User Friendly

LACS
A Computer and Technology User Group

IN THIS ISSUE

IMPORTANT NOTE

A new LACS roster is in the center of this issue of *User Friendly*. All, and only, members, received a paper copy of the May edition. Please save the roster so you will have it when needed. It will not be emailed or posted on the website.

Watch your email for APCUG workshops and
other upcoming events.

apcug

LACS IS A MEMBER OF APCUG
An International Association of Technology and Computer User Groups
www.apcug2.org
www.facebook.com/APCUG
www.X.com/apcug **(Twitter)**

MAY 14, 2024 GENERAL MEETING

Meeting Time: 7:00 to 9:00 PM — via Zoom
Socializing and Questions & Answers: 6:30
Topic: Touring the Web
Speaker: J. B. Burke, APCUG Speakers Bureau and President of the Prescott Computer Society

The World Wide Web, or just "the Web," is immense. A quick search tells us there are about 4.2 billion indexed pages. Among all those, some are interesting, informative, educational, entertaining, and even weird. J.B. looks for all of those. While making his morning coffee, when he is eating lunch, and whenever he finds a spare moment, J.B. saves them to create this "Touring the Web" program. It consists of web pages, videos, images, and other tidbits that will, hopefully, keep you entertained for an hour or so. J.B.'s presentation changes every couple of months. He spoke to us on this topic in November 2022. We will have our usual Q&A session, but since he teaches, he probably can answer many PC questions. If this finishes a while before 9:00 PM, we may show one of the many APCUG YouTube channel programs that anyone can watch at any time.

Meet Our Presenter

J.B. Burke grew up in Chicago. He graduated from the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1963. He moved to Silicon Valley in 1968 and worked in the tech sector for 36 years. In 2004, he retired, and he and his wife moved to Prescott, Arizona. He joined the Prescott Computer Society and became its President and speaker. He provides tech support for friends and neighbors and dabbles in photography. He teaches tech classes for retired folks and is a Tech Committee member of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Yavapai College.

LACS members on the PC groups.IO list will receive the Zoom link to this meeting before or on **May 12**.
Guests may ask for the link by emailing Leah Clark at leahjc@sbcglobal.net before or on **May 12.**
See more information about LACS at www.lacspc.org.

🌼 FROM YOUR PRESIDENT / EDITOR 🌼

Happy Mother's Day

To All LACS Mothers

WELCOME NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS TO LACS

Gavin Faught, LACS Treasurer

New Members: (0)

Members Who Renewed This Month for 2024: (1)

Heidi Feingersh

SAVE YOUR LACS ROSTER

HAVE SOMETHING TO SELL?

Members who have something to sell or give away, or services to offer, may place free ads in *User Friendly*.
Please email them to Leah Clark before the 20th of the month.
Potential buyers may reply to the seller by their email addresses available on the LACS roster.
No personal contact information will be published in User Friendly.

JOIN GROUPS.IO MAIL LISTS

Please join the LACS PC groups.IO email list so you receive the links to the Zoom meetings, the recordings of the meetings, and LACS notices. See page 9.

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.

GENERAL MEETING REPORT
April 9, 2024

By **Leah Clark,** LACS President/Editor
Preserving Digital Photographs and Backup Tips by Mark Schulman
APCUG Speakers Bureau

Mark asked how we can make our photos, documents, and videos available to people in the future without losing anything. It's easy to take thousands of photos with our cell phone cameras. You can make unlimited copies of the photos and edit them easily. Digital photos can last forever without fading, tearing, or smearing.

But, you cannot hold digital photos in your hand. Many are lost daily, and people don't know how to be sure the photos they take today will be available to future generations.

Mark told a story about a box of photos found in a wall of an old family home. They knew they were photos of family ancestors. If only some SD cards or CDs were in that wall, would they have seen them or known what they were?

Photos stored only on a computer's hard drive would be gone forever if the computer crashed. You want to ensure that your photos survive into the future, are identifiable, and are found.

To ensure your photos survive, make many copies and keep them in more than one place. Copies must last a long time and be able to be read in the future. Many photos were on media that are now obsolete, such as memory cards and floppy disks.

Good-quality archival CDs or DVDs are a good choice for storing photos. You should be able to find a reader for them in the next 50 years, and they may last for 100 years. Mark gave tips for how to make them last. Make copies and keep them in different places. Mark uses Ashampoo's Burning Studio Free to burn DVDs.

Copy all your photos onto external hard drives. A mechanical hard drive is better than an SSD. Get a reliable brand, choose a lower capacity, and spin them up occasionally to keep them in good shape.

Online services are good places to store photos, but not for permanent storage. You can make printed copies of your most valuable photos, but it's hard to know how long they'll last. Use a good photo printer, the manufacturer's ink, and premium photo paper. Keep them out of direct sunlight and put them under glass. Make sure your photos are identified. Organize them into folders on your computer; a plain text file lasts the longest.

To ensure your photos are found in the future, put copies of CDs, DVDs, and hard drives with your important papers. Mark gave more hints to make them findable, talked about the advantages of creating a photo book, and mentioned websites to do this. You can still buy photo albums.

Mark suggested appointing a family archivist. A family archivist should be knowledgeable about technology. This person should be able to collect materials from family members, make fresh copies, and monitor technological changes.

Back-Up Tips

Mark then discussed backing up our files. A reliable backup is convenient, reliable, secure, and inexpensive. Have at least three copies of all your data on two different media, and place one of the copies off-site.

Mark's favorite way to make a backup is on external hard drives. He explained synchronization software and demonstrated FreeFilesSync. Synchronization software will keep copies of files as they were before you backed them up in case you accidentally deleted something or made a mistake. He will send slides with instructions on how to set this up.

Mark suggested rotating between two or three external hard drives and not leaving them connected when not in use. If you get infected, a virus may also wipe out your backup. Schedule your backups so you don't forget to do them.

Mark likes the Western Digital Elements portable external hard drives. You can also store files on cloud storage services like Google Drive, OneDrive, Dropbox, or pCloud. These are not for your only backups because they can fail or go out of business.

Online backup services monitor files for changes, copy them to the backup service over the internet, and encrypt all data. iDrive, Backblaze, Crashplan, and Carbonite are some examples.

We all have photos on our cell phones, which can be lost, stolen, or broken. With an Apple phone, iCloud will do it; enable the option. On iOS or Android, you can download 1Drive from Microsoft. Occasionally copy them to your computer, if it's not being automatically synchronized.

Plan now and list what you will do if your phone is lost. Record the phone's make, model, IMEI number, customer service number, Apple ID, or PIN. Make a list of the passwords for apps on your phone to change if your phone is stolen. Consider a cell phone tracking feature. Make sure you can handle 2-factor authentication without your phone.

Mark explained what he does each week. He uses VeraCrypt to encrypt each of his backup hard drives. Be sure to know the passwords to open them.

The most important thing about backups is **JUST DO IT**.

Following this excellent presentation, there were many questions and answers and much discussion. All attendees and LACS members received a link to the recording of this meeting. ❖

ARE THERE ANY LINUX PHONES?

By **Jordan Gloor**
How-To Geek, March 2022

The great Android versus iPhone battle might have a third contender.
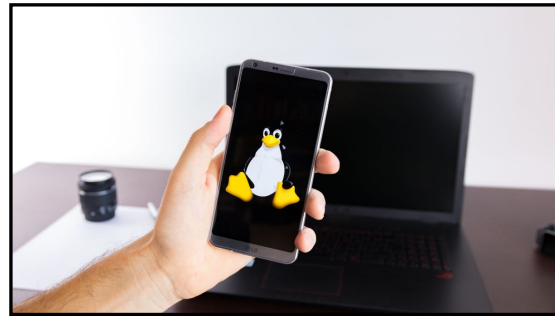
Leaving "big tech" ecosystems on the desktop is fairly easy with a Linux laptop or a manual Linux install. Smartphones, though, seem strictly the domain of Apple and Google. Do any Linux-based smartphones exist? Let's take a look at this mostly nascent smartphone genre.

What Exactly Constitutes a Linux Phone?

First, let's make a technical caveat. Both iPhones and Android phones are, in a way, Linux phones, or at least related to Linux. Google built its Android operating system on top of AOSP, an open-source project based on the Linux kernel---the foundation of all Linux distributions. AOSP's code is free and available for anyone to modify and use for their own purposes. The version of Android you use on your phone, however, is closed-source. That means the modifications Google has made are proprietary and not publicly available.

iOS and macOS are descendants of Unix (via the BSD kernel), which the Linux kernel is also based on. However, iOS is largely closed-source. Technically, then, both iOS and Android are in the same family tree as Linux. The key distinction is that neither preserves the free and open-source software

tradition. So, to be clear about what we mean by **Linux phone** let's define it as a smartphone with an operating system whose source code remains open-source. These phones do exist.

True Linux Phones Exist, You Just Have to Find Them

If you're in the market, a few retailers sell smartphones with one or another custom Linux operating system (also called a ROM) preinstalled. A few examples are **eSolutions** with an operating system called /e/OS, **Purism** using PureOS, **Volla** with Ubuntu Touch, and **Pine64** with a mobile edition of Manjaro Linux. **F(x)tec** sells the **PRO1 X**, which allows you to choose between LineageOS, Ubuntu Touch, and traditional Android.

These operating systems are often billed as more respectful of privacy than Android and iOS, and some support that claim with physical kill switches for the microphone and camera. Purism's PureOS also boasts "full convergence," meaning you can open an app on your phone, then seamlessly drag and drop it onto your desktop to continue using it there and vice versa.

All of that may sound great, but if you're a reader in the US, you'll quickly notice that there aren't many shipping options outside of Europe and the UK. Additionally, these phones tend to be less than cutting-edge. Don't expect the impressive hardware specs sported by the latest iPhones or Samsung Galaxies.

You should also keep in mind that, while not always the case, some of these phones are intended for enthusiasts, tinkerers, and sometimes people with an exceptional need for privacy—not the average consumer.

You'll likely run into problems and may have to be your own troubleshooting service. This is especially true if you hope to run classic Google apps on the phone.

You Can Convert Android Phones Into Linux Phones

If you're tempted by the idea of a smartphone experience that doesn't involve either Google or Apple, installing a Linux OS on an Android phone you already have is possible. Since some risks are high, we don't recommend doing it with a phone you currently rely on. Flashing a ROM also isn't a simple undertaking and involves using tools like **ADB** or Android Debug Bridge.

Undeterred? A good place to start is to find out if your phone is supported by looking at /e/OS's device list or that of LineageOS and Ubuntu Touch. You may also want to check out PostmarketOS. If you can't find an appealing Linux ROM that supports your phone, a good plan is to identify a device with well-documented support under the OS you want. Then, you can purchase that phone with confidence that your Linux installation should go off without a hitch.

About The Author

Jordan Gloor started writing technology guides in 2020, but his technology and writing experience extends far and wide. As a kid, he learned object scripting through the MS-DOS game engine ZZT, and he later taught himself the basics of Python programming. He has repaired his own smartphones, hosted home cloud servers, and revived old computers with Linux.

Prior to joining *How-To Geek*, Jordan published articles for *MakeUseOf* about Linux commands, free and open-source software, and online privacy. Beyond technology, he's also professionally written on agriculture business for *Ozarks Farm & Neighbor*, edited proposals for non-profits, and presented at a writer's conference on superheroes and culture. ❖

FAREWELL, BLUE SCREEN OF DEATH?

By Bob Rankin
http://askbobrankin.com

Hardcore fans of Windows XP may differ, but I believe Windows 10 and 11 are the most stable versions of the operating system to date. Still, it's not unheard of for the dreaded Blue Screen of Death (BSOD) to appear when Windows encounters an unexpected error. The good news is that you'll never see a Blue Screen of Death on Windows 11. The bad news is they changed the color of the BSOD. On a Windows 11 system, it's the Black Screen of Death. But it's not all bad — read on for the latest news on the BSOD and what to do if it happens to you.

## Fixing the Blue (or Black) Screen of Death on Windows

Even with the most up-to-date system, it's not unheard of to see the dreaded Blue (or Black) Screen of Death suddenly pop up. It's usually a warning of a serious problem and should not be ignored. Here's what to do if you encounter this error on Windows 10 or 11.

The Black/Blue Screen of Death, or BSOD for short, is a technical term for a **stop error** that brings everything on your Windows system to a sudden halt to "prevent damage to your computer." This stop error can be caused by issues in your hardware or software, which can be quite challenging to identify. Here, we provide some straightforward guidelines for debugging the BSOD on Windows 10 or 11.

An overheated CPU can cause a BSOD error. If your cooling fan runs constantly, you may need to take steps to cool things down inside your computer case. Blow out dust. Replace heat sink thermal grease. If the cooling fan does not spin freely, install a new one or lubricate the bearing. Laptops may benefit from a lap pad that circulates cool air beneath the laptop. See my article, *Do You Know Your Computer's Worst Enemy?,* at https://tinyurl.com/37rkr4np for more tips on dealing with overheating.

If you suspect that your RAM memory is causing the BSOD error, don't worry. You can easily run the Windows 10 memory check diagnostic routine to confirm. Simply close any open files or programs, click the **Start** button, type **mdsched.exe,** and press **Enter.** Then, click **Restart now and check for problems**. Your computer will restart and run the memory diagnostic. The test results will be in the **Windows Event Viewer** at https://tinyurl.com/fujasvc4.
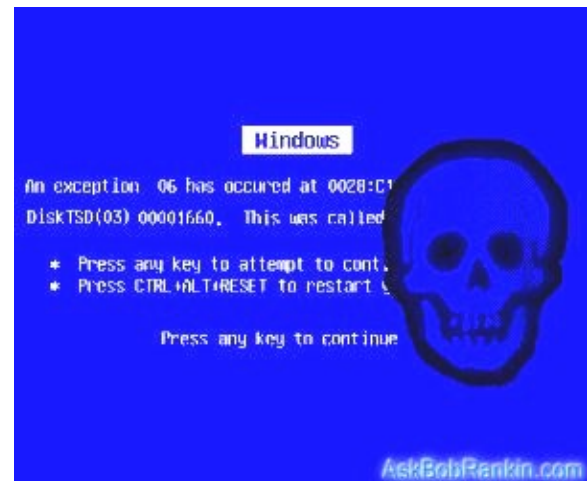
Hard disk errors may cause a BSOD error. Run the error-checking tool on your boot drive's Properties page to find and fix errors. It's also a good idea to defragment magnetic hard drives regularly to minimize errors. Note that solid-state (SSD) drives don't need to be defragged. See my related articles, *[CAUTION] Hard Drive Makes a Clicking Sound,* at https://tinyurl.com/af5wx6b6 and *[FREE] Tools to Tune and Optimize Your Hard Drive* at https://tinyurl.com/4x4n4dux for more help.

Software errors that cause a BSOD can occur when Windows does not shut down properly. Loss of power during shutdown is the most common cause of such errors. Using System Restore to restore your Windows settings to

an earlier configuration may resolve a BSOD problem. See my article, *Try System Restore for Windows 10,* at https:/tinyurl.com/4ps7ncm6 to learn more about System Restore.

More BSOD Fix Options

Check the **Security and Maintenance Center** to see if there are any known problems or unresolved configuration errors. Click **Start,** type **Security and Maintenance** in the search box, and press **Enter**. Under the Maintenance heading, there's a link to View reliability history. This will allow you to see if any software or system components are malfunctioning.

Finally, Windows 10 and 11 have a Reset option that may help resolve a Black/Blue Screen error. See my article, *[RESET BUTTON] Restore Your PC To Factory Defaults,* at https://tinyurl.com/2fyexarp. A Reset will install a fresh copy of the Windows operating system while keeping all your personal files intact.

When all else fails to cure a recurring BSOD problem, you may have to take the machine to a service center or ship it to the manufacturer for diagnosis and repair. Hopefully, the machine is still under warranty as this could be expensive. Be sure to make backup copies of all essential data before sending the machine in for repairs, and delete any sensitive data from the hard drive before turning it over to strangers.

One final note: Windows may automatically restart after a BSOD. It can be hard to diagnose the error message on the screen because the restart can happen before you get a chance to read it. I recommend disabling this setting. To do so, click the Windows button, type **advanced system settings,** and press **Enter**. Click the Settings button in the Startup and Recovery section. Remove the check mark next to Automatically restart and click OK. You'll need to restart your computer for this to take effect.

By taking note of the Error Code and/or Stop Code displayed on the BSOD screen, you may be able to search online for a solution, or at least an explanation for the error that you can provide to a tech support person. ❖

TRANSLATION TOOLS

By **Hal Bookbinder**
Venturing into our Past, December 2023
The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV)

My Bookbinder/ Buchbinder (Бикбиндер) ancestors lived for hundreds of years in Dubno, a town in Rivne Oblast, Ukraine, that was part of historic Volhynia. While my immediate ancestors left prior to WWI, scores of relatives were murdered there during the Holocaust.

One of the few who survived was Sheva Beinstock. With her blond hair and Arian looks, she passed as a Christian farmworker. In 2018, I visited Dubno with my cousin, Boris Fradkin, the son of Sheva. Erna, a friend of his who lives in Dubno served as our guide. I continue to exchange regular emails with Erna. As she does not read English, we communicate in Ukrainian.

At first, I used Google Translate to convert her emails to English and mine into Ukrainian. I have since switched to **DeepL Translator**. While most of Google's translations were reasonable, a few were laughably garbled. I found that DeepL provided more consistently credible translations. Google, however, handles 133 languages, including Hebrew and Yiddish; DeepL handles 31.

Both provide for translation from images as well as text. So, either can be used to translate a photo of a gravestone or an image of a printed page. On October 7, a heroic Israeli nurse was severely wounded by rampaging terrorists as she tended to wounded

soldiers in Zikim, near Gaza. Controlling the bleeding with a tourniquet, she continued to direct first aid. I used Google Translate to read an image of the Hebrew news article that her mother shared. The amazing story of my cousin, Michal Elon, as covered in the Times of Israel (in English) is at https://tinyurl.com/4w882us7.

To use the text translation version of Google Translate or DeepL Translator, copy or type the text to be translated into the left panel, and the translated text will appear in the right panel. To use the image translation facility of Google, select "Images"; for DeepL, select "Translate Files". Then, drag and drop the image file into the indicated window. Either may have difficulty translating unclear or fuzzy images.

I even challenged Google Translate to handle the following, carefully written, cursive Cyrillic Alphabet.

Переплетчики

It correctly translated, "Periplichek," as "Bookbinders" This appears at the top of the entry for my family members in the 1850 Russian Revision List (Census) for Dubno and is apparently a translation of the surname. It would be meaningless to the Russian ear. ❖

CHROMEBOOKS

From APCUG@.org

How To Use the Diagnostics APP To Troubleshoot Chromebooks Problems

Performing a diagnostics test was available before Chrome OS 90 was announced, but it required you to view an internal system page. Now, you have a dedicated app that presents different bits of information regarding the battery, CPU, and Memory. Here's how you can access the Diagnostics app:

How to use the Diagnostics app to troubleshoot Chromebook problems | Android Central

15 Chromeos Tips and Tricks for Your New Chromebook

Computers should be simple and easy to use for everyone. Windows and macOS devices are okay in this regard but have some complexities that sometimes make them difficult to use. Chromebooks have a streamlined user experience that is almost as easy as using the Google Chrome browser. This is because the operating system used on Chromebooks, called ChromeOS, is based on Google Chrome. Read this Android article: https://www.androidpolice.com/google-chromeos-tips-tricks/

'Chromebook X' and 'Chromebook Plus' Could Be Google's Next Big Thing for Chromeos

Over the past few years, we've been seeing a few Chromebooks hit the market with specs that rival the best Windows laptops. But it seems that Google is preparing to set these apart from the rest with specific branding known as "Chromebook X." As spotted by 9to5Google, the "Chromebook X" branding is slated to arrive on particularly powerful Chromebooks. According to a comment on a Chromium Gerrit commit, these devices will need to feature specific specs, such as a minimum amount of RAM, "camera definition, and display property." Read more at 'Chromebook X' and 'Chromebook Plus' could be Google's next big thing for ChromeOS | Android Central ❖

LACS CALENDAR

The Merry Month of

May

✔ **LACS Board Meeting, Monday, May 6**

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

Place: Wherever you are via Zoom

✔ **LACS General Meeting: Tuesday, May 14**

Touring the Web by J. B. Burke

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. Allow extra time to be sure you have the link, to get or update your Zoom software if you have not used it before or recently, or to solve any other issues before the meeting starts.

May 5: Cinco de Mayo

May 6: LACS Board Meeting

May 12: Mother's Day

May 14: LACS General Meeting

May 27: Memorial Day

VISIT OTHER APCUG COMPUTER USER GROUPS AND SEE THEIR NEWSLETTERS

LACS heartily welcomes visitors from other user groups, and we are welcome to join other groups' meetings.

Go to www.APCUG2.org . Click on **Member Benefits**, then on **Groups Sharing Meetings** or on **Newsletters Online**.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

May 14: Touring the Web, J. B. Burke

June 11: Social Media and Facebook Safety, Judy Taylour

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.

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

ZOOM RECORDINGS

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

HYPERLINKS

Underlined text (blue in the color edition) in User Friendly usually means it's a hyperlink to a website. Click on the link in the online version to see the referenced place. You can also copy and paste it into your browser's search or 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 - 1, 8, 10
MS PowerPoint - 8, 11
MS Publisher - 2

PDF - 8
Photoshop - 10
Quicken - 8, 12
Thunderbird - 7
Utilities - 7, 8
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
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 Berkom, 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	2024
Vice President	Stephanie Nordlinger	2024
Secretary	Marcia Jacobs	2024
Treasurer	Gavin Faught	2024
Director	Loling Beckman	2025
Director	Donna Benton	2025
Director	Mark Presky	2025
Director	Irv Hershman	2024
Director	E. J. Rozek	2024
Director	Annette Tossounian	2024
Director	Paula Van Berkom	2024
APCUG Representative	Leah Clark	
Corporate Counsel	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Database Manager	Loling Beckman	
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 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 at leahjc@sbcglobal.net and she will mail you a copy. Only LACS members may receive a roster.

Please note: The 2024 roster will be in the middle pages of the May User Friendly. It will be mailed to all LACS members, including those who receive only the electronic version. The roster will not be sent to anyone electronically. Be sure to keep it when you receive it.

LACS INFORMATION

USE PAYPAL OR ZELLE TO MAKE PAYMENTS TO LACS

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 payment amount, click on **Add a note**. Tell us what the payment is for. If you're paying dues note the category, and if you want paper or electronic *User Friendly*, and if you don't want your contact information published in the roster. Include any updated information as physical address, email address, and phone number.

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: **lacomputersociety@gmail.com**. The wording may be a little different on your bank's site. The wording on each bank site may be a little different, but the idea is the same.

HOW TO JOIN LACS'S MAIL LIST

LACS has a group email list: PC@LACS.Groups.IO. This email address goes to all members on the list. Use it to ask questions, offer suggestions or help, and to conduct official LACS business.

New LACS members should receive an invitation to join our list with two weeks to accept. Other LACS members who want to join the list, or have questions about the list, may send an email to Stephanie Nordlinger, Groups.IO Coordinator, for an invitation to join.

FIX YOUR PC FOR FREE?
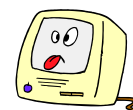
LACS member and presenter, **Jim McKnight**, has an open offer to LACS members to diagnose, repair, disinfect, or upgrade members' PC's for free. There are certain limitations to Jim's offer, so see the details by clicking the "Fix my PC for Free?" link at www.jimopi.net.

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.

USE STORYGRAPH TO FIND THE BOOKS YOU WANT TO READ

By **Kurt Jefferson**, Editor
Central Kentucky Computer Society
https://ckcs.org/
lextown2 ** gmail.com

If you're constantly searching for a good book, you might want to check out a new app called **StoryGraph**. It's a competitor to Amazon-owned **Goodreads**.
https://www.thestorygraph.com

StoryGraph's slogan: Because life's too short for a book you're not in the mood for.

StoryGraph is available through the Mac App Store for Windows PCs, through the App Store for Apple's Mobile devices, and via Google Play for Android devices. You can also log into the website to use it instead of the app.

Desktop App details for Mac and Windows (Mac version available through the Mac App Store)

https://webcatalog.io/apps/the-storygraph/

iOS and iPad OS details (download through the App Store) https://apps.apple.com/us/app/storygraphreading-tracker/id1570489264

Android App details (download through Google Play)
https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.thestorygraph.thestorygraph&gl=US

StoryGraph tracks your reading and helps you choose your next book based on your mood, favorite topics, and themes.

One of the neatest features is seeing how your reading changes over time and using the StoryGraph app or website to help you pick better books. StoryGraph will show you a graph revealing the number of books you've read, the number of pages, the "moods" of books, how fast you read the book, and other interesting facts.

Lauren Rosenberg of 9to5Mac, www.9to5mac.com, began using StoryGraph after she was frustrated with the Goodreads App and its limited functionality:

> As a devoted reader and someone who has been a member of the Goodreads community since 2013, I have found myself consistently frustrated with the app, especially in recent years, for everything that Goodreads doesn't do and doesn't offer. Aside from the fact that the app has barely updated since its inception – making for an antiquated user experience – some palpable misses would help me better understand what kind of reader I am and, perhaps, what type of reader I want to be. It's within this space that The StoryGraph shines.

Rosenberg adds:

> In addition to taking its user wants into the app's development, The StoryGraph also gives much-needed space to independent authors.

Cofounder Rob Frelow adds:

> Suppose today you're interested in a dark murder mystery set deep in the woods featuring a kidnapping, and tomorrow you're in the mood for an emotional but funny romantic comedy set in a big city. In that case, you can find that on The StoryGraph.

You aren't stuck by your old ratings or past preferences. You won't see any 'promoted' books, which indie authors can typically never afford. You have complete control.

StoryGraph allows you to:

* Rate, review, and track books

* Engage in a "Buddy Read" with someone in your community

* Keep a reading journal

* Enter book giveaways

- Set reading goals by the number of books, pages, or hours
- Browse book recommendations by mood, pace, type, or page number
- View personalized analytics

Read the full 9to5Mac article:

Finally, a formidable response to Amazon-owned Goodreads: Introducing The StoryGraph (9to5mac.com) ❖

WINDOWS 11 PAINT WITH COCREATOR AI

By **Dan Delong**
Durham Personal Computer Users' Club
PC Monitor, Oshawa, Ontario

   Windows 11 recently got more than one AI enhancement. Along with Bing Chat/Copilot in Edge, try **Cocreator** in Paint, now. Open AI's Dall-E 3 is integrated with it.

Type a few text instructions describing a visual scene and choose an artistic style.

It will try to create several versions as understood by current AI algorithms. Save the version you like best or each one separately.

Although my start screen for Cocreator suggested I go on a "wait list for early adopters," this was unnecessary. It looks like Cocreator Preview was already installed when I chose that option, introducing it with a short tutorial. A new user starts with 50 free Cocreator coins/credits, using up one credit for each AI effort.

Here is the text I used: "A dark-haired lady teacher, in glasses, reading a storybook at her desk." Whether I chose one of the seven styles or not, the AI would generate one, two, or maybe three images, all having the six characteristics contained in the text: Adding a further – seventh - descriptor, "in a stained-glass style," without choosing a default style, yielded three effective images. Asking Cocreator to follow the same instructions on a different day might produce very different results.
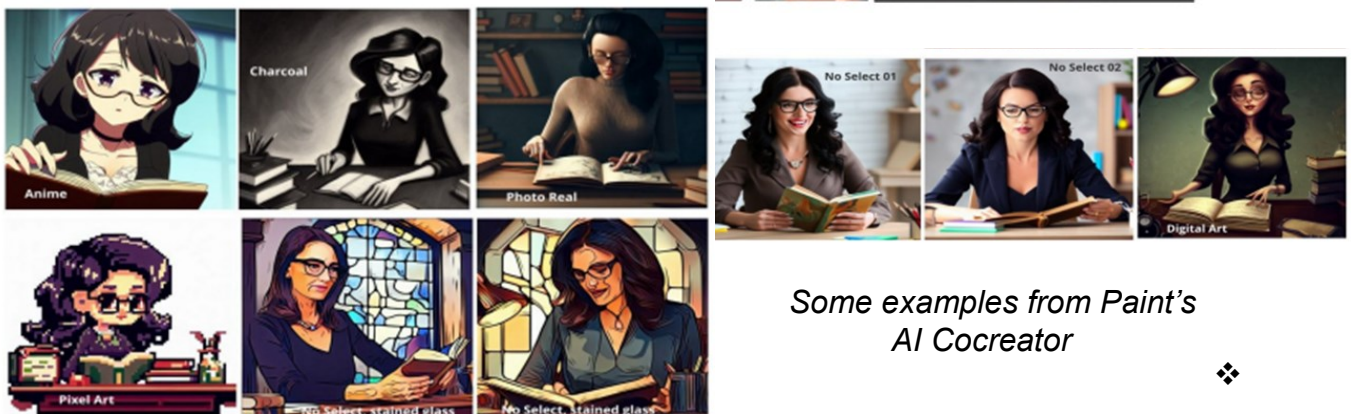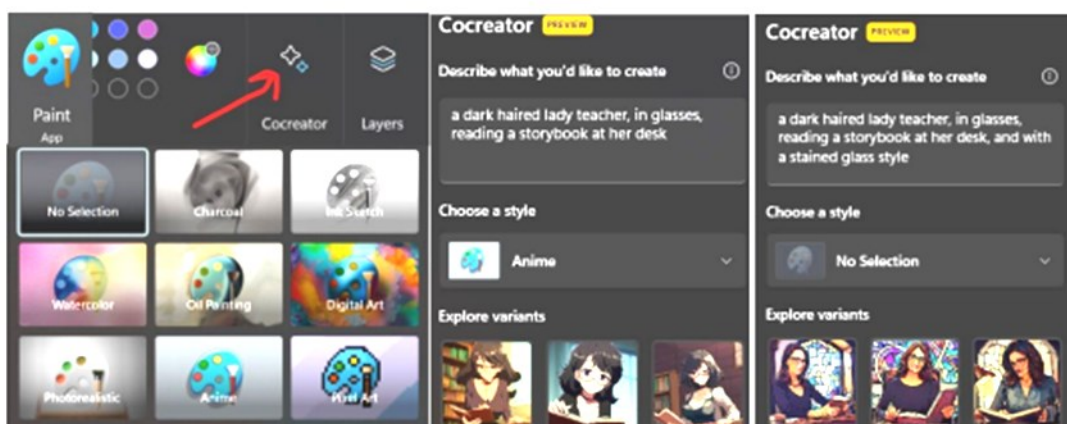
*Some examples from Paint's
AI Cocreator*

❖

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 mailing 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 knowledgeable members who are Quick Consultants listed in *User Friendly.*

— **Get help by email** by using our group email list. Send

— **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.

— 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.

All renewals are due in January. New members will pay the annual amount when they join.

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

Check # _____   **Dues may be paid by PayPal, Zelle, or check. If paying by check, make the check out to "Los Angeles Computer Society", and mail it with this form to:**
   Los Angeles Computer Society, **11664 NATIONAL BLVD. #343, LOS ANGELES CA 90064-3802**

Please PRINT Clearly   [   ] New   [   ] Renewal

[   ] New / Renewal with printed newsletter - $40.00   [   ] Associate - $12.00   [   ] Student - $18.00

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

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

Name: First	Last
Name of Associate: First (Same address as a primary member)	Last
Address:	
City, State, Zip + 4	
E-mail Address:	E-mail of Associate
Preferred Phone:	Publish Contact Info in Roster [ ] Yes [ ] No

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

Revised Jan. 2024, ljc

First Class Mail

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 at least 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.