



# THE WYSIWYG



\$3.00

April 2017

Volume 29, Issue 4

**STERLING HEIGHTS COMPUTER CLUB**

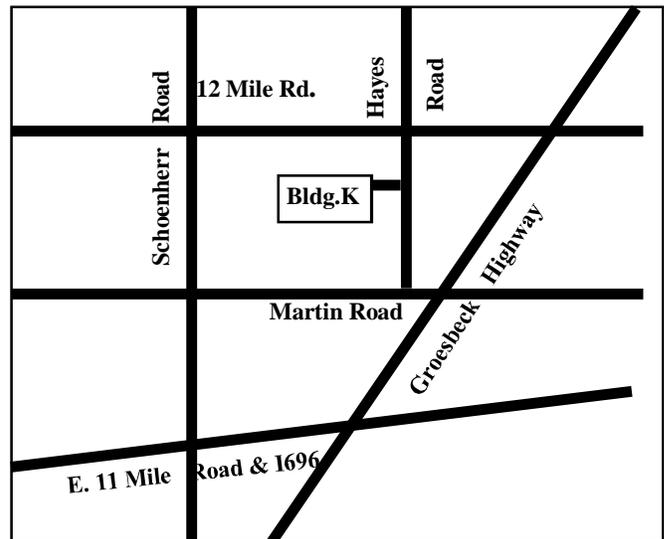
PO Box 385

Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0385

**MAIN MEETING: TUESDAY APRIL 4**

**6:30 PM**

**Macomb Community College  
South Campus  
14500 E 12 Mile Road, Warren  
John Lewis Community Center  
(Building K)**



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**This Month's Main Meeting Topic:**

**“Identity Theft” presented by Jaime Martinez from the Macomb County Sheriff Department**

**No PC SIG this month.**

See the ‘SIG Notices’ section on Page 3 for recent news about club SIGs.

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

**Four Month Meeting Schedule:**

**APRIL 2017**

- 4 - SHCC- "Identity Theft" presented by Jaime Martinez from the Macomb County Sheriff Department
- 5 - COMP meeting
- 9 - SEMCO meeting

**JUNE 2017**

- 6 - SHCC—Main Meeting
- 7 - COMP meeting
- 11- SEMCO meeting

**MAY 2017**

- 2 - SHCC—Main Meeting
- 3 - COMP meeting
- 14- SEMCO meeting

**THE CLUB DOES NOT MEET IN JULY AND AUGUST**

**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:**

Paul Baecker	586-286-2314	webwatch@sterlingheightscomputerclub.org
Mike Bader	586-447-6683	mbbader@flash.net
Bernie DeFazio	586-864-6558	berniedel@wowway.com
Rick Kucejko	248-879-6180	rick@kucejko.com
Patrick Little	586-264-1497	pblittle@wideopenwest.com
Rick Schummer	586-254-2530	rick@rickschummer.com
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-

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## The President's Pen

by Don VanSyckel

None this month. Don is still recovering from his past mishap. Maybe next month ...



## Can I Still Use My Vista Computer After The April 2017 Support Cut-Off Date?

by SHCC member Paul Baecker

Microsoft will end support for their Windows Vista operating system on April 11, 2017. This means that Vista computers will continue to function, but will no longer receive any MS support, including system and security updates.

Nothing at all.

Reasons for continuing to use Vista might include hardware/software compatibility, need to use older software, inability to run later Windows releases on current hardware, even nostalgia. Alternatives to Vista could be a still-supported Windows version, or an alternate operating system, such as Linux.

Risks and vulnerabilities already exist, and will only increase, with continued use of Vista (as with the earlier demise of MS support for XP in 2014).

Here are just a few things that you can do to protect yourself without future MS Vista support:

- Stop using Internet Explorer and switch to a still-supported web browser. However, Chrome has ended support for Vista, and Fire-

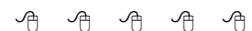
fox will end Vista support in Sept. 2017.

- Switch from any MS security tools to trusty (and often free) third-party products, such as Avast, Bitdefender, or AVG anti-virus and Zone Alarm firewall tools.
- Use a Standard User account for daily usage (not the Admin account), and set User Account Control to 'high'.
- Limit Internet usage on the computer until you have switched to a more secure operating system. Avoid, if possible, any activities such as on-line banking and other sensitive communications.
- External devices can be sources of infection. Limit connecting hard disks and flash drives to the Vista computer.
- Remove applications and utilities that are no longer supported for Vista, such as QuickTime and Adobe Reader. Also disable/remove any extensions, such as

Flash Player, which are no longer supported for Vista.

- Allow all MS updates to be applied to the computer before the April support cut-off date, scan the computer for virus and spyware infections, defrag the hard drive, and then create a restore point once the computer is cleaned up. At this point, also consider creating a full system backup image, in case the device encounters system or security issues which cannot be corrected without restoring that image. (Suggested tool: "Macrium Reflect Free")
- If hardware specs allow, consider replacing Vista with a Linux distro, or installing a Linux distro alongside of the Vista OS if there is sufficient hard drive space. Use the Linux installation for online activities, and still have access to MS-only applications on the Vista side.

Users can stick with Windows Vista even though security updates are not provided anymore. But this leaves serious security vulnerabilities unpatched which may increase the chance of being attacked successfully. Use caution and common sense.



## Door Prizes

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

**Gail Minnick** won DVD-R's

**Mike Galat** won a flashlight

**Dyan Converse** won a flashlight

**Paul Cozort** won a screwdriver

**Jim Waldrop** won a tape measure

**Ralph Osinski** won a video card

**Louise Manning** won Print Shop software

**Bernard DeFazio** won a network cable



## SIG NOTICES

**Jack Vander-Shrier will no longer host the Windows SIG meetings. It has been a long running SIG, and we thank Jack for his commitment to running the SIG. The club is looking for someone else to host it in the future. If no one offers, then the SIG will cease for now.**

A few members have indicated interest in resuming the Novice SIG meetings at the Clinton-Macomb main library, as we did a few years ago. Paul Baecker has offered to host them again, but has indicated that he needs some attendance commitments (half a dozen attendees at each meeting) to do so. All members who have interest in resuming the Novice SIG should email their interest to Paul Baecker, at [shccmbr@wowway.com](mailto:shccmbr@wowway.com). The Novice SIG meetings would be held on a Tuesday evening (pending room availability) once each month or every other month.

## Privacy Begins With The Operating System

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

**P**rivacy is a complex and far reaching topic. One of the most basic and often overlooked players: the operating system on your device.

With the release of Windows 10, Microsoft took a lot of heat for particularly permissive default privacy settings, as well as being unclear about exactly what information is sent back to Microsoft, and under what conditions.

While they've addressed some of those issues in the months since, it all serves to highlight an important concept that many people all too readily overlook: the operating system on your machine has a tremendous capability to protect – or violate – your privacy.

Do you trust it?

### The OS sees all and knows all

The operating system on your computer is the interface between all of your software and hardware and the rest of the world.

When an application wants to read from the disk, it does so via the operating system. If an application wants to communicate on the network or Internet, it uses the operating system. Even when an application just wants to display something to ask you a question, it's the operating system that displays the message and collects your response.

This puts the operating system in a unique position to see everything you do, because it's instrumental in making anything you do happen at all.

It's something we rarely think about, at least until things like the furor over Windows 10. Then things change, a little or a lot; but in the long run, the issue blows over, because we need to get on with our work. The fundamental power of the operating system, and that it's in such a unique position to examine what we do, is something that fades to the background again.



### It's not just Windows

I use the Windows 10 release as an example, because it made a lot of news at the time, and because so many people use Microsoft Windows.

But before you start pointing fingers, it's critical to realize that *every operating system* has this level of access to what you're doing. Be it Mac OS, iOS, Linux, Android, or something else completely, by the nature of what they do, all operating systems are in position to examine, record, and report back anything they care to.

It's not that they do; it's that they *can*. It's not something malicious or even surprising. A fundamental side effect of giving an OS the power to do its job also gives it the power to examine what's going on.

How do you know it's not sharing that information with others? Well, as an average computer user, you really can't.

It all boils down to trust.

### If you don't trust it, why are you using it?

One of the more frustrating aspects of my job is hearing people rail against some large entity like Microsoft, Apple, or Google, all the while using the software and/or services provided by – you guessed it – Microsoft, Apple, or Google.

It might sound a little brutal, but the bottom line is simple: if you really don't trust Microsoft Windows, for example, then don't use it. That could be as extreme as never, ever using it, or it could be more strategic, choosing to avoid it for certain types of activities you consider particularly sensitive.

Either way, "fixing" the operating system is not an option, so the only true options you have are:

- Live with it
- Avoid it for specific areas of concern
- Avoid it completely

And again, while Microsoft Windows is my example, these statements apply equally to *any* software vendor whose products you choose to use.

### Alternatives to consider

Whenever we talk about alternatives to operating systems, we're really asking the question, "Who do you trust?" As I've said repeatedly, using *any* operating system means placing some degree of trust in a product.

When it comes to desktop and laptop PCs, this typically means either:

- Windows: you're trusting Microsoft
- Mac: you're trusting Apple
- Linux: you're trusting an army of independent developers (as well as the sponsor of the particular distribution you're using)

When it comes to tablets and mobile devices, the choices are:

- Android and Chrome OS: you're trusting Google, and to some degree Linux
- iOS: you're trusting Apple

Oh, and in almost all cases, if your device come pre-loaded with the operating system, as many do these days, you're also trusting the vendor of the device, since they can and do add things.

As I said, the question really does boil down to: of those alternatives, who do you trust?

Or, perhaps, who do you distrust the least?

### The pragmatic reality

Operating systems and the privacy implications they bring are truly much too complex for the average consumer to completely understand. We shouldn't *have* to get that deep an understanding, or we'd never have time to actually move on to whatever it is we're trying to accomplish!

In many ways, some privacy exposure is part of the cost of using today's complex systems. For any system you use, information is likely being shared "upstream" for a variety of reasons, ranging from beneficial and benign (such as information used to make the software better) to malicious and invasive (such as truly tracking what you as an individual are doing).

Unfortunately, we might also find ourselves faced with constraints – software we rely on that only runs on an OS we don't trust, or cross-platform compatibility issues with people we work with on a regular basis, for example – that might force us to rely on an OS we'd prefer to avoid.

In situations like this, it's important to understand what's possible, and take whatever steps you feel are appropriate.

As for me, I run almost all the operating systems I've mentioned here (except iOS, for no reason other than time) and honestly have few concerns. I trust that any information these operating systems transmit "home" is either inconsequential, appropriately anonymized, or appropriately protect-

ed, and serves to make the software and my experience using it better.

I also know not everyone agrees with my approach.

*This article is republished, with permission, from the [Ask Leo! Newsletter](#).*



## Tech Heck

by Greg Skalka, Under the Computer Hood User Group  
[www.uchug.org](http://www.uchug.org) [president@uchug.org](mailto:president@uchug.org)

Somewhere between tech heaven and tech hell is tech heck, where most of us that are tech users reside. No one's technology experience is always flawless and perfect, so tech heaven is not achievable in this existence (I mean, really - who has not received a spam email or had a cell call dropped?). Likewise, it is unlikely anyone is always bested by technology and gets absolutely no benefit from it, or lives a life of total misery because of technology. We all live somewhere in between, usually where technology helps us a lot of the time, but betrays us on occasion. We all have our own individual tech hecks, and where ours is in that wide spectrum can vary greatly, and even change over time.

I don't think that anyone today can live completely apart from our modern technology. Even if you forsake everything modern and retreat to the wilderness to live completely off the grid and off the land with only stone tools, you'll probably be spotted by surveillance satellites or aircraft. Then the authorities will soon arrive to find out why you are trespassing, or if you do own the land, why you have not been paying your property taxes. In a world that seems to be shrinking due to increased population and easy travel, technology serves the purpose of helping us to better get along with all the other humans here.

That does not mean that everyone has to be "all in" on the latest tech. Each person must decide for themselves what they feel comfortable dealing with and capable of understanding. No one need be forced into using Snap-

chat or smart phones or self-driving cars, but we all live in a world where these exist, and we can still benefit from their existence. I don't know how to perform laparoscopic (or minimally invasive) surgery, but I am glad the technology to perform it exists, otherwise the recent removal of my appendix might have left a big scar and required a lengthy recovery. All the latest medical devices and procedures help us to live longer and healthier lives, but as I found with my recent procedure, and as we are all finding out in our country, there is often a higher financial price to be paid for those advances.

Shunning technology can reduce the negatives of tech heck in a limited sense, but we are all sharing this planet and are affected by what everyone else does, at least to some degree. The Amish certainly don't have to worry about their buggies being set afire by an exploding Samsung Galaxy Note 7, as they shun modern conveniences like smart phones. They will, however, suffer the same unfortunate fate as the rest of us tech users if we can't prevent a climate disaster from human-induced global warming or avoid a global nuclear war. The Amish may decline modern transport and walk beside the roads, but could still fall victim to an accident caused by a cellphone-distracted automobile driver.

Technology connects us all and provides a backdrop for all we do. Television, telephones, computers and the Internet have reduced the distance between us and broken down geographic barriers, all without our having to leave our homes. We have the advantage of knowing what is happening on the other

side of the globe; we also have the disadvantage sometimes of knowing exactly what is happening on the other side of the globe. The media's emphasis on sensationalism can make it seem that all news everywhere is bad. The Internet can help spread knowledge and tolerance, but can also be used by the hateful and intolerant to spread their views. We benefit from the ability to conduct financial transactions and shop online, but suffer from identity theft, online scams and loss of privacy.

Tech heck is even creeping into the ongoing political debate, one of the main current news subjects. We have had concerns about the integrity of election results in the past due to technology. Now do we have to worry about the Russians hacking voter databases and influencing our election?

Our technology problems are not even confined to this world alone. Going into space is difficult. We have had many successes, but also a number of failures, and lost lives in the process. We were able to land men on the moon with computers not much more powerful than a pocket calculator, yet we still crash expensive, sophisticated spacecraft today. Mars appears to be particularly intolerant of our technology, as of the 55 spacecraft humans have tried to send its way, less than half have been successful missions. The crash of the European Space Agency's Schiaparelli lander is another example of Mars tech heck. The U.S. and Russia have sent the bulk of the missions to the red planet, with NASA succeeding in 19 out of 25 tries, while Russia succeeded in only three of 23. Maybe we don't have to worry so much about election hacking after all.

When it comes to new technology, it appears the young are the most eager and adept adopters. Put a smart phone in the hands of a two-year-old and they will dive right in, but the same device may be intimidating to a senior citizen. My children (in their late 20's now) are more accepting of and accomplished with some new tech than I am, while my parents (in their late 70's) would like to keep up but need some help.

My daughter is not very technical, but knows most everything about social

media, and the iPhone and iPad are her weapons of choice. My son is an engineer and has become quite accomplished at building little project boards that communicate over text or the Internet, letting him know if his mail was delivered, if a monitored item moved and how much beer is left in the keg. He uses computers all day at work, set up his own home network (with network cameras) and is kind of tethered to his smart phone. He seems quite pragmatic about technology and is not at all intimidated by it; he has no reluctance to just trying things until he gets it working. Part of his confidence I'm sure comes from growing up with all this tech stuff. When I bought network cams like his, I resorted to having him come over to help me set them up (a true indication that I'm getting old). He has no interest in a user group to help solve his tech problems; he'll just Google the problem.

My parents live 100 miles away; I wish I were closer, so that I could help them with their tech problems more often. My dad has been my idol and role model through life. It has always impressed me that he grew up in a farm house with no indoor plumbing or electricity, yet picked up tech and computers easily. He has built his own computers, but lately has had a harder time keeping up with advanced topics like networking and email. My mom has used computers for years but is slowing down a bit as well. Both have cell phones but don't text. My mom now has a smart phone, but is waiting on my nephew to come over and give her more guidance on how to use it. What is intuitive for the younger generation is not so much for the older.

I'm somewhere in between, in my own tech heck. I'm an engineer and spend my work days designing telecom hardware, but no longer have the time or inclination to build little projects like my son. My first computer was a Timex Sinclair 1000, so I knew BASIC pretty well, but by the time C programming came along I was so much into the hardware that programming fell by the wayside. I'm pretty good at networking and setting up tech stuff; I have a wide variety of printers, scanners, cameras, GPS receivers, action cams and other gad-

gets. I may succeed in conquering technology more due to being methodical and persistent than being skilled. I have lived so long in the Windows environment that I've never had much interest in the Apple world (too expensive) or in Linux (too unfamiliar and seemingly less useful). Mobile devices have never caught on with me; I own a couple of tablets that I rarely use, and I've yet to buy a smart phone (I'm paying for everyone else's data plans, so can't afford one for myself). I don't really see a point in social media like Facebook; it is hard enough keeping up with email.

I am the IT department for my extended household, responsible for keeping everything running. On the whole, things usually work as expected, but with more tech comes more opportunities for interaction problems or outright failures. My least favorite call to receive is from my wife, to tell me while I'm at work that her home PC is having problems (as if there was anything I could easily do to diagnose or fix it remotely). I sometimes wonder if in an afterlife our heaven or hell would be tailored specifically to us individually. In that case, I know my heaven would be a place where everything works and nothing ever breaks or malfunctions, while my hell would be a place where everything was perpetually broken, and Lucifer was constantly after me to fix it all.

Oh heck!

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

☺ ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

## Member Ads

**A**ds are available free to SHCC members, and are limited to computer related items for non-commercial purposes. Any ad shall be a maximum of twelve newsletter lines of text.

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## Why, Or How Do Files Become Corrupt?

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

**F**ile corruption happens most commonly when there's a hardware issue or bad sector on your hard drive. I'll look at implications and preventative steps.

How are files "corrupted" and why do they go "missing"? I had this happen recently and was told that it was not a virus that caused it: that it "just happens". Whatever! Windows had to be re-loaded.

Yes, it does "just happen".

That should make you a little nervous and perhaps motivate you to invest in that backup strategy you've been putting off.

The fact is, stuff happens. Things break. When things break, the failure can be catastrophic. Perhaps your machine won't turn on. Failures can also be much more subtle, not showing up for weeks or months, or perhaps never.

### Disk risk

This is mostly about the hard disk in your computer, but can apply to any data-storage medium. It's not uncommon for a hard disk to develop or even come with a bad sector – an area on the actual medium that is somehow damaged.

Think of a bad sector as a typo in something you're reading – but it can't be fixed.

Sometimes it's small or benign, and you can easily figure out what was intended. Other times, the typo is bad, there's no way to understand what was said. In the worst case, the typo – perhaps even a tiny one – will render some key information or plot point completely unintelligible.

### Where bad sectors come from

Bad sectors develop for a number of different reasons.

Magnetic media may come with a subtle flaw or a "thin spot" that simply wears out over time. Another com-

mon cause is motion – a disk drive getting banged around while it's in use, and the read/write mechanism perhaps ever so slightly touching the magnetic material, which should never happen, and scratching it. This is one of the reasons that the more rugged laptop drives are also somewhat slower: the mechanisms are often built more solidly with motion in mind so as to minimize this risk.

Optical media like CDs and DVDs degrade over time.

Flash memory, as used in thumbdrives and SSDs, is known to literally wear out the more it's written to.

But regardless of these and other causes, it can and does happen ... and data loss is the typical result.

### Data corruption

Corruption is nothing more than data that's supposed to be one thing erroneously getting changed to something it shouldn't be. For example, data that used to be:

The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog. might suddenly become:  
 The quick br-t?hZOE-  
 -Ca f?E??IGGq+

Now, it's one thing if the text you're reading is suddenly garbled like that, but if that's your financial data, or one of your installed programs – or even Windows itself – the results can be disastrous.

### How corruption appears

Exactly how data corruption manifests varies dramatically based on exactly what's been harmed and to what extent.

- You might never notice, because the bad sector is on some unused portion of your hard disk, or in part of a file you never or rarely use, or where the corruption is actually benign.

- In some relatively benign cases, you might get a "read error" or a "CRC error", as the operating system detects that some form of data corruption had occurred.
- You might open a document to find its content scrambled.
- In more complex document formats (Microsoft Office documents are a good example), the program might not be able to open the document, due to corruption within.
- If the corruption happens within the file that contains a computer program (usually an EXE or DLL file), the program might not run at all, might crash when you run it, or might crash at some point when you access a certain feature that uses the instructions that have been damaged.
- If the corruption happens within the file system information – perhaps the information about what files are stored on the disk – files can disappear completely.
- If the corruption happens within the files that comprise Windows itself, Windows can crash or fail to boot.

If the corruption happens within the master boot record, partition information, or other key areas of the hard disk, the entire disk may suddenly appear unformatted or empty.

As you can see, problems resulting from even a single bad sector's worth of data corruption can range from being completely benign to a total disaster.

The good news in all this is that it's not something that happens every day. Hard drives often run for years without a problem. But in a sense, it's a game of Russian Roulette: you could wake up one morning with a dead hard drive. It quite literally has happened to me.

### Prevention

So, how do you prevent corruption?  
 Easy: *you can't.*

You cannot *prevent* a hard drive from developing bad sectors or failing. It happens. The best you can do is prepare.

What you *can* prevent is data loss. The real “solution” is to know that someday, when you least expect it (and probably when it’ll be most inconvenient), *it will happen*.

The real solution is to be prepared with a complete and recent backup if your computer’s hard disk, your data,

and whatever else is stored on any media that might fail (and by that, I mean all media). That way, when – not if – failure happens, you can replace the failed component (usually the drive), restore your files, and get on with your life as if nothing major happened.

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



## Open Source Software

by Geof Goodrum, Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society  
www.patacs.org linux@patacs.org

**Blobwars: Metal Blob Solid** – v2.0.  
<https://sourceforge.net/projects/blobwars/>.

Free GNU General Public License source code and executables for Microsoft® Windows®, FreeBSD®, Apple® macOS™ and GNU/Linux® by Hans de Goede, Guus Slieden, Stephen Sweeney and Parallel Realities. Metal Blob Solid is a 2D platform game, the first in the Blobwars series. You take on the role of a fearless Blob agent, Bob, whose mission is to infiltrate various enemy bases and rescue as many MIAs as possible, while battling many vicious aliens.

Features include:

- Over 25 missions
- More than 8 hours gameplay!
- 4 difficulty settings
- Large levels with different environments, such as water, lava, ice and slime
- Use a variety of different weaponry, including machine guns and laser cannons
- Multiple objectives
- Great music from DJ Sjors, Ambick, SinQ and LizardKing

- Jetpack and Aqua Lung items to find
- Optional blood and gore
- Boss Battles!
- Joypad support with configurable controls
- Configurable keyboard support
- Level replay value - Return to previous levels to rescue all MI

As and optional objectives

Screenshots at :

<https://sourceforge.net/projects/blobwars/>

**GraphicsMagick** – v1.3.25. <http://www.graphicsmagick.org/>.

Free MIT and other Open Source license source code and executables for Microsoft® Windows®, FreeBSD®, Apple® macOS™ and GNU/Linux® by Bob Friesenhahn, Glenn Randers-Pehrson and the GraphicsMagick Group. GraphicsMagick is the Swiss Army knife of image processing. It provides a robust and efficient collection of tools and libraries that support reading, writing, and manipulating an image in over 88 major formats including DPX, GIF, JPEG, JPEG-2000, PNG, PDF, PNM, and TIFF.

GraphicsMagick supports huge images and has been tested with gigapixel-

size images. GraphicsMagick can create new images on the fly, making it suitable for building dynamic Web applications. GraphicsMagick may be used to resize, rotate, sharpen, color reduce, or add special effects to an image and save the result in the same or different image format. Image processing operations are available from the command line, as well as through C, C++, Lua, Perl, PHP, Python, Tcl, Ruby, Windows .NET, or Windows COM programming interfaces.

Features include:

- Convert an image from one format to another (e.g. TIFF to JPEG)
- Resize, rotate, sharpen, color reduce, or add special effects to an image
- Create a montage of image thumbnails
- Create a transparent image suitable for use on the Web
- Compare two images
- Turn a group of images into a GIF animation sequence
- Create a composite image by combining several separate images
- Draw shapes or text on an image
- Decorate an image with a border or frame
- Describe the format and characteristics of an image

Screenshot at:

<https://a.fsdn.com/con/app/proj/graphicsmagick/screenshots/gm-snap.jpg>

**Kernel Source** – v4.8.5.  
<http://www.kernel.org/>.

Free GNU General Public License source code for all platforms by the Linux community.

**Klavaro Touch Typing Tutor** – v3.02. <http://klavaro.sourceforge.net/>. Free GNU General Public License source code for Microsoft® Windows®, FreeBSD®, Apple® macOS™ and GNU/Linux® by Felipe Castro (executables for older versions are available from third-party sources). Klavaro is a touch typing tutor that supports customizable keyboard layouts.

Features include:

- Internationalization: ar bg bn ca cs da de el en\_GB eo es eu fi fr gl hu hr it kk ky nb nl pa pl pt\_BR ru sl sv te uk ur vi wo zh\_CN (if you want to translate to another language, please read the instructions for translation)
- Ready to use keyboard layouts: “qwerty” (AR; BG; BG\_2; BR; BR\_abnt2; CZ; EL; EO; ES; EU; HE; IN; IT; JP; KK; NB; PT; SE; TR; UK; UR\_crlp; UR\_nla; US)
- Dvorak (BG; BR; DE\_neo2; EO; FR; FR\_bépo; TR; UK; US; US\_BR; US\_ES; US\_SE) “qwertz” (CZ; DE; HR; HU; SL) “azerty” (FR; FR\_ibook; BE) “jtsuken” (RU; RU\_typewriter; UA) Colemak (US) AlphaGrip5 (US)
- Keyboard layout editor: configure the key positions and save the result in a simple text file. If your keyboard isn’t shown above, you can create it.
- Basic course: a basic type of course is available for memorizing the keys positions on the keyboard. It is supposed to be independent from keyboard layout, by the generation of random character sequences to be followed by the student.
- Adaptability exercises: these exercises use all the keys randomly, so that you can practice using all the keyboard. It’s named adaptability exercise because it develops the capacity to adapt your typing skills to any kind of strange words that may appear in some texts.

- Velocity exercises: one achieves velocity on typing when the environment is well known, or, when the words come from one’s own language. That’s why these exercises focus on velocity. And even if your language isn’t supported by the application, you still can indicate texts in any language to include the words contained there.

- Fluidness exercises: with these exercises, one works typing complete paragraphs, with good sense sentences. Typing errors aren’t accepted: the user must correct them with the backspace key before being allowed to go on. Special attention is given to the typing rhythm, which must be as uniform as possible. Just like the velocity exercises, this one can load any text files, independent of language.

- Progress charts: at the accomplishment of each exercise, some characteristics of your performance are saved and can be shown graphically. Thus, you can easily observe your learning progress (or regress).

- Including other texts: facilities to import text and use them with the advanced modules (velocity / fluidness). You can launch a dialog to select a local file of the system; you can paste text already copied to the clipboard; and more, you can select, drag and drop text at the entry box in the bottom of the tutor window. These two last facilities work, for example, with text selected in your browser, from any preferred page of yours.

- Semi-online contest: for the last training module (fluidness), there is a scoring scheme to rank users accordingly to their touch typing skills. The ranking is done only locally, for users in a shared machine, or it may be enabled to send the local data to a web server, where they will be processed and a global ranking will be publicly available. Then the program

would be running as an “online” game.

- Clean graphical interface: when learning to type correctly, one must not get the attention off the exercises. So, it isn’t recommended to have dozens of gauges measuring velocity, errors, time, etc; nor a virtual keyboard floating in front of the student: he/she must memorize the key positions by the tact, not visually. Hence, Klavaro’s interface started simple and will remain like that for all of its lifetime.

Screenshots at:

<https://sourceforge.net/projects/klavaro/>

**NAS4Free** – v10.3.0.3-2964.

<http://www.nas4free.org/>.

Free NAS4Free (BSD) License bootable ISO image by Daisuke Aoyama, Michael Zoon, Michael Schneider et al. The NAS4Free operating system can be installed on virtually any hardware platform to share computer data storage over a computer network (i.e., turn an old PC into a secure network file server). ‘NAS’ as in “Network-Attached Storage” and ‘4Free’ as in “Free and open source”, NAS4Free is the simplest and fastest way to create a centralized and easily-accessible server for all kinds of data!

NAS4Free supports sharing across Windows, Apple, and UNIX-like systems. It includes ZFS, Software RAID (0,1,5), disk encryption, S.M.A.R.T / email reports, etc. with following protocols/services: CIFS/SMB (i.e., Windows network file system), Samba AD, FTP, NFS v4, TFTP, AFP, RSYNC, Unison, iSCSI, UPnP, Bittorrent, SyncThing, VirtualBox and noVNC, Bridge, CARP (Common Address Redundancy Protocol) and HAST (Highly Available Storage).

This can be managed by an easily configurable web interface.

Screenshots at:

<http://www.nas4free.org/index.php?id=4>

**Sweet Home 3D** – v5.2. <http://www.sweethome3d.com/>. Free GNU General Public License source code and executables for Microsoft® Win-

dows®, Apple® macOS™ and GNU/Linux® by Emmanuel Puybaret and eTeks. Sweet Home 3D is an interior design application that helps you to quickly draw the floor plan of your house, arrange furniture on it, and visit the results in 3D.

Features include:

- Draw walls and rooms upon the image of an existing plan, on one or more levels
- Drag and drop doors, windows and furniture from a catalog onto the plan
- Update colors, texture, size and orientation of furniture, walls, floors and ceilings

- View all changes simultaneously in the 3D view from any view point
- Create photorealistic images and videos with various light sources
- Import additional 3D models and export the plan in various standard formats

Screenshots at:

<http://www.sweethome3d.com/gallery.jsp>

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## Are You A Smart Shopper?

by Bob Rankin, AskBobRankin

[www.askbobrankin.com](http://www.askbobrankin.com)    [bob@rankin.org](mailto:bob@rankin.org)

Shopping online for Christmas, Hanukkah, or any time of year, is easy and convenient. When you use the right tools, you can also save a lot of cash. Here are some money-saving tips for the smart online shopper...

Wish list? Check. Credit card? Check. Okay, before you head off to your favorite online store, are you sure you've found the best possible price for the item you're planning to buy? Have you researched other brands or similar items?

Have you searched for coupons or other discount offers? Are you getting free shipping whenever possible? And are you taking advantage of the power of group buying, and the wisdom of the crowd?

Use my ten simple shopping tips to make sure you're getting the best deal when you shop online...

### **TIP #1: Look for rebates and rewards BEFORE you shop.**

Loyalty programs such as Ebates offer shoppers rebates and other incentives to purchase from stores where they already shop. Ebates offers up to 25% in cash

rebates when you shop online at popular stores like Amazon, Best Buy, JCPenney, Kohls, Macy's, Old Navy, Target and 1000 more. Even better, Ebates will pay you \$75 when you refer 3 friends via their Tell-A-Friend promotion.

### **TIP #2: Use price-comparison sites to find the best deals.**

**Google Shopping** is a good place to start. Just type in what you're seeking, such as "42-inch HDTV" or "cordless drills" and up pops an assortment of vendors. The initial results are displayed sorted by "relevancy" but I recommend that you re-sort them by price from low to high.

**Bizrate.com** is another good tool. It can display prices including shipping to your Zip code, or even limit your search to items that ship for free.

**Pricegrabber.com** lets you save interesting items as you shop for comparison to others.

**Pricewatch.com** was one of the first price comparison sites, specializing in computers and electronics since 1995. They now list non-tech items as well.

### **TIP #3: Before you buy, look for coupons that can reduce your final price.**

RetailMeNot has thousands of digital coupons and discount codes from many well-known and obscure online sellers. A little-known trick is to use Google's search function to find coupon codes buried on blog pages. Just use "coupon" and the name of the brand, merchant, or product that you are seeking as your search term.

### **TIP #4: An Amazon Prime membership may save you money.**

If you use Amazon.com frequently, that \$99 flat fee gets you unlimited free, 2-day shipping on products delivered by Amazon. If you haven't been to Amazon lately, it's no longer just a bookstore. Amazon also offers music, movies, electronics, home & garden, health & beauty, toys, clothing shoes & jewelry, sporting and outdoor goods -- just to name a few categories. Also, take note of the prices offered by Amazon affiliates on both new and used items; they are sometimes lower than Amazon's price. Amazon is also a great shopping research tool. After searching for the item (or type of item) you're after, Amazon will help you compare brands, prices, and retailers. You can also see what items and accessories other customers bought.

### **TIP #5: Patience Pays Off.**

Speaking of Amazon, here's a cool tip to save money when shopping online: CamelCamelCamel is an Amazon price tracking, research, and alert service that helps users get the best deals on the e-commerce giant. If you don't need to buy right away, this tool can alert you to price drops for items you're watching.

### **TIP #6: Don't forget eBay.**

Look at eBay, especially if the item you seek is a staple rather than a fad of the moment. Because it's an auction site, the price you pay items (both new and used) tend to be very reasonable. And if you prefer to skip the drama of a bidding war, look for an item with a "Buy it Now" option. Oh, and here are two eBay Ninja tricks that'll save you money every time. First, start your search at the eBay home page. When you get the

list of matching items, refine your search by checking the "Completed listings" box under the "Show Only" header This will tell you what the item has actually sold for in recent eBay sales or auctions. And second, use BidRobot to boost your chances of winning the auction.

**TIP #7: Take advantage of group buying power.**

Group-buying services such as Groupon and LivingSocial are geared mainly towards local, face-to-face merchants. But Groupon has inspired a slew of "daily deal" offers from many online sellers, too. Subscribe to email lists to receive special limited time offers from your favorite stores.

**TIP #8: Use social networking to your advantage.**

Many online sellers want you to follow, friend or "like" them on Twitter and Facebook. If you do, you'll gain access to coupon codes and special offers. If you find you're getting too many messages from these merchants, you can unfollow or unfriend to stop the flow after you've made your purchase.

**TIP #9: Got gift cards?**

Gift cards are a great option when you don't know exactly what to get for someone on your Christmas list. My friend Aaron and his team have created GiftCard Zen, a site where you can buy gift cards at a discount. You can also sell your unwanted gift cards for cash, or check the balance of a gift card you have. GiftCard Zen handles gift cards from hundreds of popular stores. It's a win-win scenario!

**TIP #10: Skip the Warranty.**

Are you giving a mobile phone, tablet, computer or TV? Read SCAM ALERT: Mobile Device Insurance and Extended Warranties to find out why these are almost always a waste of money.

**TIP #11: Avoid Penny Auctions.**

Have you seen those commercials where people brag about how they bought a \$1200 HDTV for \$25? See

my article Penny Auctions: Scam or Legit? to see why these sites are to be avoided.

**TIP #12: The Wisdom of Others.**

It's smart to take advantage of the experience of others, especially when it comes to considering big-ticket purchases. Sites like Amazon and Epinions offer actual consumer experiences and reviews of products. Consumer Reports and PC Magazine are good places to look for professional ratings and reviews.

**BONUS TIP:**

Shop on Mobile (or fake it) Researchers at Northeastern University found that shopping online with your smartphone may yield a lower price than shopping from a desktop computer. I tried a few hotel searches myself, and found that prices were about 10% lower when I did the exact same search on my phone. So I had an idea... I wondered if changing the UserAgent on my desktop browser would fool these sites into giving me the "mobile discount." And it seems to work. I checked the price for one night at a hotel in Orlando using Chrome on desktop: \$145. After changing my UserAgent string to make my desktop browser identify as an iPad, the price showed as \$131.

**Reader's Comments:**

As well as finding the best price sometimes the online stores you use are affiliated with airlines to reward you with extra miles for purchasing through their site. For example, I use Newegg.com and Backcountry.com which I access through the American Airlines shopping site (<https://www.aadvantageeshopping.com/>).

You can earn bonus miles per dollar spent IN ADDITION to any miles earned by your credit card. I believe most of the major airlines have similar shopping sites.

Don't forget to ask if there is a Senior Discount!

YouTube is a great source of product reviews.

I always comparison shop at several

outlets and I often use Amazon Prime, because, unlike what many say, the total price with shipping is frequently lower or very little more for the free 2-day shipping and many of the places that might be a couple of bucks lower don't seem to care how long it takes them to fill your order and get it in the mail. Of course, there are exceptions and if I can afford to wait I will take advantage of those deals. I have also been taking advantage of the Honey Chrome add-on for Amazon that tells you if there is a lower price on the same item.

As I said in tip #10, smart phone insurance is almost always a waste of money. But, some homeowners/renter's insurance policies have a rider available that is cheap. I pay \$18/year (not per phone, total) which gives me \$5000 coverage on my computers and smart phones with a \$50 deductible. This is all risk coverage (lost, stolen, falls in the toilet, etc.) although they can deny coverage if it is negligence (i.e., I throw it at someone).

Inasmuch as one has to use a credit card in order to make a purchase online, I find it best to use a virtual credit card. My Visa from BankAmerica calls their virtual card "ShopSafe" with a link by that name. Enter the CVC code from the back and the spending limit and you are provided with a one-time use credit card number with which to make your purchase. My MasterCard from AT&T Universal Card has a link to get a virtual card; same principle although there is no spending limit nor CVC number. Virtual cards expire in a month or two, and nobody else can use them. Totally safe. I would probably wager that lots of other cards also offer someone similar.

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**If your e-mail or mail address changes, please e-mail: secretary@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org**

## Apple COREner

by Gary Roerig, Front Range PC Users Group (FRPCUG) Fort Collins, CO  
Collins, CO, <http://www.frpcug.org>

### Did you know . . .

Your calendar App can consume a lot of data on your iPhone/iPad, depending on your settings. Normally keeping only six-months worth of information is sufficient for most of us but your setting may be for All Events so if you have been using a calendar app for 4-5 years that can be an unnecessary data hog. Go to Settings, and scroll down to Mail, Contacts, Calendars. Tap on it and then scroll down near the bottom and look for Sync. Tap on Sync and change to one of the following: Events 2 Weeks Back, Events 1 Month Back, Events 3 Months Back, Events 6 Months Back (my preference) or All Events.

### Calls on your iPhone using Wi-Fi

Some of us live in areas where our Cellular Carrier's signal is not very strong. If that is the case, and you have a Wi-Fi Router AND your carrier offers it, you can set your phone to use Wi-Fi for calling. Go to Settings, Phone, and tap on Wi-Fi Calling and then tap Wi-Fi Calling on This Phone to ON (Green).

I have had great success with this setting but there is a caveat. Not all businesses or carriers accept a Wi-Fi call. If that happens simply go into Settings as above and reverse the setting, make your call, and reset it again. It is rare but it does happen. Also note that you can use this over free Wi-Fi such as in hotels or such places in case you have a poor signal.

### In Need of a Quick Level?

There are times you may want to quickly use a level to see if a picture frame or other such item is level. Simply get your iPhone, tap on the Compass App, then swipe to the left and a level appears. You can use in Portrait (not real helpful) or Landscape mode. Place on top of your picture frame and straighten the frame until the level shows 0 Deg and Green. Swipe right to return to

Compass mode and close as you would any App.

### Need to make a quick note of things but do not have a pen or paper handy?

Your iPhone has a built in App (often hidden in a folder called Extras) called Voice Memos. You simply tap on the App, Tap on the red Record button and speak, and tap on the red square to stop recording (remember to do so or it will keep recording in your pocket). If you want to you can Tap on Done and give your recording a quick name. You can then play the recording at a later date.

### Another App to take notes is Notes.

You can tap on the symbol for New in the lower right corner, then Tap the Microphone in the keyboard and speak. Remember to speak the punctuation, e.g. "Period" at the end of your sentence. It will return to a new line for your next sentence. When you are finished be sure to Tap on Done at the bottom of the screen. Now you can read your notes at your leisure when you get home.

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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.

**VISIT THE SHCC WEB SITE:**  
<http://www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org>

## 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.



**If your dues are paid in the month they are due, as shown on the invoice the club sends, you automatically get an extra month of membership. This policy has been in effect for many years but newer members may not be aware of this "free month" policy.**

## 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.



## WYSIWYG WEB WATCH (www)

by Paul Baecker [webwatch@sterlingheightscomputerclub.org](mailto: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.

How to free up RAM, when your PC slows down.

<http://www.wikihow.com/Free-Up-RAM>

Map shows you the delicate tracery of wind flowing over the US.

<http://hint.fm/wind/index.html>

Use your mouse to play with the text; use the keyboard to change the text.

<http://william.hoza.us/text/?t=Hello>

Deep web search engines to explore the Hidden Internet.

<http://thehackernews.com/2016/02/deep-web-search-engine.html>

Is it safe to bank on public Wi-Fi? How not to get hacked! (Includes a 3-min. video.)

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/blogs/upgrade-your-life/banking-online-not-hacked-182159934.html>

How to avoid installing junk programs when downloading free software.

<https://www.howtogeek.com/168691/how-to-avoid-installing-junk-programs-when-downloading-free-software/>

How to automatically clear private data when you close your browser.

<https://www.howtogeek.com/137681/how-to-automatically-clear-private-data-when-you-close-your-browser/>

Why is my browser storing so much private data?

<https://www.howtogeek.com/138456/htg-explains-why-is-my-browser-storing-all-this-private-data-anyway/>

Learn how to select genealogy software that's right for you and how to transfer your files from an old program to a new one. Includes software comparisons and a 60-minute video.

<https://www.americanancestors.org/education/learning-resources/read/genealogical-software-programs>

Logo evolution of 38 famous brands.

<http://www.thedailytop.com/logo-history-of-37-famous-brands/>

Windows 10: How to uninstall OneDrive.

<http://www.ghacks.net/2016/12/22/windows-10-uninstall-onedrive/>

A list of popular free software.

<http://nycgraphix.com/2016/02/03/free-software-round-up-2016/>

What Is a Solid State Drive? Should I buy one?

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/what-is-solid-state-drive/>

Disposing of a PC? Nuke the drive first. Tips and links to freeware to wipe a hard drive completely.

<http://www.techsupportalert.com/content/disposing-pc-nuke-drive-first.htm>

How to protect your privacy on public Wi-Fi networks.

<http://www.techlicious.com/tip/how-to-protect-your-privacy-on-public-wifi-networks/>

If you listen to podcasts, you may not have great organization of them. Here are 6 tips for cleaning up your podcast feeds.

<http://www.pcmag.com/article/346580/6-tips-for-cleaning-up-your-podcast-feeds>

Three handy ways to use Android's Do Not Disturb rules.

<http://www.greenbot.com/article/3103430/android/3-handy-ways-to-use-androids-do-not-disturb-rules.html>

How to initiate a System Restore when your PC won't boot into Windows.

<http://www.ricksdailytips.com/launch-system-restore-from-safe-mode/>

Article suggests that "RansomFree" is the free program that protects your PC against ransomware.

<http://www.pcworld.com/article/3150748/security/this-free-software-protects-your-pc-against-ransomware.html>

Article author infected his Windows computer with ransomware to test RansomFree's protection.

<http://www.techrepublic.com/article/i-infected-my-computer-with-ransomware-to-test-ransomfrees-protection-for-windows/>

Microsoft's Office Training Center offers short tutorial videos for their 2010, 2013, and 2016 Office products.

<https://support.office.com/en-US/article/Office-Training-Center-b8f02f81-ec85-4493-a39b-4c48e6bc4bfb>

Make your right-click menu more useful: Customize the "Send To" menu.

<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/customize-send-to-menu/>

LastPass: The smart person's guide.

<http://www.techrepublic.com/article/lastpass-the-smart-persons-guide/>

How to create a Microsoft account with or without a Microsoft e-mail address.

<http://www.digitalcitizen.life/how-create-microsoft-account-or-without-microsoft-e-mail-address>

Learn about abstract leaf watercolor pattern tools and techniques in this tutorial.

<http://www.inkstruck.com/abstract-leaf-watercolor-pattern-tutorial/>

For Google users, a dozen tips for searching the web. (Some tips work with other web browsers as well.)

<http://www.lifehack.org/492416/12-tricks-that-make-you-the-master-of-google-search>

This British Avro Lancaster B Mark VII bomber, NX611, was built in April 1945 for the war in the Far East and ended in storage without seeing service. Here you can follow a panoramic virtual tour of its interior. Navigation tools are at screen bottom.

<https://www.haraldjoergens.com/panoramas/lancaster/files/>

The ABCs of particle physics presented in a graphical format by the U.S. Dept. of Energy.

<http://www.symmetrymagazine.org/particle-physics-abc/phone/index.html>

Another list of best free portable applications for a flash drive toolkit. You never know when you'll need one of them to diagnose a computer problem.

<https://www.howtogeek.com/110549/the-best-free-portable-apps-for-your-flash-drive-toolkit/>

How many triangles can you find?

<http://idealists4ever.com/if-you-can-find-more-than-18-triangle-your-iq-is-over-120/>

How to convert any file format online with free tools.

<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/convert-file-format-online-free-tools/>

Need A Locksmith? The FTC tells you how to avoid getting ripped off by an unscrupulous locksmith.

<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0089-finding-locksmith>

Free tutorial designed for people who have little or no experience with the Linux operating system.

<http://linuxsurvival.com/linux-tutorial-introduction>

Witness the most important thing that the crew of Apollo 8 discovered in December of 1968, just as they found it. (7 minute video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dE-vOscpiNc>

Lost your key or the combination? Open the lock anyway.

<https://pickeroflocks.com/how-to-guides>

Are you being spied on via your own webcam?

<http://www.ricksdailytips.com/spying-via-webcam/>

**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.

