



THE WYSIWYG



September 2020

Volume 32 Issue 7

STERLING HEIGHTS COMPUTER CLUB

PO Box 385

Sterling Heights, Michigan 48311-0385

**MAIN MEETING: TUESDAY SEPT. 1
7:00 PM**

**Same day/time as usual
Location: Your house,
Video conference**

*See The President's Pen on page 3 for details.
(Please use your real name when you log in, just as we all do
when we attend our in-person meetings.)*

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This Month's Main Meeting Topic:

“Free and Alternatives to Free Software ”

**will be presented online by
APCUG Speakers Bureau
member**

John Kennedy

* * * * *

Hope to 'see' you there!

Guests and visitors are welcome. People can attend any SHCC meetings during two consecutive months before deciding whether to become a member or not. July and August don't count since there is no main meeting in those months. 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>

2020 SHCC Officers – Thanks to all!!!

| | | |
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| Vice President | Mike Bader | VP@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org |
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| General Computer Questions | Jack Vander- Schrier |
| Hardware | <i>(open)</i> |
| MS Publisher | Paul Baecker |
| MS Word | Rick Schummer |
| Spreadsheets | Rick Schummer |

SHCC Coordinators

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

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(Use the appropriate e-address for your questions/comments.)

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Club Dues Amounts

The club dues were increased 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 \$31 per year. (increased at March 2019 meeting)

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

Four-Month Meeting Schedule

OCTOBER 2020
6 - SHCC Main Meeting
 11 - SEMCO meeting

DECEMBER 2020
1 - SHCC Main Meeting
 13 - SEMCO meeting

NOVEMBER 2020
3 - SHCC Main Meeting
 8 - SEMCO meeting

JANUARY 2021
5 - SHCC Main Meeting
 10 - SEMCO meeting

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



Last month (that's last club meeting month) we had our second remote meeting. Judy Taylour, from APCUG, presented "Utility Apps". This month we were to start meeting at our new location, St. Thomas Lutheran Church, but due to the ongoing lock down we will do another remote meeting.

Reminder: To stay connected with SHCC, if you change your email address, you need to let us know. Email from your new address to Secretary@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org for us to update it in the club records. The Secretary's email address is also on the SHCC web site, as well as on page 2 of this newsletter.

SHCC has officer elections in November for the next year, 2021. Nominations will be open in September, October, and November before the election. Nominate yourself or ask someone to nominate you. Please, if you nominate someone, check with them to find out if they'll accept the nomination. I will be emailing job descriptions for the four offices soon, if you haven't gotten it already, and the descriptions will be in the newsletter. Hint: the secretary office is *open*.

We held the now annual Gab Fest on Saturday August 22nd. I had the tree removed that we had previously gathered under in the shade, so I arranged for a canopy top to give us a shady environment. It was large enough to accommodate everyone at their preferred distancing. There was a lot of computer and Raspberry Pi gabbing, questions about the Tablo, and a couple of new items people had gotten. Everything went well and a good time was had by all.

I and apparently others encouraged APCUG to open remote meetings to people not in that particular user group, and now they have. I encourage you to visit the APCUG web site and review the remote meetings being presented and available to other user group members. Then sign up for the presentations you are interested in. Start by clicking the APCUG logo at the bottom of the SHCC web site's home page.

About the future: We will continue to have remote meetings as long as the group meeting size is limited. When we can, we'll have live meetings at the new location, St. Thomas Lutheran Church. The church is located in Sterling Heights on the north side of 15 Mile Road about 1/3 mile east of VanDyke Avenue.

This month we have John Kennedy of Association of Personnel Computer User Groups (APCUG) presenting "Free and Alternatives to Free Software". This presentation has been well-received by other user groups and is reported to be very informative. As usual we begin at 7:00 PM but at this remote meeting we will have some

time at the beginning for officer nominations and discussion like we have at live meetings. See you, sort of, Tuesday.

Last Month's Meeting

"Utility Apps" was presented remotely by Judy Taylour of Association of Personnel Computer User Groups (APCUG). Judy did a great job and introduced several useful utilities for the attendees to use. It's always good to have tools to make things go easier and quicker.



Home Automation – Webinar series offered by APCUG

APCUG offered four monthly webinar events via ZOOM during the Summer on Windows 10 features. They will be continuing their monthly events with a series of four webinar workshops starting on September 9, and continuing on one date in each of the following three months.

This series of workshops will be on **Home Automation for Seniors** – same time (Noon EDT), same place on:

September 9, 2020
October 14, 2020
November 11, 2020
December 9, 2020

- Why do I need it?
- Where do I start?
- Lights, doorbells, locks, and cameras
- Doing it myself vs. having it done

We will begin by explaining why home automation is important to Seniors. What products are on the market, costs, security, and some real-world testimonials. In the second week, we will talk about how to go about planning your home automation project and best practices. In the third week, we will talk about applications using lights, doorbells, locks, and cameras. Lastly, we will talk about the benefits of making it a DIY project or having a professional install everything.

If you registered for the Summer series, then you are also registered for this Home Automation series. If you did not previously register for any of those Windows 10 events, you can register for this series by sending a message to Judy at jtaylour@apcug.org. Put "APCUG Home Automation Request" in the subject line. A single registration is valid for all of these events. Be sure to use your first/last name for the registration and also when you log in to the events, so that you can be easily authenticated and entered into the presentations.



Bluetooth 5.0 – Improved Wireless Technology

By Phil Sorrentino, Contributing Writer
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Bluetooth 5.0 is a noticeable improvement over the previous version and is finally finding its way into new devices. If you have had problems with Bluetooth pairing or staying connected in the past, Bluetooth 5.0 may improve or even fix the problem. But both devices will probably have to be up to the new standard.

Bluetooth is a wireless technology standard used for exchanging data between fixed and mobile devices over short distances. Both Bluetooth and Wi-Fi are examples of wireless technology that use the unlicensed 2.4GHz frequency spectrum. Both have many applications in today's offices and homes such as: setting up networks, printing, connecting cooperating devices, and transferring data files among computers and smart devices.



Wi-Fi vs. Bluetooth.

Wi-Fi is intended as a replacement for cabling in large work areas. Bluetooth is intended as a replacement for cabling among equipment in close proximity. Wi-Fi is intended for use as a local area network (LAN). Bluetooth is intended for use in a smaller, personal area network (PAN). (Just for completeness, a Wide Area Network (WAN) is a communications network that spans large geographic areas such as cities, states, or even countries – think Internet.)

Bluetooth, nowadays, can typically be found in smartphones, laptop computers, tablets, headphones, and almost all new cars. Seven years ago I explored Bluetooth and reassured everyone that it was not a dental diagnosis. At that time, it was at version 4.0 so it's probably time to take another look. Technology is always evolving and hopefully improving.

Here is a little history for you tech history buffs. Bluetooth has been around for quite a while. Work on Bluetooth was started in 1994 and the Bluetooth 1.0 specification was released in May 1998. The initial Version specified a data rate of fewer than 1 Mbps (Megabits per second). It had many problems, and manufacturers had difficulty making their products interoperable. Bluetooth 2.0 was released in November 2004 with a faster data rate (approx. 2 Mbps). Bluetooth 3.0 was released in April 2009. Bluetooth 4.0 was released in June 2010. Bluetooth 5.0 was released in June 2016 with increased range, speed and capacity, and is the current standard. Bluetooth 5.0 is improved in many categories as shown below:

Bluetooth was originally conceived as a wireless alternative to the old serial RS-232 data cables. Bluetooth is a

| Feature | Bluetooth 5.0 | Bluetooth 4.0 |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Speed | 2 Mbps | 1 Mbps |
| Range | 40 Meters | 10 Meters |
| Message Capacity | Larger | Small |
| Battery Life | Longer | Shorter |
| Reliability | Higher | Low |
| Security Control | Better | Less secure |

network and thus can connect many devices, unlike RS-232 which was strictly serial point-to-point. Bluetooth is a wireless technology that uses short-range radio links and is intended to replace the cable(s) connecting portable and/or fixed electronic devices. The hope is that it will allow for the replacement of the many proprietary cables with one universal radio link. Bluetooth can provide a way to connect and exchange information between devices such as Smartphones, laptops, personal computers, printers, Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers, digital cameras, video games, et al.

So, Bluetooth is a communications standard for interconnecting electronic devices. To that end, it uses a form of data packet switching to transmit digital data via the wireless communications link. Bluetooth operates in the unlicensed ISM (Industrial, Scientific, and Medical) 2.4GHz frequency band, and avoids interference from other signals in that band by hopping to a new frequency after transmitting or receiving each packet. This radio technology is called *frequency-hopping spread spectrum*. It chops up the data being sent and transmits chunks of it on up to 79 different frequencies. (Guess who invented *frequency hopping*? Answer at the end of the article.)

Bluetooth is primarily designed for short-range communications with low power consumption. There are three power levels defined in the standard, 100 mW (Class 1), 2.5 mW (Class 2), and 1 mW (Class 3), where mW (milliwatt) is a measure of transmitter output power. The higher the power level, the further the data can possibly be transmitted. Class 1 suggests an operating range of up to 100 meters, Class 2 suggests 10 meters, and Class 3 suggests 1 meter. Most of the devices I've used have been Class 2. (One meter = 3 feet 3 inches.)

Because Bluetooth devices use radio (broadcast) communications, they do not have to be in the line of sight of each other. Bluetooth makes it possible for these devices to communicate with each other and transfer the information as long as they are in range.

A PC uses a Bluetooth adapter to communicate with other Bluetooth devices. While some desktop computers and most recent laptops come with a built-in Bluetooth adapter, others require an external adapter, usually in the form of a Bluetooth Dongle. Bluetooth allows multi-

(Continued on page 12.....**Bluetooth**)

Microsoft's New Emoji Keyboard

By Nancy DeMarte, Vice President
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If you are an Apple user, you probably know about emojis. These little head icons express moods by the looks on their faces. They can be part of emails or text messages or any place where text can be typed. The emoji collection on my iPhone has over 100 faces, each with a recognizable facial expression, but the gallery goes way beyond faces. You can send emoji animals, objects, groups of people, plants and flowers, phases of the moon, food and drinks, sports, and many more.

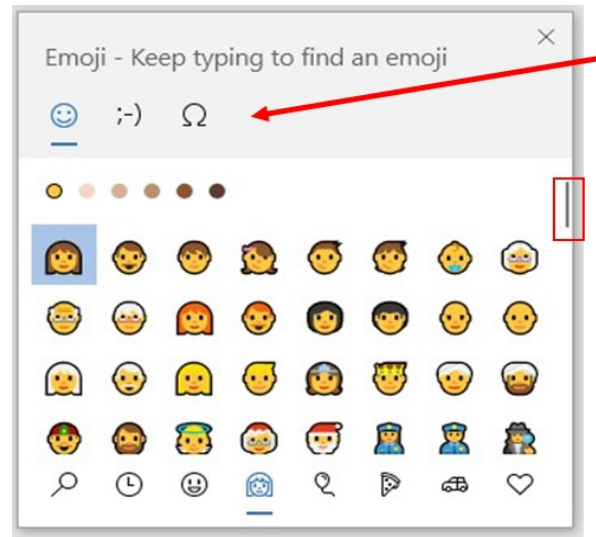
The emoji was created by the Japanese. The term was formed from the combination of the Japanese words for "picture" and "character". In Western countries, Emoji was originally called Pictograph. Emojis became so popular that a reference site, Emojipedia.org, was created in 2013. It is a search engine for emojis and is worth a visit. Emojis can be used in all the big social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, as well as email programs and other Internet places where you can type.

Microsoft has included a traditional on-screen keyboard (OSK) without emojis since the debut of Windows 7. Perhaps noticing the popularity of emojis, Microsoft created its own gallery of emojis and put them in an emoji on-screen keyboard. This keyboard was one of the feature updates Microsoft included with the Windows 10's Fall 2017 Creator Update. It was improved in April 2018 and is now featured among the Ease of Access group of tools in Settings.

To use this keyboard, you are encouraged to enable it, but if you are current with Windows updates, you may be able to skip these steps. The enabling steps begin by clicking the Start button > Settings > Ease of Access. Then scroll down to **Keyboard** and drag the Off dot to the right under the heading, "**Use your device without a physical keyboard.**" Today, most users can easily open the emoji keyboard on their screens by pressing the Windows key while clicking the period or semi-colon key. This works for touch screens, too.

The keyboard contains three major categories along the top: *Emoji*, *Kaomoji*, and *Symbols*:

- The *Emoji* category includes the smiley faces and other objects like those seen in Apple products.
- *Kaomoji* includes facial expressions made of punctuation marks and other odd lines, some of which are Japanese.
- The *Symbols* category includes Latin symbols, international currency, the copyright mark, and others. Each category can be scrolled down for more choices.



Below are a few tips for using the Windows emoji keyboard:

- To open the keyboard, click or touch the Windows key and the period or semi-colon.
- Drag the emoji keyboard anywhere within the window.
- To close the keyboard, click the X or the ESC key.
- The magnifying glass symbol is a search engine for emojis.
- The clock with hands set at 3:00 shows the most recently used emojis.
- Emoji categories are pictured across the bottom of the keyboard.
- There is a scrollbar on the Emoji keyboard, but it isn't obvious. It is a short, thin vertical line on the right edge of the keyboard. See the red box around the scroll line in the illustration. Move your mouse over the line to enlarge the scrollbar and scroll for more emojis.

You can pin the emoji keyboard to the taskbar to make it larger and easier to see. First, right-click the taskbar and left-click the "Show touch keyboard" button. That will add a small keyboard next to the time and date at the right end of the taskbar, as shown. Click this keyboard to open the traditional on-screen keyboard which now includes the emoji icon. (Shown below) Click the face and scroll horizontally to see large versions of all the emojis for each category. (It too is a fine horizontal line below the emojis.)

Then try out a few emojis on friends. They usually bring a smile.



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Free Software – Yay or Nay?

News and/or Opinion by Paul Baecker

Free software!

Does that term excite you, or does it cause you alarm and apprehension? Both reactions are valid. But with a bit of knowledge, you can seriously lean towards the former reaction and take advantage of great safe software web offerings. But what IS out there?

Let's get the definition of 'software' out of the way first. Sometimes abbreviated as SW or S/W, 'software' is a collection of instructions that enable the user to interact with a computer (or tablet or smartphone), and its hardware, and perform tasks. Without software, most computers would be useless. For example, without your Internet browser software, you could not surf the Internet or read web pages. Without an operating system (all of it comprised of software), the browser could not even run on your computer. You could not play games on your device, or prepare documents and spreadsheets, view videos, edit photos, or listen to music. But you already know this. So, onward....

Free software abounds on the web. Some is legitimately safe and very useful, while some has been hacked (purposely "broken") and is malicious and should be avoided at all costs. Some is totally free (no cost at all required to use it), and some is in the form of a free 'trial' version of what is otherwise 'at cost' (retail) software, and some is full-featured promotional software.

Free software generally falls into these categories:

- **Shareware** or **trial** software is software that gives you a few days to try the software before you have to buy the program. After the trial time expires, you'll be asked to enter a code or register the product before you can continue to use it. The trial versions are offered to you to try out and hopefully you will be sufficiently impressed to purchase their full version of the product. Trial versions are usually date-limited -- perhaps 14 days or a month, before the software stops working. In the meantime, the software may remind you that you are using their limited version, perhaps with a day-countdown ticker to help you grab your credit card.
- **Freeware** is completely free software that never requires payment, as long as it is not modified.
- **Open-source** software is similar to freeware. Not only is the program free, but the "source code" (the internal programming) is also available to everyone.
- **Retail** is software that is legitimately offered by the publisher either at cost (for purchase in a store or online) or at no cost (such as via a free promotion).

The terms "shareware", "freeware" and "open-source" are determined by the offering entity (in what fashion they want their product to be offered and distributed).

But the terms are often used interchangeably, which doesn't help at all.

Some of the totally free software comes with a request to support the programmer with a donation. A person or group somewhere on the globe creates a software product and *generously* offers it free to whomever wants to use it. This is more common than you might imagine. A donation is totally optional on your part -- you choose whether or not to donate and how much. Some totally free software examples are [7-Zip](#) and [Notepad++](#).

Free software has many sources.

There are sites that offer free 'pirated' software. Pirated software is software for which the source has probably 'broken' the license or is illegally trying to reuse it, and almost assuredly has infected it with a serious malware or virus. Stay away; do not be tempted -- it is not worth the risk. See the web [link](#) to a software piracy article in the WebPageReviews on page 14. (Hint: Microsoft, far as I know, never offers their products for free.)

So-called software 'download' web sites exist, such as [download.com](#), [filehippo.com](#), [majorgeeks.com](#), [downloadcrew.com](#), [filepuma.com](#), and so many, many others.



Free Software
Websites

Many years ago one of the most popular of this sort of source was proven to be adding malware to every file downloaded from it. Personally, I stay away

from these places, with one exception: Rarely, a publisher will use one of these download sites as the hosting source for its software. I will accept the publisher's choice if I really want the software.

Some free software can be a limited-feature (sometimes called "crippled") version of a company's retail (full-version) product. Examples are [Ccleaner](#), software from [IObit.com](#) and [Auslogics.com](#) and [Easeus.com](#), and [Malwarebytes](#), all which offer their software in a free limited version, and update it regularly, with occasional reminders to you of their full-featured (paid) version offerings.

You may find that their limited-feature version is totally capable of your usage goals, and you don't need all of the bells/whistles of the full (paid) version, and the company may not have a time limitation to use their free limited version. In fact, the software company may even supply you with regular updates to that free limited version. *Major kudos to those publishers for letting us use their copywrited technology at no cost!!!!* One thing that might irritate you with this type of offer is that the publisher may occasionally hint to you (with a pop-up window) that you are using their free version and that a paid premium version is also available. If it's too irritating, you can just not use their software and uninstall it, but for me it is a minor intrusion in trade for using some terrific products. The price is right! Why do they do this? One example is if you are employed, they hope that you inform your employer about this software and that the

employer will try it out, too, and potentially purchase licenses for it. The web sites of individual software publishing companies show what (if any) software they are offering as 'trial' software or 'free' software (the requirement for the latter is often that you are an individual computer user or a home-office user – not a corporation). Some publishers offer their software free for 'personal use' and support it with regular updates. That means that if you are a *business*, you are expected to *buy* the product (meaning paying for a license and tech support). It's like an honor system, but they have ways of checking on your usage. One example is the great [TeamViewer](#). Once, I forgot to disable my VPN service, and used TeamViewer to help someone remotely with a PC problem. The next time I used it, I was reminded that the software is free only for personal use (using a common VPN IP address suggests to them "a corporation"). I was *temporarily* black-listed from using TeamViewer on that particular PC. Tsk, tsk. Lesson learned.

And then there is full-featured retail software that its publishing company offers for free as a promotion. The free offering could be in the manner of how long you can use the software for free. Perhaps the publisher has put a time limit of a month or 3 months or 6 months or even a year on your usage. Some retail software is offered free with a lifetime license for one or more computers. That's the good stuff!!! So, you COULD get your hands on some very fine at-cost software for free for your permanent use. One caution is to not let this software update itself. Usually, if you update this type of promotional software, you lose the promotional license that came with the original offering, and the software that you have will either stop working or will become its 'free version' alternative, losing some of its functionality. The individual offering will tell you about updates. So, if you are also using any 'software updater' programs, remove the promotional software items from its scanning feature.

An example of the 'terms' of taking a promotional software offering might say:

- * *This is a 1-computer lifetime license, for noncommercial use (but sometimes offered for commercial use)*
- * *No free updates; if you update the giveaway, it may become unregistered*
- * *No free tech support*
- * *You must redeem the license key before this offer has ended*

But who really contacts software tech support these days, when so much support can be found on the web? Probably some but not many. I never have. (Even though I once worked in software tech support.)

There are many web sites that list retail software that publishers are offering for free, as described above. I have personally used several of these sites to grab offerings that I either use often, or have just grabbed to investigate and play with (hey, it's part of the hobby!). Sites that I have used most often for this purpose are:

- * [BitsDuJour](#) -- usually one offering per day
- * [GiveawayOfTheDay](#) -- usually one offering per day
- * [SharewareOnSale](#) -- usually one new offering per day, but many previous offerings remain available for as long as 7-14 days, and some even longer – just depends on what the individual publisher chooses
- * [GiveawayRadar](#) -- This site says that it "covers all relevant giveaway sites plus some other giveaways and promotions....'good software' comes with a license for at least one year and is available for everyone!" It is sort of a clearing-house for the daily promotional offerings available on many sites, including the ones listed above. This is one of my go-to web sites just about every day. What can I possibly find today that I just can't exist without???

So, whom do you trust? Well, that's totally up to you, how comfortable you feel with this activity. Using the sites above, I have not (knowingly) had malware installed with any software I've acquired. But ask around among your computer club members and other PC users for their opinions and experiences. There are certainly many in your midst who use these sites often.

Do I download/install everything that I see that's offered free? Heck no! My hard drives are only so large. But have I taken advantage of many retail offerings in this way? Absolutely, for at least 15 years. Have I later uninstalled some of them? Yes, if I've decided that I don't need them (and TOO MUCH software on your PC may slow it down somewhat). But I tell my computer class students that after you've purchased a Windows computer, there is very little software that you need to *purchase*. Examples are tax software and good security software (unless your ISP supplies something for you – my cheapo ISP does not). And so much retail software has free semi-equivalents. For example, some reviews suggest that the free [GIMP](#) program is similar to [Photshop Elements](#), and there are several free full-version office suites ([LibreOffice](#), [OpenOffice](#), etc.) that read and write to the Microsoft Office file formats.

Promo software offerings are usually limited to one computer. So, if you have more than one PC, and you want a particular software offering installed on each one, you can give each computer its own email address (and a fictitious name, because some sites require both a person's name and the email address to take stuff). Since most software offerings require an email address (in order to send you the license info, but also to send you notices of other offerings), in this way you can apply a separate license to each computer. And you don't clog up your friends/family email address with nonsense. Some free email services do not REQUIRE you to enter a phone number during registration for an email account, in case you forget the password later (the other choice often is to enter an alternative email address). Some ISPs (WOW, Comcast, others) offer their subscribers more than just one free email address (ask them about it if you don't know).

When I find a retail at-cost product that's offered for free that interests me, I first visit the publisher's web site to investigate the software and the company (if I am not already familiar with them), and to determine whether the software is applicable to my needs. If their web site cannot speak English well, I pass on it. My thinking is that if the site is not well-designed linguistically, then their software may be equally lousy.

Sometimes, the free offering (of a retail product) might be a previous version of the software. Previous versions are not necessarily bad, especially if the price is right. I use the *Power2Go* retail program from [Cyberlink](#) that is two versions old and was offered for free, and it still does it all. I also often do a web search for *unbiased* reviews of a software product before taking it.

To be safe, after I download the installation file for any software product from anywhere, I first take a moment and right-click on the file and let my security software and Malwarebytes separately scan the file, before installing the product. Even though we all know that NO security software application can identify EVERY threat, I feel that this still puts me ahead in the security game.

If you want to grab something, but you are not familiar with the publisher, it makes total sense to have a recent full system backup handy (which you should have anyway!). Also, it doesn't hurt to create a Restore Point before installation of unfamiliar software. It just depends on your own confidence and experience. But you already know the importance of all of this, just in case 'stuff happens'.

So, when you find software that grabs your attention and is offered for free, do just a little homework and enjoy a new application.



(What the Heck.....Continued from page 11)

I've found I've adapted well to reading the PDF newspaper on my Chromebook and now don't miss the paper version at all (though I might when my stock of old papers I lay out when cleaning my bike chain is used up). Digital technology has improved my life yet again. I suspect I will still have to watch my subscription charges carefully, but it will, in any case, be a lot less than for having a real paper delivered and is better for the environment.

With the digital-only subscription, I now look back at my physical paper days and wonder why I didn't do this before?

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fore?



Your Smart Speaker Might Accidentally Activate!

By Dorothy Fitch, Green Bytes Editor
GVR Computer Club, Green Valley AZ
newsletter@ccgvaz.org

An article published on February 25, 2020, in *USA Today* titled "[It's not you, it's them: Google, Alexa and Siri may answer even if you haven't called](#)" discusses the fact that sometimes Alexa, Siri or Google Home will pick up on sounds in the environment that it believes were intended to wake it up. But you weren't trying to interact with them!

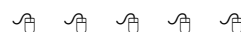
Especially interesting in the article is how "researchers at Northeastern University and the Imperial College of London spent the past six months streaming 125 hours of popular Netflix TV shows to a handful of voice-activated smart speakers. Their goal, which you can read about on a just-published webpage called "[When Speakers Are All Ears.](#)" is to figure out what words accidentally activate smart voice assistants – from Apple, Amazon, Google and Microsoft – the most and what implications it might have on our privacy."

And what about privacy, you ask? That *USA Today* article explains how you can deal with this important issue:

"If you want to know what your devices might have heard, each of the companies involved gives you a way to see, hear and potentially delete old recordings from your devices and the cloud:

- **Amazon's Alexa/Echo:** Accessing your Amazon recordings is fairly simple. You can delete anything there and opt out of having your audio recordings reviewed by people (working to make the devices more accurate).
- **Google Home:** Google lets you review and delete your recordings, and it won't let people review your interactions unless you approve it. Google said it might use recordings to deliver targeted ads to your device.
- **Apple's Siri:** In your device settings, you can opt out of having Apple store or review any of your voice interactions with Siri. You can delete any recordings.
- **Microsoft's Cortana:** Use Microsoft's privacy dashboard to delete your voice data from the service."

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



Club Officer Election Announcement and Officer Duties

It is time to elect our officers. Here's the process, the positions, and the responsibilities:

The nomination process is simple. Any member is eligible to run for any office. You can nominate yourself or have another member nominate you for one or more of the offices. All the offices (president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer) are elected in November for a one-year term, January through December of the next year. Nominations are taken in September, October, and November before the elections. The elections are held at the regular November main meeting.

Only SHCC members can vote. The candidate with the most votes for an office is the winner for that office. A person can only hold one office at a time. Some jobs of each office are flexible, some are defined, some change from year to year depending on the officers' capabilities and availability.

The president is ultimately responsible for everything, but being responsible doesn't mean the president has to do it all or even should. Delegation and management is all a part of the president's duties. The president makes sure the meeting topics are set, the speakers are prepared, runs the regular club and officer meetings, audits the monthly treasurer report and membership databases, tracks door prizes, and monitors most of the club's activities. The WYSIWYG column is optional, but a great forum to pass along information to the members. The president also makes sure that the different coordinators are appointed and do their jobs. The president enforces the constitution and club's policies. The president does whatever "Club Officer Election Announcement And Officer Duties" things cannot be done by anyone else.

The vice president has a catch-all job. The person must be flexible and be prepared to run the main and officer meetings if the president cannot. This officer usually picks up a project or two during the year to lift the burden from other officers. The vice president arranges for meeting speakers, but help is available as needed.

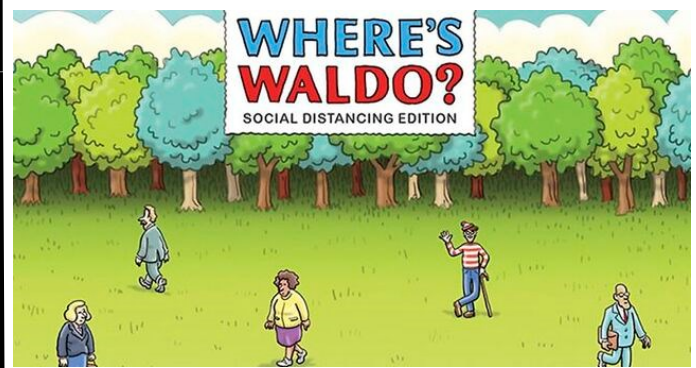
The secretary maintains the membership database which is tracked in a Microsoft Access database (SHCC owned). The secretary audits the treasurer report to make sure that the membership money collected matches the membership counts in the database, prints a report for member check-in at the main meeting, and maintains several reports, such as a membership list. The secretary mails dues notices. The secretary makes sure that sign-in table materials needed at each regular meeting are there early before people start arriving.

The treasurer maintains records for all the money taken in and paid out from the club's checking account. The

SHCC currently uses Quicken (SHCC owned) to track the funds and generate reports for the officers. The treasurer also audits the secretary's membership counts. The treasurer makes reports to the officers at the officers' meeting and four times a year to the club's membership. The treasurer is responsible to get all SHCC funds into the checking account and responsible to generate checks for all expenses.

All the officers attend the officers' meeting that takes place during the week after the main club meeting. The date, time, and location are flexible to the agreement of all officers. Historically these meetings have been at 7:30PM on the Monday or Tuesday after the regular meeting. We hope everyone considers this invitation; this call to service. It does involve some work but can be a lot of fun. Normally it takes a few hours a month beyond the main and officers' meetings. The president's job takes more, and how much more depends on delegation. If you have any questions concerning the duties, feel free to contact any of the officers.

{Ed. note: The WYSIWYG newsletter editor/publisher is not an officer. It is appointed by the Officers. Anyone can volunteer for this position. If interested, contact any Officer. But we may have to schedule an arm-wrestling event. Just sayin'...}



What the Heck is That; and Why Didn't I Do This Before?

By Greg Skalka, President
Under the Computer Hood Users Group
www.uchug.org president@uchug.org

The world is full of interesting things. As an engineer, I am usually in the habit of analyzing everything I see. Occasionally I will find something I cannot quite figure out initially, but often with a little help, it may make sense.

We all at times get in the habit of doing things a certain way. Even when it has become inconvenient or more costly, we often stick to our old ways despite having considered better solutions. It sometimes takes reaching a tipping point before we decide to try a new method, and often later wonder why it took us so long to change.

What the Heck Is That?

I love little tech gadgets. I buy a lot of little (meaning relatively inexpensive) things just on speculation, thinking that they might be useful. If they are not, at least I will have probably learned something. I am especially attracted to items on sale or that appear to be a bargain.

I buy a lot of USB Flash memory devices - after all, who cannot use more digital storage capacity? I have bought all sorts and styles of USB drives. Some have caps over the USB type A male connector for protection. Some act like a ball-point pen - the connector is concealed in the case and slides out for access. Some are large and some are tiny, not much bigger than the USB connector. I have some that are made of metal, though most have plastic bodies. Some have swivel covers, and some have no cover for the connector at all.

I bought one a while back that I thought was unique - a Patriot Stellar Lite 32 GB MicroUSB / USB 2.0 Flash Drive. (Photo 1) It has a standard USB type A on one end and a USB micro on the other (Photos 2 & 3). It was advertised to work with both PCs (the standard type-A end) and Android mobile devices (the USB micro end), assuming the mobile device supported USB OTG (On-The-Go).

I bought this drive thinking I could easily transfer files between my computers and my Android tablet, but I found, in reality, I had little need to do that. It turns out that I seldom use my Android tablet at all. It is too big to carry around, and at 9" is too small to be comfortable for a lot of reading. With the touchscreen, it is too difficult to use for extensive writing, and



Photo 1: Patriot Box



Photo 2: Patriot Stellar Lite - Type A Side



Photo 3: Patriot Stellar Lite - Micro Side

adding a Bluetooth keyboard and mouse results in the equivalent of an underpowered netbook (remember those?) with some assembly required. My tablet really only served as a gateway device to my Chromebooks and smartphone.

I love my Chromebooks; they are lightweight, small but big enough to be useable, fast booting, and are great as an Internet access device. They don't have much internal storage as I only buy the original, inexpensive kind (those new Chromebooks with large screens, powerful processors and lots of storage are just Chrome OS laptops), so I need to keep SD cards and USB Flash drives with them. Since that Patriot Stellar Lite drive was small and provides less of a lever to catch and break off when plugged in, I assigned it to Chromebook duty.

That is when I began thinking - what the heck is that little peg on the cord that came with the drive? (Photo 4)

The cord obviously keeps the cap for the USB micro side from getting lost, but what is with the funny peg? It kept getting in the way under that side of the Chromebook.



Photo 4: Peg in the way



Photo 5: Peg v Headphone Plug comparison

I was almost going to cut it off when my wife mentioned what it must be for. She suggested it would plug into the headphone jack, and thus retain the drive when it was unplugged. (Photo 5)

I tried this, and it worked (at least for the USB port on that side of the Chromebook — Photo 6).



Photo 7: Stellar Lite in Smart Phone

Mystery solved!



Photo 6: Stellar Lite in Chromebook

I tried it on my smartphone (Photo 7) and it worked as well. (I do not know if it is a necessity, but it must be what the manufacturer of the Flash drive intended.

Why Didn't I Do This Before?

I started regularly reading the newspaper at a young age. I have subscribed to the local paper since moving to San Diego in 1982. While I still get news from the radio and television, the newspaper has always been a trusted source, a familiar format, and my favorite way to stay informed. When Internet news came along, I was ahead of many in questioning how accurate and factual the information was.

I do not often get to read books (or technical manuals, like Mr. Scott from the original Star Trek) for entertainment, but I try to keep up with the newspaper. I am too busy in life right now to succeed in this, however, and am usually days or weeks behind the current issue. Others might discard the paper after a day or so without reading it, but I find much more value in it than just the headline stories. I usually get all the front-page news I need in the little bit of local and national evening TV news broadcasting my wife has on when I get home, or on the radio during my commute. It is the more timeless articles of local, regional, and national issues in the newspaper that I find of most interest. The comics have always been worth the price to me as well.

While I have never had any real problems with the quality or content of the product, it is the price that has given me the hate in my love-hate relationship with the newspaper in the last few decades. Long ago the subscription was a fixed, advertised amount per period that had only reasonable increases over time. Then the newspaper appeared to adopt the pricing philosophy of the cable and satellite TV industry, not "what the market will bear," but what I will call "whatever the individual customer will bear." In this business model, customers don't all pay the same price, and pricing is often not well advertised. Low introductory offers are available for new customers, but these rates soon increase until customers complain or cancel. Customer loyalty seems to be an undervalued trait.

I'm fine with reasonable price increases over time, in line with the general cost of living, but I still have a spreadsheet I generated in 2014 that showed I'd seen a 140% increase in my newspaper subscription cost over the prior three years. Calling and complaining got it reduced by 25%. Then I spoke with a friend in another part of town that got the same paper by paying 1/2 what I did. This price battle with the newspaper went on for years, but there was not much I could do since I had no acceptable alternative.

Though reading the paper was something I enjoyed, it was also a source of household discord. My wife is much like Mary Poppins (practically perfect in every way), and though she did read the newspaper (at least some of the time), she did not like the way I read it. She felt that once the sun had set on an edition it should be discarded; my piles of weeks-old papers were clutter to

her. She blamed the newspaper ink on my hands for grime-marks on the kitchen table (where I read), the nearby furniture, and the walls near light switches. With no children or dogs in the household any longer to blame, I had to be the culprit. The physical paper was also a nuisance when we traveled, as we had to arrange for a neighbor to collect it each day (I didn't want to stop the paper temporarily and let unscrupulous newspaper employees know our house would be vacant). I also had to go out on the driveway each morning and hopefully pick it up (and then call to complain when it was not there).

I had looked at the newspaper's web site as a digital alternative, but a hodgepodge of articles you have to search through is not what I wanted for getting my news. I wanted the same curated experience I got from the print paper, so a PDF version of the published paper would be the only acceptable digital substitute. Even then I was not sure I would be satisfied without the physical part of the newspaper experience.

Finally, after another price increase and another reading of the riot act about my piles of papers from my wife last fall, I seriously investigated the digital edition of the newspaper (it was included in our paper subscription anyway). I found you could read a reproduction of the paper on their web site (with a viewer I found less than ideal), and you could also download a PDF version. With the digital-only subscription costing 1/4 of what we were paying for print, I finally was motivated to cancel the paper version and went digital-only. No more trips to the driveway (or to the neighbor's after a vacation), and no more late (or wet) papers or tips to a delivery person.

Unfortunately, I've yet to figure out how to download the PDF version from their site successfully with a Chromebook. I now download on a Windows computer to my small USB Flash drive and read them on my Chromebook at the kitchen table (or wherever). The papers can pile up on my Flash drive without my wife complaining of clutter. She says the household grime level has gone down as well, but I am suspicious of the sudden improvement, which may just be coincident with cleaning for the holidays. I have heard it said (probably by a woman) that men are bears with clothes, so I may be accused of having my hand in the honey jar yet in the future.

I have tried reading the PDF paper on my smartphone, but it is way too difficult on the small screen. I have to scroll around to show only a small segment of a column on the screen to satisfy my old eyes. With the Chromebook, I can read when viewing the full-page width, and can still enlarge a bit more if necessary one day (something not possible with real paper).

(Continued on page 8.....What the Heck)

Modern Television Technology

By Jeff Wilkinson, President
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After a recent class on “Getting the Most From Your Roku” and in preparation for a March General Meeting update on “Cutting the Cord”, I reflected on how different television viewing is today. Growing up in San Francisco my family had just a few choices for television viewing, all over the air, and received with an antenna either mounted on the roof or rabbit ears that sat on top of the huge console. I’m sure we all remember the gyrations we went through when using rabbit ears in an attempt to receive a stable snow and ghost-free picture! And, of course, the drudgery of walking over to the TV to manually change the channel.

How times have changed, now we change channels from our favorite viewing spot and control source, volume, channel, and even record our favorite shows!

Today, we watch TV on smartphones, tablets, computers, and television sets in various resolutions. We stream to TVs using different devices like Roku, Fire TV Stick, and Android boxes and we do it in a multitude of formats.

Many years and millions of dollars have been spent to build a streaming infrastructure capable of on-demand and live streaming to a myriad of different devices and configurations. The Internet wasn’t set up to do this – top quality video in such a large scale according to said streaming media consultant and expert [Dan Rayburn](#). Streaming isn’t a static medium like TV, and our on-demand consumption pattern requires video to travel through lots of steps as it’s formatted for the final destination device.

If you look at some of the parts of the required process of streaming a live event, it is a complicated and involved process. First, you must capture the event, then convert the file format and maybe add a content protection scheme or ad insertion for on-demand revenue models and, finally, formatting for delivery through the Internet to a multitude of devices.

According to Mr. Rayburn, it’s a lot more complicated. There’s no standard for encoding, so video files need to be “wrapped” differently for every platform they’re delivered to; files are wrapped differently for [Roku](#) than they are for a desktop browser, a smart TV, or an Android or iOS device. A single video file could be wrapped 20 times or more depending on the devices to which it’s being delivered. Enjoying video on a powerful computational device such as an Xbox or PlayStation is different than streaming to a device with less memory and computational power such as a Fire Stick. The size of the video file segments must be adjusted as well as the metadata payload. And we have begun to take for grant-

ed that the video we desire will be available in 720, 1080p, or even 4K quickly and reliably when and where we want it.

Video streaming is a whole new frontier to be developed and as the deployment of streaming options continually expands, so must the technology and computing power needed to reliably deliver it.

Just a little background as to what is involved in streaming content as we all anxiously look for ways to improve our television viewing experience.


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(Bluetooth.....Continued from page 4)

ple devices to communicate with a computer over a single adapter. Microsoft Windows 10 supports Bluetooth 5.0, but your computer may have a Bluetooth device that was built to an earlier Bluetooth version. (Along with the Bluetooth version, there are Bluetooth Profiles, but we’ll leave that as a subject for a future article.)

Though you may not have thought about it, here are some of the more common applications of Bluetooth:

- Wireless control of, and communications between, a mobile phone and a hands-free headset. This was one of the earliest applications. 
- Wireless communications with PC input and output devices, the most common being the mouse and keyboard.
- Replacement of traditional wired serial communications used in test equipment, GPS receivers, medical equipment, Bar code scanners, and traffic control devices.
- A link between game consoles such as the Nintendo Wii, and the Sony PlayStation and their respective controllers.
- A link between a video camera and a remote Baby or Pet Monitor.
- A link between a Garage Door Opener Motor and the Remote Garage Door Opener Controller.
- An audio link between a Smartphone and speaker or headphones.

As you can see from this list, there are many reasons for computing devices to communicate with each other. And as more devices become smart, there will probably be more uses for the Bluetooth wireless technology.

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Thoughts From a Clicker

By Tiny Ruisch

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I love going to a carnival. I don't go on many of the rides anymore, but I love all the fun things there are to do. Unfortunately, carnivals can be dangerous too.

There are always pickpockets who will steal everything they can. We often hear of rides that injure people. About the only thing that is safe at a carnival is the healthy food you can buy. The Internet is a lot like a carnival. Everyone knows about the dangers and we all keep our antivirus programs updated. I know that all the Cajun Clickers club members have their router firmware updated. Their firewalls are active to keep the bad guys away. Since everyone is so safe, I thought that this month I'd talk about some fun things to do on the Internet. After all, many people are spending a lot more time at home trying to avoid the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19). It is keeping a lot of people at home with lots of spare time on their hands. There are a lot of fun sites. I know that everyone doesn't have the same idea of what's fun. Maybe if I tell you about my favorite sites, you might find something entertaining.

One of the things you can find a lot of on the Internet are free games to play. If you're looking for games to play, a good place to start is Gizmo's list of [Best Free PC Games](#). This site is updated often and all the games are free to play. My personal favorite online game is Texas Hold'em Poker. There are a lot of places to play, but you'll usually find me at World Series Poker at [AOL Games](#). There are lots of online games on the site, but I haven't played many of the others. If you like to play hearts, I recommend you try the [Microsoft Gaming Zone](#). The Gaming Zone has been around for a while and they have lots of games.

I've never been much of a television or movie watcher, but I love to listen to the old-time radio shows. Most evenings I'm listening to The Lone Ranger, Gunsmoke, Jack Benny, or my personal favorite, Fibber McGee & Molly. My network drive has about 21 GB of radio program files. You can get them and many more at the [Old Time Radio Internet Archive](#).

In December 1995, Bill Watterson retired from cartooning. I lost my daily dose of one of the funniest cartoons ever. Now, thanks to the Internet, I can still read Calvin & Hobbes every day. You can find a daily comic you'll like at [GOCOMICS](#), [Comics Kingdom](#), or [ArcaMax Publishing](#). None of the comics sites require registration.

"[The Alphabet has been Updated with 15 Exciting New Letters](#)" is only one of the funny satires you'll find in [The Onion](#). This fictional, satire paper started in 1988. They've been around more than twenty years, so they must be doing something right. Their news stories seem

so genuine that they have occasionally been cited as real. I've got to warn you though. There is often adult language used in the paper. Another satire site I like is the [Babylon Bee](#). For a great description, check out their About Us page.

I'll show my age a little. I don't mind being called a "senior" because it usually includes a 10 percent discount. If you like senior citizen humor, you also might like to check out [Geezer Guff](#).

As you might or might not know, I'm a transplanted Northerner. When I talk with my brother and sisters on Facebook, I usually translate into Southern for them. Everybody gets a few laughs. Translating into a dialect is easy when you use The [Dialectizer](#). As I write this you can convert into nine different dialects. It hardly ever fails to make me laugh. Here is a sample:

As y'all might o' might not know, I'm a transplanted No'therner. When ah talk wif mah brother an' sisters on Facebook, ah usually translate into Southern fo' them, dawgone it. Ev'rybody gits a few laughs. Translatin' into a dialect is easy when yo' use Th' Dialeckizer. As ah write this hyar yo' kin cornvaht into nine diffrunt dialects. It hardly evah fails t'make me laugh.

That's just a few of the things I like to do on the Internet for fun. I hope you enjoyed them too and found a new site you'll visit often. Thanks for reading.

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Other Computer Clubs

Updated info about other computer clubs in our area (whether with physical meetings or online meetups) can be viewed on the "Other Computer Clubs" page of your SHCC web site.



Web Page Reviews

by Paul Baecker — webwatch@sterlingheightscomputerclub.org



This column attempts to locate sites containing valuable, amusing, and free content, with no overbearing pressure to purchase anything. ***Our club members only*** 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 “read” a URL (Universal Resource Locator), also simply known as a “website address”.

<https://rasmussen.libanswers.com/faq/32405>

The Dialectizer takes text or other web pages and instantly creates parodies of them.

<http://rinkworks.com/dialect/>

5 warning signs your SSD is about to break down and fail.

<https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/5-warning-signs-ssd-break-fail/>

Free software abounds on the web. Just stay away from pirated products, no matter how enticing the offer may be.
<https://www.maketecheasier.com/dangers-of-using-pirated-software/>

Over 100 illustrated articles for Windows 10 newbies as well as advanced users covering basics, customization, fixing annoyances and problems, performance/productivity, security, storage, networking, backups, and more.
<https://www.laptopmag.com/articles/how-to-use-windows-10>

How to completely block Internet access for specific Android apps.

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/block-internet-access-for-specific-android-apps/>

Review of 5 graphical backup tools for Linux computers (Ubuntu and Mint distributions).

<https://www.tecmint.com/backup-tools-for-ubuntu-and-linux-mint/>

How to fix “Your Connection Is Not Private” in Google Chrome.

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/fix-connection-is-not-private-chrome/>

How to cool down your room without air conditioning.

<https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/how-to-cool-down-a-room-without-ac/>

In some situations, Windows updates can be delayed or can be reinstalled (when they fail, which happens occasionally). Here is how to download and install Windows updates manually.

<https://www.ghacks.net/2019/07/30/how-to-download-and-install-windows-updates-manually/>

Considering acquiring a new PC? Will you choose one with an Intel or an AMD processor? You will find that many AMD processors are comparable (and some are superior) to many Intel processors, at a lesser cost to you.

<https://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/amd-vs-intel/>

How to take a screenshot of an entire webpage (that is, including the webpage parts that fall below the PC’s screen).

<https://www.howtogeek.com/287992/how-to-take-a-screenshot-of-an-entire-webpage/>

Robot spy hummingbird films thousands of monarch butterflies. (3-min. video)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hq3X60H7aBo>

What is the new **USB-C** technology? It will probably be on the next PC you purchase.

<https://www.pcmag.com/how-to/what-is-usb-c-an-explainer>

Consider trying out these 10 simple steps to help speed up your PC and make it less prone to performance issues.

<https://davescomputertips.com/10-steps-to-help-speed-up-windows>

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.