

October, 2018

# User Friendly



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Ctrl-Click on this icon to see our Meetup Page



Ctrl-Click on this icon to follow us on Twitter.



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[www.youtube.com/apcugvide](https://www.youtube.com/apcugvide)

## OCTOBER 9 GENERAL MEETING

### Cyber Threats and How We Can Handle Them

Speaker: **Boeing Shih**, Special Agent, FBI

The FBI is the lead federal agency for investigating cyberattacks by criminals, overseas adversaries, and terrorists. Cyber intrusions are becoming more commonplace, more dangerous and more sophisticated. Adversaries target our nation's critical infrastructure, including private and public sector networks. Companies are targeted for trade secrets and other sensitive corporate data. Universities are targeted for their cutting-edge research and development. Citizens are targeted by fraudsters and identity thieves, and online predators target children. This presentation will discuss how cybercriminals seek to victimize you and your country and what we can do about it.



### Meet Our Presenter

Boeing Shih, FBI Special Agent, has investigated a variety of cyber cases including computer intrusions, internet fraud, and intellectual property rights violations over the last thirteen years including four years as a cyber squad supervisor. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science from U.C. Berkeley.

### Note

Boeing Shih is unable to allow photography or podcasting. Since there will be no podcast after this meeting, be sure to come to hear the talk.

**Tuesday, October 9, 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.lacspsc.org](http://www.lacspsc.org)  
 or at 310-398-0366



**FROM YOUR EDITOR****Election Results**

There were no more nominations for officers and directors at the September general meeting. So the following members were elected by acclamation by those present. Many thanks to them all!

**Leah Clark**, President, 1 year term

**Stephanie Nordlinger**, Vice President,  
1 year term

**Charlotte Semple**, Treasurer, 1 year term

**Stanley Johnson**, Secretary, 1 year term

**Annette Tossounian**, Director, 2 year  
term

**Carol Johnson**, Director, 2 year term

**Howard Krivoy**, Director, 2 year term

**Mark Presky**, Director, 1 year term

**Paula Van Berkomp** and **George Wolkon**  
have one more year on their two-year terms  
as directors.

I am asking for help and support from all the LACS members. Please email Leah anytime with your suggestions and concerns.

**Holiday Potluck Party**

Our December 11 general meeting will be a celebration with a potluck supper. We are looking for a few members to help plan and coordinate this event. Do you know someone who can entertain us, or do you have ideas for a fun activity? Please email me or any board member to volunteer or to offer ideas. Let's make it a fun evening!

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

**National Cybersecurity Awareness Month**

See page 5 for some suggested considerations for each week of October. For more ideas on how to be safe online, go to our website at <https://www.lacspc.org/security-privacy/>. A lot of good information can also be found at <https://www.wizcase.com/blog/the-ultimate-guide-to-safe-online-browsing/>.


**Venice High Chaperone**

On September 13, I went with 104 Venice High STEM students on a field trip to the Enov8 STEM Conference at UCLA. The presentations were excellent and very motivational. The students were told that soon robots will do any job that does not take creativity. Careers in the future will require imagination. Be creative with technology!

**We need an Assistant Greeter!**

Thanks to Annette Tossounian for being our greeter. We now need another member or two to become familiar with what happens at the Greeter's table to be available when she can't be there. If you come to the meetings anyway, you could be of great service. And it's a good way to meet everyone.

**Contest**

A copy of this icon  is somewhere in this issue. When you find it, send an email with your name and the page number to <editor (at) lacspc.org>. The 1st two received each month may win a small prize. Proofreaders and board members are not eligible.

**Congratulations to Charles Mahan  
for finding the icon in the  
September issue!**

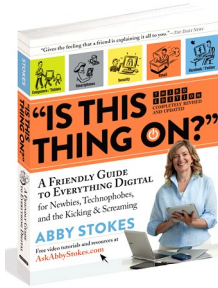


## GENERAL MEETING REPORT

September 11, 2018

By Leah Clark, LACS Editor

Abby Stokes has been teaching about computers for almost 25 years, primarily to seniors. She emphasized, "On the internet, you can be anything you want, strange that so many people choose to be stupid." Because a lot of people waste time or do bad things on Facebook, it doesn't mean you have to. You can take command of social networking to be sure you aren't doing anything foolish, and are taking advantage of all the good parts. Abby told a couple of stories of how Facebook helped in a hurricane emergency, and to find a lost dog after an emergency.



### Facebook

To join Facebook, go to [www.Facebook.com](http://www.Facebook.com). You need to give an email address, and a password. You have to give them some demographic information, but not much. You must give your real name. You can access Facebook from a computer, a tablet, or from your smartphone.

There are different groups you can join on Facebook. People you share things with are called your "friends" on Facebook. "Friends" are just those you are allowing to see what you put on Facebook, and you can see what they post. Do a little investigating of a person's profile before you allow them to be your friend. You can choose to join only organizations or pages of things you have an interest in, and not have any "friends". Abby gave many examples of interests you can peruse on Facebook. You can choose if you want to use it as an avenue to deal with your interests, or on a personal level, or both.

You can opt to be notified by email when you get a comment or friend request on Facebook. You can select your privacy settings. That is, decide if your posts can only be seen by your friends, or if anyone see them. You don't have control over what a "friend" does with what you post.

On a typical page on Facebook, the center column is the widest, being the newsfeed with a long-running list of what people choose to share. The left column is like a navigation bar with a list of things you can visit, and the right column is usually advertisements or things of little interest. You can select if your newsfeed is going to show the most popular stories first, or if they are listed in chronological order.

If you want to change or delete something you posted, you have the option to do so. A drop-down menu gives the person who wrote the post a series of options of what can be done to the post. You can't make changes to another's post, but you have choices about how you handle that post. You can un-follow someone or hide their posts. Abby's first line of defense regarding what to post is her "Front Door Test." If you would not be comfortable having any information posted on the outside of your front door, don't put it on Facebook!

Facebook will sell information to advertisers about what your interests are. They know whatever you've chosen to share. If this bothers you, don't post on Facebook.

There is a search box on Facebook where you can type in a name, subject or organization. Be careful - there may be several persons with the same name. If you don't set your privacy settings, and someone clicks on your name, they can see everything. Be sure to set your privacy settings.

When you hit the enter key while writing a comment, the cursor does not go down to the next line; the message gets sent right away. Poor design!

### Twitter

To set up Twitter, go to [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) give an email address and a password. It's a good idea to have more than one email address, with a separate one dedicated to social media. Twitter is set up very much like Facebook with three columns. The biggest differences are that Facebook is reciprocal; you and your friend can see what each shared. On Twitter, you can follow



someone without that person following you. You do not have to use your real name; you can use any handle. You can follow celebrities, authors, etc. When something happens, it often can be on Twitter before it's on a news channel.

The @ symbol comes before someone's name or a specific place on Twitter. A hashtag, #, is a way for different tweets that share a subject to be found. In the search box, you can type a hashtag followed by any subject, like "#antiquecars". Many tweets about antique cars come up. You can choose to follow any of them.

### Instagram

Sign in by going to [www.instagram.com](http://www.instagram.com). It is a website and an app. People don't talk a lot on Instagram but share in photographic form. You can make comments below a picture. You don't need to use your real name. It is reciprocal. You can edit pictures with fun filters.

### Linkedin

LinkedIn is a good network source if you are searching for a job or are hiring. It is the largest professional social media website. You can post your resumé, give references, and do a lot of networking. It is reciprocal.

### Check Truth

There is a problem with the conveyance of information on social media and people believing everything that's in writing. If a post seems unlikely to you, it probably is. There are resources for checking facts and figures. People pass on information that's not based in fact. Here are two completely non-partisan and fact-based websites. On [www.snopes.com](http://www.snopes.com) and [www.factcheck.com](http://www.factcheck.com), you can search by keywords taken from a post. Before you pass something on, look it up on these sites to see if it is true or not. You can also search on Google to check if it is from a reputable source for news.

The questions to ask are, "Will my life suffer from not using social media? Will my life be enhanced by using it?" There are a lot of benefits.

Abby's website is [www.askabbystokes.com](http://www.askabbystokes.com).



*Directors Elect Howard Krivoy and Annette Tossounian having fun before the September general meeting*







October is

## National Cybersecurity Awareness Month

### 2018 Themes

#### **Oct. 1-5: Make Your Home a Haven for Online Safety**

Every day, parents and caregivers teach kids basic safety practices – like looking both ways before crossing the street. Easy-to-learn life lessons for online safety and privacy begin with parents/caretakers leading the way. Learning good cybersecurity practices can also help set a strong foundation for a career in the industry. Week 1 will underscore basic cybersecurity essentials the entire family can deploy to protect their homes against cyber threats.

#### **Oct. 8-12: Millions of Rewarding Jobs: Educating for a Career in Cybersecurity**

A key risk to our economy and security continues to be the shortage of cybersecurity professionals to safeguard our ever-expanding cyber ecosystem. Raising the next generation of capable cybersecurity professionals is a starting point to building stronger defenses. Week 2 will address ways to motivate parents, teachers and counselors to learn more about the field and how to best inspire students and others to seek highly fulfilling cybersecurity careers.



#### **Oct. 15-19: It's Everyone's Job to Ensure Online Safety at Work**

When you are on the job – whether it's at a corporate office, local restaurant, healthcare provider, academic institution or government agency – your organization's online safety is a responsibility we all share. And, as the lines between our work and daily lives become increasingly blurred, it's more important than ever to be certain that smart cybersecurity carries over between the two. Week 3 will focus on cybersecurity workforce education, training and awareness while emphasizing risk management, resistance and resilience.

#### **Oct. 22-26: Safeguarding the Nation's Critical Infrastructure**

Our day-to-day life depends on the country's 16 sectors of critical infrastructure, which supply food, water, financial services, public health, communications and power along with other networks and systems. A disruption to this system, which is operated via the internet, can have significant and even catastrophic consequences for our nation. Week 4 will emphasize the importance of securing our critical infrastructure and highlight the roles the public can play in keeping it safe.

#### **LEARN MORE**

[staysafeonline.org/ncsam](https://staysafeonline.org/ncsam)



CyberAware

NATIONAL  
**CYBERSECURITY**  
ALLIANCE

## YES! I AM A BIT OLD SCHOOL!

By **Joe Isaac**, Tech Talk  
Central Kentucky Computer Society  
CKCS Newsletter, July 2018  
[www.ckcs.org](http://www.ckcs.org)  
joeisaac1234 (at) gmail.com



**M**y daughter wanted to delete some old programs and get them off her computer, but she couldn't remember how. As is typical of my family members, if they can't remember how something is done, it becomes my job to solve the problem. Could it be because I taught Windows at CKCS for about 21 years?

Windows 10 is a great program, but the "techies" changed many things when they wrote the new program and then again, when they do the regular updates. I knew how to solve her problem easily before Windows 10 – you just go to the "Control Panel". But that is something I hadn't seen for a while.

I figured a way to get to it using RUN and the old DOS commands, but I thought there must be a better, simpler way. Well, there is.

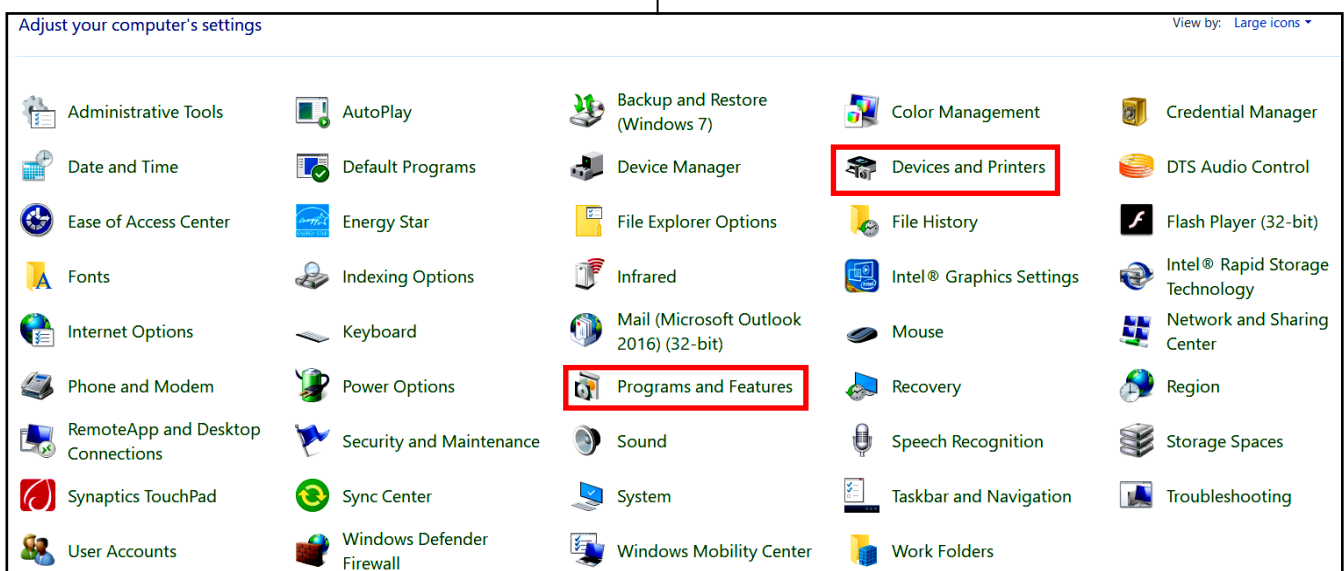
All you need to do is type CONTROL PANEL in the search bar on the desktop, or ask Cortana to do that for you, and bingo, there is the old control panel, including PROGRAMS AND FEATURES.

Another member called and asked where to go to delete his old printer that had died, and they took to the recycle center. Going to the control panel there it is, under DEVICES AND PRINTERS. Just delete the old printer and select another as the default printer. (See *screen shot below*.)

I suspect in Windows 10 there is a way to find those projects, but they created 'categories' under settings, which I never liked as well as the small icons in Control Panel.

A tip. If you need to modify something on your computer, ask Cortana for help. She manages the search bar on the desktop. She's very talented and generally will take you right where you need to be!

*Editor's note: Cortana was named for a fictional artificial intelligence character in the Halo video game series. ❖*



*I'm Cortana!*





## **CAN I PREVENT MY MAIL FROM BEING FORWARDED BY OTHERS?**

By **Leo Notenboom**

Ask Leo!

Leo (at) notenboom.org

<https://askleo.com>



**It's not only not possible to prevent email from being forwarded, it's also not possible to prevent that forward from being modified, forged or defaced.**

Once you've sent email, it's gone and you lose *all* control over it. And by all control, I mean:

- You cannot "un" send it, or prevent the recipients from getting and reading it.
- You cannot reliably tell whether or not the recipients have received it.
- You cannot reliably tell if the recipients have read it, deleted it or forwarded it.
- You cannot prevent them from forwarding it, copying it, changing it, or doing pretty much whatever they want with it.

Note I said "reliably" in a couple of cases. There are technologies, such as "bugs" or simple image tracking for HTML formatted email, that can sometimes allow you to tell that an email has been opened. This is not 100% accurate, and hence cannot be absolutely relied on, mostly because modern mail clients often have the required functionality turned off by default as a security and privacy measure. And "opening" an email does not necessarily mean that the email was actually read or even seen by anyone.

I'll put it more clearly: you cannot prevent someone from forwarding your email, and you also can't prevent them from changing it before they do so.

Get that? Not only can they forward your email, but they can change what your email says. When someone forwards an email, that email simply becomes the body of a new email, that can be edited before hitting send. And by edited, it could be as simple as changing a "yes" to a "no," an "I love

you" to a "get out of my life," or perhaps "the boss is a genius" to "the boss is an idiot."

You get the idea. If you were concerned about your email being forwarded, you can be even more concerned now. You really do need to trust your recipients.

So, if email is such an unreliable medium, what can you do? Well, the simplest first step for this particular issue is to save all your outgoing email.



That way you'll have a record of what you really said. Second, don't say anything in email that you wouldn't want to be made public, and when things get "close", make sure you're only emailing it to someone you really trust.

There are technologies such as cryptographic message signing that will allow message tampering to be detected, but currently they're used mostly only by some businesses and the tech savvy.

To be honest it shocks me how much sensitive information is transmitted in email without any protection whatsoever, other than the silly disclaimer that boils down to "if this message wasn't intended for you, forget everything you just read".

I'm hopeful that over time these types of security solutions will get easier, and more common.

And the bottom line is that if someone can read your email, they can still forward it, or copy/paste it to another email, and send it to anyone they choose, one way or another. ❖

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## LACS NOTICES

### WELCOME ALL

**George Wolkon**, LACS  
Database Manager

#### New Members (1)

Kim Holmezie

#### Renewals (8)

Raymond Crovell *	Heshmat Laaly **
Beverly Fedel	Randi Pollock
Jim Fimiani	Larry Schlesinger
Bobbi Gold	George Wolkon

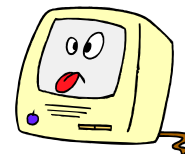
\* Contributor

\*\* Supporter



### 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](http://www.jimopi.net). on-members can wisely invest in a one- year new Regular LACS membership (\$40.00), and Jim will fix your PC problem, too. Contact Jim for specific considerations.

### JOIN OUR MAIL LISTS

All you have to do to join our lists is send your name only in the message body of an email to [lacspc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:lacspc-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).

and to

[lacslist-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:lacslist-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

These lists are for members only.

**Lacspc** is for official LACS business.

**Lacslist** is for any other computer-related messages and questions. If you have question about the lists, please contact our "Mail Guy" at [mailportal \(at\) lacspc.org](mailto:mailportal(at)lacspc.org).

### LACS IS ON TWITTER

On **Twitter**, follow us at:

[https://twitter.com/LA\\_CompSoc](https://twitter.com/LA_CompSoc)

The LACS board voted to discontinue the **Facebook** page for lack of a volunteer to manage it.

### HOW TO CHANGE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Go to [www.lacspc.org](http://www.lacspc.org). Click on **Member Forms** in the bar under the picture. Under **Member-ship Update**, select **Click Here** to select either the DOC or PDF form. Fill it out and bring it to a meeting, mail it, or email your changes to [membership@lacspc.org](mailto:membership@lacspc.org).

### LACS HAS JOINED MEETUP

Our Meetup group is called:

**"Los Angeles Computer Society and Technology Meetup."**

Please join and **RSVP** for our general meetings - it's free. Go to <http://www.meetup.com/Los-Angeles-Computer-Society-and-Technology-Meetup/> and click on **"Join Us."**

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.

### REVIEWS

Your editor wants to publish members' reviews of things they like or don't like. Your opinions about software, hardware, books, and other technology could be very useful to other members. Articles can be edited for grammar and spelling - only the content is important. Thanks!

### LACS Website

[www.lacspc.org](http://www.lacspc.org) posts back copies of the color version of *User Friendly*, calendar information, and podcasts of most of our general meetings. There is also a biannual index to past issues on the website. Check the menu on the right side.



## LACS CALENDAR



### LACS Board Meeting

**Date:** Monday, October 1.

**Time:** 7:00 P.M.

**Where:** The home of Charlotte Semple. Members in good standing are welcome to attend. Please contact any board member for Charlotte's address.

### General Meeting

**Date:** Tuesday, October 9

**Time:** 7:30 P.M.

**Where:** Westchester United Methodist Church, Fellowship Hall.  
8065 Emerson Ave. Westchester, L.A. 90045

### No Special Interest Group (SIG) meeting is scheduled for October.

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

**October:** National Cybersecurity Awareness Month



**October 7:** Daylight Savings Time Begins

**October 8:** Columbus Day

**October 31:** Halloween



## GENERAL MEETING PRESENTATIONS

**October 9** Cyber Threats and How We Can Handle Them

**November 13** Automobile Accessories

**December 11** Holiday Potluck

**Note:** This schedule is subject to change.

Check e-mail, *User Friendly* and our website for updates, but mark your calendar now.

## 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.

## USER FRIENDLY BACK ISSUES

To see back issues of *User Friendly*, go to <http://www.lacspc.org/category/user-friendly/>.

For indexes, go to

<https://www.lacspc.org/category/uf-index/>

## GENERAL MEETING SNACK SCHEDULE

By **Sylvia Q. Davis** Hospitality Chair

Refreshments and socializing will be at **7:00**. The meeting starts at **7:30**. Please bring refreshments at **7:00**.

<b>October 9</b>	O through S
<b>November 13</b>	T through Z
<b>December 11</b>	Holiday Potluck Party
<b>January 8</b>	A through D
<b>February 12</b>	E through I
<b>March 12</b>	J through N

Bring **finger-food** treats such as 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.



## 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 know a 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 and Backup - 5,12  
Digital Imaging, Editing - 8  
Digital Photography - 8  
Dragon Naturally Speaking - 4  
Genealogy - 5  
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  
Utilities - 5, 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**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Telephone</b>
President	Stanley Johnson	2018	424-216-6984
Past President	Maurice Stephenson	2018	310-625-0450
Vice President	Stephanie Nordlinger	2018	323-299-3244
Secretary	<b>Open</b>	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
Director	<b>Open</b>	2019	
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
Greeter	Annette Tossounian		310-559-2847
Assistant Greeter	<b>Open</b>		310-645-4546
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

**Website** [www.lacspc.org](http://www.lacspc.org)**Newsletter Editor** editor (at) lacspc.org**Voice Mail** 1-310-398-0366**Webmaster** sitemaster (at) lacspc.org**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 officer or 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.



## PROBLEMS WITH CRYPTOCURRENCIES

By **Joel Ewing**, President  
Bella Vista Computer Club, AR  
Bits & Bytes, June 2018  
[www.bvcompclub.org/](http://www.bvcompclub.org/)  
president (at) bvcompclub.org



There has been much hype about cryptocurrencies in general and Bitcoin in particular. Enough so, that BVCC had a recent presentation on the topic, with one of the conclusions being that as an investment Bitcoin is highly speculative and should be



limited to what one can afford to lose. The price of one Bitcoin by design tends to increase, but there have been events that have also caused prices to drop rapidly. The block chain technology on which

Bitcoin is built is finding many useful applications, but the long-term prospects for Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies is less certain.

An article in the June 2018 edition of *Communications of the ACM*, a professional computer science publication of the Association of Computing Machinery, on "Risks of Cryptocurrencies" by Peter G. Neumann, gives a much more negative view of the future of cryptocurrencies. It points out several technical reasons why it is unlikely that cryptocurrencies will ever become a wide-spread payment system. This publication is probably not one widely available to those who are not ACM members. A research library at a major university should have access to it in either hard copy or digital form, but it is not a publication one would expect to find at a public library.

I will attempt to summarize the major points of that article.

The argument presented is that cryptocurrencies are simply not satisfactory as a substitute for conventional currencies. They are by design grossly inefficient and involve risks and costs that cannot be resolved. Most of these problems only impact users of Bitcoins, but some impact society as a whole.

### INEFFICIENCIES

New Bitcoins are created by a computational process that requires a significant amount of computational time on a computer, which costs the creator in terms of computer hardware and power costs. The difficulty of the process is designed to keep the supply of Bitcoins less than the demand, so the tendency is for the value of one Bitcoin to increase over time. To keep things in balance, as the value of a Bitcoin increases, the difficulty of the generation algorithm also increases. The net effect is that the Bitcoin network currently is estimated to consume more power than the country of Ireland, and Bitcoin creators (called "miners") spend about one-third of each Bitcoin produced just to pay for their power bills. This does not scale well in a world with serious energy-based environmental problems.

There are limits in the Bitcoin design on the size of transaction blocks and the rate at which transactions blocks can be processed. This imposes limits on the number of transactions per second that can be processed. When the transaction rates approach the global volume limits, only those willing to pay unreasonably high auction-based transaction fees will get their transactions processed. If the transaction processing rate could be increased enough for it to compete with credit card usage, then each node in the Bitcoin network would have to store many gigabytes of additional data per day, all of which would need to be searched to validate each new transaction, resulting in spiraling costs to process future transactions – yet another aspect of Bitcoin that does not scale well. Credit card systems easily support thousands of times the transaction rates of Bitcoin and have done so for years, because it is not necessary to potentially search all past transactions of all customers just to deter-

mine if a new transaction is valid.

### **RISK OF LOSS**

An owner of Bitcoins has two choices: to store his Bitcoins in a “wallet” on his own computer, or to store them on one of a relatively small number of Bitcoin Exchanges. Both choices have been subject to losses, even by computer savvy individuals, either lost through direct theft, lost as a side effect of hardware or software failures, lost because the encryption key that allows access has been lost, or lost by paying for fraudulent services in Bitcoin. If your Bitcoins are lost through an unwise transaction or by someone stealing your key, there is no recourse because, unlike credit cards, Bitcoin transactions are irreversible. If lost because you lost your key or because your digital currency tokens were lost, you are also out of luck. Major failures or thefts have occurred on Bitcoin exchanges. Typically, those types of events are also associated with loss of confidence and massive drops in the value of Bitcoin.

### **PROBLEMS USING BITCOIN FOR PAYMENTS**

Legitimate businesses that offer goods and services for Bitcoin currency don't want to deal with the volatility of Bitcoin value, so they typically use some service to adjust their prices dynamically based on the current value of Bitcoin in some real currency, and as soon as they receive payment, convert the funds to real currency. This means that, although the Bitcoin transactions themselves are outside of government control, all government must do to tax or restrict Bitcoin usage is to focus on the services that convert between official currency and Bitcoin.

The fact that Bitcoin transactions are by design irreversible makes them incompatible with all other forms of electronic payment. This means if you exchange Bitcoins for an electronic currency payment of some kind, even after verifying the electronic payment was credited, you have no guarantee that the electronic payment won't be reversed later as fraudulent. If payment is reversed, you have lost the Bitcoins you sold because that transaction can't be reversed. Any service that allows electronic

payment in exchange for Bitcoins is similarly at risk. Either they must defer delivery of purchased Bitcoins for days, or risk being the victim of a massive fraud attack.

### **LIMITATIONS OF A DISTRIBUTED BUT UNREGULATED CRYPTOCURRENCY SYSTEM**

In theory, having the Bitcoin ledger maintained on many different servers was supposed to make the system trustworthy by decentralizing the data with each site being validated by the others. In practice, the consolidation of mining into less than 10 entities, self-chosen by their willingness to consume electric power, means that only a majority of that small group effectively controls the Bitcoin system. The value of Bitcoin is simply what people are willing to pay, which makes it vulnerable to sudden collapse if there is a loss of confidence and a drop-in demand.

Because there is no regulation, there are many Bitcoin scams, both security schemes and Ponzi schemes, to entrap the unwary.

That fact that exchanges are totally unregulated means that it is not uncommon for one to collapse from theft, fraud, or incompetence with loss of many Bitcoins from the exchange.

Another obvious downside of cryptocurrency is that its apparent anonymity and irreversibility of transactions attracts those with criminal intent. If you are the victim of a fraud, you can't identify who defrauded you and can't get your Bitcoins back. If cryptocurrency makes it easier for criminals to launder money, and harder to bring them to justice, it is bad for society as a whole.

### **ANONYMITY IS NOT ABSOLUTE**

The perceptions that all Bitcoin transactions shield the identities of all parties to the transaction is not 100% true. While it is true that the actual names of the individuals involved in a single Bitcoin transaction are hidden, the fact that all transaction history is visible, and a unique code represents the same individual means that associations can be deduced. The transaction history also includes Internet IP ad-

resses, which may significantly limit the possible real names associated with the transaction, especially since even non-fixed IP addresses from an Internet Service Provider may remain unchanged for months and narrow the search to a single street address. If Bitcoins are used to purchase physical goods from a vendor, the vendor must know a physical shipping address. Large transfers between Bitcoins and real currency may leave other currency audit trails that can be correlated to Bitcoin transactions. Those techniques may be sufficient to establish the actual names of parties to a Bitcoin transaction.

❖

## PHOTOGRAPHY: MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR FLASH

By **David Stonier-Gibson**, Editor

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PC\_Update, June 2018

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**M**ost cameras these days have a built-in flash. And we all know a flash is there just for those occasions when there's not enough light to take a good photo, right? Well, maybe not. There's much more to getting the most out of a flash than just allowing the camera to automatically flash when it's dark. Read on ...

Whether you are using a phone camera with its inbuilt LED flash, a pocket point and shoot camera with an inbuilt flash, or a fancy DSLR with a pop-up flash or even externally mounted "serious" flash gun, there is something here for you.

### Flash in bright sunlight

I sometimes tell people I use my flash when there's too much light. It's all good and well taking snaps of the children on the beach on a nice sunny day, but the harsh sun will cause harsh shadows. Using a flash can often reduce the shadows and highlight the subject.



### Fill flash for a bright background

How often have you seen a social snapshot or selfie where the subject was up against a window or other bright background, and consequently dark and lacking in detail. Use the flash to illuminate the subject. If your equipment allows the strength of the flash to be controlled, dialing it down a bit may improve the result.



*The camera will tend to expose the bulk of the picture, which is the bright background. By activating the flash I have both the subject and the background looking good.*



### Avoiding harsh shadows from your flash

Using a flash in low light social situations (aka parties) will produce harsh shadows on and behind the subject. If you have an external flash gun you can point it up at 45 degrees and bounce it off the ceiling. If you have a fixed pop-up flash, you can improvise a reflector from a white card to get a similar effect.



*Direct flash (left) versus flash bounced off a white card and the ceiling. (right)*



### Reduce red-eye

A camera mounted flash, especially in a phone or pocket camera, will produce that dreaded red-eye effect. Not pretty! Bouncing the flash off the ceiling will get rid of it. If that's not possible, most photo editing software, even in phones, has a red-eye reduction tool, and some cameras can reduce red-eye by a brief flash before taking the actual shot. ❖



## WINDOWS 10 CORNER

By **Rosita Herrick**

Sarasota Technology User Group, FL

[www.the.stug.org](http://www.the.stug.org)

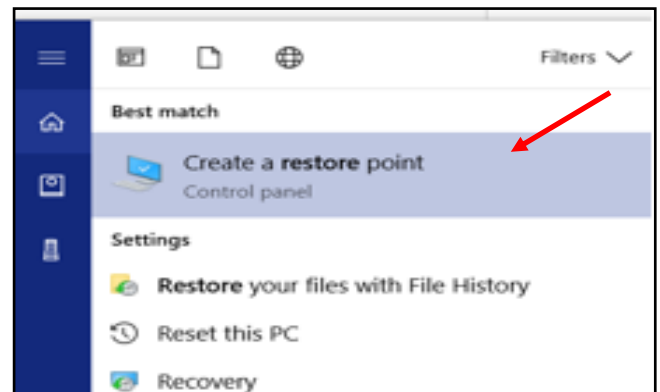
Hrosita (at) aol.com

One of the recovery options I use before I install new software is to create a Restore Point.

**System Restore** is a feature in Microsoft Windows that allows the user to revert their computer's state (including system files, installed applications, Windows Registry, and system settings) to that of a previous point in time, which can be used to recover from system malfunctions or other problems.

**Note:** No personal files, documents or photos are affected.

To create a restore point, just type **restore** in the Cortana search box. (Figure 1)



**Figure 1**

Click on the displayed link, and the window on the next page pops up. (Figure 2)

Clicking on the OK button will automatically prompt the user to enter a name, date or other data to identify that specific restore point. For example, I typed in August Backup and clicking on the Create button, will start the process. (Figure 3)

Once the process is complete, the message in Figure 4 will be displayed.

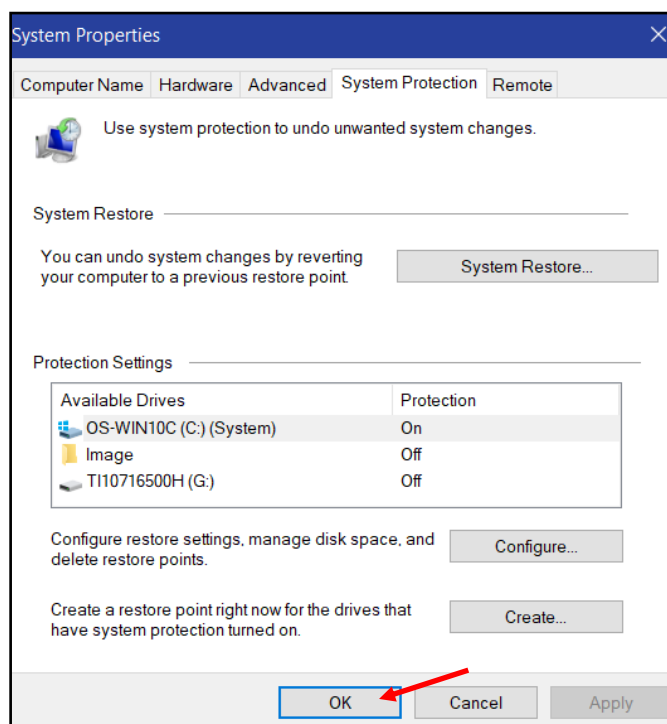


Figure 2

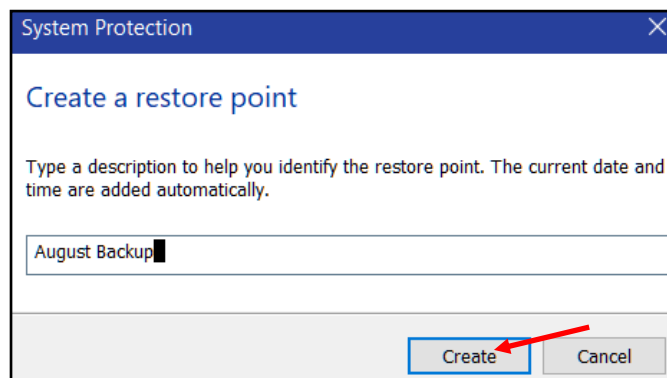


Figure 3

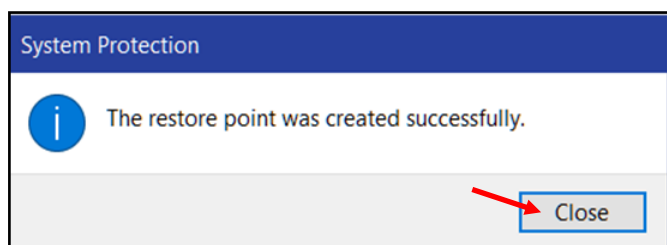


Figure 4

Click on the Close button and you have completed the creation of a Restore Point.

Windows will create a restore point automatically prior to installing updates. To see what restore points are available, enter Restore in the Cortana search box, click on the Create Restore box and click on the System Restore box. On the next window, click on Next and a window with a list of restore points will pop up. (Figure 5)

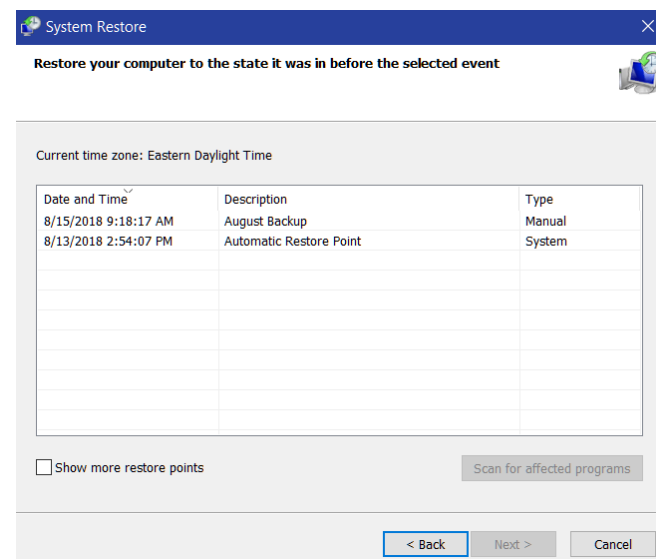


Figure 5

As you can see, two items are displayed in descending date order. On top is the point I just created, and below is a point that was created by the system when it installed some updates.

Clicking on the “Show more restore points” will display older ones. Clicking on any of the listed items will start the restore process. The user can also click on the checkbox at the bottom to show if there are additional restore points as you can see from the display below.

Date and Time	Description	Type
8/15/2018 9:18	August Backup	Manual
8/13/2018 14:54	Automatic Restore Point	System
8/5/2018 17:49	Windows Update	Critical Update
7/28/2018 18:11	Automatic Restore Point	System

By the way, I believe the system automatically deletes older points after 20 days. ❖

## SOFTWARE (APPS) UPGRADES

By **Jim Cerny**, Instructor  
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STUGMonitor, July 2018  
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**S**oftware – those programs and apps that you use every day – almost every one of them will require you to upgrade or download a newer version sooner or later. Some apps get updated very frequently, especially the more popular ones. In this article we hope to soothe your fears and give you some helpful tips when doing your upgrades.

You are, hopefully, happily using your device when you get a notice on Windows (lower right corner notification area of your desktop screen) or on your iPad or iPhone (a red circle appears on your “App Store” icon with a number) that updates are waiting for you to download. Almost always you will want to download them – that is, perform the update – soon.

Updates contain “fixes” to the software that the owners of that software would like to make available to you, so that’s a good thing. I believe that updates also contain new advertising that will display while you are using the app. So, it is a mixed blessing, but you still should install the update anyway.

If you are NOT getting these notices to update, your device may have the option turned on which “auto-updates” your apps for you. Many people may wish to turn on this option.

**In Windows 10**, you can use the search bar in the bottom left to search for “Windows Update Settings,” when there, select “Advanced Options” and then look to make sure that “Automatic” is selected.

**For iOS devices (iPad, iPhone)** tap the Settings icon on your home screen, then scroll down to and select “iTunes & App Store”. Scroll down to “AUTOMATIC DOWNLOADS” which then lists the things you may select from – the “Updates” button/

slide should be green to have your updates downloaded automatically.

To install updates on your iPad or iPhone, touch the App Store icon and then touch “Updates” at the bottom of the screen. You will see a list (one or more) of the updates that are needed. You can touch each “update” box to do each one individually or you can touch the “update all” box to do them all. A blue circle will fill in gradually to show you the update is being installed.

To install an update in Windows, just click in the notification box that appears and follow the instructions.

What I find much easier for me is to use the free utility program/app Glary Utilities. Running Glary Utilities will tell you what needs to be updated on your Windows computer and will allow you to download each update, one at a time. Glary prevents you from searching for the right website and hoping you are downloading the correct update.

Applying updates as they become available is a good idea. Someday, maybe, they will have an update to my brain that I can download; wouldn’t that be nice? ❖

## THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Collected by Leah Clark, editor  
Los Angeles Computer Society  
[www.lacspc.org](http://www.lacspc.org)  
Editor (at) lacspc.org

- The longer that something false is held as true, the more it becomes true and the less it becomes false.
- The stupid see difficulty in every opportunity. The intelligent sees opportunity in every difficulty.
- Wise people are not always silent, but they know when to be.
- Technology is a useful servant, but a dangerous master.



**CASH FLOW**

as of August 31, 2018  
Charlotte Semple, Treasurer

<b>Total Assets</b>	\$8,563.33
<b>Receipts</b>	
Member Dues	304.00
<b>Total Gross Receipts</b>	\$304.00
<b>Expenses</b>	
Newsletter	179.36
Facilities Rental	60.00
Verizon Wireless	50.08
GM Expenses	24.99
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$314.43
<b>Current Total Assets</b>	\$8,552.90

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<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, and several book, media and training sites offer discounts including the two mentioned below.

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**LAUGHING OUT LOUD**
**Computer Viruses and  
Their Meanings**

From [www.AJokeADay.com](http://www.AJokeADay.com)

**MICHAEL JACKSON VIRUS:** Hard to identify because it is constantly altering its appearance. The virus won't harm your PC, but it will trash your car.

**CONGRESSIONAL VIRUS #1:** The computer locks up, screen splits erratically with a message appearing on each half blaming the other side for the problem.

**CONGRESSIONAL VIRUS #2:** Runs every program on the hard drive simultaneously, but doesn't allow the user to accomplish anything.

**AIRLINE VIRUS:** You're in Dallas, but your data is in Singapore.

**PBS VIRUS:** Your PC stops every few minutes to ask for money.

**SEARS VIRUS:** Your data won't appear unless you buy new cables, power supply, and a set of shocks.

**JIMMY HOFFA VIRUS:** Nobody can find it.

**STAR TREK VIRUS:** Invades your system in places where no virus has gone before.

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

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

**Associate members** are those who live in the same household or work at the same address as a regular member; they do not receive their own subscriptions to *User Friendly*, but may read it on the LACS website. **Students** must prove full-time status.

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

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- **Get FREE help** by phone from knowledgeable members who are Quick Consultants listed in *User Friendly*.
- **Get help by email** by using our LACSLIST Yahoo Group Mail List. Send your questions by e-mail to lacslis (at) yahoogroups.com
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-- Occasional product **dis-**  
**counts**, special offers, etc.

-- **Special Interest Groups** (SIGs) on various topics may be created to help you to learn, to share interests, and to solve your computer problems.

-- **Information** on training, swap meets and trade shows.

-- Occasional **Free software and computer books**, if you review them for *User Friendly*.

-- **Rewards** for recruiting; LACS will extend your membership for three months for each new regular member you recruit.

-- **Annual Holiday Party**

-- **Field trips**

-- **Social Interacting** with others who have like interests in computers and technology.

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☐ Contributor \$50.00    ☐ Supporter \$75.00    ☐ Benefactor \$100.00    ☐ Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name: First \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Associate: First \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip + 4 \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Do not publish in roster

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Email of Associate: \_\_\_\_\_

Did a member of LACS invite you to join? If so, who? If not, how did you hear about LACS? \_\_\_\_\_



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## DIRECTIONS TO

### GENERAL MEETING

Westchester United Methodist  
 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.

