

Abort,
Retry,
Ignore....

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

March 2020
Volume XXXVIII Issue 3

Confirmed
meeting dates

:: ::

:: ::

March 28
Room A

:: ::

April 25
Room A
TBA

:: ::

May 23
Board Room

:: ::

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 March 28, 2020 presenter:

**NO MEETING
LIBRARY CLOSED UNTIL APRIL 6TH**

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 222
March 2020
by John Spizzirri

The Decorah Eagle cams (1) have shown much activity this past month. Both the north and south nests are occupied with brooding pairs. They are feeding quite well with this mild weather. The first south nest egg was laid on

February 21st as compared to February 22nd last year. The first egg in the north nest was laid on February 26th. The eggs take about 35 days to hatch.

Con't pg 2

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Stay Home, Stay Safe, Wash your hands!!!!
Hopefully we will see everyone at the April meeting
Stay tuned



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

As I write this on PI day (1) that happens to be the birthday of Albert Einstein (2), I am looking at the mail I received yesterday. I have a large envelope marked with the threat in bold type 'YOUR RESPONSE IS REQUIRED BY LAW'. It is from the U.S. Census Bureau (3). The missive is addressed 'To Resident At'. Whenever the government wants money, they know my name and where I live. I found that address mystifying. Inside I find two double sided 8x10 printed pages. No forms to fill out. No envelope to send back. The first sentence on the first page says it is an 'invitation to respond' to the 2020 census. The second sentence asks for my help to count everyone in the U.S. by providing 'basic information' about everyone staying at my address. The letter goes on to promise billions of dollars in tax money that will go toward schools, roads, transportation, emergency readiness, and other public services as well as determining the number of seats in the House of Representatives based on the count. The letter then orders to respond by April 1 at my2020census.gov with a twelve character census ID. It goes on to explain that the Census Bureau is using the internet to 'securely collect your information' in an effort to conserve natural resources and save taxpayer money by not paying census takers. Had my mother lived another year, she would have panicked reading this letter. She had tried using a computer about fifteen years ago, but gave up as it was too confusing. The next line in the letter is a relief to those people who do not want, cannot afford, or otherwise do not use computers. If you do not fill out the online form, a paper form will be sent to you. I interpret the next sentence to re-emphasize the threat that completing the form is 'required by law' followed by the reassurance that the answers are 'completely confidential' (until there is a data breach). The follow up threat is if you do not fill out a form, a Census Bureau interviewer will be sent to your home to collect your answers in person. At this point I went to the site to fill out the form and see what information was being gathered. This year there was not very many probing questions other than race. One page of the questionnaire was dedicated to Hispanic people. The questions wanted to know what kind of Hispanic a person is Mexican, Mexican-American, Cuban, Puerto Rican (U.S. Citizen), or Portuguese. The following page wanted to know about all other races including 'white' with a an ethnic qualifier (I answered American). I am wondering why this interest in race. I remember a few census questionnaires back there was a fascination with the number of toilets in the house. None of this nonsense is in The Constitution of the United States (4). I did notice that there was no question about citizenship. After finishing the online questionnaire I went back to the letter. On page two it mentions The Constitution Article 1 Section 2. That reads in part, "The actual Enumeration shall be made...every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct." Nothing there about race or toilets or citizenship. The rest of that page went on to pacify people who thought the time it took to fill out the form was an imposition, to tell us the information will only be used for statistical purposes, and that BY LAW this data will be held confidentially by the bureau and all it employees. And we all know that each and every government employee is the epitome of virtue and honesty. Don't we? The second page had instructions for selecting another language on the web site in thirteen languages. Interestingly,

Italian and Romanian were not among those languages.

- 1) <https://www.piday.org/>
- 2) <https://is.gd/RI9o13>
- 3) <https://www.census.gov/>
- 4) <https://constitutionus.com/>

Covid-19 (1), coronavirus (2), novel coronavirus (3), Chinese virus (4), Wuhan virus (5), and Kung Flu (6) are a number of names for the unique strain of flu virus that has developed this flu season. At first, I was puzzled by the term 'novel coronavirus'. The word novel is used in this instance to mean new. That revelation brought me to the understanding that there are at least seven strains of coronavirus with various designations. The news in past years has used those names without using coronavirus in the same sentence. Some of those names are NL63, MERS, and SARS (7). Covid-19 is also known as SARS-CoV-2. Just to be clear the disease is named Covid-19 while the virus is named SARS-CoV-2 (8). Viruses and diseases usually have different names because the medical community that treat diseases names the disease to aid in the dissemination of information to prevent the spread and help in treatment of the disease. The virus or bacteria is named for its genetic structure to aid in combating it micro-biologically (vaccines and serums). Scarlet fever is caused by *Streptococcus pyogenes* (*S. pyogenes*), for instance. It is just another factoid that seems confusing, at first. Because of the naming confusion, social media gossip, political polarization and media coverage of it, thoughtful steps must be taken to get and implement the correct information to prevent becoming ill or to recover from the illness. I found Esquire Magazine's article about fire myths you should stop believing (9) helpful. The facts (as opposed to myths) are; masks are not as helpful as you might think, the death rate is not 100%, a long exposure is not necessary, pets have NO known transmission of the disease to humans, Covid-19 resembles the flu but is much more serious. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (10) has a great frequently asked questions (FAQ) site for Covid-19 (11). They also have a household plan web site (12) that will come in handy with Governor Pritzker's lock-down orders ((13), (14)). These orders have serious implications regarding The Constitution and the Illinois Constitution (15). The Illinois Legislature has passed laws ((16), (17)) astonishingly allow Pritzker's antics without their consent. Here is a three page summary of the Covid-19 virus need to know facts (18). Snopes has set aside a special page (19) to keep things straight. Microsoft's (MS (20)) Bing has a world map that keeps track of the number of cases, active cases, recovered cases, and deaths by geographical division that is updated a few times per day (21). Just as I was finishing this article Google opened its Covid-19 informational web site (22).

- 1) <https://is.gd/LFLHj1>
- 2) <https://is.gd/NohRw3>
- 3)

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/NovelCoronavirusFactSheet.pdf>

- 4) <https://is.gd/KFwAjJ>
- 5) <https://is.gd/GGhmWI>
- 6) <https://is.gd/m2GCY5>
- 7) <https://is.gd/DizNOH>
- 8) <https://is.gd/1WYBkb>
- 9) <https://is.gd/C3YKGY>
- 10) <https://www.cdc.gov/>
- 11) <https://is.gd/N0xYzp>
- 12) <https://is.gd/uiwmtS>
- 13) <https://is.gd/2910jH>
- 14) <https://is.gd/hXxQx7>
- 15) <https://wp.me/p1RGXs-f0r>
- 16) <https://is.gd/IHasRa>
- 17) <https://is.gd/AQ949r>
- 18)

https://www.elsevier.com/___data/assets/pdf_file/0011/974621/Novel-Coronavirus-Infection.pdf

- 19) <https://www.snopes.com/?p=238235>
- 20) <https://www.microsoft.com/>
- 21) <https://www.bing.com/covid>
- 22) <https://www.google.com/covid19/>

Now that you are 'sheltered in place' a.k.a sentenced to house confinement without the ankle monitor, the lyrics of the song "We Are The Champions" came to mind "... I've done my sentence, But committed no crime." Once you have cleaned your home to CDC standards (2), you may need something to do. Youtube (1) has loads of new videos to see. About 300 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute (3). Beware of movies labeled as 'corona virus apocalypse' or something similar. These films are mislabeled in order to get clicks. Youtube will crack down on this, but be aware that it will happen. Youtube also has films that you can buy or rent. Some R rated films will want you to have a Gmail (4) account as you will get the message 'Sign in to confirm your age'. If you have Amazon Prime (5), there are a plethora of 'free' (you have already paid for them by Prime membership) movies and TV series available to you in addition to music. On the music score (pun intended), you can specify a genre or a specific artist in the YouTube search to bring up hours of music by that artist or in that genre for free. There are a number of free music web sites that do not require registration ((6), (7), (8)). There are also Web sites that access broadcast radio stations ((9), (10), (11)). If that is not enough, you can take the Google Virtual Arts and Culture tour of the world (12). The Louvre in Paris is closed to tourists, but virtual tours are free (13). I found one Russia's Hermitage museum (14). It is five hours long, shot on an Apple iPhone 11 Pro (15) with some live dancers and classical music thrown in for good measure. Perhaps you are more inclined to see what New York has to offer (16) or closer to home Chicago (17). You may want to take a picture postcard tour of the world (18). Maybe you would like to visit a few zoos across the country ((19), (20), (21), (22), (23)). After reading this section of the Lamp this 'Nothing to do' video (24) should not apply to you. To

re-enforce the CDC guidelines, this video was created (25). One additional item I found when researching this article is in the Red Cross home standards which I won't duplicate here. That had only one item that was not in the CDC standard which was do not shake any laundry before it is washed.

- 1) <https://www.youtube.com/>
- 2) <https://is.gd/uiwmtS>
- 3) <https://merchdope.com/youtube-stats/>
- 4) <https://accounts.google.com/>
- 5) <https://is.gd/eXaEX7>
- 6) <https://www accuradio.com/>
- 7) <https://www.jango.com/>
- 8) <https://www.pandora.com/>
- 9) <https://www.iheart.com/>
- 10) <https://live365.com/listen/>
- 11) <https://radiooooo.com/>
- 12) <https://is.gd/qrFXgq>
- 13) <https://is.gd/dy5tsh>
- 14) <https://youtu.be/49YeFsx1rlw>
- 15) <https://www.apple.com/iphone-11-pro/>
- 16) <https://is.gd/3V18EK>
- 17) <https://is.gd/YEACrg>
- 18) <http://www.airpano.com/>
- 19) <https://kids.sandiegozoo.org/node/410>
- 20) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Z07UxjZCoo>
- 21) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6UzpzMwwT8>
- 22) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e9KA2elY8kk>
- 23) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9Sust-85aQ>
- 24) <https://youtu.be/C0t8cF6RR1s>
- 25) <https://youtu.be/p7-UqoG1Rck>

Many grocery, drug, pet, and other stores have senior hours. These are the hours when the stores are the cleanest. Check with each store either on the Internet or by phone for those hours to see if you qualify or if you are excluded.

Tax time is right around the corner. The President moved the income tax filing and payment date to July 15 ((1), (2), (3)). If you are 'sheltered in place' you do not have to do your taxes, yet. The reprieve is great if you owe because you get an additional two months of low interest loan. If you have over paid, do your taxes today, get that money back ASAP. Kiplinger, a personal finance news and business forecasting company, has free podcasts with ads. Their podcasts are available on line every week (4). They cover a variety of topics including which tax software is the best (5), protecting your digital assets (6), and the truth about DNA testing (7).

- 1) <https://is.gd/2JSEes>

- 2) <https://is.gd/bFmSy6>
- 3) <https://is.gd/oiT7Va>
- 4) <https://is.gd/EsqJdl>
- 5) <https://is.gd/RXat4E>
- 6) <https://is.gd/XjRiMI>
- 7) <https://is.gd/3yTHYo>

What if you or someone in your family gets Covid-19? What documents will you need (1)? These documents should be available for all health emergencies. First, is a list of all medications, conditions, and doctors that care for the patient. Second, medical and property power of attorney. Third, a sealed list of current usernames and passwords for all computers, accounts (financial, e-mail, and social media) - this must only be given to a person that is trustworthy.

- 1) <https://is.gd/LUFb00>

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

Computing Experiences –
My mileage often varies.
Larry Bothe, 2/26/2020

Part One, the Solid State Drive:

At the combined November/December 2019 CAEUG meeting, I did a presentation about a flight simulator we* built from components in 2018 and 2019. One of the key pieces is a computer we got from John Spizzirri. It started life about 10 years ago as a Windows 7 gaming computer. In order to power the flight simulator, we upgraded to 16 gigs of RAM, and added a 4-monitor video card with 6-gigs of dedicated onboard video memory. After upgrading to Windows 10, we loaded flight simulation software and were off and running, sort of.

During the presentation I mentioned that we were not happy with how long it took to load the very large background scenery files that go with the simulation program. Further, every time you change tasks, the scenery has to load again. In our museum environment, when we have visitors "flying" the simulator, we change tasks for each new "pilot". It seems like we spend half of our day waiting for each new task to load. In December I told CAEUG members that we were looking into changing from a spinning platter hard disk drive (HDD) to a solid-state drive (SSD) with no moving parts. SSDs have much faster access and data transfer rates; 6 to 10 times faster than HDDs. And oh-by-the-way, the bigger ones have recently come way down in price. A 1-terabyte SSD can be had for as little as \$100 these days.

Due to the rapidly changing technology of SSDs, there are several iterations of these drives on the market. The most recent (fastest) one is NVMe. They look like a large stick of chewing gum. The end plugs directly into an NVMe socket on the motherboard. Oh, but wait, our motherboard is 10 years old. No NVMe socket. Not to worry. We'll buy an adapter card (\$20) that fits in an available PCI slot in our machine, plug the SSD into the adapter, clone the HDD onto the NVMe drive, and we'll be good to go. Didn't work. The old architecture of the motherboard doesn't allow booting from a PCI slot.

How about Plan B? We can buy another adapter (\$30) that will allow us to mount the SSD in an available 3.5" drive bay, and use existing HDD wiring to connect the drive. In order to simplify things we loaded just the simulation software onto the SSD this time. It worked, but loading the simulation program from the SSD took about the same amount of time as loading from the HDD. How could that be? The SSD, even using the less efficient wired connection, should be 6x faster than the HDD. At that point we decided to look at some information (specifications) for the HDD. During that research it was revealed that the HDD transferred data at the maximum rate for a SATA interface. We were limited by the interface; not the drive speeds.

*The Freeman Army Airfield Museum, Seymour, IN.

What does all this mean? It means we wasted about \$160 and 2 months. And we better get used to waiting; it's not gonna run any faster. As I said, my mileage often varies, widely.

Part Two, using Defraggler

Over the years, on several occasions, John Spizzirri has told me that he prefers the hard disk defragmentation and optimization utility software called Defraggler, from Piriform, over the built-in disk defragmenter found in the Windows operating system. At one point John tried to explain to me why he believes Defraggler is better, but I can't recall enough to lay it out for you here. Perhaps John could be convinced to write a sidebar to this article explaining his preference for the Piriform product.

Piriform is the same software company that brings us the very popular hard drive and registry cleaner called CCleaner. I have been using CCleaner for many years on my own machines, and putting it on computers belonging to friends when called upon to help them with a machine that has bogged down over time. Piriform also publishes Speccy, the program that gives you a very detailed listing and specifications of every bit of hardware, software and operating system that is in or on your computer.

All 3 of these programs, CCleaner, Defraggler and Speccy, are available free of charge for non-commercial home use. Just search on the program name. There are also pay-for-it "professional" versions that get you automatic updates (very

convenient) and customer support (which I have never used). I believe that if you regularly use free software or a free service you should pay for it in some way. That can be either by making a donation (like I do for Libre Office and Wikipedia), or by paying for the professional version, as I do for CCleaner. I knew my "professional" version of CCleaner expired at the end of January 2020. When they had a Black Friday sale offer of 2 years for 3 machines for the normal price of one machine for one year, and threw in the professional versions of Defraggler and Speccy, all for the one low price of \$24.95, I bought in. That in turn got me to thinking about John's preference for Defraggler, and a couple of weeks ago I finally made the switch.

When you open Defraggler it asks if you want to make it your primary defragmentation and optimization program. I told it YES, and then set the Win 10 Defrag to run manually, rather than on a scheduled, weekly basis. Then I scheduled Defraggler to run weekly instead. It is worth noting that to get a defragmentation program to run, the computer must be turned on. You can't have your fragmentation program set to run at midnight if you turn your computer off every evening. Since I leave my computer on most nights, I schedule defrag for 11:30 on Wednesdays. Further note that it is important to turn your computer off periodically; to recover hogged up RAM, and for some updates to be properly installed. I turn my machine completely off about once a week, and then restart it while I go do something else for a few minutes, like make lunch. After dealing with the scheduling issues, I ran Defraggler manually, in the middle of the day.

The first thing I noticed about Defraggler is that it takes a lot longer to run than Windows Disk Defragmenter ("Defrag"). The first run of Defraggler took something on the order of 3 hours. Defrag would have taken 15 or 20 minutes. Defraggler must be doing a lot more detailed work than Defrag; that or it's pathetically slow. I prefer to believe the former. The next, more pleasant, difference is that Defraggler gives you a color graphic layout of the drive it is working on. You can "see" what it is doing, and how it is coming along. After a while, watching the little colored squares move around becomes akin to watching paint dry. However, it's better than watching Defrag run, which is like watching paint that is already dry.

When Defraggler first analyzed my C-drive it said I had about 1100 fragmented files. After the first 3-hour run, it still reported almost 300 remaining fragmented files. I immediately ran Defraggler again. This time it took something over an hour to run through, and when finished reported only about 25 remaining fragmented files. I decided I could live with that for now, knowing that Defraggler would run every week and eventually fix essentially all the fragmented files. Note that while all this defragging was going on, I was mostly out in the garage servicing my lawnmowers. That's why I can't tell you the exact times for the two runs.

Now you want to know the end result of switching to Defraggler. I didn't do any benchmarking studies so I can't provide empirical data. However, the whole machine seems to run better now. It boots faster, and executes faster when I'm working. I'm glad I made the effort to switch to Defraggler. Mileage improved.

One final comment; really a question. The marketing description for Defraggler specifically says it works with solid-state drives. But I have read, and always thought, that SSDs do not require defragmenting. My laptop, where I'm writing this article, has an SSD. Does "works with SSDs" simply mean that Defraggler won't harm an SSD, or is there a real benefit of running Defraggler on an SSD? Perhaps John Spizzirri can tell us that as well.

Larry Bothe is an associate member of CAEUG. He served as president for a time back in the 90's when he lived in the Chicago area. Larry presently resides in southern Indiana where he is retired from the plastics industry and currently teaches people to fly airplanes. He is also the volunteer curator of the Freeman Army Airfield Museum. He can be contacted at LBothe@comcast.net.

John Spizzirri can tell us that as well Defraggler sidebar

Years ago when Windows XP was released, it was head and shoulders above all previous releases of Windows. Microsoft (MS (1)) in its wisdom continued using the disk operating system NTFS. NTFS had been around since Windows 3.1 in one form or another. It is still used on Windows 10. It uses a Master File Table to allocate disk space. This method promotes disk fragmentation. Disk fragmentation is a condition where files are divided into pieces and scattered around the disk. On a mechanical disk, gathering those pieces takes time. Mechanical disk makers try to make the disks operate faster by increasing the spin rate so that the data can go by the read head quicker. Four problems arise with faster spin rates; one is heat, the second is the drives make a lot of noise (they sound like jet engines), the third is they wear out quicker, and fourth they are more expensive. Since most people buy the less expensive disks and PC makers install the less expensive disks a method of defragmentation must be used in order to keep the PC system speed at an acceptable level. MS came up with a defragmenter that worked well on its FAT32 file system but the one it used on NTFS fell far short on performance (it was slow) and quality (it did a bad job). There was a free defragmentation program I used back then that I do not remember the name. They were eventually purchased by MS and incorporated into Windows. Unfortunately, MS changed the way the program worked that made it unsuitable for corporate use. We turned to Defraggler by Piriform. It was free and worked the way we wanted it to work (fast and automatically). Piriform has changed their name to cCleaner (2). Defraggler worked well until about 2013 or 2014. I do not know what Piriform did but Defraggler slowed down to a crawl. I switched to Auslogics Disk-Defrag Free (3). It was speedy and offered an optimization feature. About eight months ago Auslogics removed the optimization feature from the free version. It is fast but does not optimize the disk. I went back to Defraggler (4) and was happily surprised that cCleaner had returned its speed and had added an optimizer. Optimization is a movement of files that are most used to a place on the disk where they can be accessed the fastest.

- 1) <https://www.microsoft.com/>
- 2) <https://www.ccleaner.com/>
- 3) <https://is.gd/zjvTUQ>
- 4) <https://is.gd/8MM9SI>

March 2020 DVD of the Month

ARI - Monthly newsletter

AS-SSDBenchmark - SSD speed checker

AudioBook - Free audio book

cCleaner - Updated disk cleaning utility

ClearDiskInfo - Disk Info and health information utility

DataLifeguardDiagnostics - Tests WD internal and external drives

DVDDOMLists - Contents of CDs and DVDs of the Month

DVDShrink - Updated tool to fit a DVD-Vid on a single DVD

F-SecureOnlineScanner - Find and remove viruses, malware and spyware on your PC

Handbrake - Updated tool for converting video from nearly any format

InfraRecorder - Free CD/DVD burning solution

KateEditor - Updated a multi-document editor

LibreOffice - Updated an office suite

MajorGeeksRegTweaks - Updated like god mode

MakeMKV - Converts videos to MKV format

Malwarebytes - Updated free malware virus eliminator

MemberContributions - Things members send me

MKVToolnix64-Bit - tools to create, alter and inspect MKV files

OldTimeRadio - Old radio audio files

PocketRadioPlayer - Internet radio player

SeaTools - Updated diagnostic tool checks health of Seagate drives

SpywareBlaster - Updated realtime spyware blocker

TinyWall - Lightweight firewall

TorBrowserBundle - Tor Browser to experience real private browsing

UBCD - Updated ultimate boot CD ISO

UltraVirusKiller - Kills viruses and ransomware

WinDirStat - Updated disk space utility

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

Mailing address:

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Members Helpline

Any member can volunteer to be on the Members Helpline.

Hardware problems, Win 7, Win 10, Linux and Virus Removal

- John Spizzirri

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