User Friendly

IN THIS ISSUE

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JUNE 12 GENERAL MEETING

Becoming Your Own Computer Expert
Speaker: **Philip Bock,** President
Lake Area Computer Enthusiasts, Illinois

Everyone who uses a personal computer, tablet or smartphone has technical problems. Where should you turn? After talking with his club's members and attendees at local tech seminars, Phil realized that a monthly presentation at club meetings would not transform newcomers to our brave new technology world into confident, knowledgeable participants. So, he developed a program to help people improve their tech knowledge and comfort level, especially learning where to look for help if they run into a problem. This program is based on the structured approach to process development and problem-solving that he learned at Xerox Corporation.

Meet Our Presenter
After seven years of active duty in the United States Marine Corps, Phil Bock began a 33-year career in the logistics division of Xerox Corporation. Phil first became interested in computers when he bought his son an Apple II computer in 1978, and later he bought one for himself. He switched to the Windows platform in the 1990's when Xerox gave employees Compaq laptops. He bought his first home PC in 1997, running Windows 95. He went on to using Windows XP, Windows 7, 8, 8.1 and 10 - upgrading hardware along the way. He joined a local Illinois computer club six years ago and was elected its president three years ago.

Tuesday, June 12, 2018, 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

Ride Sharing

If you need a ride to the General Meeting, or if you are able to give a ride, please contact Freda Sanders at 323-230-3278. I think that the day may come when I'm no longer able to drive. How grateful I would be if someone offered me a ride!

Culver City Senior Center

Several members of LACS volunteer one Friday morning a month at the open computer Lab at the CCSC. At this time seniors can use the computers as they like including to access email, the internet, or to use or learn programs. Someone must be present when the computers are being used. Since our volunteers are human, they may get sick or want to go on vacation, so we could use a few more helpers. No special skills are needed. Those using the computers are most appreciative of simple assistance. That gives a good feeling! New volunteers will be partnered with an experienced member, until they feel comfortable being on their own.

Please contact Loling Beckman at <loling (at)earthlink.net> to learn more about what is needed or to volunteer.

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 non-profit corporation on July 17, 1991. Its predecessor was the UCLA PC Users Group.

The Editor of *User Friendly* accepts most contributions of any suitable length from members. Send articles to Leahjc(at)sbcglobal.net in an email message or as a Word document by the **20th of the month.**

Virtual Technology Conference, May 5, 2018

I watched three presentations of the APCUG Virtual Technology Conference (VTC) on May 5. The other three choices were *Create a Smart Home with Home Automation & Voice Assistants, What's New with Ubuntu,* and *Write* and *Publish Your eBook on Amazon Kindle… for Free.* I am finding it hard to keep up with all the new technology; these VTCs really do help. If you missed them, or want to review, you may see the slides at www.apcug2.org.

The first session I attended was *Synchronizing Your P*C by Bill James. I have a PC, laptop, and a smartphone, so I want to get them working together to be more efficient. Bill explained setting up cloud storage as the easiest way to access your data files across all your devices. You can save your data where it is available off-line. Dropbox, Apple's iCloud, Google Drive, and Microsoft's OneDrive keep your data in sync.

Then I watched Jere Minich's Presentation, *Windows 10 Update 2018*, known as *Redstone 4 version 1803.* It will start appearing May 8. Some of the new features are a timeline display, Settings app updates, user interface improvements, Disk Cleanup added to Settings, changes to Windows Defender, Progressive Web Apps (PWA), Edge updates, clutter-free printing, and much more. This session will help me be a little more prepared for what's to come.

The third session I attended was *Teaching Technology to Seniors* by Ray Baxter. There are many seniors who didn't grow up with computers, nor use them in their jobs. They are having a hard time keeping up in our world. Ray gave many helpful ideas from his own experience and from others for when friends and family ask us for help. He emphasized the KISS approach: Keep It Simple Stupid. ❖

GENERAL MEETING REPORT
May 8, 2018

By **Leah Clark**, LACS Editor
Speaker: **Dr. Ronald Brown**
Chromebooks

Ron opened with seven myths about Chromebooks, then he debunked them.

1) Chromebooks only work when connected to the Internet
2) Chromebooks will not run Windows Applications
3) You cannot use MS Word or Excel
4) Chromebooks are cheap computers
5) Chromebooks are for everyone
6) Chromebooks have no hard drive/storage
7) Chromebooks are only a Browser

Chromebooks work well for seniors who don't have a lot of experience with computers. They are for educators, students and business people. They are simple, secure, and fast.

Ron related the history of Chromebooks since they came into being in 2011. School boards favor Chromebooks for their low cost, security, and ease of use. Chromebooks run Android and Linux apps. Ron says he can teach you all you need to know about Chromebooks in 45 minutes! No security software Is required, you do not need to defrag the hard drive, and they cost less than a PC. There are many different models to choose. If you screw something up, just hit a button called "Power Wash." It will completely restore your system. Many computer makers make Chromebooks, but Samsung makes the majority.

Ron explained the Trusted Platform Module (TPM) Chip made by Google. It has all the security software that's on your computer. If anyone tried to open this chip, it would self-destruct. When this chip is on the motherboard, you have a Chromebook. The Chrome system updates the secondary copy, so your work isn't interrupted for updates. When you turn your computer off, they switch, so the secondary copy becomes the primary copy.

When you install a program on a Windows computer, it installs into the Windows operating system, adjusts the registry, and adds a bunch of stuff into the Windows software. The Chromebooks operating system doesn't have programs, only apps, which never get near the operating system.

You have a choice of screen size from 11 inches to 15 inches. You'll have the Chrome operating system, a keyboard, and a small solid state hard drive. Most of your data is stored in the cloud. They all have Bluetooth, USB and HDMI ports. They cost from $150 to $1500.

The Chromebooks that are built for the education market are not sold in stores. They may be on Amazon. You have to be careful that they have an HDMI port in case you want to plug in a larger external monitor. Most Chromebooks come with a touch screen. Chromebooks can download apps from the Play Store, but some older models bought on Amazon may not.

The first Chromebook was the Lenovo N22. They are indestructible, built strong for children. They have an 11.6-inch touch screen. They are sold on Amazon.

Samsung was the first company to release Chromebooks to the public commercially. The Samsung Chromebook Plus came out about two years ago, and the Samsung Chromebook Pro a year later. The only difference between these two is the processor. One may be faster, depending on what software you are using. The screens are among the best you can buy in a laptop. The Asus Chromebook Flip C302 is comparable to the Chromebook Pro. People who do a lot of writing really like its keyboard. You can try it out and compare them at Best Buy.

Ron said we should also look at the Google Pixelbook while we are at Best Buy. It is Google's Chromebook and is the nicest,

sexiest Chromebook laptop that you'll ever see. It is also expensive!

Laptops do not have interchangeable batteries; they are glued in permanently. Your laptop only lasts as long as the battery. The **Chromebox** has the Chrome operating system with the TPM chip in it. It has a USB and all the things you would expect in a Chromebook, but it is just a box. You can plug an external monitor, a keyboard, a mouse, and Bluetooth into it. There are no moving parts and no battery. This will be an excellent option if you don't need a portable device.

You get your Office Web apps from the Chrome Web store; they are all Free! You get your Android apps from the Google Play store. Printing has to be done through a wireless printer. Cables cannot be connected to a Chromebook. You print through the cloud. It is called Google Cloud Print.

Some people use non-web-enabled software for the work they do. They would not be able to use Chromebooks for this activity.

Chromebooks may be purchased at Best Buy, Walmart and Amazon.

Hewey Poplik has an incredible website, *Chromebooks for Seniors* at www.CB4S.NET.

Other references:

- How to set up Classic printing with a Chromebook
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJ1zRCskog4
- Preparing to switch to a Chromebook
  https://youtu.be/8nqfu7xn54Q
- Getting things done with a Chromebook
  https://youtu.be/6GLf0w8j2f8

You can listen to the entire presentation at https://lacspc.org/Podcasts/Chromebooks.mp3

You can see the accompanying slides at

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hkE2qxhwl5cUiBmNtVRqLs_z08Wk6vwB/view?usp=sharing❖

NO PERSONAL PRIVACY

By **Matt Batt**, President
The Computer Club, Inc., Florida
The Journal of The Computer Club, December 20
www.scccomputerclub.org
mbatt453 (at) gmail.com

I want to share three things:
1) something to think about as we enter this time of "no personal privacy"

2) a beneficial program for keeping your PC applications up-to-date

3) a fun website for displaying street views of houses

1) My wife was reading a book on her Kindle and was getting close to the end. She wanted to finish the book, so she cloistered herself in the snug family room chair and had at it. After about half an hour, she finished the book and explained that it really was a great book and she really enjoyed it. A moment or two later, her cell phone made the noise for an incoming email, and she reached over and read it. It was from Amazon, and it asked her how she liked the book that she just finished. That was so spooky! It made us feel like our privacy had been compromised. I'm a very strong proponent of technology advances and all the good things that it can bring, but this just seemed like too much and too close.

A couple of days later, she started another book, read a few chapters and had to put it down as things get busy around the first of the month. Sure enough, after a couple of days, she receives an email from Amazon asking, "how's it going?" Guess she wasn't reading enough and needed to be prodded. Now, I don't know what you think of that intrusion, but I find it really disturbing. Guess we'll have to get used to it or take the Kindle offline.

2) An important part of being safe online is keeping your computer's software up-to-date. Outdated software often contains security exposures that can provide hackers access to your computer. Outdated software can also be

buggy and have performance issues which are usually fixed with a newer version of the software. Unfortunately, if you have lots of different programs, this is an onerous task.

Patch My PC Updater will make patching your PC easy. It is free and keeps over 165 apps up-to-date on your computer. It is an easy way to update or install any of these programs on to your computer.

When you open Patch My PC Updater, it will scan your system for outdated programs. It will show programs that are outdated in Red, programs that are updated in Green, and programs that are not installed in Black. With one click you can quickly do all your updates. You can download Patch My PC from https://patchmypc.net/download.

3) On a more fun note, I've been sharing a website called www.showmystreet.com. When you go to the site, you get a box where you can type in an address. It's a simple interface that lets you display almost all locations. Just start typing the location's address and the background Google Map is updated in real-time. Like any other regular Google Map, you can drag the map, zoom in/out, and select the following views: map, satellite, hybrid, and terrain. Wherever available, Show My Street will automatically display the Google Street View of the address. Type the address one character at a time and watch the location that it displays. It's amazing. The views can be directly shared on Twitter and Facebook. You can also obtain a direct URL to the view and share it with your friends online.

(*Editor's Note: My backyard opens to an alley behind my house. When I typed my address into Show My Street, Google Maps showed the back off the alley rather than the street view of the front. When I dragged the view around, I could see an aerial view of my backyard, which I thought was private!*)

Be careful out there! ❖

DEVICE POWER OPTIONS

By **Jim Cerny**, Forum Leader
Sarasota Technology Users Group, Florida
Sarasota Monitor, September 2017
www.thestug.org
jimcerny123 (at) gmail.com

On-Off – Shutdown – Sleep – What are all these power options? Today our computer devices usually have several choices for "power", even the "off/on" switch does more than just turn your device on or off! Many devices today – especially devices that use batteries – give us more choices about how we use the power we have available. One of the best ways to learn the options for your device is to use Google. Enter "power options for my iPad" for example. You will be surprised at what is available. Here we will look at the usual basic power options used by most devices (iPads, iPhones, Windows computers, laptops, etc.).

The main power button, the one you use to turn your device on or off, is really only putting the device in or out of sleep mode. Sleep mode uses very little power and allows your device to keep your recent activity in memory, so you can easily resume where you left off when you return by hitting the same button to turn it back on. This is a good thing for most devices, especially phones, because you will still get incoming calls and messages, etc.

To turn your iPad or iPhone device completely off (also known as "shutdown" or "power off") you need to HOLD DOWN the off/on button until you see "slide to power off" on the screen. Slide where indicated, and your device will be completely off. You will use NO battery at all, and you will NOT be able to get a call, text messages, or alarms until you turn it back on. To turn your iPad or iPhone back on from "power off" you need to HOLD DOWN the off/on button until you see a white apple on the

screen. Release the button and wait for your device to power up. Other power settings for your iPad or iPhone are in "Settings" then "Battery" or "Display and Brightness".

For Windows computers and laptops, touch (or left-click) on the "Windows" button at the far left of the taskbar and then touch the power icon symbol (a circle with a short vertical line at "noon") and then select "shut down". To turn your Windows computer back on, just hit the start button. A complete shutdown or power down is good for your device because when you power it back up, it does a thorough check of everything to make sure all is working as it should.

Laptops have more power options. You can find these options in the control panel or enter "power" in the search box to find "power and sleep settings", or ask Google how. Here you can adjust your settings as to how long (minutes) your screen stays on with no activity before going to sleep. But you can also select power options for when your laptop is running on the battery or plugged into the power outlet. You can also select what happens when you close the lid of your laptop. When my laptop is at home, it is connected to a large monitor screen, so when I close the lid of my laptop, I want it to do nothing. The "restart" option will shut down your Windows computer and then boot it back up right away.

Other possible options for devices include what to do when your battery gets low on power, adjusting the brightness of your screen, even slowing the speed of your device. There seems to be an option or setting for just about anything these days. You need not concern yourself with most of the power options available unless you are using your device many hours a day and frequently see the "low battery" message.

Another easy solution to being low on power is to buy and charge up an external power pack. This can come in handy for long airline flights when you are not able to plug in to recharge your device. But then again, maybe putting **yourself** into "sleep mode" could be for the best anyway! ❖

 The "power" icon

 The "settings" icon

 The "settings" app icon for iPads and iPhones

 The "battery" icon showing power level

Should You Leave Your Computer On 24 HOURS A DAY?

By **Joe Isaac**
Central Kentucky Computer Society
CKCS newsletter, March 2018
www.ckcs.org
newsletter (at) ckcs.org

NO! I shut my computer down every night. If I'm going to be gone several days, I not only shut it down, I unplug the computer from the wall and unplug the phone line from the wall.

You are wearing your fan motor out and pulling dust thru your computer. Your hard drive may be running more. If you get a big surge of electricity that jumps your surge protector, it may save your computer by having it off.

Your surge protector is passive and works whether it is turned off or on. When it is off,

SATELLITE ANTENNA DISH POINTING

By **Gregg Bruch**, Vice President
Idaho Technology Users Group, March 1, 2018
www.idahopcug.org

Dish antennae are used for signal reception from geo-stationary satellites located at fixed positions in the sky. The dishes typically are of one of two varieties, large and small. The small dishes most often are used for residential TV reception of streaming signals from either DISH or Direct TV subscriptions, using receivers provided by the companies for the purpose. Most often the antenna dishes are mounted and pointed by technicians at the time of initial installation. Usually repointing is not necessary unless the antenna is moved for reasons such as re-roofing, line-of-sight interference, use at another location, etc. Large dishes generally are for commercial use but are also subject to initial or occasional move-pointing for signal reception. There are numerous geo-stationary satellites (and relatively close together) used for signal transmission, each with its many signal channels and specific formats for signal reception.

Dish pointing can be a daunting task since the satellites are not visible to the naked eye. Steps to be followed for pointing include:

- Obtain information from your signal supplier as to satellite name, channel for the desired signal, and format-setup information for the receiver.
- Obtain Azimuth and Elevation data for the satellite in angle degrees.

In the case of large dish antennae, the skew (rotation) angle of the sense-element also will be needed. Several Internet sources for pointing data can be found with a web search the using satellite name. Two of such are:

1) http://www.groundcontrol.com/Satellite_Look_Angle_Calculator.htm

2) http://www.satellite-calculations.com/Satellite/lookangles.htm

Generally, these will need inputting the pointing calendar-day desired, along with Latitude, Longitude, and Elevation as inputs to give the desired information for pointing. Some websites allow direct GPS-assisted locating rather than the use of the antenna Latitude, Longitude, and Elevation.

Adjust the dish to the foregoing location-data and look for the signal with the receiver. If not found, try minor adjustments in the angle inputs. With a signal, then use the receiver's signal-strength output to obtain maximum reception signal-strength by the dish's angle adjustments.

The dish elevation angle usually can be set using a small carpenter's level and a protractor, taping a string from top to bottom to simulate the face of the dish. The Azimuth most often is approximated with a magnetic compass and noticing a distant landmark on or near the needed azimuth. Then point the dish toward the object. The second web site above also will give the time of day that the sun and satellite are directly vertical from each other. Use sufficiently darkened goggles to view the sun at this actual time for Azimuth pointing.

A more accurate method is to use a vertical post or stick and marking the sundial type shadow line (at the precise time of day given) on the ground as a reference line for the desired Azimuth. Then use two equal-length long strings, one end of each taped halfway up the sides of the dish and then stretched out fully and tied together at the other ends. This will give the existing Azimuth of the dish for comparison with the desired Azimuth as shown by the marked off ground-shadow of the post. ❖

LACS NOTICES

WELCOME ALL

George Wolkon, LACS Database Manager

New Members (1)

Bryan Linnell

Renewals (4)
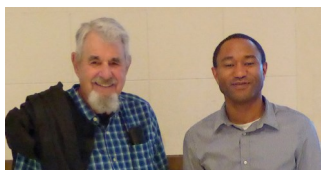
Nancy Cattell   Irving Farber
Armin Dolin   Henry Harris

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.

George and Stanley

LACS HAS JOINED MEETUP

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

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.

Go to http://www.meetup.com/Los-Angeles-Computer-Society-and-Technology-Meetup/
and click on "**Join Us.**" Also, **RSVP** for our general meetings**.**

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.
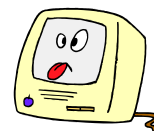
Non-members can wisely invest in a one-year <u>new</u> Regular LACS membership ($40.00), and Jim will fix your PC problem, too. Contact Jim for specific considerations.

GENERAL MEETING PRESENTATIONS

June 12 Become Your Own Computer Expert
July 10 Google Apps at Home and on the Go

Note: This schedule is subject to change.

Check your email, *User Friendly,* and our website 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**.

June 12	T through Z
July 10	A through D
August 14	E through I
September 11	J through N
October 9	O through S
November 13	T through Z

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.

JUNE 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
3	4 Board Meeting 7:00 PM	5	6	7
10	11	12 General Meeting 7:30 PM	13	14 **Flag Day**
17 HAPPY FATHER'S DAY	18	19	20	21 SUMMER
24	25	26	27	28

Members getting prepared for the meeting.

No SIG meeting is scheduled for June.

General Meeting: Fellowship Hall on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7:30 PM. The **Board** may meet at Charlotte Semple's home or at Santa Monica College. Members in good standing are welcome to attend.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIG's)

The Daytime and the Basics & Beyond SIGs may resume **IF** there is enough interest. Please contact the leaders to make your wishes known, or to offer ideas or help. New SIGs can be created if there is sufficient interest and leadership.

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 Center

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

Charlotte Semple, 3474 Beethoven St. LA 90066

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

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 - 7
Open Office - 16

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
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	10:00 AM	7:00 PM
7	Clark, Leah	310-677-2792	7:00 AM	5:00 PM
8	Silverstein, Elliot	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	2018	424-216-6984
Past President	Maurice Stephenson	2018	310-625-0450
Vice President	Stephanie Nordlinger	2018	323-299-3244
Secretary	**VACANT**	2018	
Treasurer	Charlotte Semple	2018	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	Annette Tossounian	2018	310-559-2847
Director	Paula Van Berkom	2019	310-398-6734
Director	George Wolkon	2019	310-459-2671
APCUG Rep.	Leah Clark		310-677-2792
Car Pool Coordinator	Freda Sanders		323-230-3278
Change of Address	George Wolkon		424-646-3410
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		323-230-3278
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
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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E-mail	ContactUs (at) lacspc.org	**Change of Address**	membership (at) lacspc.org

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.

EXPLORING ANDROID

By **Dick Maybach**
Brookdale Computer Users' Group, NJ
BUG Bytes, November 2017
www.bcug.com
n2nd (at) att.net

The most popular cell-phone operating system, Android, is more like a tool kit than an OS. Cell phone vendors readily change not only its included applications, but also its structure, to differentiate their products. As a result, there is more variation among devices than Windows users are accustomed to. (Windows on a Dell is almost identical to Windows on a Lenovo, but Android on a Samsung may differ substantially from Android on a Nexus.) This doesn't concern most cell-phone users, who have little interest about what goes on inside their devices. But computer enthusiasts are more curious. In this article, I'll use my own phone, a Motorola G^4 using Android 7, as an example, but yours is most likely different. You should not study my results, but use the tools I describe to explore your own device.

Smartphones are far more powerful and complex than early PCs, and one area you will want to explore is its hardware. The app, My Device, by 3k Developers is useful for this. **Figure 1** shows the areas you can learn about. (This is the screen on my phone; yours probably differs.)

Figure 2 lists the CPU characteristics; it's eight cores, and 2 Gbytes of RAM, far exceed the resources available to desktop PCs of just a few years ago. This hints at the potential hidden in the small device you carry in your
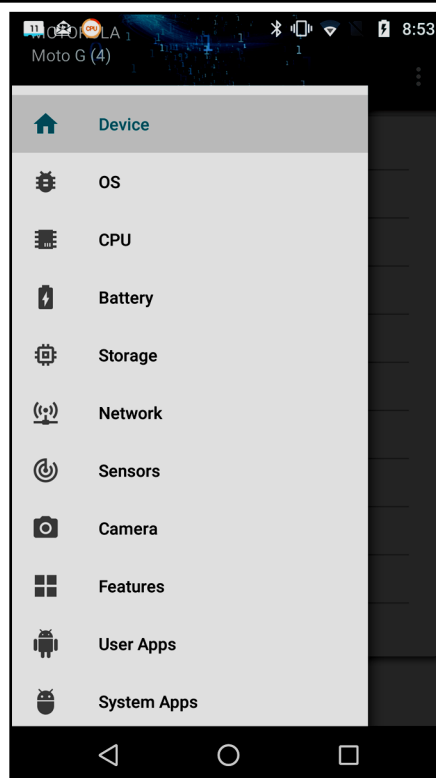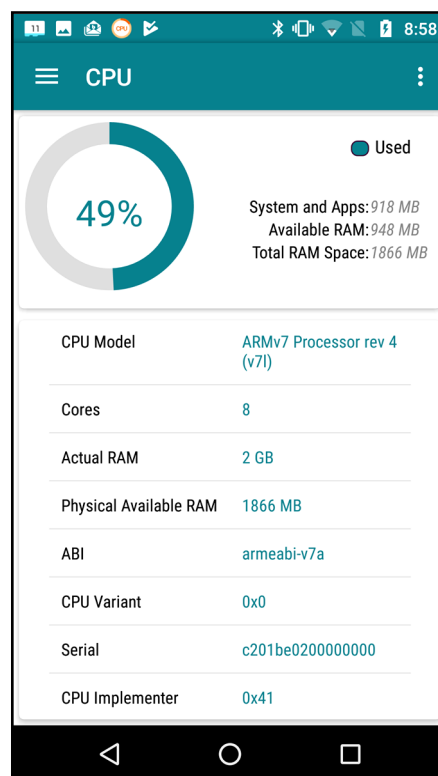
pocket.

Figure 1. My Device Home Screen.

Figure 2. CPU Characteristics.

The camera is another interesting device, as phone cameras probably take far more pictures than dedicated ones. **Figure 3** shows what Motorola included. The front camera's 13-Megapixel resolution is higher than most digital cameras of just a few years ago.
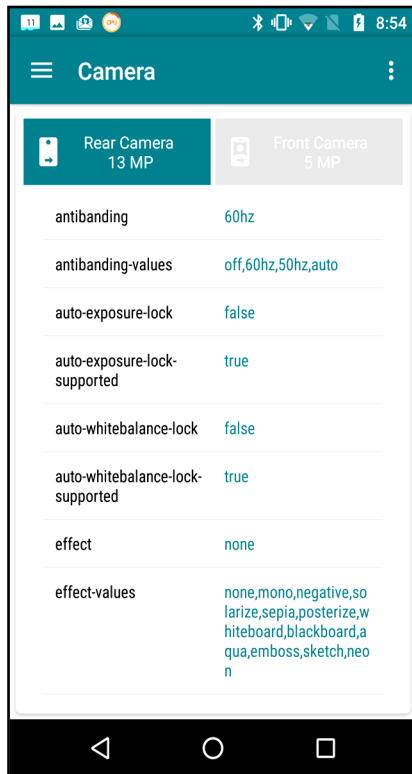

Figure 3. Camera Characteristics.

As you can see, the My-Device app provides much information about the capabilities of your phone's hardware and, although I haven't shown it, its software.

It's important to properly configure your phone, especially the resources that each app can access. Motorola included the Settings app for this, and although your vendor may have given it a different name, you have something similar. While My Device gives you detailed information on your phone, Settings lets you configure it. **Figure 4** shows a portion of its home screen. Taking the time to explore the entries will not only tell you about your phone's features, but it will let you configure

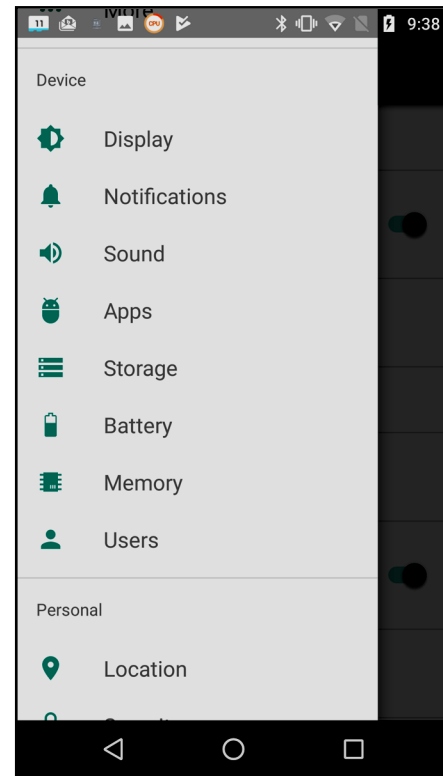it to your liking, rather than to what its manufacturer might prefer.

Figure 4. Settings Home Screen.

Exploring the Apps item is especially useful. For example, **Figure 5** shows a portion of the email app, BlueMail. As you can see, it can access my calendar, contacts, phone, and storage, but I've silenced its notifications. I prefer that my personal devices speak only when spoken to; I don't want them breaking into my life at their convenience. As a result, I've silenced almost all notifications. Some apps by default can access far more than what they need, and it's important when you install a new one to review what information they ask for and to disable what is not appropriate. As in the case of My Device, there is far more to explore in Settings than I have space to discuss here.
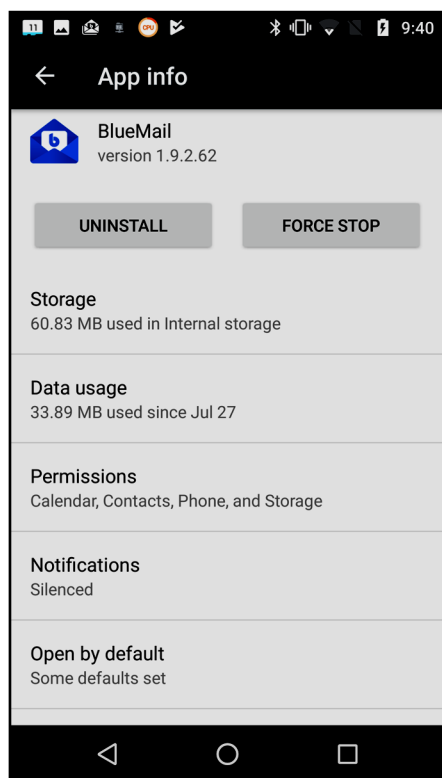
Figure 5. BlueMail App Information.

Figure 6. Android Home Directory

Unlike in the case of a personal computer, much of the Android file system is not available to users. Instead, you are limited to exploring your home directory, where your data are stored. To access the system area, you must do what's called "rooting," but unless you are an experienced Android developer, little but mischief will result. Of course, you'll use a file manager for this exploration. If your vendor didn't include one, try the ES File Explorer File Manager from ES Global. The directory screen-shots below are from this app. **Figure 6** shows my home directory.

On a typical PC, most of the directories in the home directory are created by its user, but this isn't the case for Android, where typically the directories are created either by apps or Android itself. A directory that's worthwhile to explore is Android, which has two subdirectories, data and media. **Figure 7** shows a portion of data's contents.
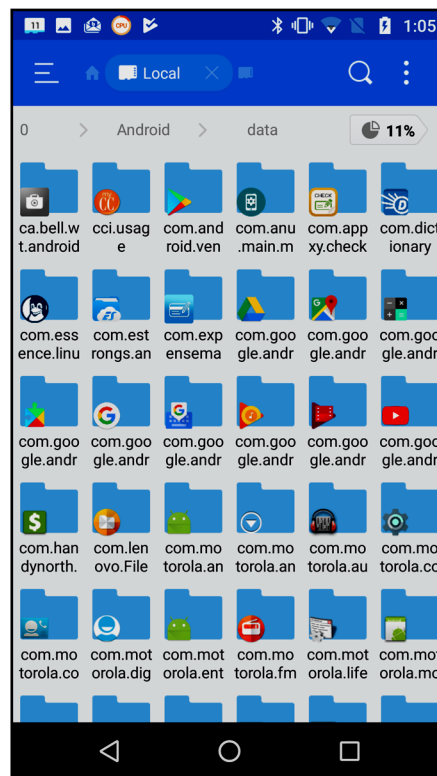

Figure 7. Contents of Android/data.

As you can see, it's full of subdirectories, most associated with a particular app, which is where the app will keep its data. If you can't find something in your home directory, this is a good place to look.

However, there is a better way to find where a particular app keeps its files. Use it to create a test file, then use the File Analyzer tool in ES File Manager (accessible when you touch the vertical line of three dots in its menu bar). Scroll down on the result to the Recently Created Files area and select Details to see a list of new files (**Figure 8**).
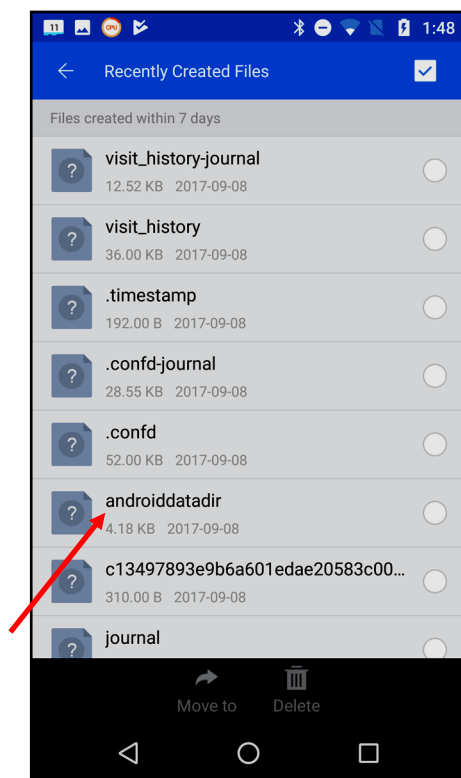

Figure 8. Recently Created Files.

When I selected androiddatadir, I obtained **Figure 9**.

The storage/emulated/0/ may be confusing, but it's just the location of the home directory. In this case, since the file we were searching for was in the root directory, finding it by brute force would have been easy. The directory structure on your device will be different
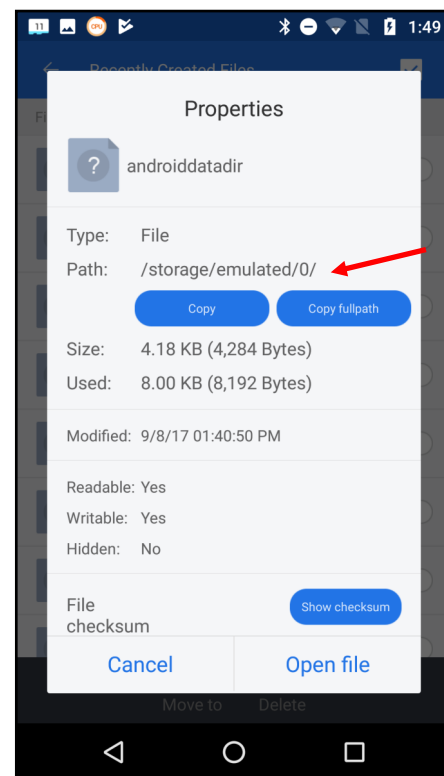

Figure 9. Details on a New File

of course. You may have noticed that this file isn't in the listing of Figure 6; I had deleted it before I made that screen-shot.

For our last expeditions we'll either (depending on your attitude) return to computing's roots or its dark age; yes, we'll be using the command line. You'll first need to install a terminal app, and I use T-UI from Everyone. Starting T-UI and using the command "tutorial", will take you to a website with a lot more help than you probably want. The command "help" will show commands that have help pages. For example, "help time" will show you what the time command does. **Figure 10** shows a screen-shot with the command, pwd (print working directory), which is the complete path to the home directory. It also shows the result of "echo $Path", which displays the directories where Android looks for commands, in this case, /sbin, /vendor/bin, /system/bin, and /system/xbin. None of these directories listed by $PATH are accessible with a file manager, unless the device has been rooted.
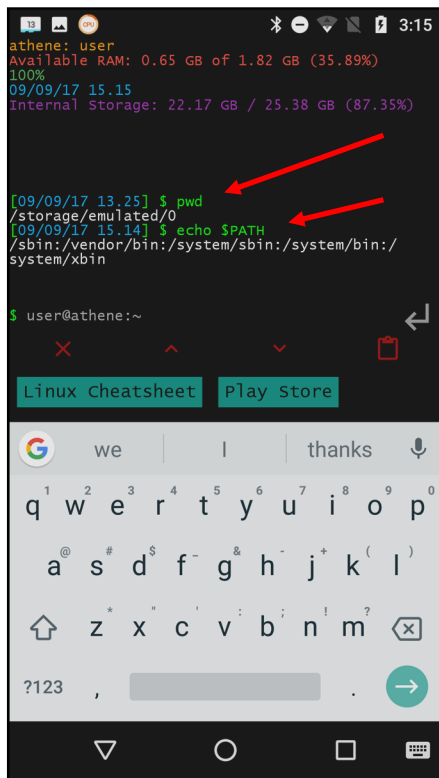
Figure 10. T-UI Screen.

The command "cat proc/partitions" shows all the partitions that exist. (I'm going to skip the explanation of exactly what this command means; the object here is to learn about Android, not become proficient in using the command line.) I won't show the output, as yours will be different. Each line

of result (after the header) is a different partition; the first number (major) is the device, the second (minor) the partition on that device, the third the number of blocks in it, and the last its name. Mine had three different major numbers, showing three separate storage devices, one with a single partition, one with 17, and one with 35. You are probably surprised at these numbers; just because Android devices are small doesn't mean they are simple. However, many of these partitions are not used in normal operation, but only during start-up and recovery.

We obtain a better sense if the storage environment with the "df -h" command, shows the free space on each partition. (The -h option makes the numbers more readable.) I've formatted the result into the table, **Figure 11**, where we see that of the 53 defined partitions, only 13 are in use.

Note that the data/media file system is mounted at /storage/emulated, which we saw in Figure 10. It is our home directory. From other explorations, I know that F549-17EF designates my SD card.

Using such readily-available tools as these, you can explore your Android device to learn about it and to make you more efficient while using it. ❖

File System	Size	Used	Avail	Use%	Mounted on
tmpfs	923M	692K	923M	1%	/dev
tmpfs	923M	0	923M	0%	/mnt
/dev/block/bootdevice/by-name/system	2.3G	1.7G	617M	75%	/system
/dev/block/bootdevice/by-name/userdata	25G	2.8G	22G	12%	/data
/dev/block/bootdevice/by-name/cache	248M	1.6M	241M	1%	/cache
/dev/block/bootdevice/by-name/dsp	12M	3.6M	7.7M	32%	/dsp
/dev/block/bootdevice/by-name/modem	94M	70M	23M	76%	/firmware
/dev/block/bootdevice/by-name/fsg	1.9M	1.9M	0	100%	/fsg
/dev/block/bootdevice/by-name/oem	635M	96M	527M	16%	/oem
tmpfs	923M	0	923M	0%	/storage
/data/media	25G	2.8G	22G	12%	/storage/emulated
/mnt/media_rw/F549-17EF	30G	818M	29G	3%	/storage/F549-17EF
tmpfs	923M	0	923M	0%	/storage/self

Figure 11. Output of the Mount Command.

Review: TouchLock

by **George Harding**, Treasurer
Tucson Computer Society, April 2018
www.aztcs.org/
actuary110 (at) yahoo.com

Security is essential, but even more important when you have to secure something physically. When you park your bike, you want to see it there when you return. A good lock is essential.

TouchLock is a good lock, one that cannot be easily defeated. It is an electronic device controlled by an app on your cell phone or another device.

The big selling point for this lock is that it can be controlled biometrically. You can easily lock it in the usual manner by pressing the hook on the lock into its hole. Unlocking it can be done in two ways.
The company provides an app that may be used to unlock by Bluetooth. Bluetooth is a short distance wireless technology used today by many devices to avoid connecting wires.

The app requires you to register as administrator, then setting unlock and administrator passwords. Once these are set, you can unlock using the app with either the fingerprint touch or the password.

Additional users may be added by downloading the app onto the user's phone. Control is accessed by entering the admin password.

The lock contains a battery that may be recharged using the included cable via USB. The company says the battery will last a year without recharging.

The lock is a heavy-duty piece of hardware with an LED light on its front surface and a micro-USB slot for the charging cable. There is no key slot or combination wheel. It is all controlled by the app.

The TouchLock comes with the lock, charging cable and a heavy-duty cable for threading through a bike's spokes and frame.

There are several versions of the Touch-Lock, varying both physically and by decoration.

TouchLock by Bio-Key
bio-key.com
Price $50 ❖

* * * * * *

(Should You Leave Your Computer On 24 Hours a Day?)
(Continued from Page 6)

the surge must jump the switch and the surge protector to get to your computer.

The only good thing about leaving your computer on is that you can get rid of the dust bunnies, the fan will pull them into your computer, and your utility company will love you!

With the increased use of always-on, DSL and Cable Internet, and with the growing threat of hackers and worms, it makes even more sense to shut your computer down when not in use.

A computer not running and not connected cannot be hacked. ANOTHER GREAT REASON TO CUT YOUR COMPUTER OFF AT NIGHT

It's not unusual to get low on system resources after you use Windows for a long stretch, especially if you open and close programs frequently. Adding a bunch of RAM doesn't help. System resources are stored in fixed memory blocks that reside in your System RAM.

Programs store certain routines inside your system resources. Some programs don't reallocate or release the memory, so after a while, your machine gets full. You must restart Windows to free up memory again.

That's why Windows feels more reliable if you start it up fresh every day. ❖

CASH FLOW
as of April 30, 2018
Charlotte Semple, Treasurer

Total Assets	$7,967.92
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Member Dues	470.00
Total Gross Receipts	$470.00
Expenses	
Newsletter	162.76
Facilities Rental	60.00
Verizon Wireless	50.08
Meetup	76.45
Total Expenses	$349.29
Current Total Assets	$8,088.63

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LAUGHING OUT LOUD

Is this Gordon's Pizza?
Contributed by **Bill Hughes**, LACS

CALLER: Is this Gordon's Pizza?
GOOGLE: No sir, it's Google Pizza.
C: I must have dialed a wrong number. Sorry.
G: No sir, Google bought Gordon's Pizza last month.
C: OK. I would like to order a pizza.
G: Do you want your usual, sir?
C: My usual? You know me?
G: According to our caller ID data sheet, the last 12 times you called you ordered an extra-large pizza with 3 kinds of cheese, sausage, pepperoni, mushrooms, and meat balls on a thick crust.
C: OK! That's what I want …
G: May I suggest that this time you order a pizza with ricotta, arugula, sun-dried tomatoes and olives on a whole wheat gluten-free thin crust?
C: What? I detest vegetables.
G: Your cholesterol is not good, sir.
C: How the hell do you know?
G: Well, we cross-referenced your phone number with your medical records. We have the result of your blood tests for the last 7 years.
C: Okay, but I do not want your rotten vegetable pizza! I already take medication for my cholesterol.
G: Sir, you have not taken your medication regularly. According to our database, you only purchased a box of 30 cholesterol tablets once, at Drug RX Network, 4 months ago.
C: I bought more from another drugstore.
G: That doesn't show on your credit card statement.
C: I paid in cash.
G: But you did not withdraw enough cash according to your bank statement.
C: I have other sources of cash.
G: That doesn't show on your last tax return unless you bought them using an undeclared income source, which is against the law.
C: WHAT THE HELL?
G: I'm sorry, sir, we use such information only with the sole intention of helping you.
C: Enough already! I'm sick to death of Google, Facebook, Twitter, and all the others. I'm going to an island without internet, cable TV, where there is no cell phone service and no one to watch me or spy on me.
G: I understand sir, but you need to renew your passport first. It expired six weeks ago… ❖

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Annual membership Dues:

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   Printed Newsletter $ 40
   Electronic Newsletter   30
Family-Associate   12
Students   18
Contributor   50
Supporter   75
Benefactor   100

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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.

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Take Manchester Ave. to
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Go about eight blocks to W.
80th Place. Fellowship Hall is
on the Northwest corner of
Emerson and W. 80th Place.
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small parking lot West of the
church.