THE WYSIWYG

APCUG — Association of Personal Computer User Groups

MAIN MEETING: TUESDAY JAN 3
6:30 PM
**Macomb Community College
South Campus
14500 E 12 Mile Road, Warren
John Lewis Community Center
(Building K)**

[Map showing 12 Mile Rd., Schoenherr Road, Hayes Road, Bldg.K, Martin Road, Groesbeck Highway, E. 11 Mile Road & 1696]

This Month's Main Meeting Topic:

"Creating A Home Inventory Record Using Any Spreadsheet" by member Paul Baecker

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PC SIG Meeting:
**Tuesday, January 17 starting at 6:45 at the Sterling Heights Public Library
(Meet in the first floor Programming Center)**

The SIG will plan to meet every other month, at this location, if people continue to attend.

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Sterling Heights Public Library

The Sterling Heights Library, at 40255 Dodge Park Road, is located just south of Utica Road.   A large sign reading "City Center" marks the driveway to the library and parking.   The Programming Center, where the meeting is held, is just inside the front door of the library.

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Guests and visitors are welcome. People can attend any SHCC meetings during two consecutive months before deciding to become a member or not. Meetings include the main meeting and SIG. July and August don't count since there is no main meeting. Membership includes admission to all SHCC functions and the newsletter. Membership is open to anyone. It is not limited to the residents of Sterling Heights.

DUES: $25/YEAR

CLUB ADDRESS: PO Box 385, Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0385
CLUB E-MAIL ADDRESS: Info@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org
CLUB WEB PAGE: http://www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org

Resource People:

Family Tree	Rick Schummer
Firefox	Don VanSyckel
FoxPro	Rick Schummer
General Computer Questions	Jack Vander-Schrier
Hardware	John Rady
MS Publisher	Rick Kucejko
MS Word	Rick Schummer
Spreadsheets	Rick Schummer

SHCC Coordinators:

Associate Editor	Rick Schummer
Door prizes	Don VanSyckel
Greeter for visitors	Jim Waldrop
Newsletter publisher	Rick Kucejko
Program Coordinator	Mike Bader
Publicity	Patrick Little
Resource People	open
PC SIG	Jack Vander-Shrier
Welcome & check-in desk.	Jim Waldrop
Web Site	Don VanSyckel
Web Watch column	Paul Baecker

2016 SHCC Officers

President: Don VanSyckel
Secretary: Rick Kucejko
V. President: Mike Bader
Treasurer: Bernie DeFazio

Four Month Meeting Schedule:

JANUARY 2017
3 - SHCC – **"Creating A Home Inventory Record Using Any Spreadsheet" by member Paul Baecker**
4   - COMP meeting
8   - SEMCO meeting
17 - PC SIG

FEBRUARY 2017
7 - SHCC – **"CD/DVD/USB, Dual boot, virtual box and more" by member Mike Bader**
8   - COMP meeting
12 - SEMCO meeting

MARCH 2017
1 - COMP meeting
7 - SHCC – "Quad-copter With Computer Control" by Sam Chapatwala of the Detroit Beagle-bone Community Meetup
12 - SEMCO meeting
? - PC SIG

APRIL 2017
4 - SHCC—Main Meeting
5   - COMP meeting
9   - SEMCO meeting

Other Computer Clubs:

As a member of SHCC, you can attend meetings of other clubs where we have reciprocating membership agreements, at no charge.

Computer Club of Marysville and Port Huron (COMP)
Time: 1st Wednesday, 7:00PM
Place: Mackenzie Bldg, Room 201, St Clair Community College, Clara E McKenzie Library-Science Building, 323 Erie St.
Port Huron, MI (810) 982-1187
Web Page: http://www.bwcomp.org
Reciprocating: Yes

South Eastern Michigan Computer Organization (SEMCO)
Time: 2nd Sunday at 1:30PM
Place: Altair, 1820 E Big Beaver Road, Troy, MI 48083
(248) 840-2400
Web page: http://www.semco.org
Reciprocating: Yes

Royal Oak Computer Club
Time: Every Wednesday at 12:30
Place: Mahany/Meineger Senior Community Center 3500 Marais Ave. Royal Oak, MI 48073
248-246-3900
Reciprocating: No

Contact Information:

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Don VanSyckel	586-731-9232	don@vansyckel.net
Jack Vander-Schrier	586-739-5952	jvanders@comcast.net
(**Call Jack after noon**)		

Newsletter submissions are due 10 days before the club meeting, but the earlier the better. They should be sent to :
    WYSIWYG Publisher
    5069 Fedora, Troy, MI 48098
OR at the e-mail addresses: newslet-

The President's Pen
by Don VanSyckel

Happy New Year!! I hope everyone had a good Christmas and New Year holiday.   Did you get everything on your list? Or did Santa pass you by? I enjoyed hearing about all the new technology items from Mr. Tapaninen from Microcenter in November. Any of these items under your tree?

There's not much under my tree. In fact there isn't a tree, of any size. I broke my leg in two places the Sunday before Christmas and there is definitely no joy in Whooville. I will not be at the January meeting and possibly the February one either.   It's difficult typing propped up on one arm so I'm cutting this   article   short.

This month's presentation should be a good one for those of you lucky enough to attend.   SHCC member Paul Baecker will present an inventory from scratch in a spreadsheet. Inventory sounds so formal, but this applies to many hobbies, a DVD inventory, software inventory, financial documents, and any other collection of items you have.

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Presenters Wanted

The officers invite any member to make a presentation at the main meeting.

If there is some software you have been using and think others may be interested as well, or there is a computer topic you would like to present to other members, please call or e-mail Don VanSyckel. Making presentations is not that difficult. The hour goes by before you know it and there is always enough material to cover in a software package so that the hour is easy to fill.

If there is a topic you are interested in or something you would like demonstrated, please see any of the officers. They are always interested in what the members would like to see.

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VISIT THE SHCC WEB PAGE:
http://
www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org

Club Membership Drive

All Sterling Heights Computer Club members,

The club is holding a membership drive through January. Not that you have to stop bringing in new members after January, they just won't be a part of this membership drive.

The rules are simple:
1) Bring in new people to SHCC and have them list you on the sign in form as the reason they came in.
2) You get credit for each person that joins SHCC from now until the time of the drawing early in the January meeting.
3) In January, whoever has the most new members to their credit will be in a drawing for the prize. At the January meeting. (Could be a drawing of one.)
4) Previous SHCC members who rejoin do not count.
5) People who visited the club previously but never joined count if they join this time.
6) New associate members also count. They can be an associate of an existing member or a new member as long as the associate has never been a member before.
7) Prize is a $25 gift card and a one year extension of your SHCC membership.

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Door Prizes

Door prize drawings are held at regular club meetings. The winner's circle for December included:

Bernie DeFazio won a thumb drive

Pat Little won a power strip

Ron Linsley won a pair of scissors

Paul Cozort won a power strip

Richard Katnik won a MS Works suite

Warner Mach won a pair of scissors

Don Hjelle won a pack of CD's

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How Windows 10 Changed Setting Default Programs
From the Ask Leo Newsletter
https://askleo.com

Windows 10 changed the mechanism used to modify the default program for certain operations, forcing you to make the choice explicitly.

In order to thwart poorly-behaved programs, Windows 10 made a relatively major change to the way default programs are set. The change can be a little startling if you're not prepared for it.

So, let's prepare.

What's a default program?

A default program is the program that Windows associates with a specific type of file or a specific action.

If you're not using your web browser and you request a web page – say by clicking a link in a PDF document – Windows knows which web browser to use, even if you have more than one installed. It's this specific browser that's considered your "default". In my case, I have several browsers installed, but Google Chrome is my default browser.
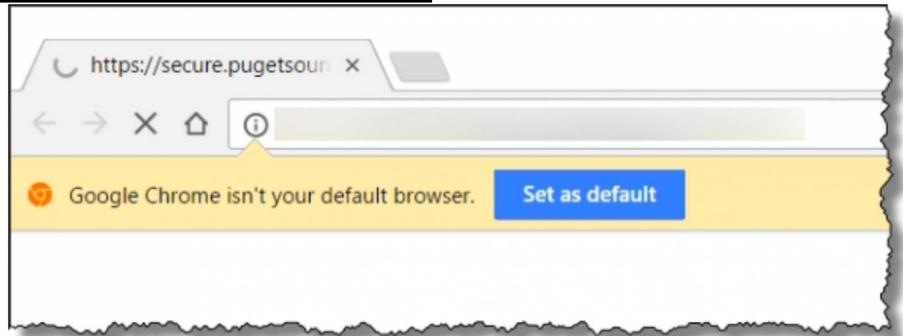
Other examples include the default mail program used when you click on a link to send email, or the default program to open a document of a specific type, such as using Microsoft Word to open ".docx" files, instead of some other program.

The problem: malicious behavior

Windows includes a way for programs to check the current default for a specific operation, as well as a way to set the default. You've probably run into this when running a second internet browser and having it tell you that it's not currently the default, would you like to make it so?

With a click, you can change your default browser – or you can ignore the message, and nothing will be changed.

The problem? Overly-aggressive programs can change your defaults without asking. Particularly when installing software, PUPs and downright malicious software can change things such that the next time you open a web page or a document, or click on a link to send mail, their software runs instead of your previously-configured default.

The change

Programs can no longer make direct changes to default associations.

Instead, any attempt to do so is treated as if it were a request, and the Control Panel Settings App is run for you to make the change yourself.

For example, if you click the "Set as default" button presented by Google

Chrome to make it your default browser, rather than immediately making the change, as in the past, you'll be presented with the Settings App.

If you really want to make the change, click on the current default, and then choose from a list of alternatives.

If the "request" originated from elsewhere – perhaps some less-than-honest software being installed – you can simply close the settings app, and no change will be made.
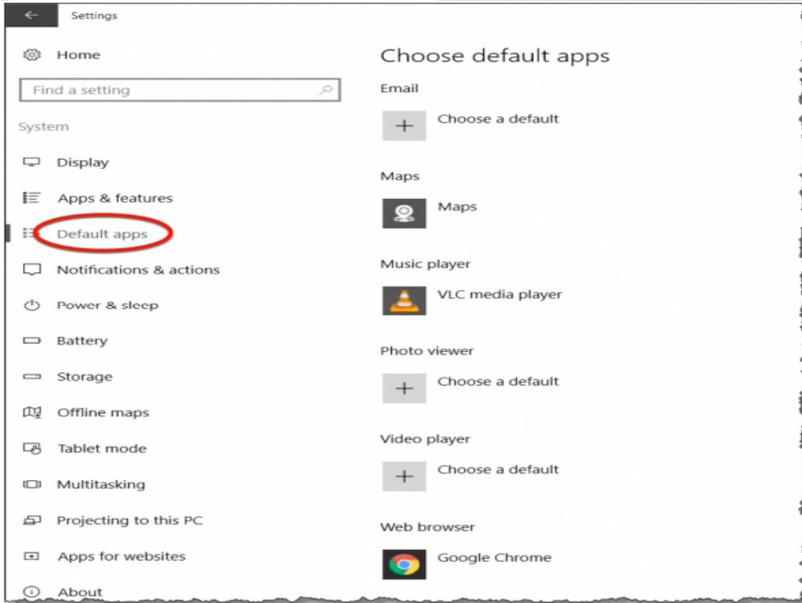
In either case, you've been explicitly alerted to the attempted change.

The shortcut

My take-away is this: if we're going to be taken to the settings app all the time anyway, why not just start there if we really do want to change something?

For example, I would fire up the Settings App, and then under
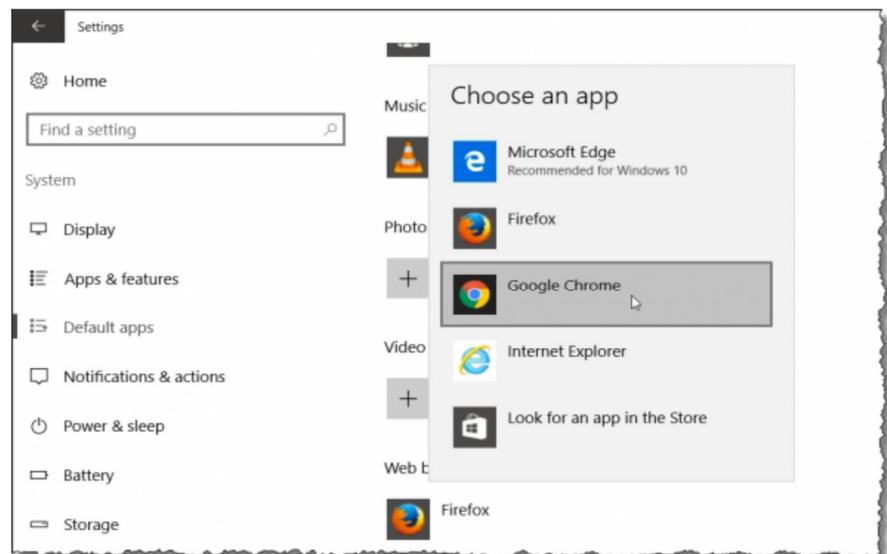
System, **Default apps**, make any or all the changes I might want to.

It's not something you need to do often, but rather than bouncing back and forth between the running application and the settings app, it feels a little less confusing to just start in Settings and proactively make the change.

Either way, you're going to end up in the Settings app.

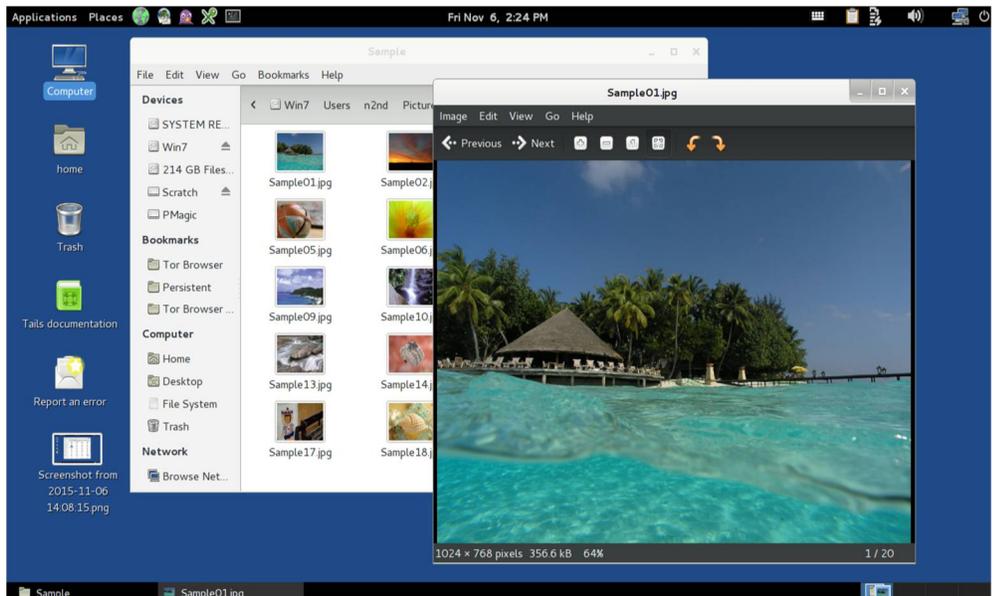*This article is republished, with permission, from the Ask Leo! Newsletter.*

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Internet Security
by Dick Maybach, Member, Brookdale Computer Users' Group, NJ
www.bcug.com   n2nd@att.net

A personal computer is secure until you connect it to the Internet, which is why the title of this article isn't "Computer Security;" however, without communications, a PC loses much of its value. Yours is almost certainly connected, but you can take steps that greatly reduce the risks. First recognize that the greater risk is not to your computer but to the personal information it holds. We'll consider two types of defense, preventing attacks and recovering from any that do occur.

The most important step you can take is to keep your operating system and your applications up to date. This can be automatic for your operating system, although I prefer to have the vendor tell me when updates are available and decide for myself whether to install them. You will probably have to check each application separately, but this is surely worth the trouble. While

you're in a housecleaning mindset, remove all those applications you no longer use, as each one represents a potential vulnerability. Until you've completed this, updating your anti-virus software is wasted effort.

In particular, if you're still using Windows XP, disconnect that PC from the Internet now, and never reconnect it while XP is running. If you must check your e-mail or your bank balance, use a secure operating system, such as Tails, http://tails.boum.org/, on a live DVD or (better) on a flash drive. Tails includes a nice suite of applications, including an Internet browser, an e-mail client, an office suite, graphics designer software, media players, a screen reader for the visually impaired, and a password manager. While using Tails you can't run any XP software, but you can read and write files on your XP disk. Tails is Linux, but as the screen-shot below shows, its user interface is similar to XP's, and you should feel comfortable using it. (In the shot, Tails has opened an image on the Windows 7 disk of the netbook on which it's running.) Furthermore, since Tails resides on a live medium, you can safely use it from almost any PC, regardless of how insecure it might be. Tails is designed for high security, and it's worth considering for such tasks as Internet banking, even if your present operating system is up to date.

Once your software is updated, you should secure your Internet connection with an effective firewall, which monitors your communication stream and blocks malicious traffic. At the least,

install a software firewall on your PC, which many anti-virus suites contain, but a hardware one is more effective. Most broadband modems that include routers also have firewalls, but often ISPs don't keep these updated, with the result that you may prefer to install an Ethernet router that contains a firewall with the latest firmware available from the vendor. Keeping your router and firewall software updated is as important as for your operating system and applications. If your router includes Wi-Fi, be sure you have enabled WPA2 encryption and changed both the Wi-Fi and the administrator passwords. Otherwise, passersby and your neighbors have free access to your computers and your Internet connection.

Next address the least secure component in your system, yourself. Establish a process to generate secure passwords and store them securely and use it everywhere, and never use the same password for different places. A good application for this is KeePassX, http://www.keepassx.org/, which both generates secure passwords and stores them in an encrypted file. You have no doubt heard that you should never use as a password anything that can be linked to you, such as you mother's maiden name, your college, or a pet's name. Yet your bank insists on recording your answers to "security questions" that have these very things as answers, so that they can be used in case you lose your password. If you follow this irresponsible advice, an intruder looking at your Facebook page can probably find the answers needed to compromise your account. The solution is to use secure "answers" to these silly questions. For example the name of your high school could be x9$Aw*_35{py. You'll of course have to store such obscure answers in your password program.

From my experience, most malware is installed on computers by users tricked by unscrupulous Internet sites. Be very careful when downloading software, as many sites include unwanted extras with the program you want. When making a search, I often find that the official source of an application is far down the list returned, and that the top choices often try to masquerade as the official source.

Windows users have to be especially careful, both because Windows is vulnerable to malware and because being the most popular operating system makes it the most attractive target.

E-mail is another risk. The only safe way to deal with a message from someone you don't know is to delete it immediately. Don't open any attachments and don't follow any links. This is good advice even if you think you know the sender, as e-mail addresses are easily forged. Unless you are expecting it, treat any e-mail with an attachment or a link as toxic. This is especially true of forwarded messages, since people in the habit of doing this seldom have the expertise to check them for hazards. Be especially careful of official looking e-mail claiming to be from your bank, the government, Microsoft, or similar entities and demanding immediate attention to avoid serious consequences. These folks seldom use e-mail to sound alarms. If you are concerned, contact them using the phone number or e-mail address you obtained directly from them, not the one in the e-mail.

A common risk is euphemistically known as "social engineering" or "phishing," but is just swindling using techniques that have been around for thousands of years. You can often recognize these because they are one of the following:

- an unexpected email with a link or an attachment,

- a request that you forward emails, attachments, or links to others,

- a promise too good to be true,

- an email that isn't addressed to you by name,

- a sender who isn't specified, isn't someone you know, or doesn't match the "from" address,

- one with spelling or grammar errors,

- one with a link that doesn't match

where the email says the link will take you, or an attachment with an incorrect or suspicious filename or a suspicious file extension,

- one with a link or attachment to view an unexpected e-card or track an unknown package, or

- one that includes links to pictures or videos from people you don't know.

Other common techniques include e-mails or phone calls asking for sensitive information or asking that you perform some task, such as the following:

- a request for your name, account information, date of birth, Social Security number, address, and the like,

- a request that you click on a link or open a file to resolve a problem with your account or to repair a problem with your computer,

- a security alert in an email, pop-ups, or a Facebook notice warning that your computer is at risk of being infected, or

- someone (probably an acquaintance) in another country needing assistance

- accessing a large sum of money, or stuck without any money,

- an IRS agent claiming that you owe taxes and must pay immediately.

Any time you are using the Internet, you should be as cautious as if you were on the street in a foreign country, because you are. It is easy to be lulled into a false sense of security because you are physically sitting in the familiarity of you own home.

You may be surprised that this far into the article, I haven't mentioned anti-virus programs. That's because prevention is far more effective than correction. Relying on an anti-virus software as your only defense is like relying only on surgery and drugs to maintain your health, where a good diet,

exercise, and sensible personal habits are more effective. However, as with your health, even with good preventive measures, your computer can be compromised, and a common cure for Windows malware is a good anti-virus program. Just keep in mind that these aren't cure-alls, because they can only detect, and often but not always remove, that malware they know about. They can't prevent problems resulting from unpatched software or careless users. The only sure cure is a good backup regimen, which will allow you to recover not only from malware infection, but also hardware and software failure, and user mistakes. There are many antimalware programs from which to choose, ranging in cost from free upward, and an Internet search will show good reviews of these. Although they're

not well rated, I use only the native Windows firewall and Microsoft Security Essentials. I feel that my preventive measures are effective, and I have frequent backups for recovery although I've seldom needed to resort to them. Although you should know that I usually do my Internet browsing from Linux, using Firefox with several protection add-ons enabled.

By making preparations and staying alert you can enjoy the Internet with inimal risk, and if you are attacked, you can recover with little or no loss.

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CEA Innovate!
by George Harding, Tucson Computer Society, AZ
www.aztcs.org   georgehardingbd@eartlink.net

I attended a program put on by CEA, the parent organization that produces the Consumer Electronics Show, presented in Las Vegas .

The program included a session called Technology Trends to Watch in 2016. It covered some of the hottest subjects today: 3-D printing, the Internet of Things (IoT), Big Data Analytics, Digital Health and Entertainment. **[Ed. Note: How much of this technology have you seen in 2016?]**

The panel on 3-D printing stated that the technology for home use is not mature and someone trying to use the reasonably priced models available today will have difficulty using them to do anything significant. The business versions, however, are very useful. The latest James Bond movie blew up a golden Aston Martin. It was created from a 3-D printer! It was actually a miniature, but was, nevertheless, an accurate replica of the car. The panel anticipated high growth in this product area over the next few years, as more uses are found for creative products.

The Internet of Things refers to the universe of applications which connect devices to the Internet resources without human interaction. There are many

examples of this already in place: refrigerators advising you of the need to replace food; the many home situations that can be controlled by remote devices like smart phones; wearable technology to monitor and measure your health quality; GPS mapping in automobiles; self-driving cars. The current state of IoT has just begun and will expand dramatically in the future, according to the panel.

Big Data Analytics refers to the collection of usage data from you and others, in order to analyze and predict actions. This may be to identify the products you want more efficiently, to broaden product categories to better satisfy customers and increase sales and profits. Whether you know it or not, you are surrounded by Big Data collection and analysis. Every time you use a credit card, the data associated with the purchase goes to combine with other data to better serve our needs and the needs of business. An associated issue is that of privacy. There is as yet no consensus about whether Big Data is good or bad, whether it should be allowed or controlled in some way.

Digital Health is also known as Wearable Tech. This is a fast developing field, with quite a large number of products already on the market. The continued development will be in making products do more and do it better. It may go from the ability to track and measure health and fitness to actual diagnosis of disease.

Entertainment is big now, of course, but it shows no signs of slowing down. The personal game devices and the online gaming continue their rapid growth. What is just starting its big growth is the streaming of movies and shows. The trend is driven by the growing reluctance to be tied to a television set for one's entertainment.

It will be very interesting to see how these areas develop and grow over the next decade.

Tech Armor case for iPhone6

There are many cases available for the new iPhones. One of the best is Tech Armor's case for iPhone6 (there's also one for the iPhone6 Plus).

The new iPhones are different in several ways: thinner, larger and with a screen that is rounded at the edges. The Tech Armor case handles all of these.

Not only is it attractive, being a steel gray color, but it is tough enough to protect your phone from bumps, drops, scratches and knocks. The case has a slightly rough surface, making it easy to grasp and hold.

The cutouts for the various buttons are well done, making it easy to press the buttons when needed.

The back is clear plastic, hard and protective of the iPhone back. The case does not come with a screen protector, but Tech Armor has that, too.

The case comes with a lifetime warranty and is reasonably priced.

About: Tech Armor case for iPhone6
Vendor: Tech Armor
www.techarmor.com
Price: $15, screen $7

Ventev
This company produces wireless infrastructure products and mobile accessories. I was provided with several of the mobile accessories to test.

Powercell 6000. This external battery can be easily charged in any wall socket. The back of the charger has two prongs which fit the wall socket and fold into the charger case. You can charge one or two mobile devices with the built-in USB sockets, one providing 1 amp output at 5 watts, the other 2 .1 amps at 10 watts . The higher capacity output can be used for a tablet, or a smart phone. In fact, you can charge two mobile devices at the same time, if needed. Price $75.

Dashport r900. This is a charger, too, but designed to be used in your car. It plugs into the power outlet in the car's dash and provides power whether or not you are near an outlet. It comes with a cable for standard USB connection and also micro-USB. Price $40.

Chargesync cables. There are several versions of this product, but each is designed to connect your mobile device to its charger or to another type of charger. What's really great about these cables is that they are flat, which means that they do not get tangled up like the round ones. They come in different colors, too. Whether you have an iPhone with 30-pin connection or one of the newer iPhone 5 or 6 cables, or even something else, you'll be able to find one of these cables for you.
Price: $15 - $25
About: Ventev
www.Ventev.com

WeMo by Belkin
We've known Belkin for many years for electronic gear, but they recently opened a new product area for exploration, capitalizing on the use of the Internet to connect disparate things, the so-called IoT (Internet of Things).

I received their WeMo LED Lighting Starter Set for review. It contains two light bulbs and a Link device, plus a set of very brief instructions.

The light bulbs are equivalent in illumination to 60 watt tungsten bulbs. We have been urged to replace tungsten bulbs with CFL (compact flash light) bulbs, with the incentive that illumination is equivalent but electrical usage is much lower. The bulbs in this kit are LED and go further in reducing electrical usage.

The bulbs look like what we're used to, but have some wizardry inside to allow connectivity through the Internet.

So, what does the kit do for you? It allows you to control two light fixtures separately and to turn each off or on at specified times, on specified days.

The procedure is to plug the Link into a wall socket. An LED comes on to tell you that it's connected. Next, you replace an existing bulb in a lamp or other fixture with one of the WeMo bulbs. You can use both bulbs in the same fixture (a chandelier, say) or in two separate fixtures. Each is controlled separately.

Next you download the WeMo app. There is one for Apple as well as Android. You next connect through the app to the WeMo network, then to your home or office network. Once this is done, the app searches for devices. When it finds the bulbs, it stores them and takes you to a page where you can set up your rules.

The rules involve On time, Off time and day(s) of the week. There is also an Away From Home setting, which is different from the standard setting. One other feature is the ability to fade in or out when the bulb turns on or off.

With the bulbs and the app, you have control over your lighting, no matter where you are, provided you have Wi-Fi, 3G or 4G service.
Belkin has other devices in the WeMo line: Light Switch, Switch/Motion, Crock Pot, Holmes Heater, Holmes Humidifier, Mr. Coffee and Holmes air Purifier.

About: WeMo
Vendor: Belkin
www.belkin.com/us
Price: $100, additional bulbs $30

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

Privacy? What Privacy?

From the Ask Leo Newsletter
https://askleo.com

Simply emailing your entire contact list with a notice that you've changed your email address is NOT the way to change your email address.

From time to time, I get emails like this one:

Hello everyone,
Just letting you know we have changed our email address to {email address removed}.
Our old address, {email address removed}, was compromised. Please delete it.
We will stop using our old address immediately.
Thanks,
{name removed}
{new email address removed}

On one hand, that works well for letting your friends and family know that your email address has changed.

On the other hand, there are serious problems with this approach. Let's review the most common ones, and what you should do instead.

Problem #1: CCing everyone

You can't see it in my example above, but the individual who sent that message included all the recipients on the CC line…

… all 68 of them.

What that means is that not only will the message be exceptionally difficult to read on some email clients (long lists of email addresses sometimes take up a majority of the space above the message itself), but the sender exposed everyone's email address to everyone else…

… whether or not they would have been okay with that.

Email addresses are funny things. While many people consider them unimportant, giving out someone's email address without permission is considered a breach of privacy.

Problem #2: using this for companies

Looking over the list of additional recipients of that message, I saw many email addresses for companies that this person had done business with, including major drugstore chains, book stores, and more.

Email Address PrivacyThe good news is that these companies aren't going to pay attention to this email; they don't have time to handle individual email address changes in this manner. The reason that's good news is that it's unlikely they will see the lengthy list of additional email addresses included on the CC line.

The bad news is that these companies aren't going to pay attention to this email. They don't have time to handle individual email address changes in this manner. You might as well have sent nothing at all.

Of course, it could still be bad news. A less-than-honest company could pay just enough attention to harvest the email addresses and start spamming all your friends. They could even spoof the From: line to make the spam messages look like they came from you.

But they won't change your email address.

Problem #3: using this for mailing lists

The reason I got this email was because this person subscribes to one or more of my mailing lists.

Once again, just sending email to the mailing list owner isn't the way to change your email address for that subscription. Particularly for large lists, that takes time list owners just don't have. In my case, I have perhaps a dozen different lists across three different types of providers – I don't even know which list your email address is on.

Several of the addresses this change request had been sent to were "do not reply" email addresses. Sending a reply to a "do not reply" email address is pretty pointless, for a hopefully obvious reason.

The solution: take the time to do it right

Yes, this takes time. That's one reason that changing an email address can be painful.

But the steps are pretty simple:

For real people, send that email, but send it only to friends, family members, and other individuals, and use BCC to hide everyone's email address from each other.

For online accounts, log in to your account at those services and change your email address yourself. If you no longer have access to an old email address associated with the account, or you've lost your password, look up your customer support options and follow those. Don't just send email to a random email address in your address book – it won't work.

For mailing lists, check the most recent email you received from that list for instructions on how to change your email address, and then change your email address yourself. If there are no instructions, find the site or service where you signed up in the first place for instructions. Only if you can't find instructions to change your email address yourself should you then look for support options relating to that mailing list to ask for help.

The bottom line is simple: tell your friends, and everywhere else, change your email address yourself.

Just sending out an email blast to everyone you can think of is simply not going to work.

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If your e-mail or mail address changes, please e-mail:
secretary@SterlingHeights ComputerClub.org

Should I Buy A Chromebook?

by John Moss, Green Valley Computer Club, AZ
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What is a Chromebook? Chromebooks are lightweight laptops that run an operating system called Chrome OS; Chromebooks are made by computer manufacturers like Dell, HP, Acer, Samsung, Toshiba, and Lenovo. These computers are designed to be used primarily while connected to the Internet, with most applications and documents living in the cloud. As a result, these laptops don't have a lot of onboard memory, but they don't have very large price tags, either.

Chromebooks are optimized for Google's apps, such as Gmail, Google Calendar and Google Drive. Getting set up on a Chromebook will be easy if you already use Google's services for your email, calendar and documents. However, if you use other popular services--such as Microsoft Outlook, AIM or Yahoo Mail--it might take some time to get adjusted to Google's OS.

If you use your computer primarily for email, Facebook, and general Internet surfing, you will get along just fine with a Chromebook. After all, that is exactly what Chromebooks were designed for.

Key Advantages of a Chromebook

So, are Chromebooks good enough for what you do with your laptop? Here are some of the features that draw people to a Chromebook as opposed to a Windows or Mac computer.

1. Price: The majority of Chromebooks cost significantly less than your average laptop. Chromebooks can be had for as little as $140 with mid-range models in the $200-250 range.

2. Speed: Chromebooks can power on and be ready to use in around eight seconds.

3. Battery: Chromebooks last a longer time on battery than most laptops.

4. Security: The Chrome OS has built-in virus and malware protection.

5. Sync: Chromebooks sync all your apps and passwords with Chrome browsers on other computers. This also means that you will never lose your work, as all of your data is saved on Google Drive (in the cloud).

6. Cloud Storage: You get 100GB of Google Drive storage free for two years with all new Chromebooks.

7. Updates: Chromebooks update themselves silently, automatically, and in the background.

8. Weight: Most Chromebooks are lightweight.

Disadvantages of a Chromebook

Like anything, Chromebooks, too, have their own shortcomings. It is necessary to be aware of some of the limitations and disadvantages of Chromebooks before making your final decision.

1. If you are married to Microsoft Office products, a Chromebook is not for you. Google encourages you to use its own free online suite of Office-like services.

2. Chromebooks, while startup is quick, can be slow while performing tasks such as working with spreadsheets or retrieving or saving files. This is due mainly to the fact that most of the processing is being done in the cloud.

3. Chromebooks typically only have 16 to 32GB of on-board storage. Limiting storage helps keep the price down because component costs are cheaper. Google wants you to store your data in the cloud, and that is why it includes 100GB of online storage for free for two years.

Chromebooks have no optical drive for CDs and DVDs

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Are Password Mangers Safe?

From the Ask Leo Newsletter
https://askleo.com

Password management utilities are great tools to not only manage your passwords, but be more secure about how you use them.

Recently I tried to use RoboForm for an account at a large financial institution, but I couldn't get it to work. In response to my inquiry, this institution said they do not permit log in using credentials that are stored on software because the security of the password could become jeopardized if my computer were hacked, invaded, etc. Is this true? Am I safer not to use tools like RoboForm?

There are people who believe that using password managers represents a single point of failure. Very technically, they are mostly correct: if someone gains access to your password manager, they have access to everything within it.

But not-so-technically, I strongly believe they are seriously misguided.

Using a password manager is, in my opinion, significantly safer than the alternatives.

Security best practices

Without using a password manager, the idea is that you:

• Have good, strong passwords (long and complex).

• Keep them nowhere but in your head (memorable).

- Use a different password on every site or service that requires one (unique).

Yes, that would be ideal.

It's also impractical for most people.

As far as I'm concerned, those requirements cannot all be met at the same time. At least one of them will be compromised.

Without a password manager

Without a password manager, most people will compromise their security in one way or another.

- They'll choose a less secure password that's easy to remember (short and/or not complex).

- They'll use the same password at multiple sites (not unique).

- They'll save the password using unsecure technology, or write the password on a note kept nearby (not memorable).

Any one of those decreases your security significantly.

I believe avoiding technology specifically designed to keep passwords secure doesn't make you safer. When you factor in human nature, it decreases overall security significantly.

With a password manager

Password managers make best practices easy – even trivial. Using a password manager allows you to:

- Generate and use secure, complex, and appropriately long passwords.

- Never need to type or remember passwords – the password manager remembers them for you.

- Use different passwords on different sites.

These are things that people don't do unless they have a tool in place to help them.

On top of that, most password managers add several features that make improved security even more convenient. They can:

- Synchronize your information across multiple computers.

- Be used on mobile devices.

- Automatically fill in not just passwords, but common web forms.

- Store arbitrary notes.

All with more security than almost all alternatives.

If you're compromised, you're compromised

It is true that if your computer is compromised, all bets are off. Malware could gain access to whatever it is you have stored on the computer.

For example, while I'm logged into LastPass, all the information is technically available to software running on my machine – good software or bad.

That's a serious concern, and not to be taken lightly.

But it's a concern that exists regardless of whether you use a password manager or not. If you somehow manage to meet the three criteria (complex, memorable, and unique) with your passwords, then all bets are still off if a keylogger captures what you enter when you log in to your bank account.

Avoiding a password manager doesn't increase your security one whit. In fact, I'd wager there's more malicious software out there waiting to see what you type in than there is targeted at stealing the contents of your password manager.

There's just no substitute for keeping your machine secure to begin with. But are password managers safe?

Used properly, yes. In fact, I'll go so far as to say that they are safer than

any practical alternative that you might think of.

Of course, there are no absolutes – that, too, is a practical reality. There is no such thing as absolute security. As I said earlier, if you fall victim to malware, all bets are off, no matter what technique you use to keep your password information.

In fact, I'll put it this way: password managers are the safest way to keep a record of your online account information, but they are no safer than:

- The master password you use to access the password manager.

- Your own ability to use your computer safely.

The last one scares most people, but my claim is that using password managers is, in fact, one way to use your computer more safely.

What I do

I keep my machine(s) secure by doing the traditional things that you hear over and over: keeping software up-to-date, running up-to-date scans, avoiding malicious websites and downloads, not falling for phishing, and so on and so on.

I use LastPass as my password manager to manage my passwords and additional security information.

I use Google Authenticator, a form of two-factor authentication, to access my LastPass vault. (There are several forms of two-factor authentication available in LastPass.) What two-factor authentication boils down to is that if I'm not logged into my LastPass account, then you can't get in even if you know my master password. To get access to my LastPass vault, you need both my master password and my cellphone.

I have LastPass automatically log out after some amount of time on any device which I'm not 100% certain won't get stolen or accessed without my permission.

Even with two-factor authentication, I keep my master password secure and complex.

I'm not going to claim it's impossible for anything to happen – that'd be a foolish claim. I am, however, very satisfied with the risks and trade-offs.

Let's face it, even doing business off-line has risks and trade-offs.

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Blu-Toque

by George Harding, Tucson Computer Society
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Bluetooth is gaining in popularity and usefulness. More and more applications use Bluetooth, a short distance communication technology. Bluetooth is not new, but the use of it to enable applications is becoming more frequent and innovative.

One such application is Blu-Toque, otherwise known as Bluetooth Beanie. Here is an innovative use of Bluetooth to play songs that are on your smartphone.

The woolen cap has a battery which is charged with an included cable. One end is a micro-USB connector, the other a USB plug. The battery compartment is accessed on the inside of the Beanie. Charging takes a while, but should last for 2 ½ days of standby and 6 hours of talk time, according to the company. The battery is lithium-ion.

Once charged, you can pair the device with your smartphone in the usual fashion. Then you can listen to your songs as you skate, hike, ski, walk or whatever, out of doors and keep your ears warm at the same time.

The module is on the outside of the beanie and has three pressure points. The middle one pressed 3 seconds turns on the device and pressed once plays or stops the music. The right-hand one skips to the next selection or, if given a long press increases volume. The left-hand one skips to

previous selection or, if given a long press decreases volume. The long press actions did not work for me, but the smartphone can be used instead for volume control.

The beanie comes with the charging cable and a User Manual which is printed in very small type, but includes brief instructions in three languages.

There are some warnings in the instruction packet.

1. Do not expose to liquids or moisture

2. Don't tamper with it

3. Pull out the Bluetooth module before washing the beanie

4, Keep it away from fire (I wonder if it is flammable!)

5. Do not store it near acids or alkaline material

I had one problem with the fit of the beanie. I guess my head must be larger than the model in the picture, because I couldn't get the beanie to fit completely over my ears. I could still hear the music, but my ears would get cold, if I were in a cold environment.

Blu-Toque by Caseco
www.caseco.ca
Price $50

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Member Classified Ads

None this month. Please send any classifieds to the WYSIWYG Publisher at his e-mail address posted on page 2 of the newsletter.

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Club Record Changes

To update your e-mail address, phone number, etc., please   e-mail the club secretary at: Secretary@SterlingHeightsComputer Club.org. Using this address will provide the smoothest and quickest venue for any changes.

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Attend The SIG

If you do not attend SIG meetings, you are missing out on important club benefits available to you. These small group get into more detail and more question and answer sessions than is possible at the main meeting.

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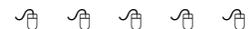
SHCC Emergency Cancellation

Sterling Heights Computer Club meets at Macomb Community College (MCC). We will meet if MCC is open and will not if MCC is closed. MCC closure is announced with other school closings on many local TV and radio stations and on their web site. All members of SHCC have an email address. One of the SHCC officers will send an email to the addresses SHCC has on file alerting members to the event cancellation. If your email is broken, call an officer; don't leave a message, call another officer if you don't talk to someone live. It is your responsibility to keep the email address you have listed with SHCC current.

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WYSIWYG WEB WATCH (www)

by Paul Baecker   webwatch@sterlingheightscomputerclub.org

This column attempts to locate sites containing valuable, amusing, and free content, with no overbearing pressure to purchase anything. Club members are encouraged to submit favorite sites (a description is optional) to the e-address noted above, for inclusion in a future WYSIWYG issue. Also check the SHCC web site ("Web Page Reviews") for previous gems.

Start learning Linux in minutes with this extensive beginner's guide.
http://www.tecmint.com/free-online-linux-learning-guide-for-beginners/

Whether you choose Linux, Windows or Mac, there are numerous free & open-source software ('FOSS') applications available that do the same thing as the expensive software you may be used to.
https://open-source-software.zeef.com

Does privacy exist anymore? Just barely.
http://www.computerworld.com/article/3135026/data-privacy/does-privacy-exist-anymore-just-barely.html

50 lesser known useful Linux commands (a 5-part article).
http://www.tecmint.com/11-lesser-known-useful-linux-commands/

Which laptop CPU is right for you? (Article does not cover AMD processors much.)
http://www.laptopmag.com/articles/cpu-comparison

Learn how to develop a logical Windows folder structure, and save yourself loads of time locating your files.
https://www.lifewire.com/organize-your-stuff-with-windows-folders-3507017

10 reasons why consumers should buy business laptops.
http://www.laptopmag.com/articles/10-reasons-why-consumers-should-buy-business-notebooks

The perfect laptop? Here's what it should have.
http://www.laptopmag.com/articles/my-perfect-laptop

Use *Reset This PC* to fix major problems in Windows 10 & Windows 8. Caution: This is a last-resort solution for serious issues.
https://www.lifewire.com/reset-this-pc-2626216

How to use the excellent and free VLC media player software to download videos from www.youtube.com . Other tools are also discussed in this article.
http://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/how-to-download-youtube-videos/

What a year on Earth really looks like. (10 min. video)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Ml4_Jv_HkE

Photographs, directions, histories, and GPS coordinates of every U.S. lighthouse and of several Canadian lighthouses.
http://www.lighthousefriends.com

16 commands to check hardware information on Linux.
http://www.binarytides.com/linux-commands-hardware-info

Over 2,500 free (and downloadable) Cheat Sheets, Revision Aids and Quick References (home/garden, language/culture, Windows/Linux, hobbies/leisure, more).
https://www.cheatography.com

20 funny terminal commands of Linux.
www.tecmint.com/20-funny-commands-of-linux-or-linux-is-fun-in-terminal

Affordable gaming PCs for 2016.
https://elitegamingcomputers.com/good-cheap-gaming-computers/

Having computer hardware problems? Here's a free tool to help detect them.
https://www.maketecheasier.com/detect-computer-hardware-problems

100 places that will give you free stuff on your birthday.
http://www.thepennyhoarder.com/100-places-will-give-free-stuff-birthday/

"PC Speed Up" is technically not a virus, but it does exhibit plenty of malicious traits, such as rootkit capabilities and browser highjacking. It often downloads with other reputable software, and can be challenging to remove. Here are some tips to getting rid of it.
https://malwaretips.com/blogs/pc-speed-up-virus/

"Typography Deconstructed" -- a comprehensive guide to the anatomy of type.   Free download.
http://www.typographydeconstructed.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/TypeDecon-Digital-Download.pdf

5 ways to back up your data. Pick one and do it, before you lose it!
https://www.lifewire.com/ways-to-back-up-your-data-2640426

Why you shouldn't buy a touch-screen laptop.
http://www.laptopmag.com/articles/dont-buy-a-touch-screen-laptop

How to download and install iOS 10 on an iPad.
http://www.laptopmag.com/articles/download-install-ios-ipad

9 ways to speed up your Windows computer.
https://www.lifewire.com/speed-up-your-computer-3506852

13 ways to make a slow laptop faster.
http://www.laptopmag.com/articles/improve-laptop-performance

How to tell if you can upgrade your laptop. (You don't have to buy memory from www.crucial.com to use their fine
memory upgrade advisor tool.)
http://www.laptopmag.com/articles/laptop-upgrade-checker

A Guide to computer ports and adapters -- why all the different cables?
http://www.laptopmag.com/articles/port-and-adapter-guide

How computers boot up. What happens before the Linux operating system displays on your monitor?   Windows
and Mac systems have similar procedures.
http://duartes.org/gustavo/blog/post/how-computers-boot-up/

Top Secret Drum Corps is a precision drum corps based in Basel, Switzerland, and performs at events around Eu-
rope and North America. Many short videos here. You may get addicted.
https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Top+Secret+Drum+Corps

"Typography Deconstructed" -- a comprehensive guide to the anatomy of type.   Free download.
http://www.typographydeconstructed.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/TypeDecon-Digital-Download.pdf

10 quick ways to speed up a slow PC running Windows 7, 8, or 10.
http://www.howtogeek.com/228570/10-quick-ways-to-speed-up-a-slow-windows-pc/

A downloadable infographic shows the opposing temperature extremes and significant temps in between.
http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20131218-absolute-zero-to-absolute-hot

Home repair and do it yourself articles.
http://www.naturalhandyman.com/iip/iip.html

Stop unwanted calls and texts from hitting your cellphone.
http://www.komando.com/columns/381405/stop-unwanted-calls-and-texts-from-hitting-your-cellphone

How to change Windows 10's taskbar color, but leave the Start menu and Action Center untouched.
http://betanews.com/2016/12/05/change-windows-10s-taskbar-color/

The Internet in Real Time. Want to know what else happens in single second online?
http://www.webpagefx.com/internet-real-time/

We're all aware that Google makes dubious use of our data. Why not switch to providers that better protect our privacy? Here's a list of 4 search engine alternatives.
https://blog.ashampoo.com/en/2016-11-29/4-great-google-alternatives

How well do you know your windows keyboard shortcuts? (Quiz)
https://www.maketecheasier.com/know-windows-keyboard-shortcuts

NOTE: Many of the links in the digital newsletter connect to the Internet if clicked. For those that do not, copy and past the link into your Internet browser.

World Wide Web Column on the Club Web Site

Check out the WebPageReviews section on the club's web site. You can see past web sites reviewed in this column on our club web page. They are arranged into various key word categories to help locate a specific site.