

Abort,
Retry,
Ignore....

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

April 2020
Volume XXXVIII Issue 4

Confirmed
meeting dates

:: ::

:: ::

April 25

Room A

CANCELLED

:: ::

May 23

Board Room

CANCELLED

:: ::

Confirmed
Picnic date

June 20

Mailing address:

CAEUG

P.O. Box 3150

Glen Ellyn, IL

60138

:: ::

MEETING

PLACE is the

Glenside Public

Library

:: ::

Visitors

Welcome

HOPE TO SEE

YOU THERE!!

Our April, 2020

NO MEETING

PER GLENSIDE WEBSITE

LIBRARY CLOSED UNTIL END OF MAY

REMINDER: \$20.00 Membership dues for 2020 are due.

See Kathy, John or Mike at the meeting or

mail dues to CAEUG, P.O. Box 3150, Glen Ellyn, IL 60138



Lamp Post 223

April 2020

by John Spizzirri

The Decorah Eagle cams (1) have shown much activity this past month. The south nest was first to hatch eaglets on March 30th and the 31st. The north nest hatched two eggs on April 5th. The last egg in the north nest hatched on the

evening of April 8th. By the time you read this the eaglets will weigh about two pounds and the white fuzzy feathers will be replaced by the gray fuzzy feathers that will let them regulate

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10 April 2020 DVD of the Month

Stay Home, Stay Safe, Wash your hands!!!!

Hopefully we will see everyone at the picnic

Stay tuned for updates!!!



their body temperature without the help of the adults.

1) <https://is.gd/YAuMFO>

Addendum to using Defragger

Disk fragmentation happens when a file or files is/are scattered in pieces on the HDD or SSD. The SSD has no mechanical lag time in accessing (reading or writing) data so defragging is unnecessary and, in fact, detrimental to SSDs. The number of writes is limited from 3,000 to 100,000 times per memory cell depending on brand and quality. According to Defragger's documentation, it warns the user that the drive is a SSD and does not need defragging. Unnecessary writes, like defragging, shorten the life of an SSD. The life of your SSD can be checked with the Self Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Technology. (S.M.A.R.T. 1) analysis tool (1). You can use CrystalDiskInfo (2). It gives more information in a better format. Its free at Crystal Dew World. CrystalDiskInfo is an HDD/SSD utility software which supports a part of USB, Intel/AMD RAID and NVMe.

1) <https://is.gd/Cs4IqH>

2) <https://crystalmark.info/en/?p=28>

Lawrence Gordon Tesler passed away (April 24, 1945 – February 16, 2020). He was an American computer scientist ((1), (2), (3), (4)) who worked in the field of human–computer interaction. Tesler worked at Xerox PARC, Apple, Amazon, and Yahoo!. Tesler was the man that gave Steve Jobs (5) the tour of Xerox PARC (6) with the demonstration of the graphical user interface (gui) and the use of the mouse. That tour led to the Lisa and ultimately to the Macintosh computers. He was the advocate of mode-less computing. That means that data or constructs used in one program can be used instantly in another seamlessly. He is responsible for the idea of cutting and pasting on a computer (7).

1) <https://is.gd/3sgFYS>

2) <https://is.gd/d6Ok9k>

3) <https://is.gd/KsyteG>

4) <https://is.gd/lvOMYB>

5) <https://is.gd/Qu9Hv2>

6) <https://is.gd/WZzftQ>

7) shorturl.at/gjkGH

Seti@home (1) is in 'hibernation'. Search for Extra Extraterrestrial Intelligence used massive computing power of idle home computers connected across the Internet to analyze data collected from radio telescopes around the world in search of intelligent signals. It has been 20 years of data collection and analysis. The project will redirect its efforts in new directions while documenting the last 20 years. If you are connected to Seti@home you may remain connected but your computer will not be getting any new jobs. Seti@home recommends connecting to Science United (2) and selecting a field of science to help out. I did my own checking and found

Folding@home (3). I got the name from Linus Tech Tips (4), a site I check periodically. Folding@home Consortium was formed to solve COVID-19 characteristics. Folding refers to the way human protein folds in the cells that make up your body. We rely on the proteins to keep us healthy and they assemble themselves by folding. But when they misfold, there can be serious consequences to a person's health. The Folding@home site where you can get the download had the covid19 path segment (5). Linus Tech Tips also mentioned it on his YouTube Channel (6).

- 1) <https://is.gd/KOX2iG>
- 2) <https://is.gd/x7tgQU>
- 3) <https://foldingathome.org/>
- 4) <https://is.gd/n3OWhU>
- 5) shorturl.at/iFIU3
- 6) <https://youtu.be/KU4qOebhkfs>

In the last Lamp Post coverage of museums with on line tours, I forgot an important museum in Seymour, Indiana. I was reminded of it while watching a documentary about the Tuskegee Airmen Red Tails ((1), (2), (3)). The museum is the Freeman Army Airfield Museum ((4), (5)). The curator is our own Larry Bothe. He is responsible for much of the content and many of the pictures on the web site. The 1995 movie 'The Tuskegee Airmen' (6) with Laurence Fishburne, Allen Payne, and Malcolm-Jamal Warner. It glamorizes the outcome while glossing over the hardship that existed. The movie is free to Amazon Prime (7) members (i.e. you already paid for it).

- 1) <https://amzn.com/B007CU8POI>
- 2) <https://youtu.be/zv4HtBaKKXs>
- 3) <https://youtu.be/qMPLpExgkGg>
- 4) <https://is.gd/aUPsl3>
- 5) <https://is.gd/oNJaZS>
- 6) <https://is.gd/AMsfuy>
- 7) <https://is.gd/DoOXKf>

Kim Komando (1) has had a number of great tips about our home confinement. First and foremost, financial attacks abound (2). Phone calls, e-mails, snail mail, and text messaging are used to get you to give up Social Security Numbers, name, address, birthday, maternal maiden name, back account numbers and other personal information. Demands or requests for fees to expedite stimulus checks. Just remember that the government already knows who you, where you live, your SSN, your bank account number, if you computer file your income tax, and will never, EVER request a fee to be paid by gift card. To find out exactly how much you may be 'entitled' to, check the U.S. Treasury site ((3), (4)) for the tool to check eligibility and the date of expected payment. It will also calculate the amount of payment. Do not fall for checks mailed to you for some unusual (larger) amounts with instructions that they can only be used for the purchase of automobiles or other big ticket items.

On the entertainment front Kim has listed ten sites 'to watch free movies'. They are Kanopy (5), Popcornflix (6), Vimeo (7), Internet Archive (8), Sony Crackle (9), Vudu (10), IMDb TV (11), hoopla (12), The Roku Channel (13), and YouTube (14). Kanopy and hoopla require a library card. Vimeo has access only to member created videos. All have free areas, but most have paid areas or pay per view for some content. Hoopla offers all the content of the library - ebooks, audio books, videos, audio, and streaming services. Kim also offers tips on protecting yourself from the virus via social distancing and cleaning and disinfecting procedures ((15), (16), (17), (18)). [Also, the daily scam (19)]

- 1) <https://www.komando.com/>
- 2) <https://www.komando.com/?p=733184>
- 3) <https://is.gd/d99xV0>
- 4) <https://is.gd/NQQzVJ>
- 5) <https://www.kanopy.com/>
- 6) <https://is.gd/ZgmsWy>
- 7) <https://vimeo.com/>
- 8) <https://is.gd/nZDYbL>
- 9) <https://www.crackle.com/>
- 10) <https://www.vudu.com/>
- 11) <https://www.imdb.com/tv/>
- 12) <https://www.hoopladigital.com/>
- 13) <https://is.gd/rh3yBV>
- 14) <https://www.youtube.com/>
- 15) <https://www.komando.com/?p=733714>
- 16) <https://www.komando.com/?p=710621>
- 17) <https://www.komando.com/?p=735318>
- 18) <https://www.komando.com/?p=735052>
- 19) <https://www.thedailyscam.com/>

Microsoft (MS (1)) released a preview of its Windows 10 May 2020 Update (2), but not to everyone. It is only going to people in the 'insider program', but not to all of them either. If insiders are using 'Windows Mixed Reality', this update will not work. Gee, is this an update or some secret decoder ring for the select few blessed by the ghost of Paul Allen (3)? Incidentally, this was supposed to be released in March then postponed to April now moved to May. MS now can blame the pandemic for the delay to midsummer or later. What will this mean for the September update? In this update they really seem to be hyping Cortana (4). MS wants you to talk to Cortana like its one of the family just like Alexa or Siri. They offer an ability to move the Cortana window. As I have told you since Windows 95, turn off disk indexer because it uses CPU resources, memory and gives you virtually no value in return. Third party file search products worked better (more efficiently). In this update MS says, "In 19H1, we asked Insiders why they were turning off the search indexer. Your feedback helped us make improvements then and helped us focus on three key areas of improvement in 20H1: excessive disk and CPU usage, general performance issues, and low perceived value of the indexer." Gee whiz, it only took 25 years, but did they

really make it better or only say they did? It says quick searches are built in. I thought they already were. I find Bing searches annoying because of the superfluous fluff it shows. It has numerous improvements to the Windows Subsystem for Linux. Not one of those is ease of access to it. Bluetooth pairing experience has been improved but only for Surface (5) products. Virtual Desktop renaming is now possible. Have you ever used Virtual Desktops? Do you know what they are? Do you know how to start them? How to switch between them? I do. It is not easy. Naming them is pointless, as I see it. I searched Google (6) for 'Windows 10 Virtual Desktop'. The fourth item returned was MS information page (7). That page has a video that explains how virtual desktops are almost exclusively for corporate customers that have lots of money, end user devices, and servers. The first item returned was by How To Geek (8) on how a home user can employ the virtual desktop. Their use is not easy compared to other operating systems. Linux has had these for many years with an easy implementation. Mouse cursor speed can now be set. Notepad supports wrap around find and replace, text zooming (resizing without resizing the whole screen), display of line and column while in word wrap, asterisk in the title bar to show the file has been modified, and a number of other items that other text processors have had for years. There are new views on the Network Status page that give more information graphically. Check out the page (4) for all the 'improvements'.

- 1) <https://www.microsoft.com/>
- 2) <https://is.gd/v5DIEi>
- 3) <https://is.gd/38l uq2>
- 4) <https://is.gd/hYJAF2>
- 5) <https://is.gd/5ivy0Y>
- 6) <https://www.google.com/>
- 7) <https://is.gd/6Tg3nm>
- 8) <https://is.gd/KTiyvO>

Last month I mentioned the Covid-19 case tracking map on Bing (MS (1)). I came across another map tracking site at Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center (2). They are both updated a number of times per day and offer detailed information down to local areas.

- 1) <https://www.bing.com/covid>
- 2) <https://is.gd/Oa80w2>

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

Microsoft's AARD Code

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Déjà vu all over again???? From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Window 3.1 was released April 6, 1992. At that time, one had to boot DOS and

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then load Windows. In January of 1992, DR-DOS was being wildly accepted as a better DOS than MS-DOS. Not liking the loss of market share, Microsoft (led by Bill Gates) decided to sabotage the competition.

The AARD code was a segment of code in a beta release of Microsoft Windows 3.1 that would determine whether Windows was running on MS-DOS or PC DOS, rather than a competing product such as DR-DOS, and would result in a cryptic error message in the latter case. This XOR-encrypted, self-modifying, and deliberately obfuscated machine code used a variety of undocumented DOS structures and functions to perform its work, and appeared in the installer, WIN.COM, and several other executables in the OS.

The AARD code was originally discovered by Geoff Chappell on 17 April 1992 and then further analyzed and documented in a joint effort with Andrew Schulman. The name was derived from Microsoft programmer Aaron R. Reynolds (1955–2008), who used "AARD" to sign his work; "AARD" was found in the machine code of the installer. Microsoft disabled the AARD code for the final release of Windows 3.1, but did not remove it, so that it could have become reactivated later by the change of a single byte in an installed system, thereby constituting a "smoking gun".

DR-DOS publisher Digital Research released a patch to enable the AARD tests to pass on its operating system in 1992.

The rationale for the AARD code came to light when internal memos were released during the United States v. Microsoft Corp. antitrust case in 1999. Internal memos released by Microsoft revealed that the specific focus of these tests was DR-DOS. At one point, Microsoft CEO Bill Gates sent a memo to a number of employees, reading "You never sent me a response on the question of what things an app would do that would make it run with MS-DOS and not run with DR-DOS. Is there [sic] feature they have that might get in our way?" Microsoft Senior Vice President Brad Silverberg later sent another memo, stating: "What the [user] is supposed to do is feel uncomfortable, and when he has bugs, suspect that the problem is DR-DOS and then go out to buy MS-DOS."

Following the purchase of DR-DOS by Novell and its renaming to "Novell DOS", Microsoft Co-President Jim Allchin stated in a memo, "If you're going to kill someone there isn't much reason to get all worked up about it and angry. Any discussions beforehand are a waste of time. We need to smile at Novell while we pull the trigger."

What had been DR-DOS changed hands again. The new owner, Caldera, Inc., began a lawsuit against Microsoft over the AARD code, Caldera v. Microsoft, which was later settled. It was believed that the settlement ran in the order of \$150 million but was revealed in November 2009 with the release of the Settlement Agreement to be \$280 million.

Today, few people are aware of the above piece of history. Having shot, killed and buried the competition, when MS was assessed the DR-DOS funeral fee, instead of crying all the way to the bank, likely it was with a smile and a smirk about what had become chump change to MS.

What's the point?

Achieving commercial success by making "shrewd business moves" is often applauded by Wall Street even if they are unlikely to win any "nice guy" awards. As noted on Wikipedia,

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microsoft_litigation#Caldera_v_Microsoft , the DR-DOS episode was not an isolated incidence. Indeed, current Windows 10 events reminded me of this history.

What am I talking about? Two of my favorite, free, programs. The first, Irfanview, is a free program that I have praised for years. While primarily a program that displays, manipulates and converts an amazing range of still image file types, it also addresses a few audio and video file types. In addition, it contains a number of utility routines that I frequently use. It crams an impressive amount of functionality into a relatively small amount of program code. Amongst which is a Slide Show routine with many options. Copy Shop, which scans and prints a document in one continuous pass. Single and batch scanning routines. Screen Shot cropping. And a really fast to load and play, image viewer and MP3 player. Those are a few examples of its array of capabilities. Much more information is available on Wikipedia:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IrfanView> . A more awe-inspiring comment on its range of functions has to do with keyboard shortcuts. Depending on which routines are in use, there are close to two hundred, that's 200, keyboard shortcuts. And, yes, I know how hard it is to remember 20 keyboard shortcuts, much less 200. But if I use an application a lot, some are worth remembering. One Windows 10 keyboard shortcut that I find myself using a lot is the Windows key + d command. That takes you back to the desktop, regardless of how many windows you have open or which one is active.

The second free program is 'VLC media player', AKA 'VideoLan media player', commonly referred to simply as VLC. Best known as the premier player of most existing video file types. Less well known is its ability to play a very large number of different audio file formats. If you don't already use this program, or at least know about it, you should visit:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/VLC_media_player . There, you will learn what the 'C' in VLC stood for. You will learn about its 22-year history, evolution and the long list of formats and platforms it supports. If you Google VLC reviews, you will find that they are overwhelmingly both effusive and positive.

Both of these programs, and several others, have been around for years. Both have been coded by some very smart people. VLC in particular is a Free and open-source software program. A full definition and explanation of that description is available at:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_and_open-source_software . Basically that means that the smartest (granted, and dumbest) programmers in the world can look at the source code for VLC. They can and do, find errors, coding that can be improved, submit additions to VLC and/or simply look for inspiration in some very clever code.

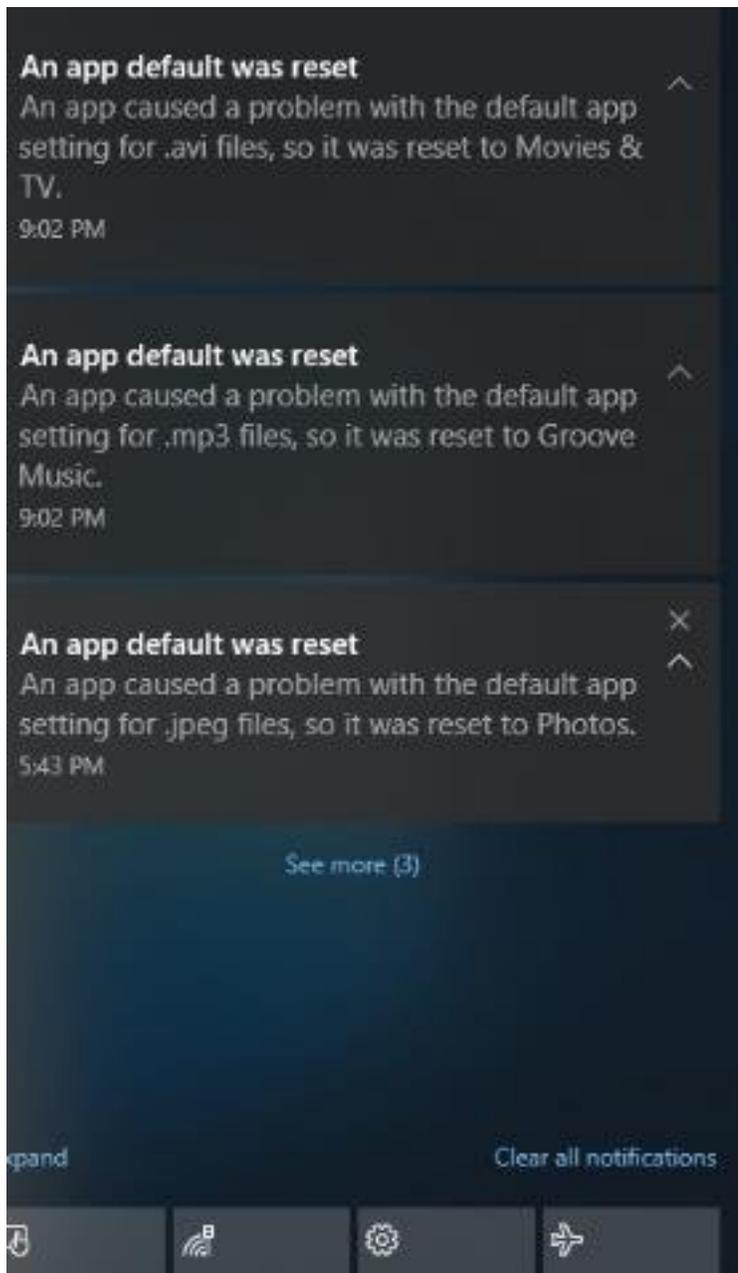
How does that relate to AARD code?

These two programs, and others, have been subject to an interesting occurrence in Windows 10 for some time. Say for instance that you are at a friend's house and she wants to show you a recently taken picture. You are impressed with the fact that almost as soon as you heard the second click on the icon, the picture is displayed on the screen. That's fast! She then shows the several ways you can quickly navigate between displayed files in a folder, zoom in/out, rotate, crop, etc. So when you get

home, you Google 'Irfanview download.' You learn that it is available from a lot of download sites, including the authors. One of them will likely be www.MajorGeeks.com, my personal favorite, and you will notice there are two parts to Irfanview. The main program and Irfanview plugins, which is much larger. You see each one is available in both 32 bit and 64-bit versions. You download both in the version that matches your OS, install the main program, install the plugins, and run the program. One of the setup screens lets you choose which file types will be associated with Irfanview as the default application. Choosing 'All' works well. Windows will go through your files and change the icon by the file name to the Irfanview icon: With the program up and running, you double click on a .jpg file and up pops your picture. A little while later, a little box pops up in the bottom right corner of your screen. If you notice it at all, you hardly have time to read it before it disappears. If you click on the messages icon at the right end of the taskbar it will show up there. It will open and display the



message one time and then go away. This is what you might have missed:



After that message popped up, Windows went back through your files and changed the icon next to your jpg pictures to the icon for 'Photos.' The same type of thing happens with the MP3 files and the video files.

You can go into settings and change it back to Irfanview, or VLC, or whatever your favorite program is that suffered the same fate. Soon after you do that, or perhaps not till after you re-boot, Windows 10 will pop out the "An app default was reset" window and change everything to: THE MICROSOFT DEFAULT APP.

Now, if you have been a computer geek for a few decades, like me, you suspect the only problem my Irfanview app and the other apps caused was having the audacity to install themselves as a default app in competition with the Microsoft app. It strikes me that there is some similarity between

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what is happening in Windows 10 and what happened to DR-DOS in Windows 3.1. There is one notable difference between the two scenarios, with the AARD code, a phony error code was generated. With Windows 10, there is no error code. The implied message is: "We are Microsoft, trust us, when we say your APP caused a problem, there is something wrong with your APP."

To paraphrase the internal memo quoted in the AARD finding: : "What the [user] is supposed to do is feel uncomfortable, and when he has bugs, suspect that the problem is (with his APP) and then stick with the default Microsoft APP." That is exactly what I would guess a huge number of Windows 10 users have done. This URL is just one of several where users were complaining.

<https://answers.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/forum/all/windows-10-issues-with-setting-photo-viewer/5ec485ad-199f-4d7f-880a-42039ac3b4cf>

While at that URL and others, there are a number of useless suggestions and a couple of workarounds that do work, one thing stands out by its ABSENCE. "Your APP violated Microsoft Windows 10 programming guidelines by doing this..... and causing error code xxxxx." Another thing that seems odd, the following URL is dated February 23, 2016:

https://answers.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/forum/windows_10-start/an-app-default-was-reset/cee24e42-f55e-47e7-b88c-30698f8b6706

Consider that last week I did a clean install of the latest release of Windows 10, version 1809. That when I ran that installation, and installed the latest versions of Irfanview and VLC, that is the installation from which I obtained the above screenshot. That means that at least THREE YEARS has gone by since "An app default was reset" started showing in Windows 10. Can anyone honestly believe that considering the sheer number, quality, and experience of the programmers writing, reviewing, and donating to the VLC code, that if Microsoft told them what "problem" the VLC app (and the other apps) actually caused, it would have been fixed years ago!

So how do you fix this issue? Windows 10 will not let you go to Setting, Apps, select Groove and choose uninstall. I tried that! So I Googled the problem. As I am sure you are aware, how you word a query in Google can result in very different answers. I don't remember how I worded my question, but one of the first responses referenced using Powershell and displayed the command lines to uninstall Groove Music. I cut and pasted the lines into Powershell, and uninstalled Groove Music, Photos, and Movies&TV. When there was no MS default music app to reset itself to, Windows 10 stopped complaining about the Irfanview MP3 music player, and the Irfanview MP3 music player continued to function just fine. Ditto the other two, and I was happy. My immediate problem solved, I stopped researching the problem.

While writing this article, I did some more Googling of the subject and was impressed with the number of different apps the complaints were about, the huge number of complaints overall, the length of time the issue has existed, the number of times non-functional or silly solutions were presented, the few workarounds that actually work, and the length of time that MS has seemingly stonewalled the issue. One find of possible interest to those that are skittish about editing the Registry or using Command lines, checkout this URL: <https://www.thewindowsclub.com/stop-windows-10-resetting-default-apps> .

There you can download and run a free program called " Stop Resetting My Apps"

that deals with six of the more frequent complaints. The reviews I looked at were mostly favorable. Caveat emptor, do your own due diligence.

April DVD of the Month

ARI - Monthly newsletter
Audacity - Updated audio editor
AudioBook - Free audio book

BackupStartMenuLayout - BackUp & Restore
Start Menu in Win10
DVDOMIists - Contents of CDs and DVDs of the Month

FoldingAtHome - Install PC sharing software
HashTab - Calc & display hash values 4 MD5, SHA1, etc

IObitUnlocker - Unlocks files for deletion
LIghtworks - Video editing software

Meazure - Measures screen objects and much more
Medial nfo - Comprehensive data contained in a media file
MediaPlayerClassic - Light-weight open source
media player 4 Win
MemberContributions - Things members send me
MSI -Afterburner - Overclocking utility 4 graphics cards
MusicBee - Makes it easy to manage, find, and
play music files

OBSStudio - Open source software 4 video recording
and live streaming
OldTimeRadio - Old radio audio files
ProcessHacker - Utility 2 help monitor system resources

qBittorrent - Peer2Peer torrent software
RevoUninstaller - Uninstall Win apps completely
ShareX - Screen capture, file sharing and productivity tool
Speccy - Updated hardware inventory
SuperF4 - Kills the foreground program on
press of Ctrl+Alt+F4
SysInternals - Updated system utility programs
TreeSize - Scan your drive(s) in seconds & find
space hogs

Note: All DVD of the month will be available at the next meeting we will be able to have.

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

MikeGold60137(at)yahoo.com. 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, Mike Goldberg at MikeGold60137(at)yahoo.com, at least five (5) days prior to the program, so that reasonable accommodation can be made.

Mailing address:
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P.O. Box 3150
Glen Ellyn, IL 60138

Members Helpline
Any member can volunteer to be on the Members Helpline.
Hardware problems, Win 7, Win 10, Linux and Virus Removal
- John Spizzirri Phone 6pm-9pm
630/858-6933

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