New Programs and Devices

By Dick Maybach, Member, Brookdale Computer Users' Group, NJ
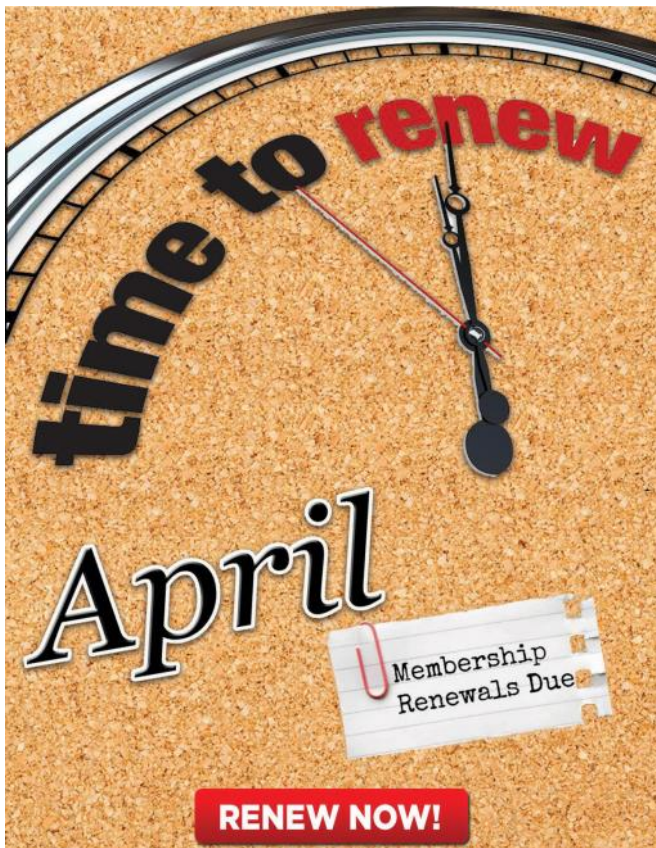
November 2016 issue, BUG Bytes

www.bcug.com

n2nd (at) att.net

Computer programs can be complex and learning to use a new one can be difficult and frustrating.

Further, many hardware devices contain processors, making it easy for designers to add features that can make them equally complex. My primary operating system is Linux, and I like to explore new applications. These are usually free, and there are often several for every task, usually with drastically different approaches. I also love such gadgets as digital cameras and pocket GPS navigators. As a result, I am continually trying to master new programs and devices and have worked out some methods of doing this.

There are many barriers that make the task difficult.

- Every designer has a different idea of how a program or device should work, and trying to use a new one the same way you used an old one can be counterproductive. Sometimes, the most difficult part is unlearning what you think you know, especially for experienced users who may feel they should be able to figure out new software and hardware by instinct.

- Different products can use different vocabularies – for example "uploading" sometime means importing information into an application and sometimes exporting it.

"Members Helping Members"
(since 1983)

Board of Directors
2015-2016

Phil Bock . . . . **President**
  president@lcace.org

Linda Busch . . . . **Vice President**
  vicepresident@lcace.org

Bobby Jacobs. . . . . **Secretary**
  secretary@lcace.org

Judy Dunham . . . . **Treasurer**
  treasurer@lcace.org

Linda Rohlfing . . . . **Programs**
  programs@lcace.org

J.J. Johnson. . . . . **Membership**
  membership@lcace.org

Linda Koudelka . . . . **Public Relations**
  pr@lcace.org

Volunteers

Webmaster . . . . J. J. Johnson
  webmaster@lcace.org

Newsletter Editor . . . . Mike McEnery
  editor@lcace.org

Historian . . . . Lester Larkin

News Journal
The LCACE News Journal is published eleven times annually. Members are encouraged to submit contributions which will be acknowledged in this newsletter.

Send articles to editor@lcace.org
Permission is granted to reproduce any or all parts of this newsletter in other User Group publications, provided that credit is given to LCACE and the individual author(s).

Logo designed on an Atari Stacy Laptop in 1989 by Dwight Johnson Jr.

Lake County Area
Computer Enthusiasts

LCACE
c/o Group Ambassador

"J.J." Johnson

Membership
LCACE membership is open to all individuals and families interested in personal computing. Annual dues are $20.00 per individual/family. Applications for membership may be obtained at the monthly meeting, by request on the club hotline, and are now available on our web site at http://www.lcace.org.

Meetings
LCACE meetings are usually held on Saturdays at the Grayslake Area Public Library, 100 Library Lane, Grayslake, Illinois. The meeting room opens at noon and the formal meeting begins at 12:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!

Newsletter Submissions
Club members are welcome to submit classified ads, reviews, tips and other articles for publication, to our newsletter editor in Microsoft Word format (.doc). **Publication deadline is the 20th of the month for all ads and articles.** Please do not use tabs or special formatting.

Newsletter Advertising
Ad rates per issue: Full page - $25, Half page - $15, Quarter page - $10, Business Card - $5. Discounts are available on advance purchase of multiple issues. Please send camera-ready copy and payment to the club address by the 15th of the month preceding publication. For more information on ad pricing, please call our Hotline. Ads are **FREE** to all paid members.

Notice
LCACE WILL NOT CONDONE or knowingly participate in copyright infringement of any kind. The *LCACE News Journal* is published by and for LCACE members. Opinions expressed herein are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of LCACE, the membership, the board of directors, and/or our advertisers.

Phil's Ramblings

April 2017

The robins are back and our neighbor's crocuses are in full bloom. It must be spring! Is it just me, or are the seasons moving faster….?

Speaking of spring, it is time once again for our annual Anniversary Party and elections. Please plan to attend our April LCACE meeting to participate in both. It's on April 15th, the third Saturday of April.

Microsoft will be introducing their free "Creators Update" for Windows 10 on April 11th. While bits and pieces about this update have appeared in the popular press during the last six months or so, I am now beginning to see comprehensive descriptions of the changes being introduced in this update. I plan to cover some of these changes at our April meeting, but I'm sure we will see considerably more information, analysis and reviews once the update is released.

News on the Chromebook front is less positive. In early 2016, Google announced that it would be making modifications to its Chrome operating system and/or Android apps, to allow many Android apps to run on Chromebook computers. This would vastly expand the applications available to Chromebook users, who are currently limited to the relatively small number of apps in the Chrome store.

As part of this announcement, Google identified three new Chromebook models scheduled for release later in 2016 as the first of many that will be Android-ready out-of-the-box. They also identified many existing Chromebook models that would be updated later in the year, to allow them to run Android apps as well. Unfortunately, we have not heard much more about this initiative since the original announcement. (If you go to the Google website and search for their Chrome blog, all you will find is the original announcement from early 2016.) In a February 2017 column on The Verge, Walt Mossberg provided an update on this initiative. Here is what he wrote:

"*I'm happy to report that the first Chromebook designed from the ground up to run Android apps out of the box has arrived, albeit a little past the end of 2016. It goes on sale this week for $450. It's called the Samsung Chromebook Plus, and it runs on an ARM processor, the same type of processor that powers the vast majority of smart phones and tablets. It was designed in close cooperation with Google.*

Alas, in my tests of the Plus over the last few days, I found the Android execution frustrating."

While Mossberg goes on to compliment the Plus as a very nice Chromebook, he cannot recommend it as a bigger-screen version of your favorite Android phone. It turns out that the problem is pretty basic. Most Android apps were never designed to look right and run right on a large screen. As a result, Mossberg ran into many situations where a favorite app did not run well on the Plus, or had a compromised display.

Google is supposedly hard working to optimize it its own Android apps for the Chromebook, and is urging third-party developers to do the same. However, it seems clear from Mossberg's article that they are way behind schedule.

Bottom line, if you are thinking of buying a Chromebook once they are fully compatible with the full range of Android apps you are using on your smartphone, it appears that you will have to wait for quite a while.

In other disappointing news, the House and Senate have just voted to block newly-developed FCC regulations designed to bar ISPs from storing and selling their users' browsing histories without their consent. In the battle to protect Internet user privacy, this

12 Keyboard shortcuts every Chomebook owners need to know

A dozen keyboard shortcuts to make Chrome OS even easier to use.Chrome OS is a blissfully streamlined operating system that is easy to use.

Keyboard shortcuts, however, can make navigating your Chromebook even easier. Here are the top dozen shortcuts.

1. Alt + Search

One of the first things you'll notice about a Chromebook's keyboard is the caps-lock key has a magnifying glass on it. Instead of locking caps, this key calls up Chrome OS's search window. You can still do caps lock, however, by hitting the search key while holding down the Alt key.

2. Shift + Escape

This is the Chrome OS equivalent of Windows' Ctrl-Alt-Delete. Shift-Esc calls up Chrome's Task Manager where you can see which apps are using the most system resources and force quit an unresponsive app. This keyboard shortcut only works when Chrome is your active window; it won't work if you have an app as its own window as your top-most, active window.

3. Search + L

Hit this combo when you get up from your Chromebook to lock it. You'll need to enter you password upon your return to unlock it.

4. Ctrl + Shift + Q(x2)

Hold down Ctrl and Shift and hit the Q key twice to log out of your Chromebook.

5. Alt + 1-9

If you have pinned your favorite apps to Chrome OS's shelf, then you can use these shortcuts to open them. Alt-1 opens the left-most app pinned to the shelf, for example, while Alt-9 opens the rightmost app.

7. Alt + [or]

These two shortcuts are great for multitasking. The left bracket combo docks the active window to the left side of your screen, and the right bracket does the opposite, letting you quickly set up side-by-side windows.

8. Alt + -

Alt plus the minus-sign key minimizes your active window. With your desktop clear, this combo will the restore the last window you minimized.

9. Alt + =

Alt plus the equals key stretches your current active window across your desktop. It's not quite full-screen mode because it leaves the header at the top of the window. You can use the full-screen key (found in the F4 spot) to go full screen.

10. Alt + backspace

The backspace key deletes the character to the left of your cursor. Windows PCs, however, have a separate delete key that deletes characters to the right of the cursor. To get this Windows delete-key functionality on a Chromebook, just hold down the Alt key when you backspace.

11. Ctrl + 'switch window' key

The switch window key is usually found in the F5 spot on a Chromebook keyboard. Combined with the Ctrl key, it takes a screenshot of your entire desktop and saves it to your Down-

- Except for a handful of very popular applications, good tutorial books don't exist. This is especially so for Linux, OS X, and many cameras.

- The number of brick-and-mortar bookstores is decreasing, and those remaining are continually decreasing the shelf space for technical books. Software is frequently updated, meaning that books quickly become outdated and public libraries can't keep up. As a result, it is difficult to find useful information by browsing books

- Information on the Internet is fragmented, poorly organized, and often wrong.

- Tech writers seem to fixate on tasks that don't interest me – they go into elaborate detail on things I never do and skip over those I perform almost every day.

- User interfaces are frequently not well designed, and not all products have useful help features.

- Purchased software and hardware usually includes only a small printed pamphlet, containing mostly legal disclaimers in several languages and labeled, "Getting Started Guide," or something similar. Many people assume this is the manual and never look at the real manual, which resides on an included CD-ROM or the vendor's Website.
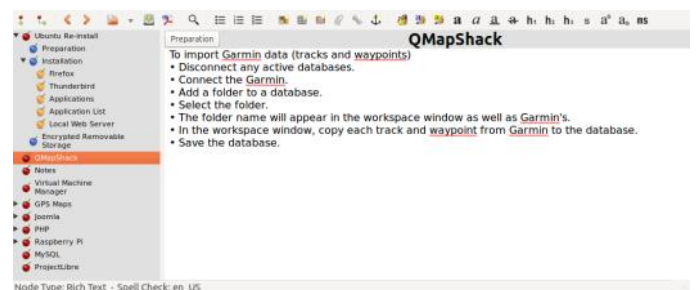
I have found several ineffective techniques.
- Calling a friend – while this is occasionally appropriate, you will soon run out of friends if you overuse it, and some friends have more confidence than expertise.

- Taking random screen shots – unless you organize these and add comments as soon as you take them, you just end up with directories full of useless graphics.

- Handwritten notes – unless you organize these you end up with stacks or useless paper.

- Working by analogy from similar products – every program is different, and few are clones. New ones appear because their developers felt previous ones had fundamental shortcomings; few are just old ones with bug fixes.

- Using a new program to work with valuable data – making a mistake here could mean you lose the data.

Before you install the software or turn on the device, gather the available information about it that appears useful, including: the full manual (if only an on-line version is available, get its URL) not just the getting started guide, reviews (which frequently provide helpful overviews), and Internet articles (or their URLs). If this is software, make a complete backup of your computer. This is important if you downloaded the software, especially for Windows users. Linux users can install new software on a virtual machine, which isolates any problems. Read the reviews and articles you gathered and at least the introduction and installation sections of the manual. Create a sandbox in which to experiment. This can be as simple as a directory with a few files you will manipulate with the new software or as complex as a virtual machine. Set up means of recording notes. I use CherryTree, http://www.giuspen.com/cherrytree/, which is free, but available only for Linux and Windows; Mac users can find equivalents http://alternativeto.net/software/cherrytree/?platform=mac. Screen 1 shows my complete CherryTree notes on QMapShack after an hour or so of use. (This is a mapping program that works with a GPS.) As you can see, these fit on a single page, and at this point I had a lot yet to do.
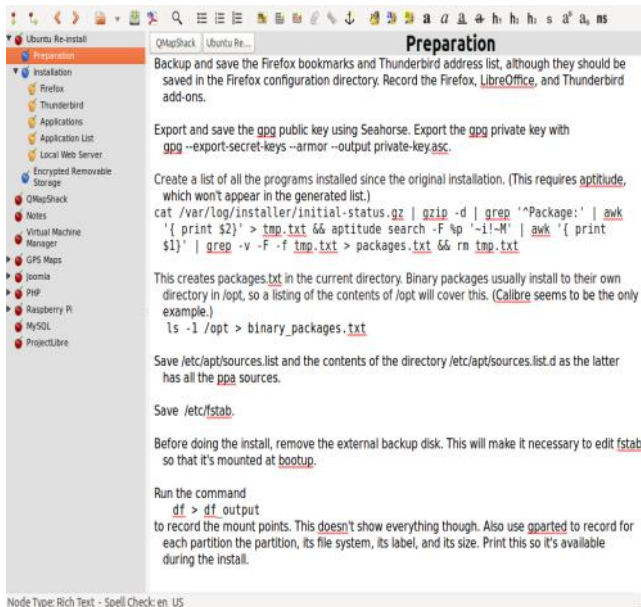

Screen 1. Initial CherryTree Notes on Qmap-Shack.

By contrast, Screen 2 shows a portion of my notes on installing Ubuntu Linux, which have been refined for several years. Note from the

outline view in the left panel that these now extend over several pages. I modify these notes again with every new installation.

Screen 2. CherryTree Notes on Ubuntu Linux.

Now you're ready to begin. Open the manual, or equivalently open its file or URL on your desktop, and open your notes program. As a result, you may have three open windows on your desktop, the manual, the notes program, and the new software. You may have less if you have a full printed manual or if you are working with new hardware. Follow the instructions to install the program or set up the hardware, making notes as needed. (Do this as soon as you perform the action. Don't wait until the end of the session.) Work your way through the manual, making notes about what you do, especially if something surprises you or works differently than you expect. On the first pass, cover only the basics and skip over those features that don't interest you. At this point you're looking for only the features that you are likely to use initially. Take screen shots as appropriate and include them in the notes (although I seldom find this necessary). Note especially any configuration changes and the locations of the files used. Repeat this until you don't have to refer to the manual, but only your notes.

By now, you should have captured the features that are important to you. I often find that my notes fall into two areas, configura-tion and work-flow (the process you follow as you use the program or device). A complex program may require several of these. They need not be polished, after all no one but you will ever see them, but they should be complete enough to guide you days or weeks in the future.

Every time you use the software or device, open the notes, as you will want to revise and augment them as you correct early misinterpre-tations and learn more. This is especially important for things you use infrequently.
Your notes should contain everything you need; that is, you shouldn't have to rely on any other material to use the program or device they cover. This should include: the URLs of any on-line material, such as manuals, reviews, tutorials, and newsletters, the supplier's Website URL, configuration data at install time, work-flows, contents of configuration and profile files, and annotated screen-shots.

Place a copy of these notes on all the PCs with which you will use the program or device. For example, if you take a laptop on vacation, it should have the notes for your camera. Consider making such notes for your operating system, your complex applications, and your hardware, including peripherals. Without them, such jobs as reinstalling an operating system will take far too long and may require several attempts. You will find that they make using and maintaining complex products much easier and maintaining them far less frustrating, especially for those you don't use every day.

---

will be another loss for users unless President Trump vetoes the bill. Google, Amazon, Facebook and others are only able to track and sell information gained from activities you engage in while using their services. But ISPs can track everything you do online. Unlike services like Facebook – which you can avoid if you believe they will undermine your privacy – you must use the services of an ISP to access the Internet.

We'll talk more about this at our April meeting, including ways in which we can enhance our privacy.

See you there!

And the winners are...

Door Prize Winner
Bobby Jacobs

50/50 Winner
Liz Barnett

Trivia Question Winner
Linda Busch

Jere's Tech Tips

BEST MEDIA STREAMING DEVICE –

Whether you've just gotten rid of cable or want to supplement your TV package with online video, now's an excellent time to buy a media streaming device. Compared to the typical smart TV, standalone streamers such as the Roku Streaming Stick and Amazon Fire TV tend to have bigger app selections, faster performance, and more features. And with so much competition between device makers, the hardware is becoming faster, more capable, and more affordable.

Here are some picks for the best streaming boxes and sticks, along with current product reviews. Recommendations will change over time as new products come to market.

Go to This PC World Magazine web page and read the reviews: http://bit.ly/2oHRhqDJTT

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - CUT HERE - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Question Of the month

Which restaurant chain was founded by Atari co-founder Nolan Bushnell?

- Applebee's
- Golden Corral
- California Pizza Kitchen
- Chuck E. Cheese

Be the first to submit the correct answer at the April meeting and win a prize.

Name: _____

Answer: _____

Waukegan Township Technology Workshop

Technology for Safety and Socialization for Seniors

Tuesday, April 25, 2017
10:00 am – 11:00 am

Park Place
414 S. Lewis Ave., Waukegan, IL

Without good digital literacy education it becomes more challenging for seniors to make the right on-line choices. This presentation is designed to provide seniors with on-line "critical thinking" and decision making strategies that they can apply while participating in the digital world. Receive information about the Internet and Social Networking to keep safer and become more digitally literate, savvy and resilient when on-line.

For information and to RSVP, call:
(847) 244-9242 or email
jnieves@waukegantownship.com

CLUB REPORT/HISTORIAN

03/11/2017 Meeting
by Les Larkin
LesLarkin@AIM.com

. L.C.A.C.E. Club Historian
History Report, 2017-03-11 Meeting
By Les Larkin
LesLarkin@AIM.com

Our March meeting was conducted by Phil Bock.

The door prize was won by Bobby Jacobs. She selected the Monopod camera accessory.

Liz Barnett won the 50/50 raffle, the club and Phil each receiving $11.00. Congratulations to all winners!

Thanks to Linda Busch for making the coffee, and to Linda and Liz Barnett who provided munchable's for us.

This month's program was "Security" by Phil Bock.ï¿½ The Grayslake police officer who was scheduled for the security presentation, was called to an unexpected meeting. Thanks, Phil, for a great presentation. It's especially appreciated considering the very short notice.

Another great meeting, and I hope to see you at our April 15 meeting.

Les

Membership

March 11, 2017

Membership Chairperson

Members: 59
Meeting Attendee: 38
Meeting Attendee: 45%

THANKS FOR JOINING
None

THANKS FOR RENEWING
Rich Garling
Phil Bock
Lester Larkin
Mike McEnery
Alden & Lois Wells
Henry Henriksen
Fred & Liz Barnett
Kenneth Nethercote

THANKS FOR VISITING
Yvonne Mitchell
Rich Garling
Peter Ivascheivko
Janet Schockmel

Winners:
Trivia: Linda Busch
50/50: Liz Barnett
Door Prize: Bobby Jacobs

loads folder. To take a screenshot of only a portion of your desktop, use Ctrl + Shift + switch window key.

12. Ctrl + Alt + /

It's easier to think of this combo as using the ? symbol, which is the shifted version of the forward-slash. If you have a question about keyboard shortcuts, this combo calls up a keyboard overlay to show you the various keyboard shortcuts available for Chrome OS.

Craftsy
By Jazmie D'Katz

Craftsy is an online educational website that offers over 1100 video tutorials and downloadable workshop for category like Quilting, Cake making, Sewing, Knitting, Cooking, Baking and Photography.

The Denver, Colorado company launched in 2011 has attracted over half a million enrollments. Craftsy produces four to six new course a month which generally cost between $20 - $50 but they offer occasional sale with many courses under $20.

The courses are taught by experienced teachers and many of the course are 10 lessons long which amount to about five hours of tutorial. Best of all, the courses you purchase never expire. One of the feature that I like most of all is the 30-second rewind which enables you to rewind section you missed or didn't understand. Many of the lesson have downloadable step-by-step instructions.

Over the past year, I've enjoyed course on Photography, Grilling Techniques, Cooking with Spices, Pan Sauces, Mastering the Braise and Cooking with Cast Iron.
Check it out:

Craftsy.com

L.C.A.C.E.

Jean Moran

Howard Jacobs

Robert Koudelka

Jean Anderson

J.J. Johnson

Bobby Jacobs

© Randy Glasbergen / glasbergen.com

"I don't wake up at night to check my e-mail. I automatically have it forwarded to the people in my dreams and they read it to me."

One of the big concerns I have is that most of the HR departments in a lot of companies are hiring away from creativity and they don't know it. For instance, they are requiring everybody to have a college degree. The most creative people I know couldn't deal with college.
Nolan Bushnell

Read more at: https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

Do you have computer questions
or need help with your computer?

Visit Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts'
help desk for one on one help

Open to all

11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
Grayslake Area Public Library
Rooms A-C

Happy Hollidays to all

2017

April Meeting

1. Internet Security update/VPNs (recap of past security discussions + privacy issues/ counter measures, including VPNS)

2. Computing self-reliance (a discussion of ways in which we can each become more knowledgeable sbout our computing devices and software).

Member of

apcug

An International
Association of Technology
& Computer User Groups

APCUG itself is not a user group; only user groups themselves are members. APCUG's product and service are offered to group leaders, who can then share them with their members.