

# User Friendly

Volume 44 Issue 4

April 2026

LACS

A Computer and  
Technology User Group

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## LACS WEBSITE

For information about LACS, go  
to <https://www.lacspc.org>

Watch your email for APCUG  
workshops and  
other upcoming events.

## LACS IS A MEMBER OF APCUG

An International  
Association of Technology  
and Computer User Groups

<http://www.apcug2.org>

[www.facebook.com/APCUG](http://www.facebook.com/APCUG)

[www.X.com/apcug](http://www.X.com/apcug) (Twitter)



**TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2026**

## GENERAL MEETING

**Meeting Time: 7:00 to 9:00 PM - via Zoom**

**Socializing, Questions & Answers: 6:30-7:00**

**Topic: Understanding Autonomous Vehicles**

**Speakers: Amber Christensen & Lisa Kattan**

Self-driving cars are no longer science fiction- they're picking up passengers in cities across the country right now. But how do they work? Are they safe? And what does this mean for the way we get around? Amber Christensen and Lisa Kattan will explain how these cars "see" the road using cameras, radar, and laser sensors, how the onboard computer makes driving decisions, and what happens when the car encounters something unexpected. They'll cover the role of human safety teams who monitor the vehicles remotely, and where the technology is headed next.

**Amber Christensen** is a Staff Technical Recruiter at Ambience Healthcare, an AI-powered healthcare technology company. She recruited engineers at Cruise, a self-driving car company, and at Meta (Facebook). She holds a degree from UC Santa Cruz.



**Lisa Kattan** is working as a Staff Technical Recruiter at Waymo, the self-driving car company operated by Google's parent company, Alphabet. She spent years recruiting engineers at autonomous vehicle companies, including Cruise and Motional.



She held recruiting roles at Google and The Walt Disney Company. She is a UC Santa Cruz graduate.

## TO JOIN A LACS GENERAL MEETING

LACS members on the PC Groups.IO list will receive the Zoom link to meetings two days before the meeting. Click on it to enter.

Guests may ask for the link two days before at Leahjc (at) sbcglobal.netleahjc@sbcglobal.net



## FROM YOUR PRESIDENT/EDITOR

### My Update

I am still fighting the wound on my left leg. I should be home from the nursing home by the time you receive this. It has been a struggle to complete this newsletter while sitting on a hospital bed, using a small laptop, and facing constant interruptions. I don't have access to a printer, so it's hard to proofread it. So, please be tolerant of imperfections. Thank you for your prayers and good thoughts. LACS members are wonderful!

### “SIGN IN WITH GOOGLE” IS A WEAPON

By **Kim Komando**

[kim@mail.thecurrentnewsletter.com](mailto:kim@mail.thecurrentnewsletter.com)

Microsoft is warning about a wave of phishing attacks targeting the system that powers every “Sign in with Google” or “Sign in with Microsoft” button you’ve ever clicked. Attackers are building fake apps that look completely legitimate, tricking you into granting them full access to your email. No password stolen. No suspicious link. **Fix it:** Go to your Google or Microsoft account settings, find **Connected apps** or **Third-party access**, and revoke anything you don’t recognize. Do it before you forget.

*HAPPY PASSOVER AND EASTER  
TO ALL LACS MEMBERS, THEIR  
LOVED ONES, AND FRIENDS.*



### Here’s Your Brainteaser

What’s the fastest way to stop your battery from draining in a dead zone?

- A) Lower your screen brightness
- B) Close all open apps
- C) Turn on airplane mode
- D) Restart the phone.

**The answer: C) Turn on airplane mode.** In a dead zone, airplane mode is the fastest way to stop your battery from draining because it shuts off the radio that’s desperately hunting for a cell tower as it got left on read.

Lowering screen brightness helps a little. Closing apps helps even less. But if a weak signal is the problem, cutting off the transmitter is the real battery-saving hero.

To turn on Airplane Mode, select **Start > Settings > Network & internet > Airplane mode**, then select the toggle for **On** or **Off**.

### LACS QUARTERLY LUNCHEON MEETING

We need to decide on a date for our next meeting at the Sizzler in Culver City. It has been in March in the past, but because the holiday party was in January, it will be in April.

**Please watch announcements in User Friendly and in LACS email for updates.** Send your ideas and preferred dates to Leah at leahjc (at) sbcglobal.net.

## GENERAL MEETING REPORT

By Leah Clark, LACS President/Editor

**Topic:** Windows Performance Tuneup

**Speaker:** Chris Taylor, APCUG  
March 10, 20



What are the problems in Windows, how can they be determined, and how can they be fixed? Be sure to back up your computer before making changes.

### Universal Tune-up Options

**More Memory**—If you have less than 8 GB of RAM, you may get a performance boost with more memory.

**Faster Storage**—Move from a slow hard drive to a faster one; move from a hard drive to a solid-state drive.

**Reinstalling Windows**—Chris discussed options, and pros and cons.

**Upgrade Hardware**—Check with rucial.com to see how much memory and storage, etc., you have.

**Faster Video Card**—Good if you are a gamer, video editor, or photo editor.

**New Computer**—if more than 8 years old

### Major Causes of Performance Problems

#### Task Manager Resource Monitor

Chris shared problems, causes, solutions, and instructions for these situations. This excellent presentation was full of information and details. **The numbers next to each listing indicate its position in the Zoom recording of the meeting. LACS members and guests received the recording, so they can go directly to the topic they want.**

**CPU Hogs 18:32**—A program can demand lots of processor time to cause slowdowns.

**Disk Activity Hogs 24:21**—A program causing lots of disk activity causes overall slowdown.

**Memory Hogs 29:36**—Some programs use a lot of memory; some have memory leaks.

**Internet Connectivity Hogs 32:36**—Programs taking a large amount of bandwidth can slow other programs requiring bandwidth.

**Web Browser Extensions 38:08**—Performance is lost from badly written web browser extensions or too many extensions.

**Web Browser Cache 40:13**—It can clutter the disk with gigabytes of files.

**Malware 46:30**—Malware can impact performance, and much more.

**Disk Clutter 53:16**—If the disk fills too much, performance can suffer.

**Auto-Starting Programs 1:01:45**—Programs set to auto-start can impact startup speed and ongoing performance.

**Out of Date Drivers 1:05:17**—Drivers are software that allow your computer to communicate with hardware devices. Video drivers can have a big impact on performance.

**Disk Indexing 1:07:19**—This can use a lot of disk space, but has no significant impact on performance.

**Crapware 1:10:16**—Many vendors add tons of performance-sucking crapware.

Chris then discussed many free advanced utilities. He explained what they do and mentioned some potential risks. Here is a list of other issues Chris discussed. 1:10:48

**OPCUG**  
Possible extras

- Clogged vents, fans & heat sinks can cause thermal throttling
  - use compressed air, not vacuum cleaner
- Reduce animations
  - Control Panel > Ease of Access Centre > Make the computer easier to see > Make things on the screen easier to see > check Turn off all unnecessary animations
- Simplify visual effect
  - Control Panel > System > Advanced system settings > Advanced tab > Performance > Settings button > Visual Effects tab > Adjust for best performance
- Increase performance at expense of battery life
  - Power settings
    - choose plan High Performance or Best performance

### THE LUMA FLUME LIGHTER

By **Bill James**

Tech for Senior

[www.techforsenior.com](http://www.techforsenior.com)



*Disclaimer: Our column is produced solely for the purpose of providing information and amusement to our readers about the most recent and interesting products on the market today. Without further investigation on the part of the reader, Tech for Senior does not promote or encourage the purchase of these items. The products mentioned here may or may not be appropriate for your specific situation or need.*

From the chemical Döbereiner lamp of the 1820s to the iconic Zippo and the disposable BIC, lighters have evolved from bulky scientific curiosities into everyday pocket tools used around the world. A lighter is a small portable device designed to produce a controlled flame for lighting cigarettes, candles, campfires, or stoves. Over time, a variety of terms have been used to describe them, including igniter, fire starter, striker, spark lighter, butane lighter, and flint lighter. Informally, they are sometimes referred to as flame makers, spark makers, or pocket lighters, reflecting their simple, useful purpose.

Interestingly, lighters were invented before modern friction matches. One of the earliest practical devices was the Döbereiner Lamp, invented in 1823 by German chemist Johann Wolfgang Döbereiner. This early lighter produced a flame by releasing hydrogen gas over platinum, causing spontaneous ignition. Although effective, these devices were relatively large and expensive, limiting their widespread use. They nevertheless represented the first significant step toward portable fire-starting technology.

By the early twentieth century, lighter designs had become more compact and practical. Flint-and-fuel lighters used a rotating

metal wheel that struck a piece of flint to produce sparks, igniting vapors from liquid fuel such as naphtha. During World War I, soldiers often improvised small metal lighters known as trench lighters. These rugged devices proved durable and dependable, influencing many later designs.

A major milestone came in 1932 when American inventor George G. Blaisdell introduced the Zippo lighter. Its windproof design, hinged lid, and refillable fuel system made it dependable in harsh conditions. Zippo lighters became especially famous during World War II when many American soldiers carried them. The brand became synonymous with durability, craftsmanship, and collectability.

Another major shift occurred in the 1970s with the rise of inexpensive disposable lighters fueled by butane gas. The most widely recognized example is the BIC disposable lighter, produced by the French company Société Bic. These lighters were inexpensive, lightweight, reliable, and widely available. Their popularity was so widespread that many people began referring to any disposable lighter simply as a "Bic," much as facial tissues are often called Kleenex.

Modern lighters come in several advanced forms. Torch or jet lighters produce a powerful, wind-resistant flame, electric arc lighters generate heat using rechargeable plasma arcs, and long utility lighters are designed for grills and fireplaces. Rechargeable USB lighters have become popular recently. Despite technological improvements, the fundamental principle remains unchanged: a lighter creates a spark or heat source that ignites fuel, producing a controlled flame. What began as an experimental chemical device two centuries ago has become a common, recognizable everyday tool worldwide.

Our gadget this week is the Luma Flume Lighter. Flume isn't just a lighter—it's part of the ritual. Whether you're lighting incense to set the mood, a candle to unwind after a long day, or palo santo for a moment of reset, this sculptural rechargeable arc lighter turns a simple action into something intentional and calming.

Designed to be seen rather than hidden away, Flume blends function with aesthetics. Its sleek, modern form allows it to sit comfortably on a coffee table, shelf, or bedside table as part of your décor rather than cluttering your space or tucking it away in a drawer. It's a lighter that looks as good as it works.



Instead of a traditional flame, Flume uses an electric arc to create a small purple glow between two prongs. This flame-free design makes it wind-proof and easy to use indoors or outdoors. Because it runs on electricity rather than butane, it's also a more environmentally friendly option. There are no disposable fuel canisters and no ongoing waste—just recharge and use again. Convenience is built into the design. The lighter recharges using the included USB-C cable and can deliver up to 100 ignitions

on a full charge before it needs to be plugged in again.

Safety features are also part of the design. A safety switch located on the bottom of the lighter must be turned on before use. Once activated, sliding the main switch exposes the electric arc prongs and creates the purple current used for lighting. After use, the prongs should be retracted, and the device kept out of reach of children, as it is not a toy. The lighter should be disconnected once fully charged and only charged using the provided cable.

To light a candle or wick, hold the arc close enough for the electric current to touch the wick. The wick should contact the arc itself rather than the metal prongs, which helps prevent residue from building up and blocking the arc. This device can be used to light a gas stove. However, I would exercise caution when using it with a gas fireplace, since the burners on these fireplaces are usually hidden.

With its sculptural look, rechargeable design, and flame-free technology, Flume transforms a simple lighter into a small but meaningful part of everyday rituals.

Available from the Manufacturer:

Luma Flume Lighter

Regular price \$58.00, tax included. Shipping calculated at checkout.

<https://lumaflame.com/>

Similar devices are available from Amazon at different price points

<https://tinyurl.com/kbs9t5ea> ❖



## SEND IT LATER! THE POWER OF SCHEDULED MESSAGES

By Bob Rankin

<https://askbobrankin.com>



Did you ever wish you could jot down a text a message but have it land in someone's inbox at the perfect moment, like later today, or first thing tomorrow? Scheduling your outbound messages lets you do just that, without staying up late or forgetting to send it later. In this article, you'll find practical reasons to schedule messages, self-reminder tricks, and step-by-step guides for Android, iPhone, and WhatsApp, plus a bonus on how to do the same with your email.

Hold on... don't hit the Send button yet! Why send a text later? Scheduling a text lets you write it now, then have your phone deliver it at the perfect time. That can come in handy for recipients in other time zones, for avoiding do-not-disturb hours, for reminders to yourself, and for messages you don't want to forget.

Some practical reasons to schedule instead of sending right away include:

- The other person is likely asleep, in a meeting, or cannot be interrupted (nighttime, work, travel).
- Different time zones, so "9 am their time" would otherwise mean you must remember and manually send at an odd hour.
- You want to get a thought off your mental to-do list now, but you want it to arrive tomorrow or next week.
- Professional courtesy, so coworkers and clients do not see timestamps at 11:47 pm or Sunday morning.

- Habit and behavior nudges, for example "Text me at 6 pm to take my medication" or "Remind me to pay rent on the first."
- You want to send a birthday, anniversary, or holiday greeting at a specific time, without relying on your memory.

Here's a simple example: You're slipping into bed at 11 pm, and you remember that you need to remind a friend about an appointment at 8 am. You schedule the text for 7:45 am, then forget about it. In the morning, they get a timely reminder, instead of an annoying late-night ping.

### How to schedule texts on Android

Most modern Android phones with Google Messages or Samsung Messages can schedule outgoing text (SMS) messages. Here's how to do that:

- Open Messages.
- Start a chat or open an existing conversation.
- Type your message, but do not tap Send yet.
- Press and hold the Send arrow until a Schedule send menu appears.
- Choose a suggested time (for example "Later today") or tap Pick date and time.
- Select the date and time, then confirm.
- Press the Send button.

Don't worry, it won't get sent right away. Your message will remain a scheduled item and be delivered automatically at that time, as long as the phone has some network connectivity. (I often use [Google Messages for Web](#) to send and receive text messages from my desktop. It's convenient, and syncs with messages on my phone, but unfortunately, it lacks the "send later" feature.)

## **If you use Samsung Messages (many Galaxy phones), use these instructions:**

- Open the Messages app.
- Compose a new message or open a thread and type your text.
- Tap the + or press and hold the Send arrow.
- Choose Schedule message, then pick the date and time (up to a year in the future on many models).
- Confirm; press Send to schedule.

If you change your mind, open the conversation, tap the scheduled bubble, and edit or cancel if your phone offers that option.

### **How to schedule texts on iPhone**

In recent iOS versions, Apple relies on the Shortcuts app for scheduled messages, and newer iPhones include a built-in “Send Later” feature in Messages.

### **Using “Send Later” in Messages (newer iPhones)**

- Open Messages.
- Start a new conversation or open an existing one.
- Type your message.
- Tap the + button near the text field, then choose Send Later.
- Pick a suggested time (for example, “Tomorrow morning”) or tap Pick Date & Time for exact scheduling.
- Confirm; the message will show a scheduled time indicator in the thread.

You can usually tap Edit on that scheduled bubble to change the time or delete it before it goes out.

## **Using Shortcuts Automation (iOS 17 and older or advanced control)**

- Open Shortcuts, tap Automation.
- Tap New Automation, then choose Time of Day.
- Set the time and choose how often it repeats (Daily, Weekly, Monthly) or a specific date.
- Tap Next, then Add Action, search for Send Message.
- Enter the message text and select the recipient.
- Turn on Run Immediately if you want it fully automatic, then tap Done.

If you only want a one-time message, delete the automation after it runs to prevent it from repeating.

### **Sending Later with WhatsApp**

Native message scheduling in WhatsApp is only starting to appear in beta (test) builds and may not be widely available yet. When it fully launches, it is expected to let you type a message, choose a date and time, and let WhatsApp send it later, with the option to edit or cancel before that time. But until that is commonly available in WhatsApp, people often use workarounds such as:

The Shortcuts app on iPhone: Automation > Create Personal Automation > Time of Day > Add Action > WhatsApp > Message to set a scheduled message.

[WhatsApp Web](#): Use a Chrome extension like [Send Later for WhatsApp](#) or [Blueticks](#) to set scheduled messages directly in the browser.

### **Sending a text to yourself as a reminder**

You can schedule messages to your own number so that in the future you get a timely nudge.

*Continued on page 17*

# Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

April 2026

## LACS INFORMATION

### HOW TO JOIN LACS' MAIL LIST

LACS has an active, general email list, [PC@LACS.Groups.IO](mailto:PC@LACS.Groups.IO), that goes to all members on the list. Members will receive meeting notices and Zoom links via this list. Members can also ask questions, offer suggestions, and help others.

New LACS members will receive an invitation from Groups.IO to join this list with two weeks to accept. Other LACS members may join the list by sending an email to Larry McDavid, Groups.IO Manager. See the roster for contact information. They will receive an invitation to join. Contact Larry with any questions about joining.

### 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](http://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.

### USING PAYPAL OR ZELLE

**To pay LACS by Zelle**, log into your bank with your username and password. Select **Transfer Money > Send Money with Zelle**. Follow the instructions. The recipient is **Los Angeles Computer Society**. Select **Send by email**. Enter **lacomersociety@gmail.com**. Add a note telling what the payment is for and your contact information. The wording may be a little different on your bank's site.

**To pay LACS by PayPal**, go to this link: [www.paypal.com/paypalme/00001024](http://www.paypal.com/paypalme/00001024), and then click on **Send**. Log in to your PayPal account or sign up for an account so that PayPal knows where to get the money to send. Follow the prompts. Enter the amount to pay, then click on **Add a note**. Say what the payment is for. If it is for dues, add your physical and email addresses, preferred phone number, and if you want a hard copy or an electronic copy of *User Friendly*.

### CHANGE CONTACT INFORMATION

Go to [www.lacspsc.org](http://www.lacspsc.org). Click on **Join LACS** in the bar under the picture. Under **Membership Update**, select **Click Here** to select either the DOC or PDF form. Fill it out; email it with your changes to Leah Clark. See the LACS roster. Or mail it to Los Angeles Computer Society  
6201 W. 87<sup>th</sup> St. # 4095  
Los Angeles, CA 90045

### 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

See back issues and indexes of *User Friendly* at <https://www.lacspsc.org>

# Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

April 2026

## LACS CALENDAR

APRIL



**LACS Board Meeting**  
**Monday, April 6**  
**Time: 7:00 P.M.** (Open from 6:30)  
**Place:** Wherever you are via Zoom

**LACS General Meeting**  
**Tuesday, April 14**  
**Time: 7:00 PM.** (Open from 6:30)  
**Place:** Wherever you are via Zoom

**April 6: LACS Board Meeting**  
**April 1:** Passover Begins  
**April 1:** April Fools' Day  
**April 5:** Easter  
**April 14: LACS General Meeting**  
**April 14:** Holocaust Remembrance 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](http://www.APCUG2.org). Click on **Member Benefits**, then on **Groups Sharing Meetings** or on **Newsletters Online**.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

**April 14:** Understanding Autonomous Vehicles

Amber Christiansen and  
Lisa Kattan

**April:** Sizzler Luncheon; Date TBA

**May 12:** Backing Up 101 for Seniors  
Judy Taylour, APCUG

Please watch your email and User Friendly for updates and changes.

### ATTENDING A ZOOM MEETING

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

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

**You can put an icon to the link to a meeting 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.
7. Click **Finish**.

# Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

April 2026

## MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

LACS members volunteer to help other members solve hardware and software problems by telephone or during the hours listed below. Please select a topic from the list below 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, email Leah Clark at the address below. 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, to make corrections, or to ask questions, please email Leah Clark at leahjc (at) sbcglobal.net

Android Smartphones —5	Mozilla Firefox — 3, 7	Photoshop Elements —2
Apple devices —7	MS Excel —5, 7, 8	Quicken —5, 8
Anti-Malware and Backup —3, 5	MS Word —1, 5, 8	Thunderbird —3
Genealogy —5	MS Outlook —1, 5	Utilities —3, 5
Groups.IO — 4	MS PowerPoint —5 ,7	Windows —3, 5
Hardware —3	PDF 5 —8	WordPerfect —5
Lotus Word Pro, Approach —3		Zoom —2, 6

Preferred Time for Phone Calls			
Number	Name	From	To
1	Loling Beckman	10:00 AM	6:00 PM
2	Leah Clark	7:00 AM	5:00 PM
3	Jim McKnight	8:00 AM	7:00 PM
4	Larry McDavid	Contact by email	
5	Stephanie Nordlinger	9:00 AM	9:00 PM
6	Mark Presky	Any	Any
7	Paula Van Berkomp	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
8	Joan Wilder	9:00 AM	9:00 PM

**Note:** Times are Pacific Times

# Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

April 2026

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## OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND LEADERS

POSITION	NAME	TERM
President	Leah Clark	2026
Vice President	Stephanie Nordlinger	2026
Acting Secretary	Stephanie Nordlinger	2026
Treasurer	Gavin Faught	2026
Director	Loling Beckman	2027
Director	Donna Benton	2027
Director	Howard Krevoy	2027
Director	Mark Presky	2027
Director	Jim McKnight	2026
Director	Paula Van Berkon	2026
Director	<b>Open</b>	2026
APCUG Representative	Leah Clark	
Corporate Counsel	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Database Manager	Loling Beckman	
Groups.io Manager	Larry MvDavid	
Newsletter Editor	Leah Clark	
Program Chair	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Publicity	Mark Presky	
Quick Consultants	Leah Clark	
Webmaster	Paula Van Berkon	

**LACS Mailing Address: 6201 W. 87<sup>th</sup> St. # 4095, Los Angeles, CA 90045**  
**LACS Website: <https://www.lacspc.org>**

Please use your LACS roster for email addresses and phone numbers to contact any officer, board member, or other member. **Only LACS members may receive a roster.**

**Please note:** The 2025 roster was in the middle pages of the May User Friendly. It was mailed to all LACS members, including those who usually receive only the electronic version. The roster will not be sent electronically to anyone. Be sure to keep it where you can easily find it when you need it. If you don't have the roster, please contact Leah Clark at < leahjc (at) sbcglobal.net >.

## WHERE AI FAILS (and Humans Can Help)

By: David Kretchmar

Hardware Technician, Sun City

Summerlin Computer Club

<https://www.scsccl.com>

kdretch (at)

dkretch (at) gmail.com

Artificial intelligence is reshaping industries, and some financial advisors are using it to enhance portfolio performance. Investment advisors are using AI to automate stock investments and generate investment recommendations. While we are only beginning to understand how AI can improve our lives, it still struggles with stock selection. Thus far, using AI to select stocks has proven no better than flipping a coin. AI's poor investment performance is mainly the result of unpredictable human behavior, geopolitical factors, and unanticipated data not included in training models. AI excels with data analysis but lacks a true understanding of complex events and, most importantly, how humans react to events.

### Can Computers Pick Stocks?

In spring 1969, a *Wall Street Journal* article (IIRC) described how a network of computers, IBM System/360s, the most advanced computer of the day, were tasked with selecting the best US stock to buy for investment.



The computers picked the stock of Ling-Temco-Vought, later renamed LTV Corporation. LTV Corporation was a massive conglomerate of businesses, including aerospace, steel, and

meatpacking. Conglomerates were all the investing rage in the late 1960's. LTV was one of a group of companies that were the 1969 equivalent of the late 1990's internet bubble or the current artificial intelligence and cryptocurrency bubbles. Conglomerates were believed to be so diversified across so many different industries that they were insulated from value drops in any particular sector. As conglomerates expanded by acquiring businesses across various industries, they used their stock or loans for buyouts. Conglomerates' earnings increased when they bought companies with lower price-to-earnings ratios or, in cash deals, when the acquired company's earnings exceeded the interest they paid on acquisition loans.

If all of that sounds like accounting mumbo-jumbo, it is. Given the apparently unsophisticated stock research used by individuals and professionals at the time, LTV earnings appeared to be growing rapidly and steadily, and its share price rose dramatically. In the spring of 1969, LTV was trading at a price-to-earnings multiple of 10 times earnings, which was below the market multiple at the time, despite its above-average growth. I believe this is what made the stock appear attractive to computers. But apparently, some astute investors recognized that the reported earnings growth was suspect, as reflected in the lower-than-average PE multiple.

In the early 1970's, investors realized the conglomerates were not growing any faster than the individual companies had before they were acquired. "Cobbler, stick to your last" is a proverb that describes a shift in investment attitudes after it was realized that a financial institution executive might not be the ideal manager of an aerospace company.

Share prices plummeted, sparking a bear market and a subsequent period of sideways market movement for much of the next decade.

Many conglomerates became horrible investments, and the stocks of many, including LTV, became virtually worthless. In other words, tasked with picking the best stock, computers managed to choose one of the worst investments. Clearly, something was missing from the computer analysis.



### Fear and Greed

It has been over half a century since 1969, but during that time, computers have consistently performed poorly at stock selection. Data scientists believe that it is because computers have so far been unable to quantify and digitize the human emotions that govern stock prices: Fear & Greed. Artificial intelligence can only be trained to mimic and possibly trigger human emotions. AI Bots have caused humans to fall in love and are even believed to have helped cause suicides. These reactions were unlikely to have been intended by the creators of the applications used, but were the result of computers failing to understand human emotions.

Programming a computer to incorporate human emotions such as fear, greed, love, and hate has proven impossible. Humans themselves do not really understand these emotions, let alone have the ability to translate them into machine language.

Computers using conventional analysis or AI have never produced consistent stock market results. If computers were usually incorrect in their stock selections, as in the example discussed above, that would be valuable from a contrarian perspective. But alas, because computers, even with AI, are absolutely ignorant of much of the pallet of human emotions, they fail to produce useful investment results.

### Conclusions

Current research suggests that the most successful approach isn't AI replacing humans but augmenting them.

The "man + machine" approach, which merges AI's pattern recognition with human judgment and some understanding of human emotions, generally produces the best results.

AI can identify potential signals, but a human investor must interpret relevance and make the final, informed decision. Just as a radiologist uses AI to help interpret an X-ray, human involvement remains critical.

Today, there is great concern that AI-powered computers will take many jobs from humans. Thirty years ago, Intuit introduced TurboTax. At the time, it was predicted that the accounting profession would become obsolete and that millions of jobs would be lost. Today, the accounting profession has never been stronger, with shortages of accounting professionals being a problem in some industries. ❖

### **I FINALLY SWITCHED TO LINUX**

**These 5 apps made it painless**

By **Raghav Sethi**, Author, MakeUseOf

I recently made the switch to Linux on all my ex-Windows devices, and I couldn't be happier, especially since I'd been holding onto Windows 10 for far too long. For me, Windows 10 always felt much better than Windows 11, but at the end of the day, the operating system itself has never been the main thing. What really matters is the apps, because that's where I spend most of my time. I was fully expecting Linux to be a painful experience, but to my surprise, a handful of apps made the transition almost seamless. Read more at <https://www.makeuseof.com/these-apps-made-switching-from-windows-to-linux-painless/>

#### **WinBoat**

**Your Windows apps still have a home here.**

WinBoat, funnily enough, one of the biggest apps that made switching to Linux easier for me was one that let me run Windows apps. I've played around with Wine and CrossOver in the past, but WinBoat stood out as the most reliable option by far.

What makes WinBoat great is how effortlessly it sets up a Windows virtual machine for you. You don't have to worry about ISO files, configuring virtual disks, or digging through confusing setup menus. Everything feels polished and straightforward, almost like you're installing a regular app. It's the kind of experience that makes Linux feel far less intimidating if you're new to it.

In terms of compatibility, it's much more consistent than Wine. Most productivity apps, like Microsoft Office, run without a hitch, and even some heavier Adobe tools are also semi-usable. It's a lifesaver if you're still caught in that Windows software ecosystem and aren't ready to give up your usual workflow yet.

Performance-wise, though, there's a limit. Since there's no GPU passthrough, you'll be running everything off your CPU. That means it's not meant for gaming (I'll get to that later) or for any graphically demanding task. But if your use case revolves around office work, browsing, and lightweight creative tools, WinBoat feels like a perfect bridge between both worlds.

That said, I'd only recommend using WinBoat as a temporary fix. In the long run, it's better to adapt your workflow to Linux-native apps for better performance.

#### **Heroic Games Launcher**

**Run Epic and GOG games with Steam's compatibility.**

As I mentioned earlier, WinBoat isn't exactly the best way to run games, but thankfully, there are ways around that, too. You might've noticed that most of your Steam games run fine out of the box, and that's thanks to Valve's Proton compatibility layer. The only real downside is that it's limited to your Steam library, which means any Epic or GOG titles sit unused.

That's where Heroic Games Launcher comes in. It's an open-source launcher that brings all your non-Steam libraries together under a native, easy-to-use interface. It supports both Epic Games and GOG, letting you install, launch, and update games directly without needing to mess around with Wine or any complex scripts.

Just like Steam, Heroic also uses Proton under the hood. It automatically handles Proton and Wine configurations, lets you tweak game settings, and even supports importing games you already have installed. You can also fine-tune which compatibility layer you want to use for each title, all through a clean UI.

[I actually switched to Linux primarily for gaming](#), and performance has been better than I expected for most titles. Heroic has been a total lifesaver in that sense.

### **LocalSend**

#### **AirDrop, but make it cross-platform.**

This is an app I also used on Windows, but given how bad Microsoft's native Phone Link implementation is, I'd definitely recommend it to anyone. Phone Link randomly refuses to connect or drops out midway through a transfer, which makes even basic file sharing more frustrating than it should be.

LocalSend, on the other hand, gets everything right. It's completely free, open source, and works on practically every platform, including Windows, macOS, Linux, Android, and iOS. It transfers files directly over your local network, so there's no dependency on the internet or any external servers. Everything happens instantly and privately within your own network.

Once installed, your devices automatically detect each other as long as they're on the same network. You can send photos, documents, or even full folders without cables, logins, or complicated pairing steps (take notes, Microsoft).

### **GIMP**

#### **Everything Photoshop does, minus the price tag**

While you can use Photoshop with Win-Boat, it doesn't really work well unless you're doing only very basic tasks. That's why GIMP is such an excellent alternative. It's a fully open-source image editor that runs natively on Linux, Windows, and macOS, so there's no Adobe subscription trying to lock you in.

GIMP covers almost everything most people need, from layers and masks to brushes, filters, and advanced retouching tools. I won't deny that it isn't as feature-rich as Photoshop, but for most workflows, it gets you about 90 percent of the way there. You can handle photo edits, digital art, and even complex compositing without ever touching a Windows VM.

If you're someone switching to Linux and worried about losing access to Photoshop, give GIMP a shot. It's free, it's powerful, and with a bit of practice, it can handle nearly everything you'd normally rely on Photoshop for. If GIMP isn't your cup of tea, I would also recommend [Photopea](#), which is a Photoshop equivalent that runs entirely in your browser.

### **TimeShift**

#### **Because Linux can break too**


Linux has been more reliable than Windows for me overall, but I've still managed to break my entire install more than once. Timeshift works a lot like Windows' System Restore, letting you take snapshots of your system at specific points in time.

If something goes wrong—like an update fails, a tweak breaks your setup, or you accidentally delete something important—you can roll back to a previous snapshot and get everything back exactly as it was. It also supports automatic snapshots, so you don't have to remember to back up manually, which makes experimenting with Linux far less stressful.

If you're worried about accidentally breaking your system, Timeshift gives you that safety net. You can try new apps, tweaks, or updates without the constant fear of messing everything up, and it quickly becomes one of those tools you rely on every day.

### Forget Windows 11, switch to Linux.

[With Windows 10 finally out of support](#) and so many perfectly capable devices left stranded because of Microsoft's absurd minimum requirements, there's never been a better time to give Linux a shot. It's no longer the scary, complicated OS I expected it to be. With the right apps, you can keep your workflow intact and make life easier than it ever was on Windows. ❖



## MAKING AN EASEUS TODO BACKUP RESCUE DISK

by **Alan German**

Ottawa PC Users Group

Your computer is working just fine. You use EaseUS Todo Backup to create regular full-disk image backups and store them on an external USB drive. Now is the time to create a rescue disk in preparation for when your computer experiences a catastrophic failure and refuses to boot. With EaseUS Todo Backup running, recovering a specific file or folder, or even an entire disk partition (other than the current system partition) is a simple process.

The Browse to Recover option allows you to select the backup drive and navigate to a specific backup (.pbd) file. There are then options to use Disk/Partition mode or File mode, with further navigation options to browse for a specific disk partition, file, or folder to be restored. If you only want to recover a file or a folder, there's an even easier way. Open the .pbd file in File Explorer. The files and folders on the backup volume are listed just as they were on the original drive.

However, the full Windows partition (Drive C:) cannot be restored in Disk/Partition mode,

as this would overwrite the system files of the running operating system. It is also clear that this would not be possible if the computer failed to boot and could not load Windows, preventing the EaseUS software from starting. In either case, it is necessary to boot the computer from a rescue disk.

The EaseUS Todo Backup rescue disk uses Windows PE (Windows Preinstallation Environment), which boots a lightweight version of the Windows operating system and automatically runs the backup software. When the rescue disk is booted, the computer's screen displays the main window for EaseUS Todo Backup as if the program had been started from the Windows desktop.

EaseUS Todo Backup can use almost any USB flash drive to create a bootable rescue disk, as it requires only 512 MB (or more) of capacity. Note that the drive should be empty, or at least not contain any files that you wish to keep. The drive will be formatted before the rescue software is written to it, and this will delete any files present on the drive.

With the backup program running in Windows as usual, navigate to Tools > Create Emergency Disk. The Boot Disk Location dialogue box displays three disk icons. Select the middle icon, a graphic of a USB flash drive inside a circle, browse to select the USB drive that is to be used to create the rescue disk, and press Create. Select the flash drive to be used as the rescue disk. A subsequent dialogue box indicates that WinPE created with the Free version does not support Clone and System Transfer. Since we will not be using either of these functions, click Create Now to continue. A new pop-up dialogue box indicates that the selected device needs to be formatted.

Do you want to continue? Press OK to authorize formatting the USB drive. Progress

will be indicated by changes in the estimated time remaining and elapsed time until the message "WinPE OS has been successfully exported" is displayed. Press Finish to exit the process.

Now, a note of caution. Viewing the contents of the rescue disk in File Explorer displays "This folder is empty." However, this does not mean that the creation of the rescue disk was unsuccessful. In fact, the drive is not empty but contains hidden system files and folders. Looking at the properties of the USB drive will show 612 MB of used space. In any case, the viability of the rescue disk should be tested by booting the computer from it and ensuring you can access the stored backup files.

You can find out how to boot your specific computer from a USB flash drive by searching Google and, in my case, pressing F12 while the machine is rebooting, which loads a boot menu from which the EaseUS Rescue Drive can be selected. Then, as described earlier, the computer boots directly into EaseUS Todo Backup, and the component(s) to be restored can be selected. Bottom Line EaseUS Todo Backup Free (Freeware) Version 17.5.0. <https://www.easeus.com/download/tbf-download.html>

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### **Send it Later! The Power of Scheduled Messages**

*Continued from page 7*

On Android or iPhone, the steps are the same as above, except you set the recipient to your own contact entry or phone number. You can also combine a calendar event with a text. For example, on iPhone, create a Calendar event titled "Text Mom" at 9 am, and put the actual wording of the text in the Notes field so the notification reminds you exactly what to send.

### **Scheduling "Send Later" Emails**

Scheduling emails works much like texts. You compose now, but set a delivery time. This keeps your inbox professional with no 3:00 AM timestamps. Gmail, Outlook, Apple Mail, and others make it simple.

#### **On Gmail:**

- Open Gmail on web, Android, or iOS.
- Compose your email.
- Click the down arrow next to Send.
- Choose Schedule send (suggested times like "Tomorrow morning" or Pick date & time).
- Confirm. It goes to the Scheduled folder; edit or cancel from there before send time.

#### **Other Email Services**

Outlook (Desktop, Web, Mobile): Compose, click the arrow next to Send, then pick Schedule send or a custom date/time.

Apple Mail (Mac/iOS): Compose, long-press or tap the Send Later icon, choose time/date. Shows in the Send Later mailbox.

Yahoo Mail (mobile only): Basic scheduling via mobile app (tap three dots > Schedule for later).

Next time you're tempted to fire off a midnight text, or you're worried about forgetting something important, reach for the "send later" option instead. With these simple steps for Android, iPhone, WhatsApp, and even email, you stay polite, timely, and organized. It will take a load off your mind, and eliminate untimely pings for your recipients. Start scheduling today, and watch your communication game level up. ❖

## FOR MANY HELPFUL TIPS AND TRICKS

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

## SPECIAL OFFERS

Go to the APCUG website at [Discounts & Special Offers For User Groups – APCUG](#) for discounts and special offers for members of User Groups on books, media, and training sites, including these:

- **Pearson / Que / Informit / Sams Program – 35% Discount**

Contact: [community@informit.com](mailto:community@informit.com)

Enroll in the program at <http://bit.ly/2dK4L>

for well-known Pearson technology brands, including Addison-Wesley Professional, Cisco Press Exam Cram, IBM Press, Prentice Hall Professional, Que Publishing, and Sams Publishing.

- **Take Control Books – Apple and Windows eBooks**

Use the form at <https://apcug2.org/contact-us/> to request the discount code.

Subject – General

Body of form – Name of your computer club and discount code.

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## LAUGHING OUT LOUD



### Why do you always have to wear a seatbelt in an autonomous car?

...In case the computer crashes.

### A Silicon Valley Bumper Sticker: My Other Car Is Autonomous...

...but I never drive it.

### They finally figured out why the computerized self-driving car has crashed...

...They didn't install the driver.

## TECH LIFE UNITY (TechBoomers)

<https://www.techlifeunity.com>

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

## DISCLAIMER

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.

# Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

April 2026

## 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 address as regular members; 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.

### Benefits of LACS Membership

**Monthly meetings** with presentations via Zoom.

**Monthly Newsletter, *User Friendly*** —

Your article submissions and free ads to sell your computer items

**Free help** by email or phone — See page 10.

**Group mailing list** to contact or ask questions of all members at [PC@LACS.Groups.IO](mailto:PC@LACS.Groups.IO)

**Important news** and announcements via *User Friendly* and LACS's mail list.

**Webinars, virtual conferences, programs, and technical information** free from APCUG, an International Association of Technology and Computer User Groups

**Annual Holiday Party**

**Social interaction** with others who have interests in computers and technology

**In-person luncheons** at a restaurant

**Renewals are due in January. New members' dues will be prorated quarterly.**

**Check # \_\_\_\_\_ New or Renewal Membership Application.**

**Date \_\_\_\_\_** Dues may be paid by Zelle, PayPal, or check. If paying by check, make it out to "Los Angeles Computer Society" and mail it with this form to

**6201 W. 87<sup>th</sup> St., # 4095, Los Angeles, CA 90045**

**Please Print Clearly** [ ] New [ ] Renewal

[ ] New/Renewal with printed newsletter - \$40 [ ] Associate - \$12 [ ] Student - \$18

[ ] New/Renewal with electronic, no paper newsletter - \$30 [ ] Gift membership - \$20

[ ] Contributor - \$50 [ ] Supporter - \$75 [ ] Benefactor - \$100 [ ] Other

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

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

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

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

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

Preferred Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Publish Contact Info in the roster [ ] Yes [ ] No

To Contact in Case of an Emergency: Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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

# Los Angeles Computer Society Newsletter

**First Class Mail**

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## **GENERAL MEETINGS ARE ON ZOOM.**

Before each meeting, members and invited guests will receive an email with the URL link to the meeting. **Just click on the link.** If you haven't received it by the morning of the meeting, let Leah Clark know at [leahjc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:leahjc@sbcglobal.net) .

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 when you re-enter. You may turn off your video while you are gone.