CAEUG — Computers Are Easy User Group

Abort, Retry, Ignore....

Confirmed meeting dates
:: ::
Library Closed
Stay Safe
Stay Home
Wash hands
:: ::
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 May, 2020

NO MEETING
PER GLENSIDE WEBSITE
LIBRARY CLOSED UNTIL END OF JUNE

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 224
May 2020
by John Spizzirri

The eaglets at the Decorah Eagle cams (1) are in much the same position we are in this past month. We can't leave the nest yet. The eaglets are gaining weight. By the time you read this the eaglets will weigh about 7 to 8 pounds and their black feathers are coming in replacing the gray fuzzy feathers. The sad news is that one of the eaglets at the south nest died of unknown causes leaving only one eaglet in that nest.

Table of Contents

Stay Home, Stay Safe, Wash your hands!!!!
Hopefully we will see everyone at the picnic
Stay tuned for updates!!!

The south nest eaglet is the oldest of all the Dechorah eaglets.

1) https://is.gd/YAuMF0

The founders of Instagram launched a web site that tracks the spread of COVID-19 (1). Rt.live (2) graphs all the states in the U.S. and each state individually for the Rt value which is a measure of how fast Covid-19 is spreading. It looks like Montana and Alaska are following the social distancing guidelines the best. That might be because no one lives there.

1) https://techcrunch.com/?p=1976802
2) https://rt.live/

Bank of America sent an e-mail to me with these tips about fiscal and on line security (1):

One - Whether masquerading as IRS agents, tech-support personnel or the attorney for the grandchild who's supposedly in jail, criminals pressure their targets to buy gift cards for iTunes, Google Play, Best Buy and other popular retailers - and ask them to provide the code numbers, or PINs, on the back of the cards so they can be redeemed.

Two - If someone you don't know wants to pay you by check and asks you to wire some of the money back or give them cash, beware! It could be a scam that could cost you thousands of dollars.

Three - The bank will never email or text you requesting you to call or respond with your account number, PIN or access code.

Four - Scammers may pose as government officials, law enforcement or even bank employees to steal your personal information. Always validate a person's organization by calling them back through an official phone number.

Five - The bank will never call you or visit your home asking you to verify your account numbers, password or access code. If you receive a call, text or e-mail, or someone comes to your home asking for this information, don't give it out. Consider installing an app to block robocalls to your phone.

Six - Scammers may ask you to pay in advance for things like debt relief, credit and loan offers, mortgage assistance or a job. They may say you've won a prize, but first you need to pay taxes or fees. If you do, they will probably take the money and disappear.

Seven - Scammers use e-mail or text messages to trick you into giving them your personal information. These messages seem identical to official correspondence. Check it out first by calling a phone number you trust and talk with someone about the notification. Don't call phone numbers mentioned in the questionable message.

Eight - Scammers may pose as an employee of a large telecommunications company or a technical support provider to tell you that your computer is experiencing technical problems [or virus infections]. They will ask for remote access to solve the problem before demanding that you buy software or pay a fee to fix the computer.

Nine - Use caution when wiring funds to unknown people or businesses. Scammers posing as a government official, relative, closing agent or some other trusted source often modify wiring instructions to route your money to the wrong account.

Ten - Scammers typically demand immediate responses and payment. Sometimes they even threaten law enforcement or legal action. If you feel threatened or are asked not to provide details to others or your bank about the reason for transaction, it could be a scam. Always ask The bank for help.

Contact the bank immediately if you feel you may have been a victim of a scam.

1) https://is.gd/xWACpG

Zoom (1) video conferencing software has had security problems in the past few months during its 20 fold increase in users. They have taken steps to alleviate those problems (2). They have added passwords and a waiting room so that meeting administrators (known as hosts) have more control of who can be 'in' the meeting. Hosts can now kick out any or all meeting participants. Zoom no longer allows a search for existing meetings. Hosts may lock meetings once started. Hosts may prevent recording a meeting. Until recently, the company claimed end to end (E2EE (3)) communication encryption. It may be that the public relations people did not understand what the tech people told them about Transport Layer Security (TLS (4)). TLS offers only encryption 'in transit' and thus NOT end to end encryption. The vulnerabilities do not affect most users unless they have financial transactions, corporate or government secrets. or other communications that could, if compromised, adversely affect themselves or other people. Zoom also collects data about the users of its services. What does it do with that data? The Register (5) reported that it was collecting and selling personal data (6) to various Internet businesses. The Register followed up (7) with a report that UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson had a "digital Cabinet" meeting using Zoom apparently oblivious to the lack of security. They pointed out that Access Now (8), a human rights organization, wrote an open letter to Zoom about their lack of transparency and a poor privacy policy. Zoom in response to the public pressure changed their policy (9). Time will tell if they tell the truth. In his blog, Bruce Schneier, a computer security on the board of the Electronic Frontier Foundation (10), indicated that he did not think that Zoom had done enough to correct their security problems. (11)

1) https://zoom.us/
2) https://zoom.us/security
3) https://is.gd/Ol1MbO
4) https://is.gd/huFTKB

5) https://www.theregister.co.uk/
6) https://is.gd/drnyrD
7) https://is.gd/PMe2KJ
8) https://www.accessnow.org/?p=33025
9) https://zoom.us/privacy
10) https://www.eff.org/
11) https://is.gd/GmzoR8

I turned on my Windows 10 PC on May 15th. It found some updates. Among them was KB4556799 (1). This update did not bother my PC. Unfortunately, that update causes many PCs to blue screens of death (BSOD (2)). If you are having problems, you may want to try to back out of the update to see if that cures the problem.
To do that start the PC in safe mode.
Go into settings.
Select update and security.
Click the update history link.
Click the Uninstall Updates link.
Choose the update KB4556799 to undo.
Click the Uninstall button that appears on the toolbar.
Follow the instructions and restart the computer.

1) https://is.gd/7VIiAm
2) https://is.gd/3gqKq3

After twenty plus years Microsoft (1) finally admits in print that it has been wrong (2). Will this be the start of something new? I doubt it.

1) https://www.microsoft.com/
2) https://is.gd/qJKlZg

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

Is there a better gift one can give than money?
By Jerry Heaton, Past Editor, Central Kentucky Computer Society
June 2019 issue, CKCS newsletter
www.ckcs.org   jerheat (at) gmail.com

If it is not money, what is it? It is your time – volunteering your time.

Before you say, "I'm too busy to do that," you are probably wrong! Everyone, particularly retired persons have some idle time. Well "OK" you ask, "why would I want to volunteer?"
Let me give you a few reasons.
•When you volunteer, you're helping others – other people, other groups, or organizations, people will appreciate you and thank you.
•It's a great opportunity to increase your skills and learn new ones.
•You will get to meet and know new friends.
•You exercise those brain cells, your whole body, and you eliminate boredom. All that

Page 4

is important!
- You are your own boss and decide how much, or how little, you want to do.
- You can set your own goals.
- You can pick your own schedule.
- There is a tremendous amount of satisfaction by completing and doing a good job.
- You can decide to do more or less, and you can quit anytime, preferably with some notice.

So what are you doing today for your neighborhood, for your community, for an organization or for the country or just for people in general?

Where would you look to volunteer? There are so many places. May I suggest one close by you might consider? Your computer club. There are many opportunities.

Think about it. There are plenty places to start. You will feel better about yourself if you volunteer. It may be the best thing you done in months or maybe years!

President's Message
Research Before Online Shopping
Richard Durand, President
Wisconsin All-computer Users Club, WI
June 2019 issue, WAUCtalk
https://www.wauc.us   rgdurand (at) yahoo.com

As the old saying goes, "When the going gets tough, the tough go shopping." Here in the 21st Century, we don't have to be as tough to be shopping because now a lot of shopping can be done online. In terms of placing orders, methods of payment, shipping, etc., I really don't have anything to contribute. But the browsing and research necessary to make a selection has been radically transformed and enhanced in a lot of unexpected ways.

Here are a few. One of the nice things about going to an old-time store was to be able to pick up and inspect an item. That was a plus for in-person shopping, though maybe not enough if the item was sealed and/or shrink wrapped. Something I discovered that I found to be much, much more useful and better was to do a search on a potential selection in the YouTube search box, and add this word, "unboxing." Then, click on one of the search results and watch a video on the selection. Oftentimes, the video will be done by a store salesman with not only product knowledge but practiced communication skills that he will use to describe things understandably. He'll hold up the contents one by one and identify them for you. It just might help.

Another useful online research technique is to look at the reviews for an item on Amazon. From what I've seen, Amazon allows just about anyone, not just the pros, but actual users and customers, to compose and upload a review of just about any item posted. The reviewer has to give a rating from one to five stars and then has space for further explanations. Many leave only very terse comments, if any, but there are a surprising number who offer long stories and multiple reasons for their ratings. These authors seem to have acquired a purpose in life of informing the rest of the world about their experiences with a product or a company's customer service.

Personally, I've got better things to do, but I'll gladly take advantage of the reviews of others.

And the one final method of research, which is blatantly obvious, but still worth mentioning, is to just enter a product name or even just a general category, such as "scanner" or "RAM," into the box of a browser search engine, such as good old Google, and add this word, "reviews." There might be lots and lots of search results, some of which might prove to be very useful. One I like to see is something along the lines of "What to look for in a ? (whatever)." Or there might be a result along the lines of "Top ten headsets, or widgets, or whatever." Even if there is no worthwhile product to select, such searches might reveal some very important information, such as what critical attributes to look for, what price range to expect, and what local establishments have this type of product available.

For me, positive or negative reports are less important than the information provided. Something that's praised to the skies might not be what I'm looking for, and something else that's condemned in a review might be just what I need. Numerical ratings are just opinions, at best, starting points, and are secondary. The internet empowers one to make up one's own mind about shopping and about a lot of other things, so one might as well use one's own mind. And if enough of us do our online shopping with these methods, I am convinced that the vendors will be motivated to improve in price, quality, and customer service. For them, it's getting more and more competitive. And for us, all of this can be done from one's own computer, tablet or smartphone.

Happy shopping!

Playlists – Use them to enjoy your music
Author: Phil Sorrentino, Secretary & APCUG Rep
August 2019 issue   The Journal   The Computer Club, FL
www.scccomputerclub.org / philsorr (at) yahoo.com

A Playlist is a list of files that can be played back on a media player. If the files are pictures and the media player is a picture viewer, you have a slideshow. If the files are audio files and the media player is a music player, you get music played for as long as the list continues. If the files are video files and the media viewer is a video viewer, you may get an afternoon at the movies. Typically with a play list, the files can be played back sequentially for an orderly experience, or in a shuffled order for a little more excitement.

Audio playlists are a great way of enjoying your digital music. Each tune to be enjoyed must be in one of the music file formats that are popular, .mp3, .wma, .wav, etc. .mp3 is probably the most popular. .mp3 is a lossy compressed format where the resultant files are about 1 tenth the size of the original file. But in the process of compressing the file some of the quality is lost. The quality that is lost is in the higher frequencies, where the human ear begins to attenuate as we age, so many of us older humans may not really be missing that much. (.wav files are lossless, uncompressed files, so if you want all of the quality, you should probably save your music in this file format when you get them; after all, nowadays storage is cheap.) By the way, Windows comes with a great application that you can use to get all of your music from your CDs - it's called Windows Media Player (WMP) and allows you

to "rip" your music files from your CDs (which is absolutely legal). It defaults to creating .wma files, so make sure you change this (in the Options) to .mp3 if you want .mp3 files. There is also an adjustment for the audio quality; the higher the number the better the quality, but the larger the file. So, once you have all of your music stored in a music database, you can start to create the playlists that will use the music files. WMP can also help you in this task. I've used WMP to create many playlists, some of which are called Love Songs, Assorted Favorites, Fun Songs, Songs from an Earlier Period, Folk Songs, Country Songs, etc.

So technically, a playlist is a file with a playlist file type. Many playlist file types have been defined such as .zpl used by the Zune Media Player (probably not many of those around), .wpl defined by Microsoft and used in WMP, .m3u originally created by WinAmp and used in the very popular free WinAmp music player, .vlc, a format used by the VLC Media Player which has the same format as .m3u except for the .vlc designation, .pls a format similar to the Windows .ini file type, and others. Currently, .m3u seems to be the most widely used file type. In my opinion, to keep your playlists most versatile, I would use the .m3u file type; but if you were going to only use WMP then .wpl would be a good choice. (WMP is setup by default to create the .wpl file type. If you want WMP to create a .m3u file type, you can change this after you have put together a list of tunes for a playlist. Right after you click "save list" you will have an opportunity to change the file type to .m3u.) In addition to being versatile, .m3u files can be easily modified, should you want to take on this tedious job. They are just text files with a simple format and can be opened with the "Notepad" word processor. To do this, just go into Windows Explorer and right click the playlist and then choose "Open with..." and choose Notepad. Each line in the file defines the location of a tune to be played, and comments can be added to the file because text lines that start with "#" are ignored. Any helpful information can be put in the comment line. Keep in mind, the tune file name used in the playlist must be exactly the same (character for character) as the tune file name in the tune database.

Here are a few lines from a .m3u playlist:

John Denver
\MP3Music\PopMusic\John Denver - Annie's Song.mp3
Alabama in Country Folder
\MP3Music\Country\Alabama – Give Me One More Shot.mp3

The first line starts with "#", so this is just a comment line and essentially nothing will be done. The second line defines the location of a tune. In this example, the tune is Annie's Song and it is by John Denver. (When you "rip" a song from a CD you have choices as to how the tune file will be named. I have chosen to title all of the tunes in my Music database as "Artist" – "Tune Title". This allows me to see all of the tunes from a particular artist in alphabetical order when I look at the Music folders using Windows Explorer.) When the music player gets to this line it will retrieve the file "John Denver – Annie's Song.mp3" from the folder "PopMusic" and start to play (process) it. Note that the "PopMusic" folder is in the MP3Music folder which is the name of the folder that holds all of my tunes. "MP3Music" also holds folders for many other music genres, such as "Country", "R&R", "PreR&R", "BigBands", "Holiday", "Jazz", "Classical"; you get the idea. So this line is like a road map to where the tune can be found. The third line starts with "#" so, again, it's a comment and nothing will happen. But the fourth line is another tune to be selected. This tune is in the

"Country" folder which is also in the MP3Music folder. So when these four lines in a playlist are encountered, first "Annie's Song" will be played and after that is finished, "Give Me One More Shot" will be played. Fortunately, all the hard work of creating a playlist is done for you by the App that you are using to create and play your playlists. WMP is especially easy to use because gathering your tunes for a playlist can be done graphically by just dragging and dropping your selections from the tune (music) database into a playlist area, and finally clicking "save list", and then you are done. Now, all you have to do is start the play list and sit back and enjoy the music.

May 2020 DVD of the Month

AngryIPScanner - Scans local network for IP addresses
ARI - Monthly newsletter
Audacity - Updated audio file editor
AudioBook - Free audio book
BalabolkaText2Speech - Converts text to speech
BelarcAdvisor - Updated hardware software inventory
ColorMania - Advanced Color Picker Utility
DeleteOnReboot - Deletes files that can't be deleted
    when PC is on
DesktopOK - Save and restore the positions of the
    Windows Desktop Icons
DVDOMlists - Contents of CDs and DVDs of the Month

EMDB - Track your Movies and TV Series in Database
FreeFileSync - File comparison and synchronization
    software
MemberContributions - Things members send me

OandOShutUp10 - Control functions under Windows 10
OldTimeRadio - Old radio audio files
Opera - Updated web browser
PDF24Creator - Create and merge PDF files using
    drag and drop
PictorPhotoEditor - Photo editor program
PrintTestPage - Alternative to Windows test page

ScreenToGif - Screenshot to GIF
UltraAdwareKiller - Adware and malware remover
    for Windows
VirtualBox - Updated virtual machine environment
WinPing - Efficient Windows Ping tool

Mailing address:
CAEUG
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

CAEUG OFFICERS
President   Mike Goldberg

V.P. (Programs) Roger Kinzie

Secretary   Position OPEN
Treasurer   Position OPEN

Newsletter   Kathy Groce

Board Member Frank Braman
Webmaster   John Spizzirri
   webmaster(at)caeug.net