

**Abort,
Retry,
Ignore....**

Founded 1984 **ARI** is the
Official Newsletter of
Computers Are Easy User Group

November/December 2014
Volume XXXI Issue 11

**Confirmed
meeting
dates**

December 6, 2014
1st Saturday

January 24, 2015
4th Saturday

February 21, 2015
3rd Saturday

:: :: :: ::

Check
www.caeug.net
for confirmed
meeting dates
**MEETING
PLACE**
is the
Glenside Public
Library

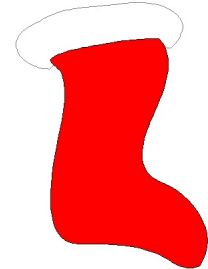
:: :: :: ::

Visitors
Welcome
**HOPE TO SEE
YOU THERE!!**

:: :: :: ::



**First Saturday
December 6, 2014 presenter:
Roger Kinzie
will demonstrate
EZ Vinyl/Tape converter software.**



The Board would like
to wish all a very
Happy Holiday!!!
Happy New Year!!!

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Clouded Judgment

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

December 2013 issue, DriveLight

www.uchug.org president (at) uchug.org

Clouded Judgment

The latest trend in computer operation and data storage is “in the cloud”. This refers to storage of files not on your local computer hardware, but on remote servers which are accessed through the Internet. The cloud can be used to store your files so they can be accessed from anywhere, not just from your own computer. Applications can be stored and run through the cloud, requiring less sophisticated local hardware.

Almost all computer users today presently use the cloud, and many probably don't realize it. There are of course the online file storage sites which many use for storing and sharing photos. Any photos you view that are not in your computer, tablet or smartphone's local memory or hard drive are coming from the cloud. Videos you watch from YouTube, Netflix or other web sites originate in the cloud. All the information you posted to Facebook about your personal activities now resides in the cloud. Anytime you play one of the games associated with the Google Doodles, those changes made to the Google home page logo to celebrate or commemorate something, you are play a game in the cloud. In reality, the cloud is the Internet.

Silver Linings

There are a lot of advantages to cloud storage and operation for the computer user. With your files stored on a hard drive in someone else's server, you don't need to have as much hard drive space of your own. Most online services, including Google, Yahoo and Amazon, provide some free cloud storage to their account holders. Having your files in the online storage provided by these companies allows access to your files from any computer connected to the Internet. If your computer is stolen or fails, your files are still safe in the cloud. This can be a great means of data back-up, and most software back-up programs now include a cloud option and online storage space for their customers.

Watching media content from the cloud has many advantages over local content. A vast array of movies and videos can be available to view over the Internet without the hassle of loading and storing on your local hard drive.

Many programs that you might otherwise have had to install and run from local storage space on your computer can now be run over the Internet, often through a web browser. Web mail is one example of a cloud application. With an email client like Outlook or Thunderbird installed on your computer, you can download and read your Gmail email and store it on your PC. Should something happen to your PC, however, your stored messages may be lost. By using the web mail online application for Gmail instead, you can always access your new and stored messages from any PC connected to the Internet.

More and more companies are providing cloud-based applications. Cloud software allows users to save local disk space, avoid installation issues, buy on a subscription basis and always have the most current version. For software makers, cloud subscription software lowers distribution costs and provides continuous revenue streams. In addition to the traditional versions installed on your PC, Intuit now provides a web version for all of its TurboTax programs. Office 365 is Microsoft's cloud version of its Office software suite. It allows users to buy a subscription to

their productivity software and run it from the Internet, with access for up to five PCs and five mobile devices. This allows users to have access to the most current Office software on a yearly or even monthly basis, with 20 GB of online storage for documents.

Another advantage of cloud computing is that the hardware requirements are lower, allowing computing devices that are less expensive and more mobile to be used. Tablet computers and smartphones don't have internal hard drives and their internal Flash memory space is limited, so cloud file storage is almost a necessity. Google's low-cost Chromebook computers are specifically made for cloud computing. The latest version, built by HP, has 16 GB of Flash memory, no hard drive and is priced at \$279. It runs Google's Chrome OS and relies on applications that run online like Gmail and Google Docs, with most data files stored in the cloud. With lower hardware requirements, cloud devices like this can be cheaper, lighter and have greater battery life.

Dark Clouds

Unfortunately, there are a number of downsides to the cloud computing scenario. All those files you stored on someone else's server are now no longer fully under your control. Cloud services companies are occasionally acquired, sold and shut down, so you may not be able to depend on your data being there when you need it. Cloud providers can also have access problems outside of your control, causing you to lose access to your data, perhaps at critical times. If your web email provider is down, you lose all email access. If you instead use an installed email client, you at least have access to the email archived on your PC.

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With your data in the cloud, not only can there be problems for you to access your data, there can also be unintended access to your data by others. Since the terms of service are often unintelligible, you may not have full certainty that your data won't wind up in places you didn't intend it through intentional actions by the cloud companies. And you really don't know what might happen to your data if the company's servers are hacked. It is therefore risky to put sensitive personal information in the cloud, even if it is encrypted, as it could be compromised through no fault of your own.

Another problem with cloud computing is that it requires an Internet connection (often through Wi-Fi only) to do anything useful. If you can't get online, all those files and photos of yours in the cloud might as well be on the moon. That Chromebook laptop may be small and light, but unless it can get a Wi-Fi signal (it has no wired Ethernet connector), it is pretty much useless dead weight, as most of its apps run over the Internet. Other Wi-Fi devices like most tablet computers have the same issue. Even with a cellular-connected tablet or smartphone, a good connection is never guaranteed. I recently found this to be the case in the lower decks of the U.S.S. Midway Aircraft Carrier Museum. If you want to be sure you can watch a movie on your tablet during your next plane flight, you'd better load it on the device.

The performance of web-based applications is often much worse than that of apps running on

your local hardware. This is especially true if your Internet connection is poor. Even with good connections, some web sites always appear to be slow. I much prefer to use a local email client for my email as my email provider's web mail site is so slow to respond.

Clearing the Air for Personal Clouds

In spite of the drawbacks, the trend towards computing devices that are more mobile yet storage-limited, like tablets and smartphones, is accelerating this push into the cloud. External USB hard drives and Flash drives may be popular storage accessories for laptops, but few tablets have USB connections. A new class of external storage devices promises to expand the local storage for Wi-Fi devices like tablets, smartphones, Chromebooks and even laptops. These devices combine the bulk storage of a hard drive or Flash memory with a Wi-Fi hot spot to create your own personal cloud.



The Gigastone Smartbox (<http://www.gigastone.com/>; \$45) combines an SD memory socket with an 802.11 b/g/n hot spot and a lithium ion battery. It allows up to six Wi-Fi devices to connect and share up to 32 GB of SDHC memory, providing handy file sharing and streaming. It can even provide a back-up power source for USB-powered devices.



The Sony WG-C10 Portable Wireless Server (http://www.sony.net/Products/ws/en_us/pwsintro; \$80) does all the Smartbox does for eight simultaneous users, and adds a port to share a USB Flash drive.



SanDisk's SDWS2 Connect Wireless Flash Drive (www.sandisk.com/products/wireless/flash-drive, \$60) does the same as Sony but can't charge other devices. The Kingston Digital MobileLite Wireless Flash Reader (www.kingston.com/us/usb/wireless; \$60) and Wi-Drive (\$60 for 32 GB) are similar products.



Another class of mobile storage devices uses a hard drive instead of Flash memory, providing much more storage capacity. This includes the Patriot Aero Wireless Mobile Drive (www.patriotmemory.com; \$150 for 500GB), a 500 GB or 1 TB USB3 external hard drive that serves to up to five wireless users. Other similar devices include the Corsair Voyager Air (www.corsair.com/voyager-air) and the Seagate Wireless Plus (www.seagate.com).

In spite of drawbacks, a greater use of portable devices means an increase in cloudiness in the computer world. To avoid operating in a dangerously obscuring fog, good judgment must be used in determining how and where to access the cloud and what data to store there. Personal clouds like the wireless mobile storage devices now available can be a safe and convenient storage alternative for use with mobile devices.



Lamp Post 164 by John Spizzirri December 2014

Microsoft (MS (1)) is suing the Internal Revenue Service (IRS (2)) under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA (3)). The IRS has hired a contractor, Quinn Emanuel (4), to evaluate the accounting practices of MS to the tune of \$2 million (that's tax dollars). Apparently no one at the IRS is smart enough to figure out what MS owes in taxes so, they have to hire a law firm to do the work. MS is concerned about the confidentiality of their internal practices as well as the actual communication between Quinn Emmanuel and the IRS.

- 1) <https://www.microsoft.com/>
- 2) <http://www.irs.gov/>
- 3) <http://www.foia.gov/>
- 4) <http://www.quinnemanuel.com/>

Have you ever typed in a web site or clicked on a link and had to wait. Is it your computer, your connection, or the web site causing the delay? Find the answer at Is it down right now.com (1).

- 1) <http://www.isitdownrightnow.com/>

PCWorld reported (1) on a coalition of eleven software, hardware, and security companies that found and removed 43,000 malware infections that were aimed at "Fortune 500 companies, journalists, environmental groups, software companies, academic institut pro-democracy groups and government agencies". This sounds like the targets of the National Security Agency (NSA (2)), but these were actually targets of attackers called Axiom (by the coalition). Axiom is a group of attackers linked to the Chinese government. The coalition included MS. The cleanup was accomplished using Microsoft's Malicious Software Removal Tool (MSRT (3)). MS is a prime mover in this coalition through its Coordinated Malware Eradication (CME (4)) initiative. MS seems to have realized that they are not the only company impacted by malware aimed at their software. They started the Virus Information Alliance (VIA (5)) to involve other entities in a coordinated effort to stop malware. I guess they wanted to come through on the promise made by Bill Gates in his trustworthy computing memo in 2002 (6). The summary of the coalition's finding is at Novetta (7).

- 1) <http://bit.ly/1CCW5K5>
- 2) <https://www.nsa.gov/>

- 3) <http://bit.ly/1lytDQv>
- 4) <http://bit.ly/1w79MTg>
- 5) <http://bit.ly/1FGMCCQ>
- 6) <http://bit.ly/1FlgX62>
- 7) <http://bit.ly/1zGFdS4>

While researching the Axiom story (above), I discovered some interesting (useful) parts of the MS web site. Here is what I found;

Troubleshooting malware
<http://bit.ly/1FGMHGS>

Microsoft Security Essentials error codes
<http://bit.ly/1y56Oos>

Freeing disk space
<http://bit.ly/15LXxAv>

Avoid tech support phone scams
<http://bit.ly/1vDazZo>

Answers to common questions
<http://bit.ly/1B36lth>

Updating MS software
<http://bit.ly/1HPpdTD>

Search for the latest threats
<http://bit.ly/1HPpeXL>

Holy smoke! The U.S. is spying on smart phone users. The Wall Street Journal let the cat out of the bag (WSJ (1), (2)). Edward Snowden (3) is in the clear. He did not reveal this secret. I wonder if the WSJ reporter, Devlin Barrett, will be prosecuted under the 1917 Espionage Act like Snowden. If you have seen small planes flying above you, you may be the target (4). Since the FAA air space rules (5) changed about 32 years ago, most airports in the suburbs of major cities with busy airports have closed. They closed not only due to the rule change but a combination of factors including property taxes, low profitability of the aviation business, and increasing land value. Before the rules went into effect, about 30 airports in the Chicago and collar counties closed in the previous twenty years. Before those rules I would see a single engine aircraft about half a dozen times a day. As the airports have closed there are fewer and fewer small planes. Up until last year it was seldom (once a week) that I would see a small plane flying the suburban area. This year has been different. I see a small plane (not near an airport) about two to three times per week. Perhaps this story ((6), (7)) is the reason why. The last line of some of the articles is telling. It reveals what our government thinks of us. Here is the quote from the DOJ (8), "What is done on US soil is completely legal. Whether it should be done is a separate question." Really?

1) <http://on.wsj.com/1B36L8q>

- 2) <http://reut.rs/1z5uVuC>
- 3) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Snowden
- 4) <http://engt.co/1yqhWV6>
- 5) <http://1.usa.gov/1pCM1zY>
- 6) <http://bit.ly/1pCM3rl>
- 7) <http://bit.ly/1zGFxjF>
- 8) <http://bit.ly/1FIhGnJ>

You may have read or heard about the cargo rocket that exploded on take off from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA (1)) Wallops Flight Facility (2), an island off the coast of Virginia. NASA reported that the launch pad suffered major damage. No one was injured or killed. Before any salvage or recovery efforts could begin, "an unidentified official on the range controller's audio channel noted that the cargo contained 'class-5 crypto' and so the launch site must be kept secure." The failure occurred six seconds after launch (3). When the failure was noted, a self destruct command was sent to the rocket. This was a cargo launch vehicle that had a number of payloads including supplies for the International Space Station (ISS (4)). The ISS will not run out of food as a Russian supply vehicle was launched a few hours later. Planet Labs (5), a private American company, lost 26 CubeSat Dove satellites. The Doves were to be used to continuously photograph the Earth. Most of the satellites that now photograph Earth are owned by governments. The pictures are given or sold to private concerns only under strict regulation. You may have seen these types of pictures on Google Earth (6). Google Maps (7), or Mapquest (8). The Jet Propulsion Lab (JPL (9)) in association with the University of Texas Austin also lost a CubeSat satellite (9). Planetary Resources (10), the asteroid mining company, lost a satellite as well. Orbital Sciences (11) designed the Antares rocket (12). The rocket is named after the red supergiant star (13) in the Scorpius (14) constellation, A.K.A. Scorpio. Antares is almost 900 times larger than our sun and only twelve millions years old. By comparison, if our sun was the size of a BB, Antares would be the size of a gigantic soccer ball (15). I was unable to find out what 'class-5 crypto' is. In searching for the definition to class-5 crypto, I found a number of free on line classes in cryptology ((16), (17)).

- 1) <http://www.nasa.gov/>
- 2) <http://www.nasa.gov/centers/wallops/home/>
- 3) <http://dailym.ai/12hGvb2>
- 4) <http://bit.ly/1vlboGe>
- 5) <https://www.planet.com/>
- 6) <https://www.google.com/earth/>
- 7) <https://www.google.com/maps>
- 8) <http://www.mapquest.com/>
- 9) <http://1.usa.gov/1yxylm8>
- 10) <http://bit.ly/1A4ECuf>
- 11) <https://www.orbital.com/>
- 12) <http://bit.ly/1FGN4Bb>
- 13) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antares>
- 14) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scorpius>
- 15) <http://amzn.to/1z5vq83>
- 16) <https://www.udacity.com/course/cs387>

17) <https://www.coursera.org/course/crypto>

While awaiting the start of the movie The Hunger Games: Mockingjay - Part 1 (1) this past week, there was an advertisement for a smart phone app called Run Pee (2). This smart phone app tells you when it is safe to leave the movie for a few minutes to heed the call of nature. It tells you when there are scenes that could have been eliminated from the film without affecting the plot line. I found it odd that the movie house would accept an ad that tells you to use your phone. About a minute after that ad played the theater ran the announcement to turn off your cell phones. You can get the same information at home before you go to the movie at the Run Pee Internet site (3).

- 1) <http://bit.ly/1rHPj6w>
- 2) <http://runpee.com/>
- 3) <http://m.runpee.com/>

With the amount of e-mail, instant messaging, and social media that each of us are involved in, a look to the future is in order. I keep a list of sites with the user names and passwords in a sealed envelope. That envelope is marked and given to my executor for use in the event of my death. I am considering getting rid of Facebook (1) now. Facebook requires a death certificate (2) in order to close an account by next of kin. I was alerted to the Facebook problem by an article in Forbes Magazine (3).

- 1) <https://www.facebook.com/>
- 2) <http://on.fb.me/1HPpWV4>
- 3) <http://onforb.es/15LXyEs>

I found a random number generator web site (1). It has links to many free services that involve random numbers.

- 1) <http://www.random.org/>

Between you, me and the LampPost. That's all for now.

Google Voice

by Dick Orenstein, Member, Sarasota PCUG, FL
June 2014 issue, PC Monitor
www.spcug.org [dicko \(at\) spcug.org](mailto:dicko@spcug.org)

Google Voice is a free telephone number that you can direct to forward calls to any other telephone number. In addition, you can block calls, receive transcribed messages, and do numerous other activities. Google Voice will also dial and connect calls for you; however, the call will be connected to another telephone number, i.e. your cell phone or your land line, as you direct.

For a visual introduction you can go to this YouTube link:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cOZU7BOeQ58>

If this link does not work here are two things you can do: first, copy the link to the URL window of your

browser, not the search window, the window with the web page address in it. And second, you can search Google (or any other search engine) for “Google Voice” and find a long list of assistance.

You may be able to get a Google Voice number that is within your area code, but in today’s world the area code of the number is not necessarily an indication of the location – witness mobile phones. Most of us have a mobile number from our home base, but if we move, most don’t change the number. And in my case, I have a mobile number from there, but have a Google Voice number from this 941 area code, and calls get routed to my cell phone!

To get a Google Voice number, sign into Google Voice (you do have a Google Account don’t you?) by going to the URL, www.google.com/voice. If you don’t have a Google Account (some-name-you-choose@gmail.com), you can do it right there.

Once there, you can answer the questions and select your phone number from a list that will be presented.

Once you have your number, you’ll now have to set up certain parameters so that the number works for you as you desire.

The first thing you’ll want to do is to establish your settings. Click on the gear on the right side of the screen, and then click “Settings.” The first tab is “Phones.”

Since you already chose a number, you will see that number and “Change/Port” and Delete and Transfer as available options. I do not recommend porting your mobile number as that will limit choices down the road. You will want a NEW GOOGLE VOICE NUMBER.

Then you will see a list of options for forwarding calls. I forward calls to my mobile number, but you can select other options which include forwarding calls to up to six (6) other numbers. You can “Add another phone” by clicking on that link.

The next tab, “Voicemail & Text” allows you to record a greeting, play your greeting, set up an email alert, forward texts, add a PIN and to turn on transcribing messages.

The “Calls” tab allows you to turn on Call Screening, and a number of other pretty self-explanatory options.

“Groups and Circles” tab allows you to establish actions by grouping. In order to use this feature, your address book has to be part of Google Contacts. That feature is beyond the scope of this article at this time, but I’ll make a follow up. For now, all incoming calls will be treated the same.

“Call Widgets” can be put on any web page, and allow people to call from that web page. When somebody clicks on the widget, we call them and connect them to you. Your number is always kept private. You can create multiple call widgets and have different settings for each of them. This, too, is beyond the scope of this article.

“Billing” will allow you to set up Calling Credits. These can be used to make calls (outgoing) to other number, mostly in our case international numbers, at low rates. You can look up the rates for international calls.

And, “Account” is some simple setups, language, time zone passwords, etc.

On the left of the Google Voice page are two red boxes, “CALL” and “TEXT” that allow you to call

another number using Google Voice. US numbers can be called for free and are connected to the phone you specify. For example, I can call someone from my Google Voice number and speak to them from my cell phone. I might do that because I do not want that person to see my real cell phone number. So, I click "CALL," enter the number I wish to call and specify to connect the call to my cell phone. You may do the same for text messages by clicking the "TEXT" box and entering the mobile number and the message.

So, let's summarize the advantages that Google Voice provides:

1. A new phone number with lots of control. The ability to allow or block callers, screen calls, forward calls to numbers by who made the call, and to transcribe and received messages by email.
2. An ability to make calls from you Google Voice number and speak from any device that's handy to you at the time.
3. It's free.
4. Depending upon your use, you will find many more advantages as you use these features.

I am also referring you to a great article by Kim Komando at <http://www.komando.com/tips/248497/3-great-things-you-never-knew-you-could-do-with-a-free-internet-phone-number/all>

Again, if the link does not work, copy it into your browser's URL window.

November December 2014 DVD of the Month

AdwCleaner - Updated adware removal tool
ARI - Monthly newsletter
cCleaner - Updated hard drive cleaner
CDOMlists - Contents of CDs and DVDs of the Month
ComboFix - Updated malware removal tool
ezVinyITape - Copy vinyl/tape to digital
gPodder - Podcast downloader
JRT - Updated Junkware removal tool
Malwarebytes - Updated antivirus program
MemberContributions - Things members send me
OldTimeRadio - Old radio audio files
RKill - Updated malware removal tool
SmartBootManager - Boot manager
SuperAntiSpyware - Updated antivirus program
SyncBackFree - Synchronize and backup files
TDSSKiller - Updated bootkit removal tool
Win10 - Windows 10 ISO file with key
WinDiskImager - Raw disk image writer

Meeting Location and Special Accommodations

The Glenside Public Library address is at 25 E Fullerton Avenue, Glendale Heights, Illinois. Please park away from the building. Thank you. The meeting(s) are not library sponsored and all inquiries should be directed to Mike Goldberg at

. Individuals with disabilities who plan to attend this program and who require certain accommodations in order to observe and / or participate in the program are requested to contact CAEUG president, , at least five (5) days prior to the program, so that reasonable accommodation can be made.

Mailing address:

CAEUG
P.O. Box 2727
Glen Ellyn, IL 60138

Members Helpline

Any member with a specific expertise can volunteer to be on the Members Helpline.

Hardware problems, XP,
Win 7, Linux
and Virus Removal
- John Spizzirri

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