



Computers Are Easy User Group

Abort,
Retry,
Ignore....

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

July 2021
Volume XXXIX Issue 7

Confirmed
meeting dates

July 24
Aug 28
Sept 25
Oct 23

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
until further
notice

PER GLENSIDE WEBSITE As a precaution,
all summer programming will be virtual or held outside.
Participants will be required to wear masks and socially
distance. Meeting rooms are not available to meet
CAEUG needs.

UPDATED MEETING INFORMATION
* * * Saturday July 24, 2021 * * *
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

Our July 24, 2021
A video on Be Safe On Line
from a live presentation at the St. Charles Library
by Mike Gershbein from Very Smart People Chicago.

REMINDER: \$20.00 Membership dues for 2021 are due.
Mail dues to CAEUG, P.O. Box 3150, Glen Ellyn, IL 60138

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Join CAEUG meeting from Home, Stay Safe!!!!
Stay tuned for updates!!!





Lamp Post 237
July 2021
by John Spizzirri

The brown bear cameras at Brooks Falls in Katmai National Park, Alaska are on (1). The salmon fishing is in full swing. It will continue through September. In Decorah, Iowa the juvenile eagles are still hanging around the nest area (2). They will probably leave in the next few weeks.

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

Life Hacks (1) is a web site that has handy pieces of information that can save money or aid in making life easier. You can just go there or you can subscribe to get a hack sent to you daily. I recommend that you get a separate e-mail address for any subscription you may get because your address may be sold. You can get a free e-mail account at Mail.com (2). It is owned by a German company called 1&1 Mail & Media Inc. (3). You can get any number of free e-mail accounts using different names. In that way you can keep your home e-mail account free of unwanted advertising and phishing e-mails.

- 1) <https://1000lifehacks.com/>
- 2) <https://signup.mail.com/>
- 3) <https://is.gd/d8w7zL>

The Texas Supreme Court has ruled against Facebook in a teen sex trafficking case (1), based on state law, Section 230 of the Federal Communications Decency Act of 1996 (2) is the portion of the law that was in question. In 2018 Congress amended the law (3) to allow state law to be used to hold web sites liable for sex trafficking and pimping. Prior to this ruling Section 230 had this easy out for web sites that allowed them to let there users to do or say anything, "No provider or user of an interactive computer service shall be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by another information content provider" (4). Once the amendment was in place business went on as usual. Fourteen year old girls were solicited and sold into prostitution. One of the mothers contacted Facebook a number of times and got not reply. Some people call that getting Zucked (5). The Texas Supreme Court ruled in part that "Holding internet platforms accountable for the words or actions of their users is one thing... Holding internet platforms accountable for their own misdeeds is quite another thing. This is particularly the case for human trafficking." (6) The business press is very concerned about the implications of this unanimous ruling (7, 8). Anti-crime groups are encouraged by this ruling and want Congress to strengthen the law (9, 10). Hill TV has a four minute video comment on Facebook about the ruling (11).

- 1) <https://www.westernjournal.com/?p=2656287>
- 2) <https://is.gd/u16AAO>
- 3) <https://is.gd/8iSeqR>
- 4) <https://www.eff.org/taxonomy/term/506>
- 5) <https://is.gd/Pnjcb6>
- 6) <https://is.gd/gNke8g>
- 7) <https://is.gd/871q2A>
- 8) <https://is.gd/6ejMJY>
- 9) <https://is.gd/K5qhSb>
- 10) <https://is.gd/jo7bKI>
- 11) <https://is.gd/SUP9m0>

Are porch pirates (1) a problem in your area? Package theft in some areas is a big problem. There are a number of methods to use to stop it (2).

1. Have your package delivered to an Amazon locker if you are a Prime member
2. Have your package delivered to a delivery center for USPS (3), UPS (4), or FedEx (5).
3. Have your package delivered to a trusted neighbor's house
4. Have your package delivered to your place of work (if possible)
5. Install security cameras like Arlo Pro (6), Wyse cameras (7), Blink cameras (8), or the Ring Video Doorbell (9)
6. Install a smart lock on your home with a smart security camera and via an Amazon Key (10) your door will open for the delivery person to put the package inside your home and lock when they leave all under the surveillance of the camera, if you are a trusting Prime member.

- 1) <https://is.gd/fJgI o7>
- 2) <https://is.gd/TbV4xL>
- 3) <https://www.usps.com/>
- 4) <https://is.gd/40n6WE>
- 5) <https://is.gd/S3mN9B>
- 6) <https://is.gd/bulQN7>
- 7) <https://is.gd/u55IdR>
- 8) <https://blinkforhome.com/>
- 9) <https://is.gd/DbKcsS>
- 10) <https://is.gd/SpKzAN>

Cleaning out cookies on a regular basis is a job that many users neglect because cookies do not show. But the computer becomes slower and slower and then they wonder why. Cookies are not the only problem but is just one of a myriad of cleaning problems that must be done on a regular basis for the computer to function properly. Experts tell you that cookies are necessary to a useful Internet experience (1). I do not think so. I erase all cookies when I

finish with the Internet and I have a good experience. I expect to login to every site that requires a password. I logout of each of those sites. I never abandon a site I am logged into. I use a password manager to keep track of all my sites that require a user name and a password. I do not use the same password on multiple sites. To clean cookies I set my browsers to erase cookies each time I close them. I also use cCleaner (2). The free version does most of the work I want done. I use Windows Run command with %temp% to reveal temporary files that can be erased. (I run that twice.) I check the properties of the C drive and click the Disk Cleanup button. I check all the boxes in the resulting dialog box and click Okay. Another box opens asking if its okay to delete files. I click okay. I clean the cache of the browser I use. For Firefox click the hamburger on the right hand side and select settings. That will open a tab. Select Privacy & Security. Slide down to Cookies and Site Data. Click Clear Data. Check the Cached Web Content in the dialog box and click Clear. (If you want to, you can also check Cookies and Site Data.) The Edge browser is similar but has some complications that are best described by Microsoft (MS 3). In Google Chrome click the vertical three dots at the rights side of the address bar. Click More Tools. Click Clear browsing data. Choose a range of time or choose All Time to delete everything. Check the boxes next to Cookies and other site data and Cached images and files. Click Clear data. Doing these things will speed up your computer. Running a quality malware checker such as Microsoft Defender, Avast, or Malwarebytes. Make sure you have at least 20 percent free space on your hard drive. Read Larry Bothe's article and make sure your peripherals are up to date.

- 1) <https://is.gd/YFO03K>
- 2) <https://www.ccleaner.com/>
- 3) <https://is.gd/23sLuS>

REvil (aka Sodinokibi) disappeared from the Internet on July 13, 2021 (1). REvil is the Russian extortion gang responsible for the Colonial Oil pipeline shutdown and more recently JBS meat processing company. President Biden has talked with President Putin about the activities of REvil. Biden expected Putin to act hinting that we would, if he did not (2). Kaseya is the most recent victim and one that affect 1,500 other companies (3). REvil has collected tens of millions of dollars but according to one of their alleged members (4) there is never enough money. I would not get too excited about this blackout of REvil. They may be just disbanding to reassemble as a differently named group of criminals. They are allegedly based in Russia. Do not believe it. The criminals are all over the world. They are connected via the Internet. The servers could be anywhere. The governments do not have the brains to hire the right people at the right price to find these criminals and act quickly enough to capture and incapacitate them. Lastly, RT (5), formerly Russia Today news outlet, has absolutely nothing to say about this story.

- 1) <https://is.gd/8dIFmL>

- 2) <https://is.gd/YmSQ7w>
- 3) <https://is.gd/UYdlvJ>
- 4) <https://therecord.media/?p=2719>
- 5) <https://www.rt.com/>

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

New Computer Accessories Make a Difference

By Larry Bothe, 7/12/2021

I think of the little things, like a mouse, or a modem, or even a little auxiliary label printer, as an 'accessory'. The really big pieces, like a monitor or a main printer, are peripherals. Today I want to talk about accessories; old ones that needed to be replaced.

Let's start with the things that connect me to the internet; the cable modem and the router. My cousin was having internet speed issues. Her ISP (Comcast, same as me) advised that her old Motorola Surfboard modem was preventing her from getting the speed she was paying for. Uh oh, I had the same modem. Checking my speed (at www.speedtest.net), I was getting 88 Mbps download. I'm paying for "up to 200 Mbps", so this is an issue. Further, for the past several months, I had been getting nagging messages from Microsoft that my ancient wireless router was insecure because it uses some old, low-level encryption system. Maybe it was time to replace my internet accessories.

My cousin did some research, and decided to take the recommendations of Wirecutter

(<https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/best-cable-modem/>). I was busy organizing a fund-raising event for the museum where I volunteer, so I went with my cousin's decision to buy a Motorola MB7621 cable modem, and a TP-Link WiFi 6 AX3000 router. They cost \$78 and \$110, respectively, from Amazon, and both units are approved by Comcast (and other major ISPs).

I installed the new cable modem first. It was very easy to hook up, and notifying Comcast that I had a new modem (required) took only a few minutes. However, the results were disappointing. My download speed went from 88 Mbps to 93, a gain of only about 6%, and still nowhere near the elusive 200 Mbps that I could theoretically obtain.

The next day I installed the new router. That was a bit more complicated, partly because I took the opportunity to clean up and reroute some of the cable mess under my workstation. Note that my computer, my wife's machine, and our shared printer, are all connected to the router via Cat-5 cable in in our shared office. Cable connections are always faster than wireless. We use the wireless network to talk to our cell phones, my wife's iPad, my laptop (what little I use it), and for guests. The router required some set-up, including

assigning names and passwords to what is now two WiFi networks; one on the traditional 2.4 Mhz frequency, and a second on the newer 5 Mhz freq. A word of caution here: Even though I used the same name (for the 2.4 Mhz network) and password (for both) as I had with the old router, our cell phones, the iPad, and my laptop still would not automatically connect. But once I went into the settings in those devices and reconnected, everything was fine.

After I had everything working properly, I tested download speed again. Whoa! Wholly lightning Batman! The speed went up to 240 Mbps! That's just over 2.5 times faster than before. Comcast is delivering as promised; even better! (My upload speed is 12 Mbps, and Ping is 21 ms, for those of you who want to know.) My old cable modem may have been obsolete, but the real culprit was the old router, apparently blocking things down the line. I'm thrilled with the improved performance.

I made a statement earlier that wired connections are inherently faster than wireless. I decided to test that right now, as I write this article. I got my laptop out and started it up. Speedtest.net says the download speed is 104 Mbps using wireless WiFi. Plugging it into the new router via Cat-5 cable yields a speed of 239. The wired speed is more than double that of the wireless connection. 'Nuff said! If you can run cable from your router to your computers and printer, you should do so.

After my good fortune with upgrading the internet equipment, I decided to work on two other accessories that have been bothering me for some time; my keyboard and mouse. For many years I had been using a very large and clunky wireless Logitech K350 "ergonomic" keyboard. I liked some of the features; notably that it was wireless, and that it had specific keys to directly change and mute audio volume. But the unwanted large/clunky part got to the point that it overshadowed the desirable convenience features. I went to my stash of computer equipment and found a slim-line wired (USB) keyboard that I think came with my HP desktop Win-10 computer that I bought in 2016. I replaced the Logitech behemoth with the svelte HP el-cheapo keyboard. I liked the smaller size, but missed the audio control keys, and I didn't like the USB cable at all. I planned to shop for a new keyboard then next time I was in a store with a substantial computer department. (Hold this thought.)

Ever since I lived in the Chicago area back in the 90's, I have used a Kensington "Expert" trackball mouse. I really like moving the cursor by rolling the large ball (think billiard ball) with my index and middle fingers, and clicking with my right thumb; as opposed to moving my whole hand and forearm to position the cursor. I had my old, wired (USB) trackball mouse for many years. I hadn't liked the wire for a long time, and more recently, the left mouse button sometimes didn't "take" when doing a left-click. It appeared that the microswitch was wearing out. I decided to buy the wireless version of the Kensington trackball mouse. I went to the internet to check prices, and

Amazon was the cheapest at \$84. I put the mouse in my cart. While on the Amazon site I decided to look for a smaller wireless keyboard that had the direct-access function keys I wanted. I found one, and it turned out to also be from Kensington (Advance Fit, Slim Wireless Keyboard), for \$32. Even though I couldn't physically see it, or type on it, it appeared to be exactly what I wanted, and the price was not excessive. I decided to take a chance and add the keyboard to my order. Both items arrived a few days ago, and are now installed and operational. I really like them both. The keyboard turned out to be even better than it looked on the computer screen. Besides the audio control buttons, it also has a "Sleep" button, to put the computer to sleep without a lot of clicking around. The keys are raised in the center, which helps reduce fat-finger typing errors. Moving to the mouse, the operation of the new one is very smooth, and the left-click "takes" every time now. Since both items are wireless technology, the USB cables are gone from my work surface. I'm very happy with these purchases.

If you have been keeping score, you will note that in past few weeks I spent, with sales tax, \$325 on computer accessories. That may seem like a lot of money (you can buy a fairly decent refurbished computer in that price range), but I think it was worth it. The specific benefits I received are much faster internet, a space-saving keyboard with the features that are important to me, and a smooth-operating mouse that works properly every time. And the cables are gone! The best part is that, taken as a whole, my overall computing experience has been greatly enhanced. I spend a lot of time at my computer; most of it taken up by writing operating procedures, creating exhibit signs, and keeping track of money for the museum. I occasionally write articles like this one, and I do a monthly aviation newsletter. A convenient and pleasant computing experience is important to me.

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, does a little flight instruction, and is the volunteer curator of the Freeman Army Airfield Museum. He can be contacted at LBothe@comcast.net.

Alerts, Notifications, and Alarms - Oh, My!
By Dorothy Fitch, Editor, GVR Computer Club, AZ
January 2021 issue, Green Bytes
<https://www.ccgvas.org/> [dmfitch \(at\) cox.net](mailto:dmfitch(at)cox.net)

I have started using alerts, notifications. and alarms to get my attention. Some of these come to my phone and some by email. Most of the time, I can choose what works best for me for each purpose. Of course, there are notifications that you get even if you didn't specifically ask for them, such as doctor appointment reminders, books that are ready to pick up at the library, and many others.

Here are some of my finds and handy tools.

Alerts:

My bank's website allows me to set up alerts for activity related to the bank and

credit card accounts. For example, whenever my credit card is charged, either in a store or online, I immediately get an email. If that card is ever stolen or hacked, I will know right away. I can also set up alerts for payments due, deposits, balances, etc.

We have a smart indoor thermometer that alerts us to temperature changes outside a specific range that we set up. That way we can tell from wherever we are reading email if the house gets too hot or cold.

Notifications:

You can sign up at the AZDOT website to be notified of construction activity, accidents, or delays on I-19. After you submit your email address, you can choose which areas of the state, including I-19, you wish to include. These notifications were particularly handy when the Irvington construction area was still active. They also have a phone app that can notify you of highway events.

The US Postal Service offers a free Informed Delivery service to let you know what mail is coming to your mailbox. As mail is scanned in the postal processing center, an image is sent to your email address. (Lately, my email keeps showing me a picture of a postcard from the USPS that says that mail may be delayed. Ironically, that postcard still has not yet arrived!)

UPS's My Choice system tracks your packages and notifies you of their delivery. It's fun to check the map that shows the exact location of the delivery truck when it is in your neighborhood! FedEx has a similar Delivery Manager system and offers to deliver the package to a secure location where you can pick it up if you don't want it left outside your door.

On Election Day, I learned of the phone app from The Guardian that sends alerts to the "lock screen" of my phone when breaking news occurs. The Guardian is a British newspaper with a great reputation and worldwide coverage. So during the evening on 11/3, as election results started coming in, I would hear the distinctive tone I set up for my phone. That sound would prompt me to go look at the television to see the latest results. It was very handy. I am still enjoying the breaking news. I'm using the free version of the app, though a premium version is also available.

I have also subscribed to the free New York Times Morning Briefing and "breaking news" emails. (I usually get the Guardian notifications about 5 minutes before the NYT ones!) Their Morning Briefing has a summary of news headlines and a mini crossword puzzle. To read the entire article or enjoy the full crossword puzzles, you need to pay for a subscription. Lately, the headlines have been enough for me!

The weather station on our roof sends us an email every day with the day's high and low temperatures, wind speeds, and other data (the rain measure has never worked well, so its rainfall reports are rather suspect). It even has its own website, which I can access from my phone. If we ever get to travel again, we'll be able to see what the weather is like at home!

Alarms:

Alarms aren't just for waking you up. They can be great reminders to take your medicine, walk the dog, or whatever suits you. I use the Alarm feature of the Clock app on my Android phone and expect that an iPhone offers the same functionality.

Another phone alarm goes off at 6:59 pm Mon–Fri. We're usually preparing dinner at that time, and we like to listen to "Exploring Music" with Bill McLaughlin on the

radio (KUAT, 90.5 FM). This reminds me to set the tuner to the radio so we can listen.

Once a month, my husband needs to submit data for his Rainlog project, where citizen scientists report the amount of rain received in their rain gauge. So, that alarm goes off on the first day of each month at noon as a reminder for him to do that. We have it on our shared Google calendar as a recurring task, but do we ever look there anymore? That calendar is rather empty these days.

It's nice that you can set up and customize multiple alarms to recur on specific days and times.

There are so many possibilities out there that you can subscribe to or set up. Give it a try! If you have a favorite attention-getter you would like to share, reply to this newsletter and let me know.

Interesting Internet Finds March 2021

Steve Costello

scostello AT sefcug.com

In the course of going through the more than 300 RSS feeds, I often run across things that I think might be of interest to other user group members. The following are some items I found interesting during the month of February 2021.

Megapixels Explained – Cyn Mackley

<https://cynmackley.com/2021/02/01/megapixels-explained/>

Do you wonder what megapixels are? Cyn Mackley provides an informative explanation of megapixels that is not too technical.

Google Meet Adds Green Room To Test Video And Audio Quality

<https://www.makeuseof.com/google-meet-video-audio-quality-test/>

I belong to a group that has started using Google Meet instead of Zoom for online meetings. When we first started there was a lot of time spent making sure our audio and video were working correctly. Recently, on the day of the February 2021 meeting, I saw this post. Using the information in this post, I checked out my audio and video, making sure everything was working correctly before the meeting.

How Often Should I Reboot My Computer?

<https://askleo.com/how-often-should-i-reboot-my-computer/>

Leo Notenboom answers this recurring question. As with most of his answers, there are pros and cons discussed. (Note: I leave my desktop on 24/7 unless there is a problem or software update. I turn off and unplug my laptops when they are not in use.)

Are VPNs Illegal?

<https://www.addictivetips.com/vpn/are-vpns-illegal/>

I know some users are concerned about the legality of VPNs. If you are one of them, check out this post. (I use a VPN whenever I connect to public wi-fi on my phone and other devices. I do this for safety and privacy, not to get around geographical restrictions.)

Google Storage Changes Coming In June

<https://davescomputertips.com/google-storage-changes-coming-in-june/>

Do you use Google's free storage? If you use Gmail, I am sure you do, whether you know it or not. This post has the information you need to be aware of about changes

coming after June 1, 2021. I suggest you read this post and make your decision(s) before then.

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July 2021 DVD of the Month

AnyDesk - Remote control software
ARI - Monthly newsletter
AudioBook - Free audio book
Disk Drill - Recover lost documents, videos, music, or photos efficiently
Distract Me Not - A simple website blocker
DVDOMLists - Contents of CDs and DVDs of the Month
IsMyHdOK - Hard drive / SSD / flash drive checker
Kaspersky Rescue Disk - Scan, disinfect, and restore infected operating system
Kaspersky Virus Removal Tool - App designed to scan and disinfect an infected computer
MemberContributions - Things members send me
Network Monitor II - Monitor of your internet connection status
OldTimeRadio - Old radio audio files
OnionFruit Connect - Use your browser to connect to the TOR network
OpenCloseDriveEject - App that allows you to open, close a DVD, CD, Blu-ray Drive
PC Control - Quick access to functions like shutdown, restart, hibernation, standby & log off
Rainmeter - Software for quickly displaying important system information
Rufus - Utility that helps quickly format and creates bootable USB flash drives
Sandboxie-Plus - Run programs in an isolated space that prevents them from making permanent changes
Text Editor Pro - Text editing tool with syntax highlighting multiple languages
Win11Wallpaper - The images used for themes and wallpapers in the upcoming 'Windows 11'

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:

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

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