



# THE WYSIWYG



February 2019

Volume 31 Issue 2

**STERLING HEIGHTS COMPUTER CLUB**

PO Box 385

Sterling Heights, Michigan 48311-0385

**MAIN MEETING: TUESDAY Feb. 5**  
**7:00 PM**

(doors open at 6:30 PM)

**Baker College**  
**34950 Little Mack Ave.**  
**in Clinton Township**

Located at the southeast corner of  
 Little Mack Avenue and 15 Mile Road  
 (Enter at the main entrance on Little Mack Ave.  
 The meeting room is then straight ahead.)



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

**Meeting topic was not determined by press time.**



**GROUNDHOG DAY-FEB 2**

Guests and visitors are welcome. People can attend any SHCC meetings during two consecutive months before deciding to become a member or not. 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: \$30/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>

## 2019 SHCC Officers

<b>President</b>	<b>Don VanSyckel</b>
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Mike Bader</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>(open)</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Bernie DeFazio</b>

## Resource People

Family Tree	Rick Schummer
Firefox	Don VanSyckel
FoxPro	Rick Schummer
General Computer Questions	Jack Vander- Schrier
Hardware	(open)
MS Publisher	(open)
MS Word	Rick Schummer
Spreadsheets	Rick Schummer

## SHCC Coordinators

Associate Editor	Rick Schummer
Door prizes	Don VanSyckel
Greeter for visitors	Jim Waldrop
Newsletter Publisher/Editor	Paul Baecker
Program Coordinator	Mike Bader
Publicity	Patrick Little
Publicity	Phil Reynaud
Resource People	(open)
Welcome & check-in desk	Jim Waldrop
Web Site Admin	Don VanSyckel
Web Watch column	Paul Baecker

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

## Four Month Meeting Schedule

<b>FEBRUARY 2019</b>	<b>APRIL 2019</b>
<b>5 - SHCC Main Meeting</b>	<b>2 - SHCC Main Meeting</b>
6 - COMP meeting	10 - COMP meeting
10- SEMCO Meeting	14- SEMCO Meeting

<b>MARCH 2019</b>	<b>MAY 2019</b>
<b>5 - SHCC Main Meeting</b>	<b>7 - SHCC Main Meeting</b>
6 - COMP meeting	10 - COMP meeting
10- SEMCO Meeting	14- 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:*  
 St Clair Community College,  
 Clara E McKenzie Library-  
 Science Building, Room 201  
 323 Erie St. Port Huron, MI  
 (810) 982-1187  
 Reciprocating: Yes

**South Eastern Michigan Computer Organization (SEMCO) (new location)**  
*Time:* 2nd Sunday at 1:15PM  
*Place:* Lawrence Tech (Southfield Campus)  
 21000 W. 10 Mile Rd, Southfield  
 Wayne H. Buell Mgmt. Bldg,  
 Room M213  
 Web page:  
<http://www.semco.org>  
 Reciprocating: Yes

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

Newsletter submissions are due 10 days before the club meeting, but the earlier the better. They should be sent to : newsletter@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org

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## The President's Pen

by Don VanSyckel



Well, time moves on. I thought the club was all set in our new home at Baker College in Clinton Township, but I was wrong. In the last few weeks it has been announced by Baker that the Clinton Township campus, among others, will remain in operation through August 2020. Then the Clinton Township campus will be consolidated (with two other locations) into a new Ferndale Campus. Our room commitment goes through June of this year. Either we need to locate a new meeting place starting September 2019 or sign up and meet at Baker for one more year and locate a new meeting place starting September 2020. The officers have already begun looking around. We will dust off the suggestions that were submitted a couple years ago when we choose Baker, but new ideas are always encouraged.

Our room requirements are:

- *First-Tuesday evening availability each month*
- *Internet connectivity and room audio system*
- *Projector and screen (and a microphone, depending on room size)*
- *40 to 60 person capacity minimum*
- *Ability to reserve the room for a full year*
- *Reasonably quiet*

A member has donated a small profile desktop PC to the club to raffle Off at the March meeting. We've done this in the past and made a few dollars for the club. The raffle tickets are \$5 each. Details of the raffle and the PC's specs are listed in the "SHCC Raffle" column to the right.

Did you see the recent Word Press presentations at SHCC? They were very good and there was quite a bit of interest among club members. Mr. Eric Malcolm, the Word Press professional who did the presentations, has volunteered to mentor a group of SHCC member who are interested in learning Word Press and building their web sites. There will probably be several meetings. The location and schedule of these meetings has not been set. Once I have a list of those interested, I will attempt to accommodate everyone or at least the most possible with meeting scheduling. Likely to be at a free room in one of the area libraries in the evening; we'll see. Please let me know by the February meeting if you are interested. No charge for this, thank you Mr. Malcolm.

Last month we were pleased to have Paul Baecker of SHCC present "Amazon's Web Site From A Seller's Point Of View - part 2". Paul presented to SHCC part 1 in September, but ran into some technical difficulties that Amazon needed to resolve. Many of us have purchased items on Amazon and it was very interesting to get a behind the scenes view of the Amazon operation.

**Nominations for the vacant Secretary position were opened at the January meeting, and will be re-opened at the February meeting. Refer back to the January WYSIWYG for details of the position. We certainly hope that one of our club members will accept this very important challenge. Please consider it!**

### \*\*\* SHCC Raffle \*\*\*

We will be raffling off a computer, donated by a club member, at the March meeting. Tickets are \$5.00 each. Specifications of the computer are listed below. The computer is a refurbished unit in fine working order. It will be available for inspection at the February and March meetings.

Tickets will be available at the February and March meetings. Tickets can also be purchased by sending a check for \$5.00 for each ticket, to the club P.O. Box. We won't send back a ticket for mail purchases, but we will acknowledge receipt of the money via email, and will put a ticket in the drawing jar for you. The club address is on page 2 of the WYSIWYG. All checks sent by mail must arrive in the P.O. Box by Saturday, March 2 (so don't delay!). You do not need to be present at the meeting to win.

The drawing will be held at the end of the March meeting, in addition to the normal door prize drawing.

#### Specs of the raffle PC:

##### Hardware:

- ◆ HP Compaq 8000 Elite SFF Tower
- ◆ Intel Duo Core CPU 3.0 GHz
- ◆ 4 GB RAM, 320 GB Hard Drive
- ◆ PS2 Keyboard, MS USB Laser Mouse
- ◆ 17" Monitor
- ◆ 4 USB ports on front, 6 on back
- ◆ VGA, Display, Ethernet ports
- ◆ On-board Sound

##### Software:

- ◆ Windows 10 Professional, version 1809, updated, 64-bit
- ◆ Adobe Reader DC, Flash, Shockwave, Java
- ◆ IE11, Microsoft Edge, Google
- ◆ Bullzip PDF Printer
- ◆ Classic Shell
- ◆ LibreOffice (alternative to MS Office)
- ◆ Windows Defender, Silverlight
- ◆ PIXresizer
- ◆ PrintKey 2000
- ◆ Roxio Business ver. 10
- ◆ WinAmp with 60's music

## Do You Have Unclaimed Money Waiting?

From the Ask Bob Rankin Newsletter

<https://askbobrankin.com>

**D**id you know... If you have a bank account that has had no activity for as few as two years, it may be declared abandoned, and turned over to the government? Fortunately, there are ways to get that money back. Government experts estimate that \$32 billion worth of lost, forgotten, or unclaimed money is waiting for consumers to find it. It could be a dormant bank account, stock dividends, a forgotten inheritance, or a class action lawsuit settlement. But it doesn't wait forever. Here are more than a DOZEN places to look online to see if there's money waiting for you to claim...

### **How to Get Your Lost Money Back:**

I got a letter in the mail a few days ago, alerting me to some unclaimed funds that were awaiting me. The letter instructed me to fill out a form, and mail it back. The company that sent the letter would charge me a 15% fee to "file the paperwork, and manage the claim." Phooey! I went online, and quickly found that both Amazon and Google were holding unclaimed funds for me. A few clicks later, and my claims were filed. And within a week, I got checks from the Comptroller of the State of New York for \$58 and \$27. That's not quit-your-job money, but it was a nice surprise, and cost me nothing but 5 minutes of my time. Read on to learn how you can do likewise.

It's always worthwhile to check under your couch cushions or car floor mats, but you're not likely to find more than coffee money by doing so. The vast majority of unclaimed cash is waiting in state government hands for the rightful owners to come and get it. All of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands have "unclaimed property" programs. So do the Canadian provinces of Quebec, British Columbia, Alberta, and New Brunswick. Details of their legislative authority vary, but in general they collect and safeguard abandoned or unclaimed funds which banks, brokerages, insurance companies, and other specified institutions are required to report and hand over.

The government is supposed to attempt to reunite citizens with their money. SEC regulations also require corporations that pay dividends to make an effort to notify you if there are uncashed dividend checks. But if you've moved or changed your name, that connection could be missed. And who knows how hard they really try to find you? So it's a good idea to make use of online tools to see if you have any missing money that could be reclaimed.

Your starting point to search for unclaimed funds is

Unclaimed.org, operated by the National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators (NAUPA). This website makes it extraordinarily easy to see if you have any cash coming to you. Just enter your first and last name (or any other name, such as your maiden name or the name of a deceased relative) and look for matching records of funds among the search results. Don't forget to try nicknames or aliases, as well. "Cash" may include stocks, bonds, and other liquid assets, not just currency or bank account balances.

Each jurisdiction has its own rules for claiming found money. Some states hang onto unclaimed property forever. A Kansas City, MO, woman collected \$6.1 million that her ancestors had lost! Once you find money that seems to be yours, you can contact the appropriate agency to claim it.

All 50 U.S. states participate in NAUPA's searchable online database, as well as Guam, US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and some Canadian provinces. Check with each state, territory or province that you (or a relative) have lived in. I strongly advise you to begin these searches for missing money at Unclaimed.org, because they will link you to the official government sites to search for and claim your funds. Some unscrupulous third-parties may charge you a fee to do so.

### **Other Places to Search for Unclaimed Funds:**

But don't stop there... The federal government may also have money for you. The Internal Revenue Service has a database of undeliverable refund checks that may belong to you. Are you a military veteran? Search the Veterans Administration Benefits database for unclaimed veterans benefits owed to you.

The Wage and Hour Division of the U.S. Department of Labor sometimes recovers unpaid wages on behalf of employees, and holds those funds for three years. You can search the Workers Owed Wages database to see if you have money waiting to be claimed. The FDIC is holding money owed to depositors of failed banks; you can search for yours here. The National Credit Union Administration has its own database of unclaimed deposits.

If your private pension plan went bust, the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corp. may have your back. If you have an FHA mortgage, HUD may owe you money. The governments of Canada, Australia, France, New Zealand and Switzerland also have searchable databases of unclaimed funds.

Some U.S. states allow local governments to safeguard small amounts of unclaimed cash for up to two years

before turning it over to the State. Try Google searches for “unclaimed property” plus the names of towns or counties in which you’ve lived. Google searches for “unclaimed child support” or “undistributed child support” can be fruitful, too; one single mom collected over \$30,000 that way.

Beware of anyone who wants a fee to help you find or recover unclaimed property. There are so many free ways to search that I can only describe such finders-fees as scams. The sole exception to that rule is MIB Solutions, a private firm that keeps track of life insurance policies. Life insurance companies are not required to make any effort to pay benefits; beneficiaries must file claims. MIB charges \$75 to help you find and claim benefits you may not know were owed to you.

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## Store Your Recipes In Word

By Jerry Heaton, Editor, Central Kentucky Computer Society  
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I had a dear sister-in-law named Margaret, now deceased, who never owned a computer, probably because I don’t think she ever typed anything. Just the same, my older brother, more than once, suggested that she buy a computer to join the modern world. Finally, she asked, “What would I use one for?” Searching for a quick response, he said, “You could keep your recipes on it”. This brought a huge laugh from her and the rest of the family as well. Margaret seldom ever cooked, either.

This story came to mind when a classmate said she had found a recipe online for pumpkin nut bread. She wanted to save it. She did not know how to move it to her computer and wondered if there was a computer program for recipes. There may be one, but I told her how I organize my favorite recipes in my computer – I keep them all in a simple *Microsoft Word* document titled “RECIPES”. (*Ed. note: Or use LibreOffice Write.*)

I offered her these step-by-step instructions:

1. If you haven’t already done so, create a document named RECIPES.
2. Go to the web site and find your recipe.
3. Using the mouse, click and drag to highlight only the recipe. Be sure you start at the top left edge of the recipe, then drag until what you have is only the recipe. (Another way to highlight is to click at the start of

the recipe, hold down the CONTROL + SHIFT keys and use the four arrow keys to highlight exactly what you want to save and nothing else.)

4. Press Control + C and that copies the highlighted text to your clipboard.
5. Take what you have copied (it is on your clipboard) and paste it into your Word document by pressing Control + V.
6. Edit your recipe text – maybe making the title bold and a bit larger than the rest of the text.
7. Save the Word document. It is now among your favorite recipes. I put each recipe on a separate page by putting a “page break” at the bottom of the recipe (create a page break by holding down the control key and tapping the ENTER key once). This provides you a blank page on which to put your next recipe.

When I want to use a recipe, I just print that one page; thereby, I have a fresh copy to follow as I cook. If I spill something on the recipe, that’s no problem because I generally discard those sheets and just reprint them the next time I am ready to use that recipe another again. Give this a try.

By the way, it is easy to improve a recipe on your master document for the next time. The recipe my classmate wanted to save was for “Quick Pumpkin Nut Bread – a delicious recipe handy for the upcoming holidays”. In case you are interested – here it is (copied into Word from that web site):

### *Quick Pumpkin Nut Bread*

- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- 3/4 cup solid pack (canned) pumpkin
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 t. nutmeg
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 pkg. Cinnamon Streusel Bread Mix



Combine egg, pumpkin, milk and nutmeg in large bowl. Add pecans, bread mix, and cinnamon streusel packet (from bread mix), and mix thoroughly (set aside glaze packet from bread mix box).

Pour into greased and floured 9X5X3 loaf pan. Bake 350 degrees until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, about 50 minutes. Drizzle glaze from bread mix over top of loaf, if desired. Cool completely before slicing.

Can be made into muffins. Spoon into greased/floured muffin tins and bake 350 degrees until done, about 15 minutes.

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

## The Year of Living Dangerously (The Last Year of Windows 7 Support)

By Greg Skalka, President, Under the Computer Hood UG, CA

[www.uchug.org](http://www.uchug.org)

Google's Android is now the most-used operating system in the world, holding 40% of market share. This is due to its popularity with smart phone users. Surprisingly, Microsoft's Windows (all versions) still holds nearly 36.5%, in spite of being relegated almost completely to the personal computer market. This appears to be the case because, although there are now more smart phones in the world than personal computers, there are still not that many more (maybe 2.3 billion vs. 2 billion PCs). Per StatCounter, iOS holds 13.02% (of Operating System Market Share Worldwide from July 2017 - July 2018) and OS X is at 5.51%. Linux holds the next largest share (and lowest of named OS's) at a minute 0.74%. Unfortunately for those Linux advocates I know, it was beaten out by "Unknown" at 2.56% and "Other" at 1.61%.

In the PC market, Windows truly dominates, holding 82.79% (of worldwide market share, 7/2017 to 7/2018). OS X comes in second with 12.63%, with Linux at 1.61% and Chrome OS at 0.86%. For Windows versions, Win10 has finally edged out Win7, 42.37% to 42.14%, and Windows 8.1 has 8.59%. These three are the only versions still supported by Microsoft, per the Windows Lifecycle Fact Sheet. The remaining, unsupported versions (XP, 8, Vista and others) hold less than 7% of market share.

Windows 7 was released to the world on July 22, 2009. Its mainstream support ended on 1/10/15, meaning the end of product improvements and new features. In a little more than a year from now (1/14/20), extended support is scheduled to end. This will mean that Microsoft will stop making security updates to Win7, and it will become more dangerous to use (at least when connected to the Internet).

I currently have six actively used personal computers (desktops and laptops) at home. Of these, more than half (3.5, by my accounting) run Win7. I have a Chromebook, which runs the Chrome OS; it is my favorite for travel and for getting on the web quickly. I still have one desktop PC I still use (I'm writing this on it) which runs XP, though for security it is not connected to any network. My newest computer is a tower desktop that I call my chameleon computer, as its boot hard drive is removable from the front. I have separate hard drives that allow it to run either Win7 or Win10 (thus the '3.5' for Win7 machines, and Win10 would be on 0.5 computers). My primary computer is a 14" laptop running Win7. My wife has a Win7 desktop, as well as a 15.6" Win7 laptop. Next year will be the 'year of living dangerously' for these

three Win7-only machines. Something will need to happen before 1/14/20, so that my wife and I can continue computing safely. Microsoft could extend the support date out further, but that is highly unlikely, as their apparent goal since it was released in 2015 is to get all users on Windows 10.

I might spend most of 2019 trying to figure out what to do, but by the end of next year, I will need to be on the path of one or more of these likely actions:

- Update my Win7 PCs to Win10. Microsoft did provide me with several opportunities to update my Win7 computers to Win10 for free in the past, but I was not willing to switch at the time. As the end-of-support deadline nears, it is possible they could provide some final upgrade offer to entice those still on the fence to join the Win10 collective. They could offer a discount on an upgrade version, but it is more likely they will hold the line on price and rake in more upgrade money. If I were to go with this option, I'd likely wait as the deadline approaches, to see if any good deals come up.
- I could buy the Win10 upgrade for some or all, but I'd need to weigh that cost against the age of these computers, which range from 6 to 8 years old. All seem to still run well, though I fear my wife's desktop, her primary computer, could have a catastrophic failure at any time. I have made upgrades in memory, drive space and interfaces over the years, but none have USB3 or gigabit Ethernet capability, or meet the most current Wi-Fi standards. I could pay for OS updates and then wind up having a hardware failure soon after. I could also find my computer hardware, though once verified to be compatible with an older Win10 version, may not be with the latest. It may be more cost effective to follow the next action.
- Buy new Win10 computers as replacements. Buying new computers, with Win10 installed, would certainly be the most expensive option, but would provide many benefits over upgrading old hardware. We could have all the most current capabilities and features, with higher performance and (presumably) longer life going forward. OS compatibility issues would be eliminated, though there would no doubt be extra costs for new application software, to replace those programs we used on our old PCs. My wife's poor old desktop is definite-

ly a good candidate for this option, as is possibly my laptop.

- To minimize costs, I'd again likely wait until the deadline looms closer, to buy the most current hardware I can within my budget. I'd probably look more intently at the Black Friday deals this year and next, to see if there are good savings at those times. There is always this China trade war issue to consider, however; I'd hate to find that even larger tariffs on foreign-made computers (effectively the only kind available) have doubled their prices as Win7 support ends.
- Abandon Windows and convert to another OS. Both of the options explained so far assume we will need to learn to use Win10. Though I despise change for change's sake, I'm sure I can adapt to Win10 and the new programs that will go with it. I've not used my Win10 incarnation of my chameleon computer very much, though, as I prefer to stay with the more familiar Win7. That would obviously have to change. Getting my wife comfortable with Win10 may be another story, however, as she has a sometimes-tense relationship with Win7 now. Still, she has figured out her iPhone with absolutely no help from me (being an Android advocate), so the transition for her may not be as bad as I might imagine.
- Still, there would be an OS change, and so this might be an opportunity to consider other possible changes. While staying with Windows, which is likely to remain the overwhelming favorite PC OS, will facilitate compatibility with computer use required in employment for both of us, there are other PC operating systems to consider. We could consider a Mac, but my exposure to Apple products so far indicates I don't think the way their developers do. My wife might make this transition better than I (could it be that men are from Mars / Google / Microsoft, and women are from Venus / Apple?).
- Ultimately, the high cost of Apple product would deter me, as I'm among the most value-conscious persons you are likely to find. We could switch to Linux, and maybe even continue using our old hardware, but I fear the learning curve would be great, and we would still have work compatibility issues with our existing stuff and the work world. Maybe I could convert one of the old computers to Linux to experiment with (though I could be doing this with my chameleon computer now and don't), but, overall, I'd say this option is not likely as a comprehensive solution.

- Abandon Windows PCs and use only non-Windows or mobile devices. There are a lot of people now that don't use personal computers in their personal lives at all; smart phones and tablets fulfill all their computing needs. While there are more and more web-based applications available, and I find I'm online more and using "offline" programs less, I'm not yet ready to give up word processing, spreadsheets, photo editing, tax filing and other more PC-centric activities to the small screens (and lower performance) of phones and tablets. It might be possible, but as I get older, I want bigger screens, not smaller. My smart phone and my Chromebook have definitely taken over a growing percentage of my computing time, but I really can't see them increasing to all the time. Maybe some new neural implant and projection display technologies will change that one day, but not by 2020. For better or worse, I feel we need to be tied to that majority of PC users that, again for better or worse, support Microsoft (at least through Windows).

Note that "Continue using Win7 on the Internet" is not one of the options I'm considering for after its security support ends. It might be safe for a short time, but eventually uncorrected issues found by hackers in Win7 will make it too vulnerable. Since we use these computers to access our online financial accounts, the risk is just too great.

It is likely I will in any case keep at least one Win7 computer available to run off the network, especially if I find, as I did with XP, that some programs and interfaces for other devices are not easily available on other computing devices or with other operating systems. I have handheld GPS receivers that I can only connect to through my XP machine. I have a lot of admittedly older software for things like mapping, photo editing and scanning that is either not available, not available without significant cost or that I simply prefer on my old XP computer. I'll likely find similar issues going from Win7 to Win10 or to other operating systems and computing devices.

As my year of living dangerously comes to an end and 1/14/20 approaches, I hope I will have determined, and perhaps implemented, a course of action to allow my wife and I to safely continue the computing activities we need to perform. If not, 2020 might really be dangerous.

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



## Is Your Charging Cable Killing Your Phone?

From the Ask Bob Rankin Newsletter  
<https://askbobrankin.com>

For years, folks with gadgets that need to be recharged have fought with those annoying, odd-shaped USB connectors. They can only be inserted one way, and they always seem to be upside down or misaligned on the first attempt. And forget about trying that in the dark! The USB-C standard was supposed to fix this problem four years ago. Read on to learn why we're not quite there yet, and why your charging cable might be damaging your phone...

### The USB-C Standard Is Neither Standard Nor Universal

The USB-C specification was published in August, 2014. Its greatest improvement over previous USB specs is, in many minds, a "rotationally symmetrical" connector. That means you don't have to worry about which side of a plug is "up;" it just fits without second or third tries. Additionally, USB-C supports data transfer speeds of up to 5 Gbps, and can carry low-amperage power to recharge compatible devices.

Microsoft's newest line of Surface laptops, announced in October, are almost entirely lacking USB-C ports. Microsoft has been late to adopt industry standards in the past, but this time the fault lies with the standard. The latest version of the Universal Serial Bus (USB) is still not fully finalized, and competing versions of USB-C create a hazardous landmine field for consumers. The wrong USB-C cable can fry expensive hardware. Here's what you need to know about USB-C.

To borrow a line from Orwell, "All USB-C cables are equal, but some USB-C cables are more equal than others." More succinctly, not all USB-C cables are alike. All of them have the convenient oval-shaped connector. But that's where the similarities end.

Some support the fastest data speeds, others max out at slower USB 2.0 speeds. Some cables carry power, some don't; when they do carry power, they may not carry it in both directions or support fast charging. The first USB-C standard was not compatible with Apple's Thunderbolt 3 standard; now they are compatible, making a one-cable world possible yet still out of reach.

### Which USB connector do you need?

The confusion and lax enforcement of fast-evolving USB

-C standards led to a plethora of fly-by-night cable sellers who cut corners to lower their costs and sell cables cheaply. Things got so bad that Amazon had to clean house of many USB-C cable sellers.

Microsoft is defending their decision to hold back on offering USB-C charging ports on Surface devices. "We don't want our customers plugging in the wrong 5-watt power cord from their Android phone into the Surface and then wondering why it didn't charge," Microsoft's Chief Product Officer Panos Panay told a Mashable reporter at the latest Surface device launch event.

In addition to its own identity crisis, USB-C faces a challenging competitor in the form of USB-A, the 20 year-old standard that is found everywhere. It will take years for USB-C to replace all of those entrenched USB-A connectors. And Apple will be in no rush to develop a Lightning-to-USB-C cable.

That said, USB-C is rapidly gaining traction in the mobile world. Mobile users are very receptive to carrying just one cable, or even relying on whatever cable is sticking out of a charging station at Starbucks.

### Practice Safe Recharging

But beware of strange USB-C cables; they may be lacking important features that can, at the least, mean that your mobile device won't charge. At worst, they may deliver too much juice and damage your device.

I bought a Motorola Moto phone from an eBay vendor about a year ago, and while the phone was new, it was shipped with cheap third-party USB-C cables. After a few months, the phone would no longer charge. I thought the battery was defective, but after purchasing a new quality charging cable, it works fine.

When buying a USB-C cable, make sure it conforms to the USB Implementors Forum standards. If you don't want to read the tech specs, you can play it safe by purchasing a USB-C cable only from the vendor who sold you the device on which it will be used. Of course, that will usually mean paying more for the cable, but it should ensure you don't damage your device.

One day, all USB-C cables will be the same, and safe for all recent devices. But that day is not yet here.

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## The Amazon Fire Stick — A Plug-in Streaming Device for Internet TV Services

by Tom Burt — [tomburt89134@cox.net](mailto:tomburt89134@cox.net)  
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During the mid-July “Amazon Prime Day” sales, Mrs. Burt and I ordered an Amazon Fire Stick device. It was on sale for half price - \$19.99. At that price, we figured what have we got to lose? The Fire Stick device plugs into an HDMI port on your HDTV and then, after some simple setup steps, connects to the Internet via your Wi-Fi router. It turns your HDTV into a “smart” TV. It comes with all the usual apps for streaming TV services like Netflix, Hulu, YouTube, Pandora and, of course, Prime Video.



The Fire Stick regularly sells for \$39.99 at Amazon.com. You can find details and specs at: [https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00ZV9RDKK/ref=fs\\_ods\\_fs\\_smp\\_tk](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00ZV9RDKK/ref=fs_ods_fs_smp_tk).

Included with the Fire Stick is a compact, easy-to-use remote that includes a microphone that allows you to talk to Amazon’s Alexa to control the Fire Stick with your voice.

This article will discuss our experience after about a month of use.

### Setting Up the Fire Stick

The package contains the Fire Stick itself, the remote, a HDMI extender cable, two AAA batteries and a power / adapter cord. The power cord has a micro USB jack on one end that plugs into the Fire Stick and a regular USB connector on the other end. The regular USB connector plugs into a USB socket on the small power adapter.

I plugged the Fire Stick into my HDTV’s HDMI 2 port, using the HDMI extender cable for better clearance. (My DirecTV receiver is connected to the TV’s HDMI 1 port.) I first tried plugging the USB connector of the power cable into my Samsung HDTV’s USB jack, but found that the USB jack wasn’t putting out enough power. So, I used the power adapter and plugged it into a surge protector next to the HDTV.

I used my Samsung HDTV’s remote to select HDMI 2 as the Input Source. That gave control of the screen to the Fire Stick.

Next, I put the two AAA batteries into the Fire Stick’s remote and then let the remote find the Firestick. From there, I followed the on-screen prompts to connect the Fire Stick to my Wi-Fi router.



To use the Prime Video service, you must be an Amazon Prime subscriber and you must log in with those account credentials. For other paid services like Netflix, you need an active account and, the first time, will need to enter your account credentials for the service.

### Using the Fire Stick

Our Samsung HDTV already had “smart features”, but the performance of the apps was spotty with very slow connections and frequent dropouts and pixilation. I think the TV’s internal Wi-Fi components were not powerful enough to do a good job.

By contrast, the Fire Stick has been amazing – quick connections with rock solid and very clear pictures and

clean, clear sound. It's Wi-Fi is 802.11ac, which my Netgear home router supports. I've had no trouble with dropped signals and we don't see any buffering.

The Fire Stick remote is easy to use with a ring in place of the four arrow keys. It's light and small enough to fit any hand comfortably. The Fire Stick is very responsive to clicks on the remote.

I've tried the remote's Alexa voice control, which is very nice for searching and works well. However, most of the time we use the navigation ring to click around. The on-screen graphics are eye-friendly, and the navigation is easy to figure out. When I want to browse to see what's available on a service like Prime Video or Netflix, I still favor using my desktop PC because the mouse and keyboard are more efficient for navigating. When I find something of interest, I add it to my watch list for that service and then it's easy to get to on the Fire Stick.

### Fire Stick Apps

Unlike my Samsung TV's "smart" apps which are a limited set and don't get updated, the Fire Stick is designed to let the user decide which Apps are installed. There are hundreds to choose from, aside from those that come pre-installed on the Fire Stick. There are also many games that you can download and install. The Fire Stick has 8 GB of storage, so it's possible to have many Apps installed. The Fire Stick has a built-in web browser, but you can also install the Firefox browser. With a web browser, you can go to any website that has streaming content and watch it, even if there's no specific App for it. Here's a link to an article from FireStick-Tricks.com listing 35 recommended paid and free Apps:

<https://www.firesticktricks.com/amazon-fire-stick-apps.html>

### Prime Video

At present, since we've subscribed to the Amazon Prime service; we're also able to get the Amazon Prime Video service at no extra charge. Prime Video features many movies and TV series, but also has some great original content. Over the summer we've been re-watching all 9 seasons of the Hugh Laurie "House, MD" series and the Prime original "Bosch" series featuring Titus Welliver. The offerings get updated frequently. The streaming video quality is great, and the content is all "on demand." And, if you doze off while watching an episode, you can go back and watch it again.

### Conclusions

We're quite happy with the Fire Stick. I'd definitely recommend it if you don't already own an Apple TV or Roku device, which offer similar functionality. The Fire Stick is far better than the built-in "smart" features of my Samsung HDTV. As a vehicle for "cord cutting", the Fire Stick is interesting because it can access so many sources for content. Among its available Apps is one for "DirecTV Now," which is a streaming version of DirecTV that currently costs quite a bit less than the satellite version. There's also an App for Sling TV, which is another streaming service that offers a lot of "cable" channels at very low rates.

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



## Tech Talk: Cure Desktop Clutter

By Joe Isaac — [joeisaac1234@gmail.com](mailto:joeisaac1234@gmail.com)  
Central Kentucky Computer Society  
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If you have more than four rows of icons on your desktop, you probably have too many for efficient use. Desktop icons should only be something used often. The icon idea is to put a program or project up front, so you don't have to spend a lot of time looking for it. Quick access is the key! If you have several dozen icons there, the ability to find something quickly is much less likely. We usually start with just a few, but they tend to grow in number as we install a new program. Every program writer thinks his/her program is the absolute most important one, so they hang another icon on your desktop.

So here is what I recommend you do. Look over the icons on your desktop and identify the ones you haven't clicked on in weeks or maybe months. Right click somewhere on your Desktop. Select NEW, then click on FOLDER, name the new folder Misc. or Stuff. Then hit Enter.

Now, left click and drag your least used icons into this one folder. Leave only the frequently used icons in view. Those rarely used icons are still available to you should you need one of them.

Get to work! You will be glad you did!

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



## Is Online Banking Safe?

From the Ask Leo Newsletter

<https://askleo.com>

Is it possible to bank online securely? Yes, if you're careful.

I would think that no PC would be immune from malicious threats if they landed on some corrupt site that then installed malware or key-capture software. Is there any reasonable way to continue to safely do online banking?

Sure.

Avoid getting infected.

I know, that sounds trite and flippant, and I don't mean to be so. Ultimately, though, all the advice boils down to exactly that: do what it takes to stay safe on the internet.

I regularly bank online. In fact, I've done so for years without incident. I much prefer it over the alternatives.

### Follow the basics

It really boils down to remembering and religiously following the basics.

**Use a strong password** – Much of the account theft I see is due to poor passwords. You must have a strong password on your banking accounts. It's your best, first line of defense.

**Don't share passwords** – Giving your password to someone you "trust" is another way banking accounts often get compromised. The problem arises when the individual turns out to be not so trustworthy or not as security-conscious as you need them to be.



**Use two-factor when available** – Two-factor (also "multi-factor") authentication prevents unauthorized entry into your accounts even when the password is known. Using SMS, a dedicated app, or some other approach is the best way to truly lock down your most important accounts.

**Open only email attachments you trust** – If you're the least bit uncertain, don't open 'em. Email attachments

are, by far, the most common way malware lands on machines these days.

**Learn to recognize and avoid phishing** – In order to fool you, hackers constantly send email that looks like it came from your bank. Don't click on links in email messages from your bank. Instead, visit your bank as you would without the email: type the address of your bank's website into the browser address bar (or use a bookmark you saved previously).

**Secure your network** – Make sure to secure your router. Understand what it means to use an open Wi-Fi hotspot or other shared network connection safely. Yes, you can bank online safely when traveling (again, it's something I do), but it does require that you pay attention to network security.

**Avoid shared or public computers, period** – While library computers or the machine you can borrow while visiting your friend might be convenient, you have no idea what's on them. They could be full of malware or include undetectable malicious hardware. Avoid them for anything sensitive.

All banking is dangerous

### All banking is dangerous

All banking, online or off, is dangerous. In my opinion, you're actually more likely to be affected by bad behavior you have no control over — such as that in the bank's back room or at some hacked third party — than you are to have your information compromised due to your own failings... as long as you follow the basic security you should already be doing.

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## Member Ads

Ads 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. Deadline is two weeks before the next main meeting date.

**If your dues are paid in or before the month they are due, as shown on the invoice the club sends to you, 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.**

## Facebook: Killing Us One Stone At A Time

by Rod Scher at The Geekly Weekly  
<http://www.thegeeklyweekly.com>

They killed Margaret Clitherow on the 25th of March, 1586. They did it very slowly, by laying her own front door on top of her and then piling rocks on top of it until she was crushed to death, a process called "pressing." It took about 15 painful minutes for her to die. (Which is nothing compared to the ordeal of 81-year-old Giles Corey of Salem, Massachusetts. Corey was pressed to death for refusing to plead after having been accused of witchcraft. He was a stubborn old man. It took him 3 days to die, and each time his torturers asked him if he was ready to plead, he is said to have responded by crying, "More weight!") Margaret's crime was not witchery, it was that she belonged to the wrong religion at the wrong time. She was a Catholic (and was later sainted), which was not exactly a crime at the time, though it was mightily frowned upon. What was a crime was harboring Catholic priests and failing to attend the prescribed and approved church. (Keep this in mind when you hear someone argue for the compulsory presence of religion in schools, in politics, and in society in general. Be sure to ask them which religion they're talking about. After all, you wouldn't want to select the wrong one.) Margaret failed to attend church and she harbored priests, and then—like Corey—refused to plead. (They refused to plead because that way their families, including children, could not be called to trial and tortured until they gave "evidence," which would then give the authorities the right to repossess any land or other property belonging to the family.) Corey and Clitherow suffered excruciating deaths largely to spare their families; they were tougher than you and me.

The Black Swan Inn in York, where Margaret Clitherow is said to have housed priests hiding from the authorities. (Image copyright Peter Church and licensed for reuse under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0 license.)



Naturally, thinking of huge, heartless entities crushing innocents to death made me think of Facebook.

Facebook collects information about us—about you and me. A lot of information. Then they sell that information (supposedly anonymized and aggregated) to their "partners," companies that wish to sell us goods.

How much data, you ask? Well, you can find out for yourself fairly easily. Just go to your Facebook settings; then select *Settings* and then click "Download a

copy of your Facebook data". The company will send you a ZIP file containing about 25 folders, each of which contains several HTML documents full of data the company has collected about you. (The complete process is nicely explained here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybpb7drb>.) I did that, and it was an enlightening process.

Here's just some of what Facebook sent me:

- A 'Stuff About Me' folder containing face recognition data and address book info (friends, institutions, etc., going back 2 yrs).
- An 'ADS' folder containing:
  - Ad interests: 41 pgs of data, 1329 items, ranging from academy awards to action movies, from MacBooks to Method acting, from Smartphones to Sonny Bono (?!), and from tattoos to time travel.
  - An 'Advertisers Who Uploaded a Contact List With Your Information' document, which was explained thusly: "Advertisers who run ads using a contact list they uploaded that includes contact info you shared with them or with one of their data partners." This included a list of 211 advertisers, from AARP to Zappos.
  - Advertisers I've interacted with (which consisted of about 100 clicked ads).
- An 'Apps and Websites' folder: Apps I've used Facebook to log into (stretching back to 2013).
- A document containing every FB post on which I've commented—including the text of the comment—going back to 2013:
  - A list of every person I'm following and every person who's following me, every page I've ever Unfollowed, and every person I've "friended" and when (dating back to 2009).
- A 'Posts and Comments' document that included every "like" (or any other reaction) I've posted on a post or comment.
- A 'Location History' folder. Mine is empty, since I've never "checked in" or otherwise informed FB of my location. (But you may have.)
- A list of every FB message I've sent or received and from/to whom.
- A 'Photos & Videos' folder containing every... Well, you get the idea:
  - Security & Log-In Info that included session cookies updated (148 MS Word pages, about 7,000 or so cookies), all devices authorized to log in (back to 2013), and a list of where I've logged in from and when.
- A document listing my complete search history.
- And a handy Index.html doc that lets you get to all of this stuff a lot more easily than poking around in every damned folder, which is what I did. Unfortunately, I found this document last.

As you can see, that's a lot of information about me — and honestly, I'm a pretty boring person! Really. You can ask anyone.

He doesn't look like an evil person, does he? At least, he didn't back in his Harvard days.

(Image licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 Generic license.)



Something should be pointed out here... Near the top of this list is a document that lists advertisers who run ads using a contact list that I shared with them or with one of their data partners. Now, I am perfectly happy (well, moderately happy) to share data with companies that sell products in which I'm interested: computers, say, or archery or cars or motorcycles. But I have no idea who these "data partners" are. It turns out that when I share data with an entity, I'm in effect also sharing it with whomever they decide to share it with. And I have no control over who that might be.

I don't like that.

Really, most of these bits of data are relatively insignificant. If any one or two or five of them got out in public or were sold to a marketer, it probably wouldn't matter much. But, like the stones that killed Giles Corey and Margaret Clitherow, eventually, the combined weight of the stones reaches a critical mass and that one last stone finishes you off. Facebook has collected a LOT of stones, enough to build a fairly accurate—and quite

valuable—dossier on every one of its over *2 billion* customers. Eventually, we might end up being crushed by those stones.

*This article is republished, with permission, from The Geekly Weekly.*



## More Phone Scams

News and/or Opinion from Paul Baecker

The latest of the many phone scams preying primarily on senior citizens concerns the Social Security Administration (SSA).

Two different phone calls are received from scammers posing as SSA employees — one concerning a non-existing problem with your SSA account, and the other just phishing for your personal info.

If you get either of these calls, and you answer the phone, refrain from saying anything and **JUST HANG UP!** If your phone system offers a call blocking feature (as my Panasonic 4-phone system does — blocks up to 250 phone numbers), block the call.

Just remember that the SSA does not do its business via phone calls. If you have questions about calls that pretend to be SSA originated, contact the SSA directly. A web link with some SSA tips is in this issue's **WYSIWYG Web Watch** on page 14.



## Door Prize Winners

### **December 2018:**

**Martee Held** -- Printer paper  
**Evelyn Cherson** -- Wireless mouse  
**Bill Kramer** -- Power strip  
**Jesse Cwalina** -- DVD spindle  
**Bernard DeFazio** -- 12-volt tester  
**Gail Minnich** -- Brush set  
**Ron Linsley** -- DVD spindle  
**Rick Kucejko** -- DVD spindle

### **January 2019:**

**Rich Monk** -- Flash drive  
**Walter Jendhoff** -- Ear phones  
**Warner Mach** -- Inspection flash-light  
**James Waldrop** -- Printer paper  
**Mike Bader** -- DVD spindle  
**Ron Linsley** -- Printer paper  
**Ed Zaremba** -- CD case

## Club Dues Amounts

The dues were raised to \$30 per year at the November 2018 meeting. This includes a digital version of the newsletter sent monthly, except for July and August, when the club does not meet.

A paper version of the newsletter is available in place of the digital newsletter, for an additional \$20 per year.

Associate memberships, for a second member of a household, remain at an additional \$15 per year.

**VISIT THE SHCC WEB SITE:**

<http://www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org>

## SHCC Emergency Cancellation

Sterling Heights Computer Club meets at Baker College In Clinton Township. We will meet if Baker College is open and will not meet if Baker College is closed. Baker College 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; and 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.

Everyone needs to be aware of, and understand, the current Social Security scam, being delivered by phone.

<https://oig.ssa.gov/scams-involving-impersonation-ssa-employee>

8 tasty apple varieties and how to make them thrive.

<https://morningchores.com/apple-varieties/>

“Chkdsk cannot run because the volume is in use by another process” — What does it mean and how do I fix it?

<https://askleo.com/chkdsk-cannot-run-because-the-volume-is-in-use-by-another-process-what-does-it-mean-and-how-do-i-fix-it/>

A list of dumbest USB gadgets you can buy.

<https://www.reviewgeek.com/5774/the-dumbest-usb-gadgets-you-can-buy/>

Is my power supply dead? Here’s the Paperclip Test. (Just presuming that this won’t cause self-electrocution.)

<http://support.antec.com/support/solutions/articles/1000015319-is-my-power-supply-dead-the-paperclip-test>

15 CMD commands every Windows user should know when and how to use (several of which are useful when diagnosing computer problems).

<https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/15-cmd-commands-every-windows-user-know/>

Do you blindly add an app to your phone just because a friend says that he/she did so? How to tell if an Android app is potentially dangerous.

<https://www.howtogeek.com/188519/how-to-tell-if-an-android-app-is-potentially-dangerous/>

How to disable and remove Windows 10 Account Sync Settings.

<https://www.howtogeek.com/399568/how-to-disable-and-remove-windows-10-account-sync-settings/>

How to take photos of fireworks.

<https://www.howtogeek.com/314903/how-to-take-photos-of-fireworks/>

Difference between *straight through* (to connect computers to hubs or switches) and *crossover* (to connect a computer to another computer) cables. It may be sensible to own at least one of each.

<http://www.cables-solutions.com/difference-between-straight-through-and-crossover-cable.html>

Having too many digital accounts raises your risk of data being misused or stolen. Here’s how to clean house.

<https://www.consumerreports.org/privacy/how-to-delete-online-accounts-you-no-longer-need/>

How to disable the new “reserved storage” feature in Windows 10, which occupies 2.5GB to 7GB of your drive space.

<https://betanews.com/2019/01/11/disable-windows-10-reserved-storage/>

We know that online entities such as Facebook, Google, and Amazon have “algorithms” that give us updates, search results, and product recommendations, but what does that actually mean?

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/what-is-algorithm/>

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

## Web Watch Column on the Club Web Site

Check out the **WebPageReviews** section on the club’s web site. There you can see past web sites reviewed in this column. They are arranged into various *keyword* categories to help locate a specific topic or site.