

User Friendly

LACS
**A Computer and
Technology
User Group**

LACS 2023 MEMBER ROSTER

**THE 2023 LACS
ROSTER IS IN THE
CENTER OF THIS ISSUE
OF USER FRIENDLY.
PLEASE KEEP IT!**

Be assured that the roster will go only to LACS members. It will not be emailed to anyone. It will not be online. If you should need a new copy, it will have to be snail-mailed to you, so please keep it.

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MARCH 14, 2023 GENERAL MEETING

Meeting Time: 7:00 to 9:00 PM, via Zoom

Socializing and Q and A: 6:30-7:00 PM

Topic: Everything Google

Speaker: Bill James, APCUG Speakers Bureau



You may use Google daily, but there is a lot you probably don't know about the company, its operations, and its hardware and software. We will explore the vast world of Google hardware and software. Google strives to have the most comprehensive and diverse suite of apps and hardware that work together on various operating systems. Its Chrome browser is the foundation of its platform and the Chromebook Operating System.

All Google software is web-based and free; none resides on your computer. Each app is designed to work seamlessly with the others to make a cohesive system. We will look at Google hardware and some popular and some more obscure apps and how they interact. Bill will show us how to use Google's products and software better. You can ask questions at the end of the program.

Meet Our Presenter

Bill joined the Oklahoma PC User's Group, now known as the Computer Club of Oklahoma City in 1992. He has been a member of the club's Board of Directors since 1998. He now serves as VP of Operations and their eBulletin curator. He often gives presentations on software to his club and APCUG groups. Bill is the APCUG Region 8 (AR, KS, LA, MO, OK, TX) Advisor. He retired from the Federal Aviation Administration as a Supply Systems Analyst for the FAA Logistics Center in Oklahoma City, OK, in 2007, where he worked for 38 years.

Tuesday, March 14, 7:00—9:00 PM Via Zoom

6:30—7:00: Socializing and informal Q & A

LACS members on the PC groups.IO list will receive the Zoom link before or on **March 12**. Guests may ask for the link by emailing Leah Clark at LeahClark424@gmail.com before or on **March 12**.

More information about LACS is at www.lacspc.org.



FROM YOUR PRESIDENT / EDITOR



A NEW PROCEDURE FOR PAYING LACS DUES

★ We are working on a procedure where all members' dues will be paid in January, starting with January 2024. This will entail additional work and organizing in 2023, but should make it simpler in the future. All members will know when to pay their dues.

Your 2023 dues will be prorated to the end of the year. For example, if you are due in May, you will pay for seven months. A member joining or renewing in July will pay dues for five months. Your 2023 dues reminder email will tell you what you owe.

We hope this transition will be painless. Please watch your email and *User Friendly* for updated information. And we welcome your ideas for carrying this out easily.

We thank you for your patience as we make these changes.

APCUG EVENTS

Watch your email for APCUG workshops and other upcoming events.

LACS IS A MEMBER OF APCUG

www.apcug2.org
www.facebook.com/APCUG
www.twitter.com/apcug
www.youtube.com/apcugvideos



An International
Association of Technology
and Computer User Groups

On St. Patrick's Day
I pretend to be Irish,
just like on Christmas
I pretend to be good.



LUNCH SIG

We have been conducting our board and general meetings by Zoom. This has been convenient for us. We can stay in our comfortable homes and don't have to drive after dark. But, we miss personal contact, sharing food, and exchanging no-longer-needed items. I would like to meet at a restaurant, maybe quarterly, for a lunch Special Interest Group (SIG). We could eat, have computer and technology related Q & A, share, and socialize. What do you think? Who would like to help set this up? Any ideas? Please email me to let me know what you think about this.

WELCOME TO LACS NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Gavin Faught,
LACS Treasurer

New Member (1)

Sandra Gross-Smith



Renewals (2)

James and Penelope McKnight

Michael Napoli

James Somerville

Anne Uski

GENERAL MEETING REPORT

February 14, 2023

By Leah Clark, LACS President/Editor

Topic: Making Your TV Smart

Speaker: Hewie Poplock
APCUG Speakers Bureau



Hewie started by playing a video showing his TV screen with his Apps and Channels. He explained how he installed them to his Fire TV using **Plex Media Server** as an example. He showed the choices that Plex and others give of local channels, live programs, movies, TV programs, etc. You can set up a watch list, listen to music, record, or add shows to your favorites. Hewie mostly uses **Direct TV Stream**. You can watch old TV shows for free with **Freevee**.

He then explained adding Plex to his Roku TV. This was similar to Fire TV, with some differences. Hewie showed several things in settings you can have with your Roku TV. Not all are free, but some are subscription based.

When you are streaming, you must wait for things to download, so it's not like cable where you are there as soon as you click a button.

After the video, Hewie spoke about many of the free streaming services for watching movies, TV shows, sports, and more.

In a few years, most cable companies will be going to streaming, so dishes will be disappearing from roofs. TVs have Wi-Fi, so you will download to your internet just as you do on your computer.

As long as your TV has an HDMI port, you can buy a Roku box that plugs in. All you need is power and Wi-Fi. Sometimes you have to activate a service via your computer. What you can do on your TV, you can also do on your PC, Mac, Chromebook, or Android or iPhone.

Hewie showed a list of places online where you can stream movies, TV shows, documentaries, and more, free and legally, and he

talked about each of them individually. On some, you can access your personal music and video libraries. He will send the links to them for our members. Attendees and members also received the link to the meeting recording where they can hear his commentary on each of them.

After the descriptions of all the listed streaming services Hewie fielded questions from the participants.

You can keep your cable while trying some streaming, and then give up your cable after you are satisfied with streaming. You don't have to do everything all at once.

Hewie showed us the website www.suppose.tv. You decide what programs you must have, arrange them by priority, and it will tell you what services you will need and their cost. You can figure out where to find different programs, by seeing what channels are included in each service.

This presentation was an introduction to the free channels out there. You can also look at the paid ones.

Streaming is like watching TV as if it were a computer. Connect to the internet, go to a streaming website where you can practice on your computer before putting it on your TV. Fire TVs have a browser; Roku TVs do not. You can use the browser to watch a website on your TV.

TV has changed a lot!

Hewie showed his website at www.Hewie.net. He hosts a special interest group for the Central Florida Computer Society and the Sarasota Technology User Group. The *Tech for Seniors* website at www.techforsenior.com, has a new free program every Monday. Hewie and other members of APCUG, do more online presentations, including "Learning Chromebooks." Check out his websites and the recording of this presentation. All of these programs are saved on YouTube. ❖


MAKE A ZOOM BACKGROUND

By **Leah Clark**, Los Angeles Computer Society

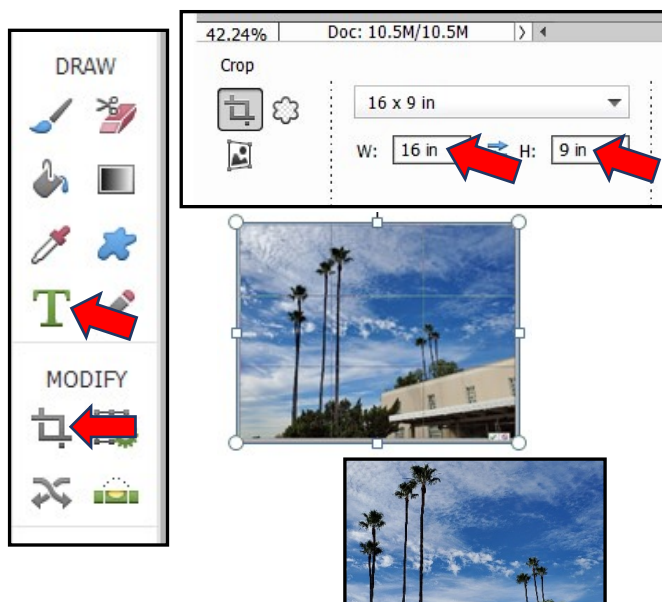
I have been asked how I make personalized and custom Zoom virtual backgrounds. It depends on what software you have and wish to use. I use Microsoft Publisher and Photoshop Elements, because these are programs I use almost daily. But my way is not the only way.

This article is not going to give detailed instructions for using any software. This can be obtained from the software's website, Google, YouTube, LACS members, etc. Virtual backgrounds can be made from a photograph or customized from scratch. The aspect ratio between the width and length must be **9 X 16**.

From a Photograph


Bring the photo you want to use into the PhotoShop Elements Editor. The first thing to do is to crop it to the **9 X 16 aspect ratio**. See the lower part of the menu on the left side. Click on the , then enter the 9 X 16 ratio. Grab the corners of the lines that form over the picture to adjust the crop. Save the cropped version.

In Zoom, click on the arrow next to the camera icon on the lower left, chose Virtual Background, click on the plus sign on the right above the background pictures, then select your saved picture.

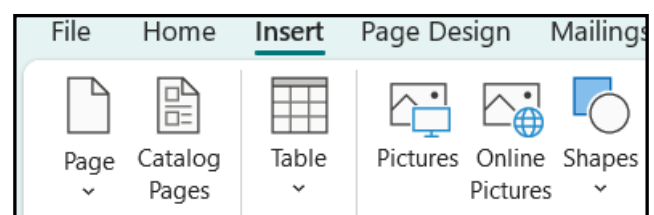


Design Your Own

Open a new, blank publication in Microsoft Publisher. Click on **Insert > Shapes**, and select a rectangle shape. Draw a rectangle on the page (The exact size and aspect ratio don't matter now), then click on **Shape Fill** to choose a color for the background. Right-click on the rectangle, then select **Save as Picture**.

Open this saved rectangle in PhotoShop Elements. Fix the aspect ratio at 9 X 16 as described in the previous column. Click on  to add text. Choose the font and size, and put the cursor where you want to start typing. Save this background.

If you now want an image on the Zoom background, go back to Publisher, open a new blank page, and load the saved background. Click **Insert** to add pictures from your computer or from online pictures.



I hope this gives you ideas for developing your own methods, and that you have fun designing your virtual backgrounds as I do.

Any JPG or GIF image that is a rectangle with a 9 X 16 aspect ratio can be used as a Zoom virtual background. I did the above for our March meeting.



I found an excellent YouTube video for making virtual backgrounds using PowerPoint. See [Zoom Virtual Backgrounds - How to Use & Create Your Own! - YouTube](#)

I read that a darker background lessens the likelihood of "ghosting" around a person's head or hair in a Zoom background. ❖

WHAT IS VAPORWARE?

The Greatest Technology You Never Saw By Danny Chadwick

ReviewGeek.com,

Associate Editor



After the Consumer Electronics Show, you're probably seeing many stories about great new gadgets companies are developing to improve your life. However, many of those products and concepts never make it into your home or even onto store shelves. We call it "vaporware."

What is Vaporware?

Vaporware is an informal term used by tech industry professionals, journalists, and consumers to describe products that have been announced but never materialize or take a very long time to reach the market. This can happen for various reasons. Sometimes the company misjudges its ability to develop a concept into a finished product. Other times it just runs out of money to keep the project going. And occasionally, the company is just lying about its intentions to generate publicity.

In honor of CES 2023, we've compiled a list of our favorite pieces of vaporware—no matter the reason for their failure to launch.

Apple W.A.L.T.

A computer with a telephone in it might seem like a trite concept today. But, back in 1993, it was a mind-blowing concept. And Apple partnered with telephone company BellSouth to make it a reality. The resulting prototype featured a touchscreen, caller ID, a fax machine, an address book, customizable ringtones, and online banking access.

All of these features were cutting-edge tech in the early 90s. If Apple had made it a reality, it likely would have been a big hit. And the tech world would look very different today.

Unfortunately, it never made it out of the prototype stage. But, fortunately, it also meant its

awful name never entered the tech lexicon long term. W.A.L.T. stands for "Wizzy Active Lifestyle Telephone." What a "Wizzy Active Lifestyle" entails, we'll never know. But it's a safe assumption that Steve Jobs would have not approved that name. That's okay. We like the iPhone much better.

Google Glass

Google Glass qualifies as vaporware because it still hasn't reached the general public as we thought it would when it was first announced back in 2012. This heads-up display was marketed to the public as a game changer in how we live. It featured a built-in camera and showed you lots of cool stuff in the glass of the eyepieces.

I really wanted one at the time. Glass seemed like a gadget Tony Stark would wear. I even entered Google's #IfIHadGlass promotion on Twitter to try to get my hands on a prototype (thankfully, that cringy tweet has long since been deleted) in 2013. I'm still waiting for any company to develop a decent heads-up display made for everyday use that isn't some massive, augmented reality headset that you wear like a helmet.

Google eventually shipped 8,000 Glass prototypes to "Glass Explorers" for testing. But, by 2014, it was clear that the heads-up display was in trouble. In February 2015, the *New York Times* reported that former Apple executive Tony Fadell was redesigning the product, and it wouldn't be released until it was perfect — meaning never.

However, Google did eventually release the [Google Glass Enterprise Edition](#), but as the name implies, that's only available to specific businesses for specific purposes. The general public may never see these would-be glasses with a built-in camera and eye-level display. Such a shame.

Palm Foleo

If you're having trouble remembering what a "subnotebook" is, you're not alone. That

class of devices was meant to mean “really small laptop” in the early 2000s and has since dropped out of widespread use—kind of like “netbook.”

The Palm Foleo, a long-forgotten productivity device, could be considered the death knell of the subnotebook product category. Palm announced the Foleo in 2007, and it was meant to be a companion device for the company’s Treo smartphone line. It ran the Linux operating system and featured Bluetooth and Wi-Fi connectivity. The subnotebook also had an integrated email client, used the Opera web browser, and the *Documents to Go* office suite. Had it ever reached the market, the Foleo could have been a pretty handy device for on-the-go users in its age.

Unfortunately, it was never to be. Palm was getting slammed in all areas of the consumer electronics market at the time, and the Foleo was canceled just three months after it was announced. The official reason was so that Palm could refocus on its smartphone devices. The company never recovered and was acquired by HP three years later.

Atari 2700

Many recall the Atari 2600 as their first home gaming console. More than thirty million units were sold during its 1977-1992 lifespan. Given its popularity, it’s natural that Atari would craft a successor – the Atari 2700.

Intended for a 1981 release, the 2700 was meant to be fully backward-compatible with the 2600’s games and accessories (a promise almost all game companies make but never keep). The design for the console was a significant departure from the 2600, featuring a more sleek wedge-shaped form factor rather than the now-classic boxy wood panel look of the 2600.

And, in what would have been a significant innovation, the 2700 would have wireless controllers. The controllers would have worked via radio signals, with an adjustable

antenna sticking out of them, making them resemble a walkie-talkie with a dial in the middle instead of a speaker. But Atari couldn’t work out the technology and canceled the system. Atari would later realize wireless controllers as a plug-in accessory to the 2600 in 1983.

Duke Nukem Forever

Duke Nukem Forever holds a distinction in video games for spending a very long time in “development hell.” 3D Realms first announced the game in 1997 as a sequel to the smash hit *Duke Nukem 3D*, and it was expected that the game would be released before the year 2000. However, the late 90s was a transition period for first-person-shooter gaming engines. And 3D Realms had yet to acquire a license to develop *Forever* on the Quake II engine, so they began developing it on the aging Quake engine.

It turns out that was a mistake because Epic Games soon unveiled the Unreal Engine, which some programmers considered superior to the Quake II engine. So, in June 1998, 3D Realms announced it would have to start over on *Forever* using the Unreal Engine but stated that it would not be significantly delayed—just a month to six weeks, the company claimed at the time.

Months ended up being years, and *Duke Nukem Forever* began missing deadlines, and multiple launch dates were announced and later rescheduled. It got so bad that in 2001, 3D Realms announced that *Forever* would be released “when it’s done.” It would take another decade and a lawsuit to finally get the game onto the waiting players’ consoles. And by all accounts, the game wasn’t worth the wait. Critics widely panned it, and the consensus among video game aficionados is that it’s one of the worst games of all time.

Duke Nukem Forever holds the Guinness world record for the longest development of a video game.

One of the most recent examples of vaporware is the Noveto N1. This innovative speaker was dubbed the “invisible headphones” by [CES goers in 2022](#). In fact, it was one of *Review Geek*’s [Editor’s Choice Award](#) winners for that year’s show. The N1 used beam-forming technology to [create sound pockets](#) around a listener’s ears and transmitted sound to those pockets without needing a physical headset. It would have been a game-changer in the world of audio.

Review Geek’s Editor in Chief had a terrific hands-on experience with the N1 and reported that “it’s everything the company is promising.” Unfortunately, CES 2022 was the last anyone saw of the N1. A few months after the show, the company stopped updating its website and returning emails from its [Kickstarter backers](#).

In March 2022, the company posted an apology to its Kickstarter backers on that website, stating, “We are not satisfied with the current performance of the Noveto N1 product, and are working tirelessly to solve these issues to deliver on our promise.” However, in August, the company admitted that “Noveto has encountered financial distress and initiated insolvency proceedings.” A sad example of what would have been a fantastic product being killed by financial troubles! As of this writing, Noveto’s final fate is uncertain, as its website is still up and running and touting the high praise it got at CES 2022. ❖

THE SCAMS JUST KEEP COMING

By **David Kretchmar**, Computer Technician
Sun City Summerlin Computer Club

<https://www.scscc.club>

dkretch (at) gmail.com

As posted in *Bits & Bytes*,

Bella Vista Computer Club, AR

<http://BVComputerClub.org>

Email: editor (at) bvcomputerclub.org



If you’re on the phone with a nice person who asks you to download some software onto your computer that will allow them to remotely fix something that has been a problem,

please think twice about it. Then do not do it. The chances are high that you are dealing with a scammer trying to get financial and personal data about you.

It is probably generally a very bad idea to give a stranger access to your computer. Yes, there are exceptions; I have allowed a Microsoft Tech to access my computer remotely to fix an Operating System installation problem. But anything short of that, such as reactivating a permanent version of Microsoft Office after a hard drive failure, which did not require me to relinquish control of my computer to a stranger.

Therefore, it is unlikely that any issue you are having would require you to give a stranger remote access to your computer.

My Experience: I was having problems installing AOL Gold on a client’s new computer. A Google search led me to what appeared to be a legitimate AOL site, or at least it fooled me. I called the number and spoke to a young lady, who might have been on the other side of the world. She explained that to fix the problem preventing AOL Gold from loading, I would have to give her access to my computer. She asked me to download and install a program that would allow her to access my computer, which I foolishly did. She then sent me a code which I had to enter to activate a remote session.

Then, I wondered, why does she need to do that? I told her I was a computer tech who could probably follow her instructions, and she gave me an unsatisfactory answer. So, I terminated the call and uninstalled the remote access software.

Remote access programs such as TeamViewer, AnyDesk, LogMeIn, and others are legitimate, but they can be used for nefarious purposes. Scammers reproduce the logos of legitimate software providers. They can even spoof their email address, so an email appears to be coming from a legitimate company. ❖

LACS INFORMATION

PAY DUES BY PAYPAL OR ZELLE

To pay by PayPal, go to this link:

www.paypal.com/paypalme/00001024

and then click on **Send**. You'll be asked to log in to your PayPal account or sign up for an account so that PayPal will know where to get the money to send. Follow the prompts. Once you have entered your dues amount, click on **Add a note**. Tell us of any updated information: physical address, email address, phone number, and what type of dues you are paying: regular, electronic *User Friendly*, etc. or if you don't want your contact information published in the roster.

To pay by Zelle, log into your bank with your username and password.

Select **Transfer Money > Send Money with Zelle**. Follow the instructions. The name of the recipient is **Los Angeles Computer Society**. Select **Send by email**. The email address is:

lacompetersociety@gmail.com. The wording may be a little different on your bank's site. Email questions to Gavin at gmfaught@gmail.com.

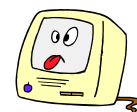
HOW TO JOIN LACS'S MAIL LIST

LACS now has **one** active general list: PC@LACS.Groups.IO. Use this email address to ask questions, to offer any comments or suggestions, and to conduct official LACS business.

New LACS members should receive an invitation to join our list with two weeks to accept. LACS members who want to join the list should send an email to

LACS+subscribe@Groups.IO from the email address they want to use with their name and phone number. Stephanie, our Groups.IO Coordinator, will check your membership and add you to the PC list. You can contact her at nordlacs@AOL.com

FIX YOUR PC FOR FREE?



LACS member and presenter, **Jim McKnight**, has an open offer to 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 new regular LACS membership (\$40.00), and Jim will fix your PC problem, too. Contact Jim for specific considerations.

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** to select either the DOC or PDF form. Fill it out, and email it with your changes to Membership@lacspc.org or snail-mail it to

Los Angeles Computer Society
11664 National Blvd. #343
Los Angeles, CA 90064-3802.

ATTENDING A ZOOM MEETING

LACS members who are on our PC email list will receive a link, meeting ID, Passcode, and instructions to attend the LACS general meetings a couple of days before the meeting. **Please let Leah Clark know by the morning of the meeting if you don't have it or have any problem.**

You can put an icon to the link on your desktop so it's handy at meeting time.

1. Right-click a blank spot on your desktop.
2. Select **New** from the drop-down menu.
3. Select **Shortcut**.
4. Type or copy and paste the link in the box that says "Type the location of the item."
5. Click **Next**.
6. Type a name for the shortcut.

LACS CALENDAR



LACS Board Meeting

Date: Monday, March 6, 2023

Time: 7:00 P.M. (Open from 6:30 P.M.)

Place: Wherever you are via Zoom

Please log in early so we can start on time.

LACS General Meeting

Date: March 14, 2023 via Zoom

Time: 7:00 P. M. (Open from 6:30 P.M.)

Place: Wherever you are via Zoom

Please log in early so we can start on time.

March 6: LACS Board Meeting

March 6: Purim

March 12: Daylight Savings Time begins

March 14: LACS General Meeting

March 17: St. Patrick's Day

March 20: Spring begins

March 22: Ramadan

HAPPY PURIM



VISIT OTHER COMPUTER USER GROUPS

Check out the URL below for information for visiting other user groups' Zoom and hybrid meetings. See a list of groups open to other groups, and for tips and ideas for using and joining Zoom meetings. The meetings are free to join.

<https://apcug2.org/tech-things-to-learn-while-sheltering-in-place/>

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

March 14: Everything Google

April 11: To Be Announced

Check your email and User Friendly for updates to this schedule.

ZOOM MEETINGS

Members on our PC email list will receive, via email, an invitation to join LACS Zoom general meetings. Click on the URL in the invitation before the meeting and follow the prompts.

Contact Leah Clark at leahjc@sbcglobal.net if you have any questions or if you don't receive the link by the morning of the meeting day.

ZOOM RECORDINGS

LACS members will receive links to the recordings of Zoom meetings via email.

HYPERLINKS

Underlined text (blue in the colored editions) in User Friendly usually means it's a hyperlink to a website. Click on the link on the online version to see the reference. Or, if necessary, grab the URL or type it into the address bar.

USER FRIENDLY BACK ISSUES AND INDEXES

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

For indexes to past issues, go to <https://www.lacspc.org/category/uf-index/>

To find a specific article or topic, use the search box on the top right.

MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

LACS members volunteer to help other members solve hardware and software problems by telephone or during the hours listed below. Select the topic from the list and then contact a person whose number is listed next to it.

Find a helper's email address and phone number on your roster. If you don't have your roster, call 424-261-6251. Only members in good standing may receive a roster. We hope you find this LACS free service useful.

If you are experienced using a particular program or hardware, please volunteer to be a consultant. You don't have to be an expert. To volunteer for this list or to make corrections, please email Leah Clark at leahjc@sbcglobal.net or call her at 424-261-6251.

Adobe Creative Suite: PDF,
InDesign, Photoshop, etc. - 10
Android Smartphones - 8
Apple devices - 11
Anti Malware and Backup - 7, 8
Dragon Naturally Speaking - 3
Genealogy - 8
Groups.IO - 8

Hardware - 7
Lotus Word Pro, Approach - 7
Mozilla Firefox - 7
MS Excel - 8, 11, 12
MS Word - 1, 3, 8, 12
MS Outlook - 8, 1, 10
MS PowerPoint - 8, 11
MS Publisher - 2
PDF 24 - 8

Photoshop - 10
Quicken - 8, 12
Thunderbird - 7
Utilities - 7, 8
Visual Basic - 5
Websites - 5
Windows - 7, 8
WordPerfect - 8
Zoom - 2, 9

Preferred Time for Phone Calls			
Number	Name	From	To
1	Beckman, Loling	10:00 AM	6:00 PM
2	Clark, Leah	7:00 AM	5:00 PM
3	Hershman, Irv	11:00 AM	11:00 PM
5	Ialongo, Gilbert	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
7	McKnight, Jim	8:00 AM	7:00 PM
8	Nordlinger, Stephanie	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
9	Presky, Mark	Any	Any
10	Rozek, E. J.	Noon	8:00 PM
11	Van Berkorn, Paula	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
12	Wilder, Joan	9:00 AM	9:00 PM

Note: Times are Pacific Times

OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND LEADERS

TITLE	NAME	TERM
President	Leah Clark	2023
Vice President	Stephanie Nordlinger	2023
Secretary	Marcia Jacobs	2023
Treasurer	Gavin Faught	2023
Director	Sylvia Davis	2023
Director	Howard Krivoy	2023
Director	Mark Presky	2023
Director	Irv Hershman	2024
Director	Emil Rozek	2024
Director	Annette Tossounian	2024
Director	Paula Van Berkom	2024
Immediate Past President	Stanley Johnson	
APCUG Representative	Leah Clark	
Corporate Counsel	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Database Manager	Donna Benton	
Groups.IO Email Lists	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Newsletter Editor	Leah Clark	
Program Chair	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Publicity – Press	Mark Presky	
Publicity – Online Media	Open	
Quick Consultants	Leah Clark	
Webmaster	Paula Van Berkom	

Mailing Address: 11664 National Blvd., #343, Los Angeles, CA 90064-3802

Website: www.lacspc.org

Contact the President/Editor at LeahClark424@gmail.com or at **424-261-6251**.

Follow the prompts. This is a Google Voice number.

Please use your roster for **email addresses and phone numbers** to contact any officer, board member or other member, or you may leave a message at the above number. If you don't have your roster, please contact Leah Clark, and she will mail you a copy. Only LACS members may receive a roster.

BACKUP

By **Dick Maybach**

Brookdale Computer User Group

www.bcug.com

n2nd (at) att.net

Life is constantly changing, meaning we should occasionally review our habits to see if they are still appropriate, and this is true for PC backups. So, let's take a high-level look at the subject. Your situation is undoubtedly different from mine, and your approaches will most likely differ.

Two basic backup techniques are copying the entire disk (cloning) and file-by-file. **Cloning** saves both your software and your data but requires that your backup medium be at least as large as your disk. In addition, there may be complications if you restore to a different PC, as old software may not be compatible with its new home.

On the other hand, **file-by-file backups** can be updated far faster because only changes are saved. You can also do partial restores, replacing only corrupted files or restoring only missing ones. However, a complete restore of a file-by-file backup is slower (perhaps significantly so) than a restore of a clone because the data is scattered throughout the backup medium.

Full disk backups protect against disk failure, software malfunction, and malware, as a restore returns the disk to its state when you backed it up. Of course, this means you lose any changes you've made since then. It's less satisfactory if you want to restore to a new PC. Most users buy PCs with an installed operating system (OS) with an OEM (original equipment manufacturer) license valid only for that machine. When you copy the entire disk contents to a new one, it now has an OS whose license isn't valid.

Further, the software is configured for the old PC. All is not lost, however, as you may be able to mount the backup disk on your new

PC and copy just the data you need from it. Be sure to test this before you need to do it, as there are possible complications, for example, if your hard disk is encrypted. When moving to a new PC, you'll probably want to retain the OS and any applications you bought with it and install your other applications from their installation media.

File-by-file backups allow you to save just your data and thus will enable you to move it to a new PC, but you must be careful. For example, Windows users should back up the entire contents of [C:\Users](#) and Linux users the entire contents of /home. Be sure you get everything, as many important items are hidden.

Consider using both strategies, clone the disk after upgrading old software or installing new, and make frequent file-by-file backups to preserve your data.

The Terabyte capacities of modern hard disks leave you only two choices of backup medium, hard disks, and the cloud. (Resist the temptation to back up to a separate partition of your system disk, as a disk failure will affect your system and your backup.) For example, backing up a 3-Terabyte disk to the cloud, assuming an upload rate of 3 Megabytes per second, would require close to 100 hours. However, I see rates around 100 Mbytes/second when writing to USB-3 external disks, meaning a 3-Tbyte disk backup would need a more reasonable three hours.

Your backup software can limit your choices for your next PC. For example, I use Back in Time, available only for Linux, and the backup disk is formatted as ext4. If considering changing operating systems, use different backup software and a different disk format.

Currently, USB is the most common interface for external disks. Using something else increases the risk that a new PC may not have the same interface or replacement

drives may become unavailable.

Backup disks can be either internal drive or external. An internal drive is always available, making it suitable for scheduled backups. However, a serious PC problem, for example, overheating or a power surge, could damage both the PC and your backups. An external drive, especially if connected to the PC only when in use, makes it more likely to survive a PC mishap. Leaving a USB drive always connected makes it function as an internal one and can support scheduled backups. Also, it's less likely to be damaged by a catastrophic PC failure.

What do you back up, and on what schedule? I use open-source software, and I prefer to install software from current distribution media rather than from a backup if there is a problem. This ensures the software is up to date and free from the inevitable configuration problems that seem to accumulate over the years. This solution is less desirable with proprietary software, where you would have to reinstall from the original installation media (or the recovery disks) and then do all the updating. A better solution here is to clone your disk when you install a new program or perform a significant upgrade. Then make file backups of only your home directory.

I've found that backup programs do a poor job of error reporting. Even experienced PC users are sometimes surprised to find their backups have failed without warning. Frequently check the backup program logs. I have one scheduled every Tuesday, and once I found that my medium had failed three weeks before, meaning the last three backups had failed. If you make file-by-file backups, occasionally check the process by restoring one or a few, preferably to a different location, so you can compare the originals with the backup versions.

You can streamline your backups by organizing the file system on your PC. For example, you can create an archive area where you keep old, seldom-accessed files. If you move

files to it only once a year, you need back it up only once a year. As a result, your other backups will be faster and smaller. Of course, we all should delete far more old, obsolete files than we do, but an archive accomplishes almost as much and involves less agony.

The recovery process depends on the damage. An operator error or disk failure usually involves just restoring from a backup. This can require recovering a complete copy of your disk, which I've had to do after mistakenly restarting Windows during an update. As I noted above, PC failure is more troublesome if you use proprietary software. The safe course is to use the OS you bought with the PC, restore your home directory from your last file backup, and reinstall the installation media software whose licenses permit such things.

I prefer to keep at least one backup offline, that is, disconnected from the PC, making it safe from even a catastrophic power surge. Once a week, I back up my home directory automatically to an internal drive, and once a month, I back up to an external one.

The large capacities of our hard disks mean that our backups are most likely stored near our PCs, where catastrophic events, such as a house fire or flood, could damage them. While these are unlikely, they happen, and taking special precautions with your valuable data, such as passwords, key financial records, and contacts, is worthwhile. In my case, these occupy less than 20 Mbytes and are easily stored on a USB memory stick or a cell phone. Because these are sensitive data, they should reside in an encrypted volume. Memory sticks are so small that asking a friend or relative to keep one for you is reasonable.

When you think about your needs, you will likely decide to use more than one backup technique. After all, there is more than one risk. ❖



HOW TO TURN YOUR WINDOWS PC INTO A WI-FI HOTSPOT

From *How-To Geek*

By **Chris Hoffman** and **Nick Lewis**



To create a hotspot on Windows 10 or 11, open the Settings app, navigate to Network & Internet > Mobile Hotspot, then click the toggle to share your internet connection. Click "Edit" to customize the network name and password.

Windows 10 and Windows 11 both have built-in features that can turn your laptop (or desktop) into a wireless hotspot, allowing other devices to connect to it and share your internet connection. Here's how it all works.

Thanks to a hidden virtual Wi-Fi adapter feature in Windows, you can even create a Wi-Fi hotspot while you're connected to another Wi-Fi network or wireless router, sharing one Wi-Fi connection over another one.

Why Share Your PC's Internet Connection?

There are many reasons to share your PC's internet connection via a [Wi-Fi hotspot](#). Here are a few that you might encounter.

- **A Better Wi-Fi Connection**

Let's say your phone doesn't get good Wi-Fi reception when you're at your computer, but you have an Ethernet hard line that provides a good connection to your PC. If your desktop or laptop has built-in Wi-Fi, you can use that to create a Wi-Fi hotspot, then connect your phone (or any other wireless device) to the hotspot.

All of your device's wireless traffic is then routed back along the Ethernet line, giving you significantly better performance.

- **Encrypt Traffic Through a VPN Running on Your PC**

Wi-Fi 6 and Wi-Fi 6E use WPA3, which enables encryption on public Wi-Fi networks. But not all networks you'll encounter use those standards yet. If you want to encrypt all of your wireless traffic on a Wi-Fi network, you can fire up a VPN on your PC (probably a laptop), then connect all of your wireless devices to that laptop's hotspot. Then all of your traffic will be encrypted, and you don't need to worry about whether or not someone is snooping on your online activity.

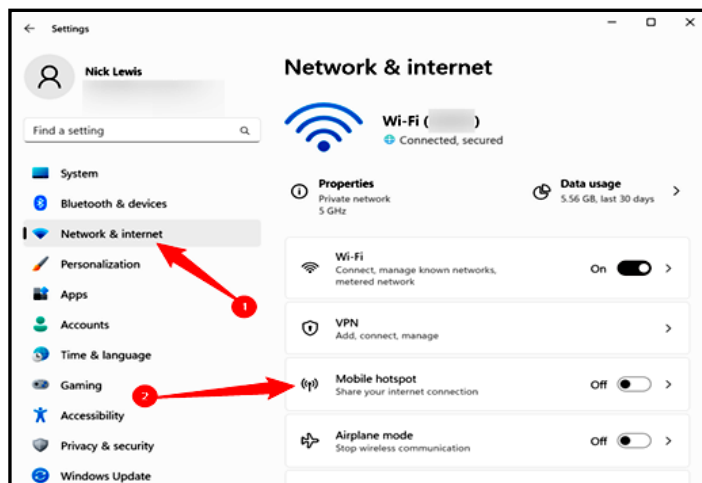
- **Circumvent Per-Device Fees**

Sometimes you'll be in a hotel room, on a plane, or elsewhere, and you'll find that the Wi-Fi network has per-device fees. This is another great application for using the built-in Wi-Fi hotspot functionality.

Sign up for the plan with one device — your laptop — and create a mobile hotspot. Then connect your other devices to your Windows PC's hotspot instead.

How to Share an Ethernet or Wi-Fi Connection in Windows 11

To share your internet connection in Windows 11, first, open up the **Settings** app by pressing Windows+i or searching for Settings in the Start Menu. Once Settings is open, click **Network & Internet**, and then select **Mobile Hotspot** from the list.

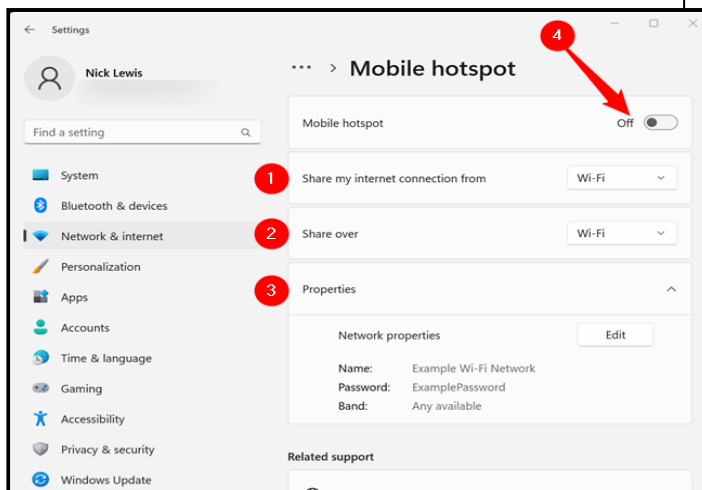


Select the adapter you want to share your connection from, then select how you'd like to share the connection with another device.

For example, if your PC were plugged into an Ethernet cable, you could select **Ethernet** from the dropdown list next to **Share My Internet Connection From**, then select Wi-Fi from the **Share Over** dropdown menu.

Click **Edit** to set your network name, password, and select the band (2.4 GHz, 5GHz, or 6GHz) you want to use. Your choices will be limited by the hardware your PC has, and you'll need [a Wi-Fi 6E-enabled device to use the 6GHz band](#).

Once that configuration is done, click the toggle near the top to enable your network.



You will be able to connect to your Windows mobile hotspot just like you would any other Wi-Fi network you might encounter.

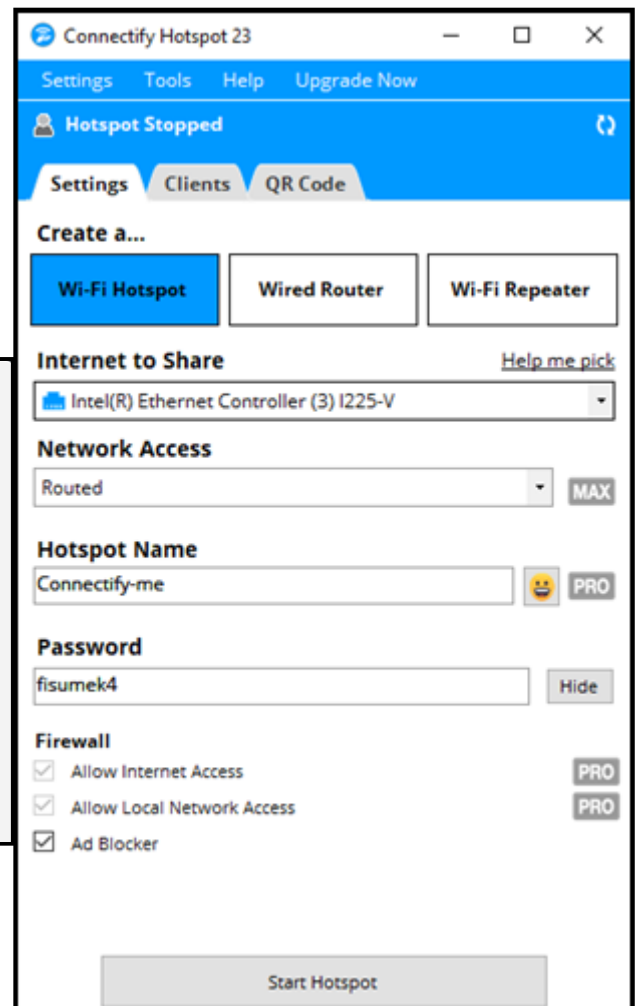
How to Turn Your PC Into a Wi-Fi Hotspot the Easy Way

If you can't get the built-in Windows [Wi-Fi hotspot](#) working, you should try using [Connectify Hotspot](#) instead — it's a completely foolproof Wi-Fi hotspot with tons of options and a nice interface.

[Connectify Hotspot](#) is great if you're at a hotel that charges per device, or if you're on a plane and you connect your laptop but don't want to pay more to connect your phone. If

you pay for the Pro version you can even use your PC as a Wi-Fi repeater or a wired router, or share a tethered connection off your phone

It's really more of a power user tool, but if you're looking for a good solution, Hotspot is free to try out, and the basic version is free with some limitations.



Windows Stopped Allowing Mobile Hotspot? Fixes to Try

There are a few likely culprits breaking your hotspot. Here are some troubleshooting steps you can take on Windows 10 or Windows 11 if your mobile hotspot stopped working. Keep in mind that not every wireless adapter supports creating a mobile hotspot, and the best way to find out if yours does is to try it.

- **Disconnect, Forget, and Reconnect Your Devices**

If you suddenly find that your hotspot isn't working correctly, try disconnecting from it, [forgetting the network](#), and then reconnecting again.

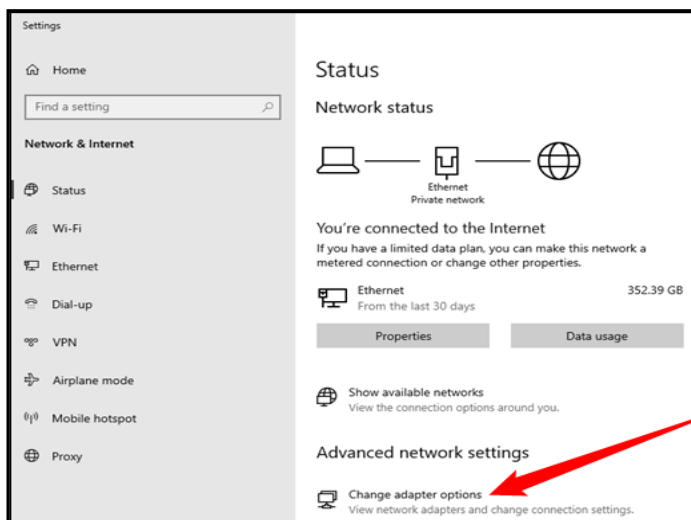
Make sure to double check the hotspot password at the same time. If you changed it but didn't update it on whatever device you're trying to connect, they'll get authentication errors.

- **Restart the Hotspot**

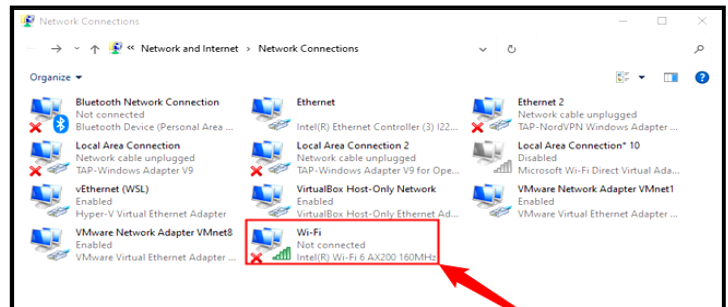
If reconnecting with the hotspot didn't work, try restarting the hotspot entirely. Open the **Settings** app, then go to **Network and Internet > Mobile Hotspot**, and click the toggle off and back on. Then try connecting your other devices again.

- **Enable Internet Connection Sharing**

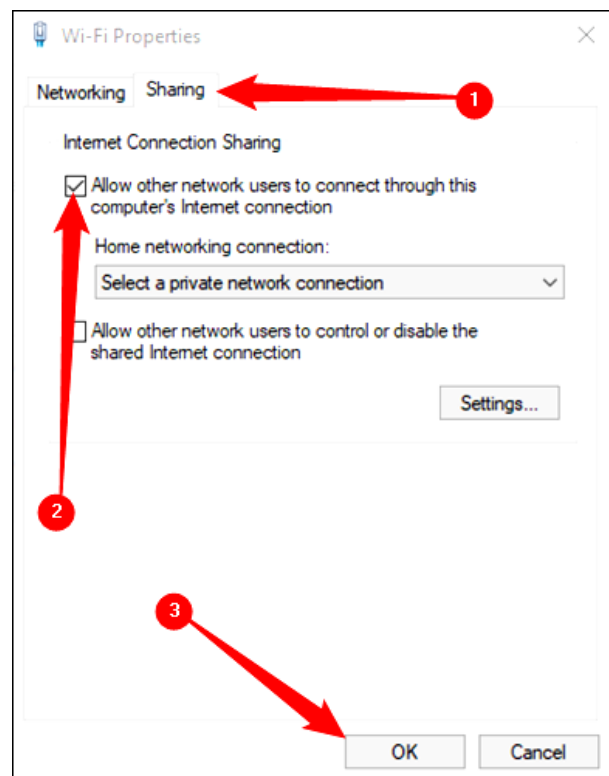
Your Wi-Fi adapter might have Internet sharing disabled. To enable it, open the Start Menu, search "Network Status," open "Network Status" result, and click "Change Adapter Options" towards the bottom.



Right-click your Wi-Fi adapter and click "Properties."



Then go to the **Sharing** tab. Make sure that "Allow Other Network Users to Connect Through This Computer's Internet Connection" is enabled, then restart your hotspot and try connecting to it again.



- **Restart Your PC**

"[Have you tried turning it off and back on again](#)" is a cliché, but it is standard advice for a good reason. When you [restart your PC](#), all of the hardware gets turned off, the RAM is cleared, programs and drivers are all restarted, and a huge range of issues will 'magically' fix themselves. If your hotspot is malfunctioning due to a driver error or some other related problem, there is a reasonable chance restarting your PC will fix the issue.

- **Temporarily Disable Your Firewall and Antivirus**

Occasionally firewalls or [antivirus programs](#) get a bit overzealous and block things we do deliberately. It is possible that they might even prevent a Windows hotspot from working correctly. Try disabling your antivirus software and firewalls **temporarily**, to see if it solves the issue.

[Antivirus software](#) varies significantly, so you'll need to check the product's documentation to determine precisely how to do that.

Alternatives to a Windows Hotspot

We covered some possible uses for a Windows Mobile Hotspot, but there are some alternatives that can accomplish the same things that you might prefer.

- **Use a 5G Mobile Hotspot**

A Windows hotspot only works when your laptop or desktop has a good internet connection. If it doesn't, you're just creating a miniature [local area network \(LAN\)](#). That can be useful in a few cases, but it probably isn't what you're looking for.

A [5G mobile hotspot](#) does much the same thing, but it routes all of your internet traffic through cell towers rather than a Wi-Fi network. Depending on your data plan, it might be cheaper and faster than Wi-Fi you purchase through a hotel.

Cellular mobile hotspots vary significantly in price and quality, so be sure to pick out the [best mobile hotspot](#) for your needs.

- **Use a Travel Router**

A [travel router](#) is similar to the router you have in your home, except it is designed to be portable and go places with you. Instead of connecting your wireless devices individually to a nearby Wi-Fi network, you connect your travel router instead, which then routes your traffic through the local [Wi-Fi or an Ethernet connection](#). This has a few noteworthy advantages.

1. It can bypass device restrictions on the network, so you can bring as many devices as you want without paying additional fees.
2. They often support VPNs in encrypting your traffic, so you're relatively secure, even on suspect networks.
3. If your room has spotty Wi-Fi, most travel routers can connect via Ethernet.

- **Create a Mobile Hotspot with your iPhone or Android**

Sometimes you'll want to do things in reverse — share your phone's internet connection with your laptop or desktop instead. You can still route your traffic through a VPN if you want, but you'll be limited to sharing a Wi-Fi or cellular connection, whereas most laptops, desktops, and travel routers allow you to share an Ethernet connection. How you create a hotspot varies by device, as the procedure is different on [iPhones](#) and [Androids](#), and not all carriers have the same policy towards [phone hotspots](#).

You should also be careful — you can burn through data more quickly than you think. If you're on a metered plan, you need to keep an eye on your data usage. ❖



FOR MANY HELPFUL TIPS AND TRICKS

Go to <https://www.apcug2.org> for all aspects of computing and operating systems.

TECHBOOMERS.COM

For learning how to use internet-based websites and applications for free.

- <https://TechBoomers.com>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2-bwYIYu1I>

SPECIAL OFFERS

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

- Members can save at the **Pearson Technology** websites: InformIT, Cisco Press, Pearson IT Certification, Que Publishing, Adobe Press, and Peachpit Press.
Informit.com/user_groups/index.aspx
Code for print books: **ITCOMMUNITY**.
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LAUGHING OUT LOUD

Q. Did you hear about the monkeys who shared an Amazon account?

A. They were Prime mates.

Q. Which type of virus does not have any vaccine?

A. Computer virus.

- Autocorrect can go straight to he'll.

A programmer was walking along the beach when he found a lamp. Upon rubbing the lamp a genie appeared who stated, "I am the most powerful genie in the world. I can grant you any wish you want, but only one wish."

The programmer pulled out a map of the Mediterranean area and said "I'd like there to be a just and lasting peace among the people in the Middle East." The genie responded, "Gee, I don't know. Those people have been fighting since the beginning of time. I can do just about anything, but this is beyond my limits."

The programmer then said, "Well, I am a programmer and my programs have a lot of users. Please make all the users satisfied with my programs, and let them ask for sensible changes"

Genie: "Uh, let me see that map again."

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.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION and BENEFITS of MEMBERSHIP

Annual Membership Dues:

Regular New and Renewal,	
Printed Newsletter	\$ 40
Electronic Newsletter	30
Family-Associate	12
Students	18
Contributor	50
Supporter	75
Benefactor	100
Gift Membership	20

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

Associate members USE 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. A member may give a 1- year, 1-time **gift** to a non-member.

Monthly general meetings

are via Zoom. In-person or hybrid meetings may take place in the future.

Members also enjoy these special benefits:

— **Monthly Newsletter**
User Friendly. We publish your article submissions or free classified ads to buy or sell your computer items.

— **Get FREE help** by phone or email (See your roster) from members who are Quick Consultants listed in *User Friendly*.

— **Get help by email** from our email List. Send questions to PC(at)lacs.groups.io

— **Receive important news** and announcements via *User Friendly* and LACS's email list.

— **Free APCUG** (International Association of Technology and Computer User Groups) **webinars, virtual conferences, programs, and technical information.** Check *User Friendly* and your email to see what's offered and when.

— Occasional **free software and computer books**, if you review them for *User Friendly*.

— **Annual Holiday Party**

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

— **Special Interest Groups** (SIGs) on various topics may be created by members.



NEW MEMBERS, PLEASE SEE PAGE 2 OF THIS ISSUE

Date: _____ **LACS** New or Renewal Membership Application
Check # _____

Please mail your dues and this form to:

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Please PRINT Clearly

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[] New / Renewal with electronic, no paper, newsletter - \$30.00 [] Gift Membership - \$20.00

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

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Name of Associate: First _____ Last _____
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Address: _____

City, State, Zip + 4 _____

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Preferred Phone: _____ Publish Contact Info in Roster [] Yes [] No

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*PLEASE KEEP IT!***

Los Angeles Computer Society

GENERAL MEETINGS ARE ON ZOOM.

Before each meeting, members and invited guests will receive an email with the URL link to the meeting. If you haven't received it by the morning of the meeting, let Leah Clark know. When you click on the link, you will enter a waiting room. Then the host or a co-host will admit you to the meeting.

Please try to arrive a few minutes before the meeting start- time so you don't interrupt the meeting and any technical problems can be solved. If you need to take a break during a meeting, do not click on Leave or End. If you do, the meeting will be interrupted for someone to re-admit you from the waiting room. You may turn off your video when you are gone.