User Friendly

IN THIS ISSUE

Click Here to see our Meetup page, and Here to follow us on Twitter. See Page 8.

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An International Association of Technology & Computer User Groups

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NOVEMBER GENERAL MEETING

Catastrophic Meteorite Impacts on Earth

Speaker: **William I. Newman**

UCLA Professor, Astronomy and Physics

Professor Newman will explore the threat of extermination of life on Earth by an extreme impact event. At least five have taken place during the last 200 million years; our moon was created by a supermassive event much earlier. There are extraordinary numbers of such materials in our outer solar system. How is it that we are still alive? Prof. Newman and his colleagues have demonstrated by using advanced computational methods that the Earth is remarkably immune to such events, but that doesn't explain why they occur. The basis of modern science is to develop a physics-based theory, a conjecture demonstrated by independently repeated testing, to explain what we observe.

Meet Our Presenter

William I. Newman is a Professor in the Departments of Earth, Planetary, and Space Sciences, Physics & Astronomy, and Mathematics at UCLA. He earned a B.Sc.(Hon.) and M.Sc. in physics (University of Alberta), and an M.S. and Ph.D. in astronomy and space science (Cornell). He was a member of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, and he is a Fellow of the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation. His research interests range from theoretical geophysics and astrophysics to signal processing and advanced computational methods, from pattern formation in nature to theoretical biology. He has published over 100 papers and graduate textbooks, and has received much international recognition over 30 years.

Tuesday, November 14, 2017, 7:30 - 9:00 PM
Westchester United Methodist Church
Fellowship Hall
8065 Emerson Ave., Westchester, L.A. 90045
An informal Computer Q & A Roundtable meets from **6:30 to 7:20** to answer individual questions.
Refreshments and socializing at **7:00**
More info: www.lacspc.org
or at 310-398-0366
All are welcome.

FROM YOUR EDITOR

LACS 2018 OFFICERS

At the October general meeting these members were voted into office for 2018. We thank them for their dedication and give them our support.

- Stanley Johnson: President
- Stephanie Nordlinger: Vice President
- Randi Pollack: Secretary
- Charlotte Semple: Treasurer
- Paula Van Berkom: Director
- George Wolkon: Director
- Leah Clark, Jim McKnight and E. J. Rozek have one more year left on their two-year terms as Directors.

DIGITAL PHOTO SIG
Thank you, Elliot and Nancy

Elliot Silverstein, who has been a very committed leader of the Digital Photo SIG, is resigning after the October 23 meeting. He has provided us with interesting topics and much knowledge for about 14 years. We give him our heartfelt thanks for all he's done. We also thank Nancy Cattell for all the years she was co-leader. She's an excellent photographer. We wish both of them the best.

If we wish to continue this SIG, we will need someone else to take over as leader. Are there other interests members would like to pursue as a Special Interest Group (SIG)? Some of the SIG topics that other user groups have include: hardware, website design, investing, astronomy, photography, smartphones/mobile devices, social media, Windows and Office programs and genealogy. Let us know if you have any ideas. It is always fun to get together with those who have the same interests. But it does take someone to coordinate the meetings.

Virtual Technology Conference
Saturday, 11/04/17
@ 1 PM ET

Conference Description & Registration Links go to

apcug2.org/category/virtual-tech-conference

Free 2017 Fall Virtual Technology Conference
Saturday, November 4
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM Pacific Time

TYPEFACES/FONTS FOR
USER FRIENDLY

With the October, 2017 issue I began investigating a more readable look for *User Friendly*. I tried the Garamond typeface, but a lot of readers found it too light and hard-to-read.

With this November issue, I'm using Bookman Old Style which I like a lot better. Please let me know how you like it. If many don't like it, I'll go back to the original Rockwell.

Here is an example of Rockwell so you can compare. Both are size 11.

> With this November issue, I'm using Bookman Old Style which I like a lot better. Please let me know how you like it. If many don't like it, I'll go back to the original Rockwell.

I appreciate your feedback. My main objective is to accommodate my readers.

DAYTIME SIG

As you can tell from the report on page 7, there are a lot of interesting discussions and much learning going on at the Daytime SIG. But... No one showed up at the October meeting! This SIG won't meet in November or December, and we must decide if it is going to resume in January.

GENERAL MEETING REPORT
October 10, 2017

By **Leah Clark**, LACS Editor
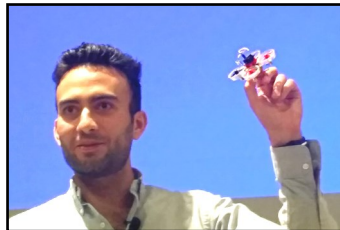Speaker: **Joshua Sharfi**
Drones

Joshua Sharfi has had a drone career for about four years. After his uncle bought him a drone to film his house for a real estate job, Joshua was hooked. From there he started filming music videos and movies. He got to work with tech companies, building drones, and doing fun, innovative things.

About three or four years ago, you needed many experts and engineers to get drones to fly. It was difficult to travel with large crates of very sensitive equipment. Today, the same drones that took $30,000.00 to build, and four people to pilot can be bought at Best Buy for $500.00. Technology is the only thing that gets cheaper as time goes on. New technology grows so quickly! There's always someone to make things better, cheaper and more rugged.

Joshua showed an impressive video taken from drones. He told us about being a technical director for the TV show, *Drone Wars*, which was filmed in Croatia.

Joshua showed us a small drone intended for racing. It can go up to 100 miles per hour in less than a second. They go so fast that a pilot can't watch them on site, so they wear a pair of goggles that are wirelessly connected to the onboard camera. It can't be done by WiFi because there would be a little bit of a delay, and even a millisecond delay would mean a 10 to 15-foot delay. It has a two-camera setup; one for the First Person View (FPV) and one for recording HD videos. This drone racer is often built in someone's garage.

Drone racing is a fun, cheap and exciting thing to do for an adrenaline rush. When you put on the goggles, you become transformed, feeling like you're sitting in the cockpit. It's not virtual reality - it IS reality!

Joshua flew a little racing drone around the room, then showed us the video he took of everyone in the room. He passed two little drones around so we could see them up close. This drone cost about $100.00. The batteries are about $16.00 per pack, the goggles are $250.00, and the radio is around $200.00. The same goggles and radio will work for all your drones. This drone is made out of a carbon fiber frame that's very light and rugged. The 3D printed camera mount is bendable and very hard to destroy.

This presentation became very interactive with many questions, answers, and comments.

To become a drone pilot you must take FAA tests to fly legally. When you're flying as a hobby, it's pretty much open as long as you fly under 400 feet. FAA regulations are constantly changing. Liability insurance is necessary as pilots can be held liable for every kind of crash, even if it's not their fault. Pilots are not only meeting the rules

but usually practice well above them.

Someone asked if a drone could get a life preserver out to a swimmer faster than a lifeguard could swim to him. The problem with that is it would be costly to have the equipment kept on standby, and it would take time to boot up the computer system and check all the sensors.

There are a billion people in this world who don't have access to all-weather roads. Drones can carry supplies, food and medical provisions to people in small villages whose roads have been flooded or iced out.

Anti-collision technologies are getting more and more involved and complex.

In answer to questions, Joshua discussed radio interference, maintaining flightpath, controlling the camera's automatic and manual settings, maintaining position and maneuvering the drone in wind, and controlling angle, pitch and speed. Sensors have connections to 17 GPS satellites. The drones have barometers, gyroscopes, and many sensors. Drones are being adapted to carry passengers. Many drones can be detected by radar.

We've had remote controlled helicopters and planes for a long time. The quadcopter platform gives a lot of advantages over the traditional helicopter, with more aerial effects of yaw, rudder, and speed. Joshua said that autopilot mechanisms are getting so smart that 16-year-old kids may be able to do his job for $20.00 an hour! Most drones are quadcopters, but there are octocopters and decocopters. These give redundancy, in case units fail.

Most drones operate at 2.4 GHz, the model airplane frequency. The lower the frequency, the further they can fly. They cannot interfere with police or military frequencies.

Can drones replace fireworks? Fireworks are polluting, cause collateral damage, upset pets, and cause car alarms to go off. Joshua

showed a video of a drone hula hoop light show. A couple of drones were retrofitted with hula hoops. Motors were placed on the hoops, and LED lights were put inside the hoops. The effect was spectacular.

The Super Bowl had a drone light show with 500 to 1000 drones in a synchronous choreographed dance that moved across the NFL show.

Drones can be noisy because they are displacing a lot of air. They can still be used for military surveillance because they can operate at a very high altitude with very powerful telescopes. All sorts of drones are used in the military.

Even though technology is moving so fast, we are still stuck on batteries. They are the biggest roadblock preventing us from moving forward faster.

The Chinese-made DGI drones take such detailed flight logs, that even if you don't have a memory card in the drone, it takes pictures, GPS coordinates, headings, and vectors. Everything is loaded to some service in Beijing. No one knows the ultimate use of what they're doing there. The U.S. military has banned the use of all DGI drones. ❖

DIGITAL PHOTO SIG REPORT
September 25, 2017

By **Elliot Silverstein,** LACS

The topics discussed at the September 25 meeting of the Digital Photo SIG included items related to photographing people. These included lighting, both natural and flash, posing the subject, and overall composition of the photo.

Several tutorials from YouTube were presented. One showed the effects of different lens focal lengths on the composition, in particular on the blurring of the background while maintaining good in-focus views of the subject. Lenses of about 50 to 120 mm focal length seemed to be preferred for portraits. A 50mm lens shows the subject as seen by the naked eye.

One point often stressed is the recommendation to use flash when taking portraits outdoors. Placing the subject in the shade, or at least looking away from the sun, avoids the subject's need to squint (when looking into the sun). And it can achieve reasonable light balance across the face of the subject. It was recommended that the ratio of fill-in light from the flash should be about half that of the ambient light, at least that is a good starting point for setting one's flash. And it is important to use a camera mode that permits the flash to fire, even though the camera sees enough light so that it may conclude that flash is not required.

Soft lighting, as obtained from ambient light or a large light source is generally preferable to the hard light that results from a small source such as an on-camera flash. Use of a large white or silver reflector near the subject can help in this regard.

In addition to showing the YouTube videos, we also showed several tutorials from the site "Cambridge in Colour" that is found on the internet. These are not videos, but rather presentations of text and pictures.

"Cambridge in Colour" is recommended as an excellent source for learning about many photographic topics.

We had six people present at the meeting, including the presenter. ❖

DAYTIME SIG REPORT
September 26, 2017

By **Leah Clark**, LACS and
Jim McKnight, LACS

This was another jam-packed meeting with lots of ideas and learning. Here are some of the things discussed.

- Gmail filters out more spam than other Email providers. It has good security.

- Robocalls are a nuisance. There are ways to block them. Nomorobo is effective, but it isn't available for regular landlines. So far there is no way to block calls from random numbers to some cell phone.

- A member was frustrated because the Microsoft Mahjong game wasn't working. Jim suggested she uninstall it, then reinstall it from the Microsoft Store app. A Microsoft Live account is needed to order anything from the app store. Even if it is free, you still need to "buy" it from the store. Worst case would be to "Refresh" Windows 10 then reinstall required apps.

- Windows 10 is constantly doing updates. Using a metered connection limits Windows checking for updates and reduces data usage on a network. Log into an administrator user account; go to Settings →Network & Internet →WiFi →Manage known networks. Click on the WiFi network that you are on and click to choose "Set as metered connection."

- When you start up **Windows 10** for the first time, they don't tell you that you can get a "Local" user account. The option is mostly hidden, but you can google how to create a "Local" User account. microsoft.live.com is the official site for

your Microsoft account. If you have your Win 10 user account connected to your Microsoft account, then the PC Log-in password must be the same as the live.com log-in password.

- Your Skype account can accidentally get tied into your Microsoft account since Microsoft now owns Skype.

- You can get into all Microsoft apps with the one and same password, as you can get into all Google apps with one ID.

- Win 10 START Menu: You can turn off live tiles by right-clicking on them. You can delete tiles from the Start menu.

- Internet Explorer is still available in Windows 10. You can hide the Edge Browser, but not remove it. When you get Win 10, your default PDF viewer is the Edge Browser. You can install Adobe Reader (now called Acrobat Reader DC) and then set it as the default PDF reader. PDF readers are built into most browsers. Edge is more than a browser; it's also a PDF reader among other things. See Jim's Windows 10 Install checklist for details on setting up Internet Explorer 11.

- With every new version of Windows 10, Microsoft is taking things away from the Control Panel and putting them in the Settings Window (the Gear icon). For now, the Control Panel still shows default programs and file types. They are gradually moving pieces over to the Settings screen. One member says she had to google to find out where something was. Both the Spring and Fall Creators Updates are making things harder to find, and Google has not caught up. To see what version of Windows 10 you have, search WINVER on the PC and click on the run command. The Spring Creators update is version 1703. The Fall Creators Update is version 1709. Any versions lower than that are OLD.

- **LibreOffice** is a free full office-suite program similar to Microsoft Office. How you

do things is different, so you have to learn it. Some people are happy just using WordPad. Another alternative is Google Docs. LibreOffice is easy to download from the web, and there are a lot of YouTube videos showing how to do any task.

- Jim uses Ninite.com to download most common free programs without a lot of questions and ads. Ninite will also check for updates and download them to update all your selected programs with one click.

- The Windows 10 version of Windows Defender adequately protects against adware, spyware, and viruses, but nothing protects you like Sandboxie.

- To clean the screen on a laptop: buy a Screen Cleaner Kit (which includes a little spritzer of screen cleaner liquid and a microfiber cloth). Sold everywhere.

- If your cursor stops working, the first thing to do is to try an alternate mouse or the track point or the trackpad on a laptop. If it is the mouse, find out if the battery went dead in the mouse or if a cable became undone. If it's frozen for real, press the power button for 1 second and wait for a shutdown to complete. If nothing happens, hold the Power button down for 15-30 seconds.

- In Windows 10, by default, when you press the power button, the PC goes to Sleep (not Shutdown). Go to Power Options in the Control Panel, and choose "What the power button does." Set it to do a Shutdown when you press the power button. See Jim's install checklist at www.jimopi.net for details.

- In Sleep mode, a laptop continues to drain the battery but only uses little power. Open documents and applications are kept in memory and memory stays powered up. In Hibernation mode, open documents and apps are saved to the hard drive, and there is a total power-down. Jim

recommends just turning the computer off as Windows 10 boots fast.

- A bad thing about Windows 10: Window 7 is sleek and elegant looking, but to make Windows 10 work faster, they keep removing the pretty things.

- You can go to the Task Manager to see what's running. Many background processes are always running. New computers are so fast that you can have a lot of crap running all the time and not notice it. It's good to remove all unnecessary programs.

- With most new laptops, you cannot change the battery or hard drive - they are hidden inside.

- **Solid State Hard Drives** are much faster than spinning hard drives. The best rated solid state hard drive is the Samsung 850 EVO, but Jim has had problems with it in some laptops. The Crucial MX 300 was rated second and is reliable and fast. Jim recommends getting a 500GB SSD as the best price point.

- If you have multiple drives in your PC, you can tell Windows (Win 7 thru 10) where your My Documents folder is. That way you can move all your data from drive C to the secondary hard drive, freeing up space on Drive C. Jim likes using multiple separate hard drives rather than partitioning up one drive.

- You can save your bookmarks by periodically exporting them to the My Documents folder. If you ever need to reinstall your browser, you can import them back in. Also, you can put your most important bookmarks into a handy bookmarks toolbar.

- Many of the add-ons available for Firefox are now available for Chrome.

- Web of Trust (WOT) now gives you a choice of opting out of full-time tracking of what you're doing and is again available for the Firefox and Chrome browsers.

- Jim feels he gets the best search results from Google, but Google tracks your searches to place ads. Duck Duck Go supposedly does not track your searches.

- Jim says never to allow third-party cookies, which let websites know where you have been on other websites. He also selects to "Clear history when Firefox closes." Note: If you select to "Delete cache, or temporary internet files, a lot of web pages won't be saved in your browser to make it faster to go to them again. You can tell CCleaner not to clear certain cookies. If you do your logins when you are in Sandboxie, they won't remember you. You must do the log-in without Sandboxie.

- Jim lists his recommended Firefox add-ons on his website under Firefox Tips.

- **Internet of Things** (IoT) devices should be kept on a separate network from your main network. Have two networks, one private and one guest (both with passwords), so someone who hacks into one of your IoT devices cannot get into your personal data. There are network monitoring programs to help see what devices are on your Home Network. Belarc Advisor will list everything on your network.

- **Mesh Routing** is the newest way to get wireless coverage through your whole house. It puts multiple connected routers around your house.

- Advertisers can pay AdLock Plus to let their ads go through!

- Malwarebytes only protects you full time if you get the paid version.

- LifeLock identity protection is now affiliated with Norton.

- To find icons on the desktop click the cursor on a blank spot on the desktop. Then type the first letter of the icon you want to find.

- Nine members plus Jim attended this meeting. ❖

LACS NOTICES

WELCOME ALL

George Wolkon
Database Manager, LACS

New Members (2
Jack Crane
Freda Sanders

Renewals (6)

Jim Fimiami	Jim Louie *
Bobbi Gold	Michael Napoli
Stanley Johnson	Freda Sanders
Jim Louie *	*Contributor

HOW TO CHANGE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Go to www.lacspc.org. Click on **Member Forms** in the bar under the picture. Under **Membership Update,** select **Click Here** for either the DOC or PDF form. Fill it out and bring it to a meeting or mail it. Or email your changes to membership@lacspc.org.

LACS HAS JOINED MEETUP

Our Meetup group is called:
"*Los Angeles Computer Society and Technology Meetup.*"

Go to http://www.meetup.com/Los-Angeles-Computer-Society-and-Technology-Meetup/

and click on "**Join Us.**" Also, **RSVP** for our general meetings**.** Please join - it's free. If others see that a lot of people are interested, they will be encouraged to join LACS. We hope this will result in new members.

We need someone to contact those who have expressed an interest, but have not come to a meeting.

LACS IS ON TWITTER

On **Twitter**, follow us at:

https://twitter.com/LA_CompSoc
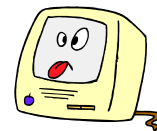
The LACS board voted to discontinue the **Facebook** page for now.

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 Regular LACS membership ($40.00), and Jim will fix your PC problem, too.

GENERAL MEETING PRESENTATIONS

November: Catastrophic Meteorite Impacts on Earth
December: Holiday Potluck

Note: This schedule is subject to change. Check your email and *User Friendly* for updates.

PODCASTS

Listen to the podcasts of our general meetings. Go to http://www.lacspc.org/category/audio-files/. Click on the session you want to hear.

GENERAL MEETING SNACK SCHEDULE

By **Sylvia Q. Davis**, Hospitality Chair

Refreshments and socializing will be at **7:00**, with the meeting starting at **7:30**. Please bring refreshments at **7:00.**

November 14:	O through S
December 12:	Holiday Potluck
January 9:	T through Z
February 13:	A through D
March 13:	E through I
April 10:	J through N
May 8:	O through S

Bring **finger-food** treats such as fresh fruit, veggies, nuts, cookies, cold drinks and the like. LACS provides hot drinks.

See your email for updates and reminders.

Please pick up your leftovers and serving pieces at the end of the meeting.

NOVEMBER 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 **All Saints Day**	2 **Dia de los Muertos**	3	4
5 Daylight Saving Time Ends	6 Board Meeting 7:00 PM	7	8	9	10	11 Veterans Day
12	13 Basics & Beyond SIG 7:00 PM	14 **General Meeting 7:30 PM**	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 Happy Thanksgiving	24	25
26	27	28 No Daytime SIG	29	30		

See page 2 regarding the Digital Photo SIG and page 7 about the Daytime SIG.

Watch your email for the dates of possible future meetings at the Microsoft Store.

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

General Meeting: Fellowship Hall on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:30 PM.

Most SIGs meet at the Santa Monica College Bundy Campus, room **236**, unless otherwise noted. The **Daytime SIG** meets at the Felicia Mahood Senior Center.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIG's)

SIG meetings are led by and for LACS members. Visitors are welcome to attend.
For information about a SIG, check your e-mail or call the contact person.

Basics & Beyond SIG Paula Van Berkom   310-398-6734   2nd Mon. 7 PM SMC, Bundy Campus

Daytime SIG   Jim McKnight   310-823-7829   4th Tues. 1 PM, Felicia Mahood Ctr.

Digital Photo SIG   See page 2.

New SIGs can be created if there is sufficient interest and leadership.

ADDRESSES

Felicia Mahood Senior Center, 11338 Santa Monica Blvd., West LA 90025 (at Corinth)

Fellowship Hall, Westchester United Methodist Church
8065 Emerson Ave., Westchester 90045

Santa Monica College Bundy Campus, 3171 S. Bundy Drive, LA 90066.
Go west on College Dr. (1 block South of Airport Avenue, 2 blocks North of Rose.) Drive to the back to park in the lot behind the building. 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 using a particular program or topic, please volunteer to be a consultant. You don't have to be an expert.** To volunteer for this list or to make corrections, please e-mail or call Leah Clark at Leahjc (at) sbcglobal.net or at 310-677-2792. More Quick Consultants, and more categories are always needed. You may decline or postpone a call if it comes at an inconvenient time.

Adobe Creative Suite: PDF,
    InDesign, PhotoShop, etc. - 17
Android Smartphones - 5
Apple devices - 15
Anti Malware - 12
Digital Imaging, Editing - 8
Digital Photography - 8
Dragon Naturally Speaking - 4
Genealogy - 5, 7
Hardware - 12

LACS Mail List - 6
Linux - 11
Lotus Word Pro, Approach - 12
Mozilla Firefox - 12
MS Excel - 3, 15
MS Word - 3, 4, 10
MS Outlook - 5, 15, 17
MS PowerPoint - 15
MS Publisher - 2, 7

Photoshop - 17
QuickBooks -18
Quicken - 3, 5
Thunderbird - 12
Visual Basic - 13
Websites - 13
Windows 7 - 16
Windows - 5, 12
WordPerfect - 5

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	7:00 AM	5:00 PM
8	Silverstein, Elliott	310-670-1544	10:00 AM	10:00 PM
10	Beckman, Loling	310-471-7893	10:00 AM	6:00 PM
11	Hughes, Bill	424-259-1818	Any	Any
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 Berkom, Paula	310-398-6734	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
16	Johnson, Carol	310-372-8535	10:00 AM	9:00 PM
17	Rozek, E. J.	310-823-3811	Noon	8:00 PM
18	Semple, Charlotte	310-398-5052 M-F	9:00 AM	5:00 PM

OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND LEADERS

Title	Name	Term	Telephone
President	Stanley Johnson	2017	424-216-6984
Past President	Maurice Stephenson	2017	310-625-0450
Vice President	Stephanie Nordlinger	2017	323-299-3244
Secretary	Lee Freehling	2017	310-837-4022
Treasurer	Charlotte Semple	2017	310-398-5052
Director	Leah Clark	2018	310-677-2792
Director	Jim McKnight	2018	310-823-7829
Director	E. J. Rozek	2018	310-823-3811
Director	Paula Van Berkom	2017	310-398-6734
Director	George Wolkon	2017	310-459-2671
APCUG Rep.	Leah Clark		310-677-2792
Car Pool Coordinator	Freda Sanders		
Change of Address	Karl Springer		424-646-3410
" "	George Wolkon		310-459-2671
Corporate Counsel	Stephanie Nordlinger		323-299-3244
CCSC Computer Lab	Loling Beckman		310-471-7893
Hospitality Chair	Sylvia Davis		213-924-4927
Asst. Hospitality Chair	Freda Sanders		
Membership Database	George Wolkon		310-459-2671
Newsletter Editor	Leah Clark		310-677-2792
Program Chair	Stephanie Nordlinger		323-299-3244
" "	Stanley Johnson		424-216-6984
Publicity Chair	Annette Tossounian		310-559-2847
Publicity - Press	Mark Presky		310-398-0366
Quick Consultants	Leah Clark		310-677-2792
SIG Coordinator	**Vacant** - please volunteer		
Webmaster	Paula Van Berkom		310-398-6734
Welcome Chair	Irene Mussack		310-672-3077
Asst. Welcome Chair	Linda La Roche		310-645-4546

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The **ContactUs (at) lacspc.org** address goes to our **president** and **vice-president**.
If the message is for another board member, they will forward it to the correct person.
To contact other officers, directors, leaders or members directly, members may use our roster for phone numbers and e-mail addresses.

UBER VS. LYFT: WHICH IS BETTER?

By **Bob Rankin**
Ask Bob, October 5, 2017
www.askbobrankin.com

Which Car Service is Better?

Wikipedia defines the term "disruptive innovation" as "an innovation that creates a new market and value network... displacing established market-leading firms, products, and alliances." Wikipedia itself is one such example, displacing the traditional encyclopedia market.

Streaming video services such as Netflix have practically obsoleted the DVD rental business. In the next decade, autonomous cars may replace human-operated ones. But for now, we still have plenty of cars and plenty of drivers disrupting the traditional transportation markets via Uber and Lyft.

The only controversy left is, "Which service is better?" The answer is pretty clear; Lyft offers the better deal, all else being equal. However, "all else" is often not equal. Let's take a look at both services' apps, standard price rates, and policies.

The Uber app and the Lyft app are quite similar, which isn't surprising given that they do very similar things. There are some differences worth considering.

Both apps try to detect your current location for pickup using your smartphone's location services, so you should have that option enabled. You can change the pickup location either by moving a pin on a map or by typing in a street address. Both apps then show you the cars near you, with an estimated arrival time for each. This is an improvement over taxi services that require a specific address. For example, I once called for a cab and gave the address of a shop I had just left. Unfortunately, its street address is that of the shopping mall in which it is located, so the driver looked for me more than a block away.

Location, Location, Location

If you don't have a smartphone, you can use your desktop computer to visit Lyft or Uber, create an account, and get a price quote. Lyft lets you hail a ride from their website, but Uber makes it harder. After signing up at www.Uber.com, you have to visit www.m.Uber.com, to trick Uber into thinking you're using a mobile device.

Destinations can be specified by street address, landmark name, or even personal locations stored on your Google Maps, e. g., "Grandma's." Uber wants a destination first; Lyft starts with your pickup location. In fact, you only need to specify a destination for Lyft if you want a cost estimate before booking a ride.

Lyft lets you add a "waypoint," a place to stop between your pickup and destination. This is useful if you want to grab a Starbucks or drop off a companion on your way home. It's possible to negotiate such waypoints with an Uber driver, but Lyft takes the hassle out of it.

Once you book a ride, both services display a map that shows your driver's progress towards you and estimated arrival time. You'll get a beep on your phone when the driver is one minute away, so you don't have to stand outside waiting or even pay attention to the progress map. No taxi service will do that.

Once your ride arrives, Uber gives you two minutes to board before starting to bill you for waiting time. Lyft doesn't start billing until you are in the vehicle. Drivers for both services may cancel a trip if you fail to board within five minutes of their arrival. (Cancellations get rather tricky, requiring links to Uber's and Lyft's policies.)

Fees and Payment

Both services accept credit or debit cards; Lyft also accepts Paypal. Card numbers are stored on the services' servers. Either way, when you get to your destination, you can just jump out and go, without fumbling for a

card or with a payment terminal. After your ride, you can rate your driver, and the driver can rate you. You can also add a tip if you wish, all of which goes to the driver.

Here is a comparison of standard rates charged by Lyft and Uber, followed by a discussion of why they may vary widely.

	Uber X	Lyft
Booking/Service fee	$1.85	$1.80
Cost per minute	$0.15	$0.15
Cost per Mile	$0.90	$0.90
Minimum charge	$5.35	$3.50
Cancellation fee	$5.00	$5.00

The costs shown above are for the lowest-priced, single-passenger service offered by each company. Uber and Lyft offer slightly cheaper "ride-pooling" options if you're willing to share a back seat with one or two strangers, and wait while the driver looks for more passengers. In my experience, both in suburban and downtown areas, drivers spend little time cruising for more passengers and I have yet to share a ride.

Service, Swank, and Surge

Both companies offer different levels of service and swank, from the economical but somewhat awkward ride-sharing option to deluxe limo and SUV rides. Their prices vary accordingly and are shown during the booking process. Neither company has a handicapped-accessible vehicle class.

The biggest price difference occurs in "surge pricing" situations, when a spike in demand drives prices up dramatically. Surge pricing helps to keep wait times reasonable by a) persuading more drivers to get out on the road, and b) dissuading potential passengers. Uber's zones in which surge pricing is temporarily applied tend to be large. Lyft's zones are much smaller, so it's possible to escape a surge-priced zone by walking a block or two.

The quality of vehicles and drivers is about the same whether you ride Uber or Lyft. In fact, your driver may work with both companies, switching from one to the other depending on passenger demand in his/her area. The ride experiences I have had are the same as taxi rides I have taken; perhaps a little better, overall.

I wouldn't price shop Uber vs. Lyft on trips of less than 15 miles or so. Taxis will always lose to either Uber or Lyft, and not by trivial amounts. Some apps will take your starting and end points, and give you side-by-side estimates of Uber, Lyft, and even taxi companies in your area. But their estimates are based on published prices, so

THESE ARE A FEW OF MY FAVORITE THINGS

BY **Greg Skalka**, President
Under the Computer Hood User Group
Drive Light, June 2017
www.uchug.org
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Raindrops on roses
And whiskers on kittens
Bright copper kettles and warm woolen
  mittens
Brown paper packages tied up with strings
These are a few of my favorite things
(from "My Favorite Things," by Oscar Hammerstein / Richard Rodgers)

In *The Sound of Music*, Maria (played by Julie Andrews in the film version), a nun turned governess, sings of her favorite things to her seven young charges. I wonder how her list might be different if the story was set today, rather than immediately before World War II. Maria's list is of simple things; would today's Maria include tech items like smartphones and Facebook-likes in a more modern list?

What would a list of today's favorite tech-

nology items look like? And what constitutes a favorite? Is it something you enjoy (like 3D movies) or are merely dependent on and addicted to (perhaps smartphones)? Rodgers and Hammerstein provided some guidance in their lyrics:

When the dog bites
When the bees sting
When I'm feeling sad
I simply remember my favorite things
And then I don't feel so bad

So, if I were to make a list of some of my favorite tech things, it would need to contain things that make me smile and feel happy (perhaps even after being bitten and stung.) They don't have to be tremendously useful (raindrops on roses aren't), but should have few negative connotations. That can be a high hurdle for a lot of our technology, as it seems there is a downside to most of the tech we know and love. Some of the things that would not make my list because of this include:

Smart phones - While it is remarkable to carry access to the internet in your pocket (assuming you have a big enough pocket), these devices can also enable a lot of anti-social behavior. Smartphone addiction is real - the fear of being without your smartphone is called nomophobia. In spite of being one of the most popular devices and being in practically everyone's hands, we are forced, out of a concern for safety, to enact laws prohibiting their use while driving.

Twitter - While I'll admit I don't use it, it would seem to be a fun and useful way to communicate. It appears to be a poor way for a President to communicate.

Drones - Quadcopters seem fun; I'd like to try one sometime. I've seen some that can fly by themselves, even unskilled pilots could use them, and they are pre-programmed to follow you and take photos and video. Unfortunately, they are sometimes used to invade privacy and interfere with fire crews

and commercial aviation, and so now require regulation.

Facebook - What could be wrong with a way to stay in communication with friends and relatives, and share personal information and photos? Unfortunately, its use can become an addiction, it can be a tool for bullying and it can be poor at protecting that personal information.

Email - Another great way to communicate easily, quickly and inexpensively, until your inbox gets filled up with spam, your email account is hacked and you click on a malicious link in a phishing email.

If you look at Maria's favorite things, they are all pretty innocent and noncontroversial, even by today's standards. None of them would be subject to laws, regulations or prohibitions (as long as the brown paper packages tied up with string are not left unattended in a public place, and your doctor does not recommend limiting your intake of schnitzel or strudel.) With all this in mind, a few of the favorite tech things I might pick to sing about are:

Maps - I've always been fascinated with maps. I used to collect AAA road maps and have bought all sorts of map software, including Microsoft Streets & Trips and DeLorme Street Atlas USA. Now, map software programs are pretty much obsolete, as Google Maps and Google Earth provide all the maps you could ever want online. Satellite photography and street mapping and imaging provide accurate, detailed and up-to-date information unavailable previously.

GPS - The Global Positioning System was developed by the U.S. military to better locate warfighters and guide munitions, but the signals from its constellation of satellites are available to any user receiver on earth for accurate location and time. It provides the "you are here" to enable easy navigation for any means of travel. The Europeans are currently launching their own constellation

of Galileo satellites to complement the U.S. GPS system, the Russian GLONASS and Chinese BeiDou systems. I own at least six discrete GPS receivers (handheld, car-mount and USB), though now most people get their GPS directions through their smartphones.

Office/productivity software - For someone like me, an engineer that can barely handwrite my name (even my printing is not so great), the ability to write quickly and legibly with a word processing program is wonderful. There is no way you would have ever read a column from me without it. With my technical and math orientation, spreadsheets are so useful and actually fun.

Google searches - With all the information available on the internet, it takes a good search engine to sift out what you want. Though there may be concerns about your browsing information being used to sell advertising, Google is still the king, and it lends its name (Googling) to searching the web for good reason.

Digital music - Though vinyl records are making a bit of a comeback, digital music is now the only way to go for portability and streaming. I may not have as much interest in music as I did as a teen, but I appreciate that I can listen to my MP3 files anywhere.

USB flash drives - When you can have 128 GB of USB3 storage in your pocket (and a small pocket at that) for under $30, it is remarkable. And these drives just keep getting larger (in capacity) and cheaper.

Chromebooks - These are so useful for most users' computing needs. They are light, fast booting, long running (on battery), low cost and great if what you need is mostly web surfing, email and word processing.

Star Wars - It was 40 years ago this Memorial Day weekend that this remarkable movie was released. Three George Lucas trilogies, two Disney movies, a cartoon series and untold numbers of books and other merchandise items later, Star Wars has become part of our tech culture. I was at the Reagan Library a few weeks ago and was reminded that it also informally lent its name to the SDI (Strategic Defense Initiative) missile defense system proposal that was a factor in the ending of the cold war and collapse of the Soviet Union. To me, Star Wars is just great entertainment that inspires real technology and scientific discovery.

Gigabyte Flash drives and boxed sets of Star Wars
Chromebooks and Fitbits and Amazon Prime stores
Searches with Google (don't switch me to Bing)
These are a few of my favorite tech things

When the web's slow
When my screen's blue
When it's filled with ads
I simply remember my favorite tech things
And then I don't feel so bad

(Apologies to R & H) ❖

PAY WITH YOUR PHONE

Maybe Soon, Using Android Pay or Apple Pay

By **Phil Sorrentino**, Contributing Writer
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The Journal of The Computer Club, Inc.
www.sccomputerclub.org
http://Philsorr.wordpress.com

Android Pay and Apple Pay are payment services developed and supported by Google and Apple respectively. They both support in-app and tap-to-pay purchases on their respective mobile devices (phones, tablets, watches). You can use your phone for so many things already, why not add purchasing to the growing list? Your phone is usually in your hands anyway, why bother trying to get out your credit or debit card from your wallet or handbag, just use the phone to authorize the purchase. It's really very easy and recent statistics indicate that either system can be used in over 700,000 stores in the U.S.

In-app purchases are purchases of extra content or subscriptions that you can buy while in an App, using your mobile device or computer. Not all apps offer in-app purchases, but if they do, you will see "Offers In-App Purchases" or "In-App Purchases" on the app page possibly near the "price", "buy" or "get" buttons. In-App purchases may be consumable, like "game currency" or "game hints", or non-consumable, like an "Upgrade to a Pro Edition", or an offer to "Remove Ads". An In-App purchase may allow you to purchase a subscription to a newspaper, a magazine, a game, or even a service like Netflix.

Tap-to-Pay purchases are purchases you make at a store, at the Point-of-Sale (POS) terminal, using just your mobile device. The POS terminal must be a contactless-capable terminal. Your mobile device takes the place of a credit or debit card or cash. Tap-to-Pay purchases are made by bringing the mobile device near the point-of-sale terminal and authorizing and starting the purchase by taping the terminal or possibly pressing a button on the device screen. In order to accomplish this, the device must have a Near Field Communications (NFC) capability built into the device. The Apple iPhone6, iPhone6Plus, iPhone6S, iPhone6Splus, or an iPhoneSE all have the capability built in. Android devices with version 4.4 Kit-Kat or higher are capable if they also have NFC circuitry in the device. Check in Settings in your phone or check the user manual for your particular device. NFC is a set of short range wireless technologies and communications protocols that enable electronic devices to establish communication when brought to within 4 cm (1.6 in) of each other. Communications protocols are a set of rules that allows two or more participants on a communications network to exchange information.

So, believe it or not, in your smartphone there may be four different communications capabilities, each of which also includes an antenna. That little phone is really packed with electronics. Just for review, the communications capabilities are:

- NFC for very close communications, almost touching the phone, up to 1.6 in.
- Bluetooth, for a personal area network up to 10 meters around the device
- Wi-Fi, a local area network up to maybe 100 meters
- And of course, 3G or 4G Cell Phone Tower communications, capable of distances of up to 45 miles.

In populated areas, a cell tower may never be more than a few miles away, but in less populated areas the tower may be beyond the phone's capability. Note that a typical cell phone has enough power to reach a cell tower up to 45 miles away, but depending on the technology of the network, the maximum distance may be as low as 22 miles, due to the timing requirements of the network.

But, back to paying with the phone: In order to make a purchase, you need the appropriate App; Android Pay for the Android phone or Apple Pay for the Apple phone (or Samsung Pay for certain Samsung phones). Once you have downloaded the App, you can add a credit or debit card to the App. You can use the camera to capture your card information or you can enter it manually. This is the card that will eventually be charged for the purchase. You can change the card to be used at any time. Although most cards from almost all U.S. banks can be used, some cards may not.

As with many new technologies, one of the biggest concerns with something like Apple Pay or Android Pay is security. And so, one of the reasons you may want to use your phone for a purchase is because of the improved security over a similar transaction made by a credit or debit card. The purchasing process is a little different in that your

card information is never used during the transaction. Instead, a virtual account number, or one-time transaction code is created and used for the transaction, in place of your true card information. The transaction code can only be used once, and may even expire after a set period of time. Additionally, fingerprint ID authentication is used on devices where a fingerprint reader is available. On devices without a fingerprint reader the purchase is authorized with a password. Great, another password to remember! So, if this system provides better security because of the way it works and if it is more convenient than using a credit or debit card, this may be the way many future purchases will be made.

By the way, Android Pay is different from Google Wallet. Wallet is not for purchasing, it is a peer-to-peer method of transferring money to another person. As the advertisement for Google Wallet states "Google Wallet is a fast, free way to send and request money. You can send money to someone using just their email address or phone number – they don't need to have the Wallet app. All you need is a Google Account and a debit card to get started."

And let's not forget that Apple has recently announced a Peer-to-Peer mobile payment service that will be in the new iOS 11 Operating System.

These money transfer systems may just be an indication of a world that has become more dependent on mobile devices and less reliant on cash for transactions. ❖

Educational, Fun, and Interesting Web Sites

by **Howard Lewis**
Midland Computer Club, MI
http://mcc.apcug.org/
capmidmi (at) yahoo.com

- https://forvo.com/

Forvo is the largest pronunciation guide in the world, the place where you´ll find millions of words pronounced in their original languages. If you have a word you would like to know how to pronounce – whether it be English or one of the hundreds of languages around the world – you might be able to find help at this site. If there is a word you would like to know how to pronounce, you can request someone to pronounce it for you.

- https://www.techrepublic.com/article/what-kinds-of-people-fall-prey-to-identity-theft-phishing-and-hacks-its-not-who-you-think/

Who's most likely to be the victim of hacks and identity theft? Surprisingly, it is not who we normally think that fall prey to the various scams running around. This article looks into some of the data and draws mixed conclusions. Interesting reading!

- https://betanews.com/2017/03/08/disable-ads-file-explorer-windows-10/

If you are getting ads in Windows 10's File Explorer, here is how to disable them (at least temporarily).

- https://support.office.com/en-us/article/office-training-roadmaps-62a4b0dc-beba-4d8e-b79c-0ad200e705a1

Microsoft offers free basic training on the use of several of the Microsoft Office products (Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint and Access). They are in pdf format and can be downloaded to view at your leisure.

- http://deep-web.org/how-to-research/deep-web-search-engines/

We all search the web at various times and we sometimes hear about the "dark web". You don't want to go there unless you know the ramifications! But did you know there is also the "deep web"? The web as we know it is really just a small portion of the internet that the major search engines (Google, Bing, Yahoo, etc.) view. There is much more out there that can be searched with the appropriate search engine. This site lists some of the specialized search engines to find that really hard to find information. ❖

CASH FLOW

as of September 30, 2017
Charlotte Semple, Treasurer

Total Assets	$	9,249.58
Receipts		
Member Dues	$	380.00
Donation	$	50.00
Reimbursement	$	12.00
Total Gross Receipts	$	442.00
Expenses		
Newsletter		181.10
Facilities Rental		60.00
Verizon Wireless		50.08
Total Expenses	$	291.18
Current Total Assets	$	9,400.40

SPECIAL OFFERS

Go to the APCUG website
https://apcug2.org/discounts-special-offers-for-user-groups/ for discounts and special offers for User Groups Members. Avast Anti-virus and Acronis True Image, as well as several book, media and training sites, offer discounts, including the two mentioned below.

Members can save at the **Pearson Technology** websites: InformIT, Cisco Press, Pearson IT Certification, Que Publishing, Adobe Press, and Peachpit Press.
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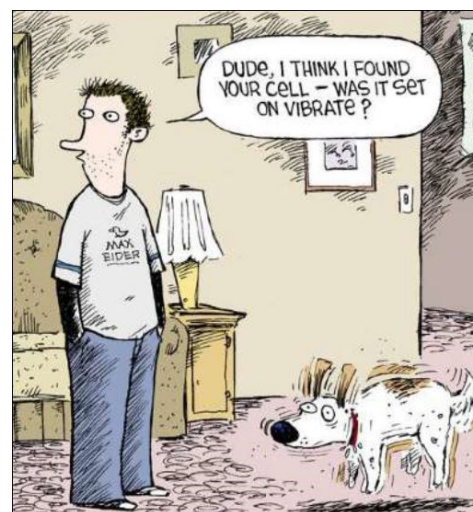See the latest books on digital imaging and photography, gaming, animation, film and video, post-production, audio, music technology, broadcast and theatre from Routledge | Focal Press today! They offer discounts to User Groups.

NOTICE

LAUGHING OUT LOUD

"I forgot to make a back-up copy of my brain. Everything I learned last semester was lost."

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Annual membership Dues:

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

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-- **Annual Holiday Party**
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-- **Computer and Virtual Technology Conferences**

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[ ] With printed newsletter - $40.00   [ ] Associate - $12.00   [ ] Student - $18.00

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

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Name of Associate: First   Last

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Day Phone: Evening Phone: [ ] Do not publish in roster

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Email Address   Email Address of Associate

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DIRECTIONS TO GENERAL MEETING

Westchester United Method-
ist Church Fellowship Hall
8065 Emerson Ave.
Los Angeles CA 90045

From the North:

Take Sepulveda Blvd.
SOUTH to W. 80th St. Turn
WEST/right. Go about one
mile to Emerson Ave. Turn
SOUTH/left. Go one long
block to W. 80th Place. It 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. Go about eight
blocks to W. 80th Place.
Fellowship Hall is on the
Northwest corner of Emerson
and W. 80th Place. There is
street parking and a small
parking lot West of the
church.