert Kraus

Charles Mahan

Monique Marie

William Oppenheimer

Elliot Silverstein

David Speer

Elliott Stern

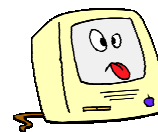
Paula Van Berkom*

Jim Vollmer

* Contributor

**FIX YOUR PC FOR FREE?**

Jim McKnight has an open offer to all LACS members to diagnose, repair, disinfect, or upgrade members' PC's for free.



There are certain limitations to Jim's offer, so see the details by clicking the "Fix my PC for Free?" link at www.jimopi.net.

Non-members can wisely invest in a one-year LACS membership (\$40.00), and Jim will fix your PC problem, too.

GENERAL MEETING PRESENTATIONS

March 10, Network Reliability

April 14, Earthquakes

May 12, AVAST

June 9, Net Neutrality

This schedule is subject to change, but mark your calendar now.

GENERAL MEETING SNACK SCHEDULEBy **Sylvia Q. Davis** and **Linda Williams**

March Q through S

April T through Z

May A through C

June D through G

July H through K

LACS provides hot coffee, regular and decaf, tea and cocoa.

Please participate by bringing finger-food treats such as fresh fruit, veggies, nuts, cookies, brownies and the like. Bottled water and regular and diet soft drinks are appreciated, too.

NOTICE

The columns, reviews and other expressions of opinion in *User Friendly* are the opinions of the writers and not necessarily those of the Los Angeles Computer Society. LACS became a California nonprofit corporation on July 17, 1991. Its predecessor was the "UCLA PC Users Group".

The Editor of *User Friendly* will accept contributions of any suitable length from members.

Articles should be sent to Editor@lacspc.org as **plain text** in the body of an e-mail message or as a Word document. The deadline for submitting articles is the **18th of the month**.




USER FRIENDLY ADVERTISING RATES

Business Card, Member	\$10
Business card	\$15
Half Page	\$35
Third Page	\$25
Full Page	\$50
Two page spread	\$100

For further information on our advertising policy, please e-mail: [editor\(at\)lacspc.org](mailto:editor(at)lacspc.org)

COPYRIGHT © 2015

by the Los Angeles Computer Society, an all-volunteer, tax-exempt [IRC Section 501(c)(3)] nonprofit California corporation. All rights reserved. *User Friendly* is published monthly. Subscriptions are included in membership dues. Reproduction of any material here by any means is expressly prohibited without written permission, except that other nonprofit User Groups may reprint LACS articles in substantially unaltered form if credit is given to the author and this publication and an e-mail is sent to, editor@lacspc.org reporting the reprint information (user group and the name and date of the publication). Product and company names may be the trademarks of their respective owners.

MARCH, 2015						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 Smartphone SIG 7:00 PM	3	4	5 Purim 	6	7
8 Daylight Savings	9 Basics & Beyond SIG 7:00 PM	10 General Meeting 7:00 PM	11	12	13	14
15	16 Board Meeting 7:00 PM	17 	18	19	20 Spring Begins	21
22	23 Digital Photo SIG 7:00 PM	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1 	2	3	4



The March board meeting will be at the home of Maurice Stephenson, LACS President.

This Calendar may change. Check your e-mail or with the SIG leader before attending a meeting.

The SIGs and Board meet at the Santa Monica College Bundy Campus unless otherwise noted.

We are scheduled to be in Room 235 through June 30, 2015.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs)

SIG meetings are lead by and for LACS members. Visitors are welcome to attend.

To inquire about a SIG, call the contact person in advance.

Basics & Beyond SIG	Kim Stocksdales	310-720-0603	2nd Mon. 7 PM SMC, Bundy Campus
Digital Photo SIG	Nancy Cattell	310-452-2130	
	Elliot Silverstein	310-670-1544	4th Mon. 7 PM, SMC, Bundy Campus
Smartphone SIG	Stephanie Nordlinger	323-299-3244	1st Mon. 7 PM, SMC, Bundy Campus

ADDRESSES

Fellowship Hall, 8065 Emerson Ave., Westchester 90045

Dinah's Family Restaurant, 6521 Sepulveda Blvd., LA 90045 (on Sepulveda, just S. of Centinela)

Santa Monica College Bundy Campus, 3171 S. Bundy Drive, LA 90066 (1-2 blocks S. of Airport Avenue)

Our room number may change each semester. Look for it on a sign opposite the elevator on the first floor.

MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

LACS members volunteer to help other members solve hardware and software problems by telephone during the hours listed below. Select the topic from the list and then call a person whose number is listed next to it. Or you may use a Helper's e-mail address, found in your LACS Roster. We hope that you find this free service useful. ***If you are experienced in a particular program or topic, please volunteer to be a consultant.*** To volunteer for this list or to make corrections, please e-mail editor@lacspc.org or call Leah Clark at 310-677-2792. More Quick Consultants are always needed. You may decline or postpone a call if it comes at an Inconvenient time.

America Online - 5	Lotus Word Pro, Approach - 12	Picasa - 14
Anti Malware - 12	Mozilla Firefox, Thunderbird - 12	Quicken - 3, 5, 9
Digital Imaging, Editing - 8, 14	MS Excel - 3, 15	QuickBooks - 9
Digital Photography - 8, 14	MS Word - 3, 4, 10	Visual Basic - 13
Dragon Naturally Speaking - 4	MS Outlook - 15, 5	Websites - 13
Genealogy - 5, 7	MS Outlook Express - 15	Win XP-Vista - 12, 16
Hardware - 12	MS PowerPoint - 15	Windows 7 - 5, 12
iPhone, iPad, iPod - 15	MS Publisher - 2, 7, 9	WordPerfect - 5
LA FreeNet - 6	Open Office - 16	Yahoo - 9

No.	Name	Preferred Phone for Calls	From	To
2	Mercer, Bob	310-837-5648	9:00 AM	10:00 PM
3	Wilder, Joan	310-472-8445	9:00 AM	9:00 PM
4	Hershman, Irv	310-397-9453	11:00 AM	11:00 PM
5	Nordlinger, Stephanie	323-299-3244	5:00 PM	10:00 PM
6	Springer, Karl	424-646-3410	10:00 AM	10:00 PM
7	Clark, Leah	310-677-2792	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
8	Silverstein, Elliott	310-670-1544	10:00 AM	10:00 PM
9	Kamerman, Cora	424-442-9592	Noon	8:00 PM
10	Beckman, Loling	310-471-7893	10:00 AM	6:00 PM
12	McKnight, Jim	310-823-7829	8:00 AM	7:00 PM
13	Ialongo, Gilbert	310-641-7906	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
15	Van Berkomp, Paula	310-398-6734	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
16	Johnson, Carol	310-372-8535	10:00 AM	9:00 PM

OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND LEADERS

Title	Name	Term	Telephone
President	Maurice Stephenson	2015	310-625-0450
Vice President	Vacant		
Secretary	Lee Freehling	2015	310-837-4022
Treasurer	Elliott Stern	2015	310-880-9891
Director	Leah Clark	2016	310-677-2792
Director	Lance Hegamin	2015	310-202-8926
Director	Heshmat Laaly	2015	310-838-7140
Director	Jim Louie	2015	310-473-4247
Director	Jim McKnight	2016	310-823-7829
Director	Paula Van Berkorn	2015	310-389-6734
Director	Stanley Johnson	2016	909-782-0103
APCUG Rep.	Cora Kamerman		424-442-9592
Car Pools	Lance Hegamin		310-202-8926
Changes	Karl Springer		424-646-3410
	Gene Jacobs		310-397-8457
Corporate Counsel	Stephanie Nordlinger		323-299-3244
CCSC Computer Lab	Rosalie Kirsch		310-559-2244
Hospitality Chair	Sylvia Davis		213-924-4927
Asst. Hospitality Chair	Linda Williams		310-748-1694
Membership Database	Gene Jacobs		310-397-8457
Newsletter Editor	Leah Clark		310-677-2792
Program Chair	Maurice Stephenson		310-625-0450
Publicity	Mark Presky		310-398-0366
Quick Consultants	Leah Clark		310-677-2792
SIG Coordinator	Heshmat Laaly		310-838-7140
Web Master	Gilbert Lalongo		310-641-7906
Welcome Chair	Ida Riordan		310-837-9851

Los Angeles Computer Society**Contact Information**

Website	www.lacspc.org	Newsletter Editor	editor@lacspc.org
Voice Mail	1-310-398-0366	Webmaster	sitemaster@lacspc.org
e-Mail	ContactUs@lacspc.org	Change of Address	changes@lacspc.org

The **ContactUs@lacspc.org** address goes to our **president** and **immediate past president**. If the message is for another board member, they will forward it to the correct person.

To contact officers, directors or leaders not listed above, members may use our roster for phone numbers and email addresses.

Please note that the new roster is in this March, 2015 issue. Please save it.

GOOGLE CHROMECAST - INEXPENSIVE COMPETITOR TO CABLE AND SATELLITE ENTERTAINMENT

by **Ira Wilsker**

Golden Triangle PC Club

iwilsker@sbcglobal.net

www.theexaminer.com



You may have seen the recent TV commercials for a new device from Amazon called **Fire Stick**, which is so new that it is just starting to be shipped. Another device which recently came on the market with great fanfare is the **Roku Streaming Stick**. Several other comparable devices are in development, or recently came on the market creating a crowded field of competitive products. One that has been on the market since the summer of 2013, is Google's

Chromecast, which has become well established with "millions" sold, according to a July, 2014 statement from Google. One may wonder what all of the buzz is about, and why so many companies are developing or producing these items. How did Google manage to sell "millions" of Chromecast devices (their words) in the first 12 months that it was available? The answer is simple - these relatively inexpensive items have become an entertainment tool that for many users, can somewhat compete with satellite or cable TV at a fraction of the price.

One of my daughters recently "cut the cable", even though she was on a very good fiber optic system with hundreds of TV channels, dozens of movie channels, and other features, because in her eyes the monthly cost was becoming prohibitive. She also has a separate very high speed internet service which she believed could be better utilized for entertainment purposes, as well as providing a reliable connection for her chosen digital telephone service. She and her husband like streaming movies, sports, music, features, and other entertainment. Living in the Dallas area, all of the local TV stations, both local and network, are available over the air for free, using an inexpensive digital antenna hooked up to the TVs around



her house. By connecting her TVs to the internet, using some of the readily available and inexpensive devices, she has found that there is nothing that she is really missing from her former expensive cable service, other than a large monthly bill. By her calculations, she believes that she is saving about \$150 per month using these alternative devices to connect her TV to the internet in her home. Some of the newer "smart TVs" that recently came onto the market do not need external devices to connect to the internet, as they are already capable of receiving alternative internet based entertainment through an Ethernet or Wi-Fi connection. Since she does not (yet) have a new smart TV, one of the devices that she uses is the **Chromecast** device from Google.

A Chromecast device, which Google refers to as a digital media player, looks very similar to a common USB flash drive, and is about the same size and weight, but has an industry standard HDMI plug, rather than the USB plug found on a typical flash drive. Specifically a Chromecast device is 2.38" long, 1.38 inches wide, and 0.47 of an inch thick, and weighs 1.2 ounces. Inside, where the magic takes place, is a Nexus Q microprocessor (CPU), with 512 MB of fast DDR3L RAM, and 2 GB of storage. Power is supplied through a standard micro USB plug and power source (included), similar to the chargers and plugs used on most of today's smartphones. The standard HDMI plug on the end of the Chromecast plugs directly into an available HDMI port on the TV (most newer TVs have multiple HDMI inputs), and Chromecast receives the digital media through Wi-Fi utilizing the common 802.11 b-g-n protocols at 2.4GHZ. Obviously, the user needs to have a decent home Wi-Fi system in order to utilize the Chromecast. The device itself is readily available in the big box stores, discount stores, online retailers, and direct from Google, and carries a suggested retail price of \$35. Bargain shoppers can currently find the Chromecast on sale online for as little as \$22 including a bundle of digital media streaming services.

Installation of the Chromecast is a simple and fast three step process. Google says, "Plug in and Play" which consists of plugging the Chromecast into an available HDMI port on the

(Continued on Page 13)

(Google Chromecast)

(Continued from page 12)

TV and powering the device through the included micro USB plug, connecting the device to the home Wi-Fi, and then



"Enjoy - Cast apps from your mobile device to the TV." Casting apps is the process of selecting entertainment channels using any compatible smart device attached to the home Wi-Fi, such as a phone or tablet, including Android tablets and smartphones, iPhones and iPads, Chrome for Windows, Chrome for Mac and Chromebooks. In effect, the hand held smart device becomes the remote control, and the apps are the selected streaming media sources.

The list of streaming media apps that are available for the Chromecast is extensive, and includes a large selection of both free and paid subscription services. Google has an updated app directory at google.com-chrome-devices-chromecast-apps.html and, as to be expected from Google, is totally searchable, or content can be displayed by genre. Among the category headings are Featured, New, TV & Movies, Music & Audio, Games, Sports, Photos & Video, and More. Selecting a media source from these app directories connects directly to the appropriate download. If it is a paid or subscription app, such as Netflix, that information is clearly displayed prior to any purchase. Among the more popular casting apps are HBO GO, Netflix, Watch ESPN, Just Dance Now, Showtime Anytime, YouTube, and the large assortment of digital media available from Google Play.

The "Featured Apps" include the most popular apps, and includes in addition to the more popular apps listed above, Nickelodeon, Hulu Plus, Comedy Central, Sesame Street, Pandora, game shows, Disney, Starz, Encore, iHeart radio, Major League Baseball, Crackle, NPR, Vudu, and dozens of other apps. The "Music and Audio" lists hundreds of domestic and international streaming music sources, including some local and international radio stations. Personally I am not into digital games, but the "Games" section lists about 75 streaming games that can be played on the Chromecast.

I would expect that one of the major uses of Chromecast would be to watch sports, and the "Sports" selection may satisfy fans of most major sports. Included in the Sports apps are, WatchESPN, UFC.TV, MLB.TV Premium, MLS MatchDay, NFL Game Pass, MLS Live, Red Bull TV, a high school sports channel, and several foreign sports channels.

The "More" category includes dozens of casting apps including PBS for Kids, TED Chromecast, UDEMY (online classes), ABC News, Funny or Die, FM radio stations, a baby monitor, QVC, iFood TV and Recipes, religion channels, local and international TV news stations, and many other apps.

Often, we may see something online or on our smartphones that we would like to view on the big TV screen. Chromecast can handle that. According to Google, "Whatever you're listening to or watching -- you can cast it straight from your Windows, Mac, or Chromebook directly to the TV. To cast from your laptop, just add the Google Cast extension to your Chrome browser." Owners of Android smartphones or tablets can broadcast directly from their screen to the TV using the appropriate app.

Chromecast devices are popular, with users receiving over 400 billion programs in the first year (source, Google). According to the news site *Gigaom*, in an article dated December 7, 2014, "Streaming on Chromecast passes Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV in US", the author Kevin C. Tofel explains, "What happens when you offer the combination of a simple user experience, a growing choice in streaming apps and a low cost? You sell a lot of that product and people use it. That's what happened in 2014 to the Chromecast according to Parks Associates, who say that Google's \$35 streaming stick now trails only Roku players in the U.S. when it comes to streaming content." While Roku released a competitive stick device during the summer of 2014, larger Roku streaming



(Continued on Page 14)

(Google Chromecast)

(Continued from page 13)

players have been on the market much longer than the Chromecast.



4x
STORAGE &
2x MEMORY OF
CHROMECAST

PLUS, BETTER WI-FI
PERFORMANCE FOR
MORE RELIABLE VIEWING

The most powerful
streaming media stick

Built for speed
From the responsive interface to instant search results, everything about Fire TV Stick is fast and fluid. It's all thanks to a dual-core processor with 6x the processing power of Roku Streaming Stick, a dedicated VideoCore4 GPU, and 8 GB of storage—4x that of Chromecast and 32x that of Roku Streaming Stick.

Immediate video start with ASAP
You shouldn't have to wait 10 seconds for a video to buffer every time you press "Play." ASAP (Advanced Streaming and Prediction) for Amazon Instant Video learns what movies and shows you like and gets them ready for you to watch. The more you use Fire TV Stick, the more accurate ASAP becomes, dynamically adapting to your viewing habits.

Stunning video. Vibrant sound.
With Fire TV Stick, you can stream movies and TV shows in up to 1080p HD. Enjoy rich surround sound with Dolby Digital Plus (up to 7.1).

Amazon, who is no slouch when it comes to introducing and implementing new technologies, will be shipping by the time that you read this its new **\$39 Fire TV Stick**, as a direct competitor to Chromecast and similar devices, but offers improved Wi-Fi connectivity, more internal memory, a more powerful dual-core processor, and other technical enhancements. Basically, the Fire TV Stick offers much the same content as Chromecast, but adds the hundreds of thousands of movies and TV shows currently available at no additional cost to Amazon Prime subscribers (currently \$99 per year) which for many users is price and selection competitive to Netflix, plus offers a lot of benefits in addition to streaming media, such as free second day delivery of most items from Amazon. The Fire TV Stick also includes a separate remote control device, or the user can use a free smart device app as a remote control. In terms of disclosure, I pre-ordered an Amazon Fire TV Stick at a greatly discounted price, and will review it when it arrives. Since I already have an Amazon Prime account, I will be able to utilize Amazon's massive video and TV library when the Fire TV Stick arrives.

One suggestion that many readers might find helpful if considering using one of these Wi-Fi connected stick devices to provide digital content to a flat screen TV; if the TV is physically located in close proximity to the Wi-Fi router, such as in the same room, signal strength should be fine. An easy way to roughly figure Wi-Fi signal strength is to connect a smart device to the Wi-Fi, and note the signal strength (bars) precisely at the location where a stick device would be connected. In my house, our bedroom TV is a distance from the Wi-Fi rout-

er, with several walls in between, giving only a "3 bar" Wi-Fi strength where the Chromecast is currently connected to that TV. To improve the signal strength, I purchased a deeply discounted, factory refurbished, major name brand "Wireless-N Range Extender", and mounted it on the stand directly below the HDMI port on the bedroom TV. Now my phone shows all 5 Wi-Fi signal strength bars, indicating a very strong signal, which has dramatically improved the performance of the stick device.

Either as a replacement for, or as a substitute to cable and satellite TV service, these stick devices may be a very cost effective way of "cutting the cable" as my daughter did. As inexpensive as these stick devices are, and with the entertainment capabilities that they provide, one of these new stick devices may be a worthwhile investment.

WEBSITES:

<https://www.google.com/chrome/devices/chromecast/index.html>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chromecast>

https://www.google.com/intl/en_us/chrome/devices/chromecast/index.html

<http://www.google.com/intl/en/chrome/devices/chromecast/index/opt/a.html>

<http://finance.yahoo.com/news/streaming/chromecast/passes/apple/tv/150024539.html>

<http://www.cnet.com/products/google/chromecast/>

<http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2422300,00.asp>

<https://www.google.com/chrome/devices/chromecast/apps.html>

<https://support.google.com/chromecast/?hl=en#topic=3447927>

<https://support.google.com/chromecast/answer/2998336>

<https://www.google.com/chromecast/backdrop/>

Ira is a member of the Golden Triangle PC Club, and an Associate Professor at Lamar Institute of Technology. He writes a weekly technology column for the Examiner newspaper in Southeast Texas. <www.theexaminer.com>. Ira is also a deputy sheriff who specializes in cybercrime, and has lectured internationally on computer crime. ♦

AMAZON PRIME STREAMING MEDIA TAKES ON NETFLIX

by **Ira Wilsker**

Golden Triangle PC Club

iwilsker@sbcglobal.net

www.theexaminer.com



As I type this, the extremely popular streaming media company **Netflix** is operating in over 40 countries, and has in excess of 50 million paid subscribers. Originally known for its mail based DVD rental service, Netflix is currently the world leader in streaming media subscriptions. Once thought of in monopoly terms, Netflix is now facing serious competition from a multitude of sources including the online retailer Overstock.com, retailing megalith WalMart, and the marketing powerhouse of Amazon. While the lesser streaming media competitors (if anyone could ever consider Walmart a "lesser competitor") have barely dented Netflix' dominance in the streaming media market, Amazon's growth as a direct competitor has been explosive.

According to Rich Tullo, the Director of Research for the old line Wall Street firm of Albert Fried & Company, "It looks to me like they are very close to or preparing to approach 45 million U.S. [and UK] subs by the end of 2015. They could be pretty close to it now. ... I think they're probably really close to Netflix in terms of U.S. subs." According to Tullo, "(Amazon) Prime subscribers are attracted to both the instant video content and the free two-day shipping, not one or the other. Once they see the platform, I think they like it," Tullo said of those who accepted a trial offer. "I like it, it's easy to use, and it's got a full content offering. It's very synergistic with their (Amazon's) business."

While most readers of this column are at least somewhat familiar with Amazon's Prime services, many are probably not aware of the breadth and depth of the Prime offerings currently available for a \$99 annual membership. Subscription discounts are available to students with an "edu" email address, new mothers (Amazon is the largest seller of diapers in the US), Prime subscriptions given as a gift, new Prime subscribers may qualify for a discount, and Prime may be available as a free affinity benefit from some of the premium credit card companies. One-time free

trials of Prime are also available from Amazon. While Netflix at about \$8 per month predominately provides the benefits of "SVOD" (Streaming Video on Demand), Amazon provides somewhat competitive streaming media, as well as many additional benefits not available to Netflix subscribers.

The list of Amazon Prime benefits are extensive and includes free two-day shipping on most items sold by Amazon; Prime Instant Video, which includes over 40,000 titles of unlimited streaming of movies and TV; Prime Music, which includes unlimited, ad-free access to hundreds of Prime Playlists and more than a million songs for members; Prime Photos, secure unlimited photo storage on the Amazon Cloud Drive; Prime Pantry where members can purchase low priced grocery, household, and pet care items for a flat delivery fee of \$5.99 for each Prime Pantry box; Prime Early Access, where bargain hunters can get 30 minute early access to select Lightning Deals on Amazon; Kindle Owners' Lending Library where Prime members can borrow for free many of the otherwise paid Kindle e-books; Kindle First, where members can download a new book for free every month from the Kindle First picks; and Membership Sharing, where Prime members may invite up to four eligible household members living at the same address to enjoy the shipping benefits of a Prime membership at no extra cost.

While the majority of Amazon Prime members apparently join to get the free two day shipping benefits, the other major reason why (according to Tullo) Amazon Prime has tripled its membership in the last couple of years is its rapidly expanding library of streaming media. According to Amazon, "Prime members can watch thousands of movies and TV shows at no additional cost. ... You can instantly stream Prime Instant Video titles from your computer's web browser, Fire phone, Fire TV, Fire Tablets, iOS devices, Android phones, and hundreds of other Internet-connected TVs, Blu-ray players, set-top-boxes, and gaming consoles." In addition to its paid Prime subscribers, Amazon also makes the streaming media available for free to those with a 30 day trial of Amazon Prime or Amazon Prime Instant Video.

(Continued on Page 16)

(Amazon Prime Streaming Media Takes on Netflix)

(Continued from page 15)

Amazon's current collection of movies and TV shows is smaller than that of Netflix, but Amazon is constantly increasing its selection of available media, with the clear intent of going head to head with Netflix. Amazon also offers one of the largest collections of streaming music in the industry, with millions of titles available for free to subscribers. In addition to licensing content from the Hollywood movie houses and national and international TV networks, Amazon also had a massive collection of movies, shows, and series created by the pay-per-view and subscription media companies, such as HBO. Amazon, like Netflix, has started to finance the production of quality media and movies exclusively for its subscribers. According to a January 14 article published by MSN, "In Amazon, Netflix battle, consumer is the winner," by Therese Poletti of Market Watch, "The video-streaming battle between Netflix and Amazon.com Inc. is intensifying, as both companies seek to become more like Hollywood producers, with Amazon upping the stakes this week in a big content deal. Amazon, fresh off two awards at the Golden Globes for its new show 'Transparent,' announced a deal on Tuesday with filmmaker Woody Allen to write and direct his first television series." In an article by the Motley Fool, dated January 31, "Amazon announced plans to launch a dozen original movies starting this year."

In addition to original movies, Amazon is also actively producing a large collection of new series, ten of which the pilots have been completed and are currently available to Amazon Prime and Prime Instant Video subscribers to view and evaluate. The ten recently released pilots, joining the stable of already released series, include several animated series for children (Buddy, Tech Detective; Sarah Solves It, and the Stinky and Dirty Show), a fully acted children's series (Just Old Magic), and several comedy, action and drama series including The New Yorker Presents, Point of Honor, Man in the High Castle, Cocked, and Mad Dogs. Amazon Studios Vice President Roy Price is quoted on Amazon.com as saying, "Our first pilot sea-

son of 2015 brings some of the greatest storytellers in the business to Amazon customers with works of novelty and passion. We're very excited by the shows and look forward to getting customers' reactions." I recently viewed "Cocked", and found it totally entertaining and well done from an artistic view. Many other viewers of "Cocked" have had the same impression, as 1535 reviews of "Cocked" have been posted on Amazon, with 922 reviewers giving it 5 stars, and 352 giving it 4 stars, with the remaining 231 giving it lower scores, with an overall average of 4.3 out of 5 stars. I agree with the consensus of many of the reviewers who stated that "Cocked" included a good blend of both humor and drama.

In terms of accessibility, the Amazon Prime streaming media, including the videos and the million-plus streaming music titles, are available on almost all internet-connected devices, including computers, tablets, Amazon's Fire devices, Apple and Android powered devices, set top streaming media boxes and sticks, and gaming consoles. Personally, I have watched a reasonable selection of Amazon's "SVOD" (Streaming Video on Demand) directly on my desktop computer browser (mostly Firefox), my Android smartphone, and on my primary flat screen TV. On my smartphone I use the basic Amazon app to access my Prime account, and then click on the menu icon on the top left corner of the screen to select the desired media types, and then choose the specific music or videos that I want. Any movies or TV shows with the "Prime" logo across their top left corner are available to Prime subscribers for free, while some of the new releases under the "Shop" categories, without displaying the Prime logo, are available for sale or rental. On my primary flat screen TV, I use an inexpensive but powerful **Amazon Fire TV Stick**, which plugs directly into an available HDMI port, to access the extensive Prime libraries, as well as content from several other streaming services. In my experience, the extensive collection of over 40,000 free movies and TV shows, as well as over a million free music titles was totally adequate for my needs.

While the streaming media and delivery services such as Netflix helped lead to the de-

(Continued on Page 17)

mise of much of the DVD rental industry, such as **(Amazon Prime Streaming Media Takes on Netflix)**

(Continued from page 15)

the disappearance of Blockbuster, the current technology of widely available broadband Internet along with the reasonably priced "SVOD" (Streaming Media on Demand) services, consumers have several good choices for digital entertainment. I have to agree with Therese Polletti, in her January 14 MSN story, "In Amazon, Netflix battle, consumer is the winner." We all benefit from competition between strong competitors. Watch for even more upcoming enhancements from Amazon and Netflix, as they battle with each other for market share. Just as Netflix appeared from nowhere and defeated Blockbuster, and Amazon is now taking on Netflix, do not count out the upstart competitive services from Walmart, Overstock.com, Hulu Plus, and other services. We really do live in interesting times.

WEBSITES:

<http://www.amazon.com/Cocked/dp/B00RSGI1OU/>

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/help/customer/display.html?nodeId=200444160>

http://www.amazon.com/Prime/Instant/Video/b/ref=sv_atv_0?encoding=UTF8&node=2676882011

<http://www.msn.com/en/us/money/technology/in/amazon/netflix/battle/consumer/is/the/winner/ar/AA8aEhj>

<http://finance.yahoo.com/news/analyst/says/amazon/prime/reach/185905585.html>

<http://www.nasdaq.com/article/should/netflix/inc/and/amazoncom/be/making/movies/cm438851>

<http://www.marketwatch.com/story/netflix/is/their/favorite/in/streaming/market/2015/01/16>

<http://www.marketwatch.com/story/amazon/unveils/13/new/shows/2015/01/06>

<http://www.nasdaq.com/article/overstockcom/is/no/threat/to/netflix/or/amazoncom/cm438935>

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/dorothyperman/2015/01/22/netflix/and/amazon/will/have/a/harder/time/with/movies/than/they/did/with/tv/money.cnn.com/2015/01/11/media/amazon/netflix/golden/globes/index.html>

<https://gma.yahoo.com/blogs/abc/blogs/amazon/amzn/movie/plans/shake/hollywood/154658496//abc/news/deals.html>

<https://au.finance.yahoo.com/news/amazon/produce/acquire/original/movies/230111020.html>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netflix>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazon.com#Amazon_Prime

Ira is a member of the Golden Triangle PC Club, and an Associate Professor at Lamar Institute of Technology. He writes a weekly technology column for the Examiner newspaper in Southeast Texas. <www.theexaminer.com>. Ira is also a deputy sheriff who specializes in cybercrime, and has lectured internationally on computer crime and security. ♦



Serious Discussions During the Break at the February 10th Meeting



LAUGHING OUT LOUD

Submitted by **Helen Karagozian, LACS**

Actual Dialogue of a Former WordPerfect Customer Support Employee

This is a true story from the WordPerfect Help-line, which was transcribed from a recording monitoring the customer care department.

O = Operator; C = Caller

O: Ridge Hall, computer asst.: May I help you?

C: Yes, I'm having trouble with WordPerfect...

O: What sort of trouble?

C: Well, I was just typing along, and all of a sudden the words went away.

O: Went away?

C: They disappeared.

O: Hmm. So what does your screen look like now?

C: Nothing.

O: Nothing?

C: It's blank: It won't accept anything I type.

O: Are you still in WordPerfect, or did you get out?

C: How do I tell?

O: Can you see the "C: prompt" on the screen?

C: What's a sea-prompt?

O: Never mind, can you move your cursor around the screen?

C: There isn't any cursor; I told you, it won't accept anything I type.

O: Does your monitor have a power indicator?

C: What's a monitor?

O: It's the thing with the screen on it that looks like a TV. Does it have a light that tells you when it's on?

C: I don't know.

O: Then look on the back of the monitor and find where the power cord goes into it. Can you see it?

C: Yes, I think so.

O: Great. Follow the cord to the plug, and tell me if it's plugged into the wall.

C: Yes, it is.

O: When you were behind the monitor, did you notice that there were two cables plugged into the back of it, not just one?

C: No.

O: Well, there are. I need you to look back there again and find the other cable.

C: Okay, here it is.

O: Follow it for me, and tell me if it's plugged securely into the back of your computer.

C: I can't reach it.

O: OK. Well, can you SEE it?

C: No.

O: Even if you maybe put your knee on some thing and lean way over?

C: Well, it's not because I don't have the right angle - it's because it's dark.

O: Dark?

C: Yes - the office light is off, and the only light I have is coming from the window.

O: Well, turn on the office light then.

C: I can't.

O: No? Why not?

C: Because there's a power failure.

O: A power A POWER FAILURE? Aha. Okay, we've got it licked now. Do you still have the boxes and manuals and packing stuff that your computer came in?

C: Well, yes, I keep them in the closet....

O: Good. Go get them, and unplug your system and pack it up just like when you got it. Then take it back to the store you bought it from.

C: Really? Is it that bad?

O: Yes, I'm afraid it is.

C: Well, all right then, I suppose. What do I tell them?

O: Tell them you're too stupid to own a computer!

Samsung Electronics

C: Can you give me the telephone number for Jack?

O: I'm sorry, sir, I don't understand who you are talking about.

C: On page 1, section 5, of the user guide, it clearly states that I need to unplug the FAX machine from the AC wall socket and telephone Jack before cleaning. Now, can you give me the number for Jack?

O: I think it means the telephone plug on the wall!

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Annual membership Dues:

Regular	\$ 40
Family-Associate	12
Students	18
Contributing	50
Supporter	75
Benefactor	100
Renewal, Electronic Newsletter	30

A subscription to *User Friendly* is included with membership.

Associate members are people who live in the same household or work for the same company as a regular member; they do not receive their own subscriptions to *User Friendly*, but may read it on the LACS website or on Yahoo Groups.

Students must prove full-time status.

In addition to monthly general meetings, members enjoy these special benefits:

- Monthly printed Newsletter *User Friendly*. We publish your article submissions or free classified ads to buy or sell your computer items.
- Get help by phone from Members who are Quick Consultants listed in Use Friendly.
- Get help by e-mail by using our LACSLIST Yahoo Group Mail List. Simply address your e-mail questions to [lacslist\(at\)yahoogroups.com](mailto:lacslist(at)yahoogroups.com)
- Receive important news and announcements via LACS's Yahoo Group e-mail lists.

- Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to help solve your problems regarding selected topics.
- Eligibility to win door prizes in the General Meeting's "Lucky Draw."
- Information on training, swap meets and trade shows.
- Occasional product discounts, special offers, etc.
- Free software and computer books (if you review them for *User Friendly*).
- Rewards for Recruiting Members: LACS will extend your membership for three months for each new Regular member you recruit.

LACS

Membership Application

Please bring your dues and this form to a meeting or mail them to:

Los Angeles Computer Society, 11664 NATIONAL BLVD. #343, LOS ANGELES CA 90064-3802

Please PRINT Clearly

[] New [] Renewal

[] Regular - \$40.00 [] Associate - \$12.00 [] Student - \$18.00

[] Renewal with electronic, no paper, newsletter - \$30.00

[] Contributor - \$50.00 [] Supporter - \$75.00 [] Benefactor - \$100.00 [] Other \$_____

Name: First

Last

Name of Associate:

First

Last

Address:

City, State, Zip + 4

Day Phone:

Evening Phone:

[] Do not publish in roster

e-Mail Address:

Who invited you to join LACS?



First Class Mail

Editor..... Leah Clark
Electronic Editor ..Karl Springer
IndexerLeah Clark
Proof ReadersVirginia Ford, Lance Hegamin, Jim McKnight and Stephanie Nordlinger

FREE!

Earn 3 months of free membership for every new regular member you bring in.

User Friendly is published by the Los Angeles Computer Society,
11664 NATIONAL BLVD, #343
LOS ANGELES CA 90064-3802

Voice-mail: 310- 398-0366. Web site: <http://www.lacspc.org>
Subscription is included in the membership dues.

DIRECTIONS TO GENERAL MEETING

From the North:

Take Sepulveda Blvd. SOUTH to W. 80th St. Turn WEST-right and go about one mile to Emerson Ave. Turn SOUTH-left and go one long block to W. 80th Place. Fellowship Hall is on the Northwest corner of Emerson and W. 80th Place.

From the South, East or West: Take Manchester Ave. to Emerson Ave. Turn North and go about eight blocks to W. 80th Place. Fellowship Hall is on the Northwest corner of Emerson and W. 80th Place. There is plenty of street parking and a small parking lot West of the church.

