



Computers Are Easy User Group

Abort,
Retry,
Ignore....

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

September 2020
Volume XXXVIII Issue 9

Confirmed
meeting dates

Sept 26
Zoom
meeting
10:00am

:: ::

Check
website for
dates and
meeting info

:: ::

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

:: ::

MEETING
will be
held using
Zoom

:: ::

* * * Our September 26, 2020 * * *

NO LIBRARY MEETING
PER GLENSIDE WEBSITE
LIBRARY PARTIALLY CLOSED FOR Meetings
No food or drink are allowed inside

UPDATED MEETING INFORMATION

Our September 26 meeting will be on the
4th Saturday at 10 AM via Zoom.
A meeting where you get to stay at home.

There will be a meeting invitation e-mail Thursday evening
before the Zoom meeting on
Saturday morning at 10:00

Presentation John Spizzirri will present LinuxFX,
a desktop Linux that is easy to use.

REMI NDER: \$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

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Stay Home, Stay Safe, Wash your hands!!!!
Stay tuned for updates!!!





Lamp Post 228

September 2020
by John Spizzirri

The brown bears are still feeding on the last of the sockeye salmon migration at Brooks Falls in Katmai National Park, Alaska (1). The days are getting short. Check out the various camera locations along the river before its too late. The bears feed from dawn (about 11:00 AM CDT) to dusk (about 11:30 PM CDT) although some bears feed at night. The cameras are on at night but do not have a very good picture. There is a short period of time at the end of September when fishing picks up, but it is short lived. The bears will abandon the river for more abundant sources of nourishment before the hibernation.

1) <https://is.gd/5XSkeR>

I have had a number of calls the past few weeks from various clients with problems ranging from the inability to close or open an application to long wait times for applications to start. The solution to all these problems was the same. It seems to be a common solution to many Windows problems. Reboot the computer. In each case the problem disappeared. If you are having a problem that you have not encountered before, reboot as a first resort to see if that cures the problem. If the problem persists, then continue troubleshooting procedures.

Better Business Bureau (1) and a number of local police departments across the country have warned consumers about fake cell phone text messages (2). The text addresses the individual by name, informs them that there is a package waiting for them, and asks them to click a link for information to schedule a delivery. This is a phishing text (3). Even if you are expecting a package, reputable sellers and delivery companies do not operate in this manner (4). If you are expecting a package, go directly to the seller or the delivery company with the tracking number that you were provided at the time of purchase to inquire about the delivery. If you do not have that number, contact the seller to get it. Do not click on any text message link. It will likely contain malware possibly with a keystroke logger to steal your user name and passwords for other accounts (banking and financial). This type of fake message may come in an e-mail message as well. Do not fall for it.

1) <https://www.bbb.org/>

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

3) <https://www.wane.com/?p=378781>

4) <https://is.gd/qV7Wu6>

[Editors note about the following sections: The dark web is the World Wide Web content that exists on darknets.]

For those of you that missed the last meeting, I thought I would guide you step by step to access the dark web. First deep web is that part of the Internet that is not indexed by search engines and that you cannot reach by legal methods. That includes private files of corporations, financial organizations, banks, insurance organizations, medical organization. colleges and universities, governments, military units, and intelligence agencies. Those files are not made public for a myriad of reasons. Some may be accessed by multilayered password or pass keys. On the other hand the dark web is not indexed by search engines, but can be accessed legally. The dark web was created by the the U.S. Naval Research Lab ((1) NRL) accidentally on purpose. In an effort to protect U. S. spys (that's the rumor) and military operations the NRL came up with the onion routing theory and released it to the public to confuse and obfuscate governmental communications. In the early 2000s two Massachusetts Institute of Technology ((2) MIT) grad students perfected the idea and put it into practice in October 2002. The Navy continued to fund The Onion Router (TOR) Project, but it was soon funded privately by volunteers and the Electronic Frontier Foundation ((3) EFF), and other governments. The TOR Project ((4) TOR) became a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization to continue development and operation. Development continued to make it easier to use for the less technical user. By 2010 TOR was instrumental in the organization of the Arab Spring protests that helped depose Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, Muammar Gaddafi, Hosni Mubarak, and Ali Abdullah Saleh. I guess that made it a good investment by the Navy. By 2013 TOR proved that it was safe to use because it could not be cracked or tracked. Edward Snowden (5), whistle blower or traitor, depending on your point of view showed that TOR, his primary method of communication on the Internet could not be traced to him or the people he communicated with unless they told someone or everyone (Laura Poitras (6) and Glenn Greenwald (7)). The TOR project has about 6,000 individual computer nodes. Of these only 800 are exit nodes. Using the TOR browser can get you to the dark web as well as the regular Internet. The dark web consists of the web sites that are not indexed by Google or the other major search engines like Bing or Yahoo!. There are other ways of accessing the dark web besides the TOR browser such as GUNet (8), ZeroNet (9), Freenet (10), or I2P(11).

- 1) <https://www.nrl.navy.mil/>
- 2) <https://www.mit.edu/>
- 3) <https://www.eff.org/>
- 4) <https://www.torproject.org/>
- 5) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Snowden
- 6) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laura_Poitras
- 7) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glenn_Greenwald
- 8) <https://gnunet.org/en/index.html>
- 9) <https://zeronet.io/>
- 10) <https://freenetproject.org/index.html>
- 11) <https://geti2p.net/en/>

Before you begin, you should only access the dark net at your own risk. Exploring the dark net is slightly more dangerous than exploring the world wide web that you

usually see. Just keep your wits sharp and you will not have any problems. First, before you try accessing the dark web you still need a Virtual Private Network ((1) VPN). It is essentially a secure encrypted tunnel across the Internet that increases privacy through the use of software and / or hardware. You will probably use a software VPN. VPNs, in general, use encryption and authentication to discourage snoopers and crackers. Authentication is often accomplished transparently via Transport Layer Security ((2) TLS) or Secure Sockets Layer ((3) SSL). VPNs cannot keep out a determined cracker, but it makes life very difficult. The snooper or cracker may look at the data being transmitted and received by your PC / tablet / phone and some server on the Internet but will only see encrypted gibberish because when your device and the server began the communication the TLS/SSL set up a secret handshake that only the machines know. It lasts only for the duration of the one communication. All data between the devices is encrypted using that secret handshake. It is discarded when the communication is broken. That is the reason why you should ALWAYS logout / sign out / log off of any financial institution web site you communicate with. Those of you who have multiple devices in your home may opt to get pre-flashed VPN routers so that all devices are always covered by a VPN when on the Internet. The trade off there is that VPN routers are expensive and may not have warranty coverage because of the VPN software flashed on the chips. The other problem lies in that devices that are portable like cell phones and tablets may leave your home and connect at places outside your control. They must have a VPN client installed to be covered. Your cell phone connecting to your bank while you are in the coffee shop or restaurant without a VPN opens you up to a Man in the Middle attack ((4) MITM). You can think of MITM attacks as eavesdropping. MITM attack is where someone with a device nearby you appears to you as your bank's server. The MITM then establishes a handshake with you. The MITM then contacts your bank's web site that you wanted to contact and creates another connection. All information like passwords, usernames, financial details, and other identifiers are passed through the MITM device in the clear (unencrypted). Without a VPN you nor the bank are aware of the MITM. I used the bank web site as an illustration. It could be a wealth management account, credit card account, credit bureau account, brokerage account or other sensitive web sites. Other practical advantages of a VPN are that it hides your Internet Protocol ((5) IP) address from prying eyes. Most VPNs encrypt your data so that snoops cannot read your user names, passwords, e-mails, photos, videos, audio files, bank / financial data and other sensitive information. Stream your favorite content without throttling or location censorship. Some targeted advertising charges higher or lower prices based on IP addresses. Some VPNs allow you to change your IP address on the fly during any on line session. Personally, I use NordVPN (6). I am neither endorsing nor opposing them. With a VPN connection, you can have peace of mind knowing that your data is encrypted and IP address hidden, if and only if you TRUST your VPN provider. Your VPN should not be located in a country in the 14 eyes (7). Trust is a tenuous thing. Even with the controversy surrounding NordVPN over the past few years, I trust them because no one has shown proof that the accusations are true. You should investigate the various VPNs available and pick one that you can trust ((8), (9), (10), (11)). Regardless of which VPN you choose it will cost you \$2.50 or more per month on a three year or

greater contract. Usually, there is a one month free trial. If you have multiple users in your household, look for number of simultaneous connections. If you want to use it with your cell phone, look for mobile apps. Once you have a VPN in place, you can check it. Before turning on the VPN check your IP address using [Whatismyipaddress.com](https://www.whatismyipaddress.com/) (12) and run a speed test (13). Start the VPN then run both tests again to check the results. If the results are satisfactory to you, then you should use that VPN.

- 1) <https://is.gd/tul6il>
- 2) <https://is.gd/huFTKB>
- 3) <https://www.digicert.com/ssl/>
- 4) <https://is.gd/kRP5d2>
- 5) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IP_address
- 6) <https://nordvpn.com/>
- 7) <https://protonvpn.com/blog/?p=582>
- 8) <https://is.gd/83zj1B>
- 9) <https://is.gd/r57og8>
- 10) <https://is.gd/wW5XwQ>
- 11) <https://is.gd/jc5aoq>
- 12) <https://whatismyipaddress.com/>
- 13) <https://www.speedtest.net/>

I use the TOR browser and will concentrate this area on that browser. You may do the IP test and the speed test in the TOR browser and note that the IP address has changed again. That change is due to the fact that using that browser connects you to a chain of three servers that encrypts your uploads (queries, e-mails, etc.) and downloads (Startpage or Duck Duck Go results, e-mail, etc.) before contacting the Internet or the dark web. If you run the speed test you will see a sizable decrease in speed. That again, is due to the speed of the slowest server in the chain which you attach to the onion router. If it is unbearably slow you may change your 'identity' by clicking on the check mark icon on the far right side of the address bar next to the Open Menu hamburger icon. That will restart the browser, resetting the chain of servers. It may keep the exit node but the intervening servers will change (1). Re-check the speed for a difference. Don't expect a large increase in speed. TOR is not fast. It is private. It can connect you to dangerous sites anonymously. It can connect you to innocuous sites anonymously. Dark web sites use a hodgepodge naming structure that creates URLs (2) that are impossible to remember. I have a list of number of addresses on the dark web that I have previously checked that may be of interest. Duck Duck Go (3) has its own dark web site. A static site of onion links (4) that changes periodically. A Conservative news site (5), a progressive news site (6), an Eastern European viewpoint news site (7), and the BuzzFeed news site (8) are various news sources, Just one of many free music sites (9). Read books on line without drm restrictions (10). A small comic book collection online (11). Audio books read on line or downloaded without DRM (12). I left out many of the illegal things like the purchase of credit card numbers, drugs, guns, counterfeit money, stolen subscription credentials, hacked Netflix accounts and software that helps you break

into other people's computers. You can buy \$3,000 in counterfeit \$20 bills for \$600 or prepaid debit cards, each with a \$2,500 balance, for 35 cents on the dollar. In order to take advantage of these illegal things, you must have Bitcoin (13), Litecoin (14), or Ethereum (15) cash. They do not use credit cards, Paypal, or checks. Personally, I would never buy anything legal or illegal on the dark web in that web sites appear and disappear day to day and month to month. The e-cash may have disappeared with those web sites or the goods may have been delivered. Only the individuals will know as the privacy is so good the police will have no possible way of tracking anyone. If you can overlook the lame speed and the occasional shock of the dark web, it's worth visiting. Just don't buy anything there or reveal your true identity. NEVER open Facebook in TOR because Facebook has its own way of identifying you no matter what browser you use.

- 1) <https://is.gd/pa1VxL>
- 2) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/URL>
[Editor's note on the following: the urls ending in the word onion will not work unless you are using a TOR browser or a browser that works on the dark web.]
- 3) <https://3g2upl4pq6kufc4m.onion/>
- 4) <http://onionlinksv3zit3.onion/>
- 5) <http://dstormer6em3i4km.onion>
- 6) <https://p53lf57qovyuvwsc6xnrppyply3vtqm7l6pcobkmyqsiofyeznfu5uqd.onion/>
- 7) <http://occrpweb4n2vlmih.onion/en>
- 8) <https://bfnews3u2ox4m4ty.onion/>
- 9) <http://76qugh5bey5gum7l.onion/Lush.m3u>
- 10) <http://inclibuql666c5c4.onion/>
- 11) <http://nv3x2jozywh63fkohn5mwp2d73vasusjixn3im3ueof52fmbjsigw6ad.onion/>
- 12) <http://www.loyalbooks.com/>
- 13) <https://bitcoin.org/en/>
- 14) <https://litecoin.org/>
- 15) <https://ethereum.org/en/>

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

President's Corner
Plan 9 for Windows 10

By Greg Skalka, President, Under the Computer Hood User Group
Drive Light Newsletter www.uchug.org president (at) uchug.org

In "Plan 9 from Outer Space," a low-budget 1959 sci-fi horror movie from Ed Wood, extraterrestrials in flying saucers try to stop the rash and violent humans on Earth from advancing their technology further and risking the destruction of the universe. They finally resorted to 'Plan 9', which involves resurrecting an army of dead humans to get our attention. The film is narrated and introduced by The Amazing Criswell, who greets the viewer with: "We are all interested in the future, for that is where you and I are going to be spending the rest of our lives!"

In the present day, minute spongy beings from a part of the galaxy known as Redmond

Washington strive not for the attention of humans, but for their resources. Their goal to dominate the computer activities of humans has been successfully achieved over the last three decades through their operating systems and office suites. Their seventh Plan was highly successful, though their eighth was a flop and resulted in their loss of control over many humans. Faced with losing the human's interest to other operating systems and new portable devices, these beings enacted Plan 9, which involved subscription software and a new OS, not referred to by the number 9, but instead 10. To tighten their grip on the resources of those humans still under their influence, they made their Plan 7 obsolete, hoping the humans would flock like zombies to their latest offering. Just as Criswell asks at the end of the 1959 film, "Can you prove that it didn't happen?"

With Windows 7 security updates ending on 1/14/20, I knew last year that Windows 10 would be in my future, and so started making plans for switching my family over. I went through quite a few plans and a fair amount of resources, and though not quite as daunting as raising the dead, it was and continues to be a challenge that I hope to work out completely in the future. Here are the first four of my nine plans to that end.

Plan 1 - My Wife's Desktop PC. Way back in October 2018, I was anticipating the end of Windows 7's security in a year and formulating a plan to continue safe computing in the new decade. I wrote a newsletter column that month, outlining the pros and cons of the alternatives as I saw them. I recognized that I would be living dangerously in 2019, needing to do something before Win7 security updates ended on 1/14/20.

I was definitely going to be at risk, as practically all our computers were running Windows 7. My wife's nine-year-old Acer desktop PC seemed to be constantly on the brink of a calamity, though I somehow managed to overcome minor hardware failures and Windows issues to keep it running. My primary computer was a six-year-old Fujitsu 14" laptop which ran fine, probably due to the care I gave it. My wife also had a six-year-old laptop. These Win7 computers met our needs, though due to their age lacked more modern features like USB3, Gigabit Ethernet, and solid-state drives. I'd put in upgrades where I could, but they were all past their primes.

I did have a two-year-old Lenovo desktop I had bought for myself and turned into what I call my "chameleon" computer. I had installed a 3.5" bare hard drive dock in a front bay in the case, so the boot hard drive could be easily changed. I envisioned having many boot drives with different operating systems for this computer, but I have only set up two so far - the original Win7 and a Win10 drive that I created by cloning the original drive and upgrading it while Microsoft was still offering free Windows 10 upgrades in 2016. Since I used Win7 at work and Win10 seemed a bit unstable in this upgrade arrangement, I really never used this computer, preferring to stick to my laptop.

The good husband that I am (and because I tired of working on her PC), I planned to replace my wife's computer first in this conversion to Windows 10. None of our computers were worth upgrading, and I was less than thrilled about the results of my one upgrade experience. It was about time we got some new hardware with new features anyway.

I starting looking but didn't find any good deals for Black Friday in 2018. I unfortunately also am

the type of person that needs a deadline to get motivated to do something, and January 2020 was still almost a year away. After seeing how Fry's Electronics seemed to be slowly circling the drain, I widened my search for computers and in August 2019 found a good deal at Costco. I bought my wife a Dell Inspiron 3670 desktop for \$549 (it was \$150 off). It had all sorts of good things, like a 9th generation Intel I5 processor, a 1 TB hard drive, and a 128 GB SSD, USB3.1, GigE, and HDMI. I was concerned about the relatively small SSD filling up, as in the past my wife and Microsoft's upgrades had often conspired to fill up the boot partition on her old PC. A good friend with extensive Win10 and SSD experience reassured me that 128 GB would be sufficient for the boot drive.

Plan 2 - Dual Monitors. A few weeks later, with the Dell PC box still unopened, Costco had a sale on Dell 24" monitors. I had been using dual monitors on my Win10 computer at my new job and really liked it. I bought two monitors for my wife's new computer, thinking it would help her feel better about the hassle of having to change computers. My friend reviewed the Dell computer's specs and assured me that it could run one monitor from the VGA out and the other from HDMI.

Plan 3 - My Mom's Desktop PC. Move ahead to November 2019, now only two months before the Win7 apocalypse. I still have not found the time or the urgency to open the box on my wife's new PC. I'm in Costco again and see that they are still selling the same model Dell PC (which is reassuring), and it happens to be on sale again for the same price. I knew my mom needed a new computer to replace her old Win7 desktop, and I had not come up with a Christmas gift for my parents. I decided to double down on the Dell computer and buy another one for them.

Now I had a bit more urgency, as I wanted to get it set up for them before Christmas, but unfortunately had no more spare time. I needed to set up my wife's PC first, so I finally opened the box on hers on December 23, as I had that week off from work.

Plan 4 - UEFI. I connected up my wife's new Dell PC on a card table with one of the new monitors. It powered up fine, and I saw that it had 36.6 GB used on the 128 GB SSD, with 67.1 GB free. I assumed (as I later confirmed) that Dell had used some of the SSD for recovery and diagnostics partitions, so the SSD was initially only 36% full, which seemed reasonable. After activating Windows, my next step was to make a backup of this "as delivered" configuration.

I have been using Acronis True Image for computer backups for many years and have been very happy with it. I know it works well as I have restored many times, the true test of a backup program. Although it can be installed on a PC, I have never done this. I prefer to use the boot CD that comes with the software to boot outside the OS and back up using the version running from the CD. There are fewer features in this version, but since I would need to use the bootable version should I have a hard drive failure, I felt always using it would make me more familiar and confident with it.

I pulled out my True Image 2017 CD, which had worked to back up my Win10 chameleon computer but ran into something new - UEFI. It stands for Unified Extensible Firmware

Interface and is a replacement for the old BIOS (Basic Input/Output System) firmware that is now prevalent on new computers. It has many more capabilities and is more secure than the old BIOS. On this Dell, it was accessed the same as a BIOS, by holding the F12 key on startup. I selected the UEFI loader option in the displayed boot menu to boot from the DVD drive.

My True Image 2017 CD booted fine, but when running, the SSD drive did not show up in the program. Only the 1 TB hard drive was visible, so I could not back up the SSD. Seeing on the Acronis web site that I could no longer get support for my old version, I ordered the latest version, True Image 2020, from Amazon (at a lower cost than that listed on the Acronis site).

When my Amazon True Image arrived, I realized I had ordered a box with only an activation code - no CD was enclosed. I would have to download the software from the Acronis website. I was able to register there and download a bootable image file to burn to a DVD. Unfortunately, booting the new bootable version resulted in the same problem - the SSD was not visible to the program.

I finally had to break down and install True Image 2020 on the new computer, and when I ran it under Windows, the SSD was finally visible. I found an option under the rescue media builder tool for the simple method, which configures the boot media it creates to suit this computer best (no doubt taking UEFI into account). When I created a boot disc in this way, the bootable version was at last able to see the SSD. I could finally back up the way I was accustomed to, but now had a program installed that I didn't intend to install. My first back-up showed that 42.32 GB out of 103.8 GB on the SSD was now used (now 41%).

Feeling even more concerned about filling up the SSD, I decided that partitioning the 1 TB hard drive might help. If I split it into a 200 GB APPS partition and an 800 GB DATA partition, I could more easily install less critical programs on the hard drive, saving space on the SSD. I obviously could do this with the hard drive as it was, but a separate data partition would help in segregating backups of her critical and more frequently changing data.

I looking into using my standard partitioning program, Acronis Disk Director 12, but found again that when booted from its boot disc (as I'd have to use it if I were partitioning a new blank hard drive following an existing drive failure), it would not work. Per their web site, I'd need new Disk Director 12.5, which would support Win10. In a hurry, I downloaded and installed the 12.5 demo version from their web site, and while it would set up to partition, it would not create one (I'm not sure what it was supposed to be demonstrating). Fortunately, I remembered to look up Acronis on the APCUG web site and found a 5/25/19 article on Disk Director 12.5 and the link to Gene Barlow's User Group Relations web site. Gene represents Acronis products to user group members and sells download versions at a significant discount from the Acronis web prices. I purchased Disk Director 12.5 and got his email with the product key the next day.

After putting the key into the demo version I had already installed (yet another install into the SSD!), I was able to easily partition the 1 TB hard drive the way I wanted it. I did make

many attempts to create a working boot media (meaning one that would see both drives in this computer) with the Disk Director Media Builder tool, and though there were many options, none I tried were successful. I didn't care at the time to partition the SSD, but someday I'll have to email Gene to see if he has a solution.

I next installed some essential utilities like the Chrome browser, Adobe reader, and printer drivers for our two HP network printers (all on the SSD). A new backup showed the SSD was now at 45% full. I was now almost ready to make the swap - this new Windows 10 PC for my wife's old Win7 desktop. I'd still have to transfer data and other programs over from old to new, and this would require a new plan. Unfortunately, it was now January 12, 2020, only two days before Win7 security support ends.

I'll describe my Windows 10 Plans 5 through 9 in a future column (where Criswell predicts we will all be in a month).

DVD list of the month September 2020

ARI - Monthly newsletter
AudioBook - Free audio book
Clipdiary - Clipboard manager

DisableAMT - Disable Intel Active
Management Technology
DVDOMLists - Contents of CDs and DVDs of the Month

EmsisoftDecryptor - Prevents phishing and
ransomware attacks

HitmanPro - Malware detector
MemberContributions - Things members send me

OldTimeRadio - Old radio audio files
PowerPing - Improved Ping program
Recoll - Advanced Win search program

ShowSeconds - Shows seconds on the Win clock
on the task bar
SurfsharkVPN-notFree VPM

ThisIsMyFile - Take ownership of a file
ZHPCleaner - Clean hard disk

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 , 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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