



Computers Are Easy User Group

Abort,
Retry,
Ignore....

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

June 2024
Volume XXXX Issue 6

PER GLENSIDE Library (Masks are optional)

INFORMATION for Saturday June 22nd start time in person at
Library Board Room is 9:30am or at home Zoom is 10:00am.
This will be a hybrid meeting.

There will be a meeting invitation e-mail Thursday evening
before the Saturday meeting.

Our June presentation various short
video presentations

CAEUG, P.O. Box 3150,
Glen Ellyn, IL 60138

**Thank you! to all who paid the
low \$20.00 dues for 2024!**

**Your support helps pay for our PO Box and
APCUG membership and CAEUG website**

Confirmed
meeting dates

2024

June 22

July 27

:: ::

Hybrid
Board Room
in person
OR Zoom

:: ::

Check
website for
dates and
meeting info

:: ::

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



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Join CAEUG meeting in Library or from Home,
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The Glenside Public Library address is at 25 E Fullerton Avenue, Glendale Heights, Illinois. The meeting(s) are not library sponsored. 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, at least five (5) days prior to the program, so that reasonable accommodation can be made.

Members Helpline

Any member can volunteer to be on the Members Helpline.
Hardware problems, Win 7, Win 10, Linux and Virus Removal

- John Spizzirri

About DVD of the Month

Unfortunately, the DVD of the Month is no longer creating an income center for the club. August 2022 will be the last issue of the DVD. Starting in September, I will feature a review of a freeware program in the ARI... Some of these programs may be elaborate and complicated others may be very simple. I may include screen shots if that can be accommodated.



Lamp Post 269 June 2024 by John Spizzirri

Both the bald eaglets at Decorah, Iowa (**1**) have fledged. The eaglets will continue to be fed at the nest or away if needed. The adults will help the fledglings hunt. The South nest cam (**2**) now focuses on the pond where the goslings are growing. The parent Canadian geese are hard to pick out from among the flock.

- 1) <https://is.gd/0YqTVG>
- 2) <https://is.gd/YAuMFO>

By the time you get this ARI..., the brown bear cams (**1**) should be live. The bears are out of hibernation and soon will start fishing.

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

With the amount of recent and predicted activity on the sun, it might be a good idea to keep the Aurora cam sites in your favorites. The Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis) cam at Churchill, Manitoba, Canada (**1**) is in the Central Time zone as is the polar bear site (**2**). If you stay up really late or get up early, try the Alaska Borealis cams (**3**). Two places to try offer various cams from around

the world (**4, 5**). To check on the space weather (for aurora forecasts) try here (**6**) and NASA (**7**).

- 1) <https://is.gd/3RjcRQ>
- 2) <https://is.gd/7PDEvO>
- 3) <https://auroranotify.com/?p=63>
- 4) <https://seetheaurora.com/webcams>
- 5) <https://lightsoverlapland.com/?p=79>
- 6) <https://www.spaceweather.com/>
- 7) <https://www.swpc.noaa.gov/>

One of my clients called me in tears telling me about how she was hoodwinked by a scam phone caller claiming to work for the security department of her main bank. She gave him all sorts of information that she should not have. He used this information to empty her credit union checking account via the Internet (a loss of over \$5,000). Once she found the loss she called her main bank security department and found that they do not call customers. They helped her put a freeze on her Experian Credit Bureau (**1**) record. I told her the additional steps she should take as soon as possible;

1. Freeze the TransUnion Credit Bureau record (**2**)
2. Freeze the Equifax Credit Bureau record (**3**)
3. Change the account number on the credit union account
4. Change the account number on the main bank account
5. Change the account number on all credit cards
6. Change the account number on all debit cards
7. Change the passwords on every account you have (use a password manager like Bitwarden (**4**), LastPass (**5**), KeePass (**6**), Proton (**7**))
8. Report this incident to the police
9. Report this incident to the Illinois Attorney General (**8**)

There are a number of web sites that outline these steps (sometimes omitting some of them) that I relied on to help her out (**9, 10, 11, 12, 13**)

- 1) <https://is.gd/JEq3j9>
- 2) <https://is.gd/C5ji6b>
- 3) <https://is.gd/ZRSYjX>
- 4) <https://bitwarden.com/>
- 5) <https://www.lastpass.com/>
- 6) <https://keepass.info/>
- 7) <https://proton.me/>
- 8) <https://is.gd/yBa2fu>
- 9) <https://is.gd/mZljhM>
- 10) <https://bityl.co/QXsP>
- 11) <https://is.gd/edNJO5>
- 12) <https://is.gd/a2qsFu>
- 13) <https://www.usa.gov/credit-freeze>

Lynn Conway (**1**) passed away on June 9th. She worked at Xerox Parc (**2**) in the 1970s. She was part of the team that brought us the Very Large Scale Integration chip design i.e. IC chips and CPUs. That design is in part named for her, Mead–Conway VLSI (**3**). Without these chips personal computers, tablets, and cell phones would not be possible. Prior to Xerox she worked for IBM (**4**) but was fired when she revealed her intent to change gender to a woman. After Xerox she went to work for Darpa (**5**) in smart weapons development. Since the late 80s she has been teaching computer science and electrical engineering at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor (**6**). IBM apologized to her for the firing in 2020. For the last twenty years she has been an activist for the transgender community.

- 1) <https://is.gd/yEpJz6>
- 2) <https://is.gd/UQRqr1>
- 3) <https://is.gd/tPmPCN>
- 4) <https://www.ibm.com/us-en>
- 5) <https://is.gd/YOi9NB>
- 6) <https://is.gd/7cQ7BV>

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

My Smartphone, My Friend
Greg Skalka, President, Under the Computer Hood User Group
<https://uchug.org/>
President (at) uchug.org

I got my first smartphone, a low-cost (\$150) Samsung Galaxy J3, in 2017. It was not that powerful and I was a bit apprehensive about this new device, so I used it mostly for phone calls, texts and select apps. I saved web browsing and email for my computers and laptops as the phone screen seemed too small. As I warmed up to the smartphone I found it essential for navigation (with Google Maps). Having a camera handy, as poor as it was compared to my Panasonic Lumix digital camera, became another feature I used constantly. As time passed, I added more apps but was selective about what I chose to install. I had no time for games and no use for social media, but I used several smart home apps to control the various devices I bought. I refused to do banking or conduct any financial transactions on the phone, preferring the relative security of a computer for any online banking or shopping.

Every business seemed to have a smartphone app to promote, but I only installed a few that I thought were safe and offered compelling benefits worth the risks. One of the riskiest apps I use is Google Maps, as I have found over the years that it has been tracking me, even when the app is not running.

However, its benefits are so compelling that I've made that bargain with the

Google devil and accept being tracked in exchange for its navigation capabilities. Having every store and sandwich shop app seems like a foolish risk that is usually not worth it. I don't want Google to also know what I'm going to do in the future and whom I associate with, so I refuse to use a calendar app on my phone or computer.

One app I do accept is the Southwest Airlines app, as it is so much handier than checking in for flights online with a computer. The Southwest app finally drove me in 2022 to buy a new smartphone, as their app developer stopped supporting my old phone. I bought a Samsung Galaxy S22 and am hopefully spending real money (\$700) to buy more performance and tech longevity.

As with my first Samsung, I bought myself a very rugged case for my S22 to allay my fears of damaging the phone. With the belt clip front, the phone is fully enclosed when I carry it. I use magnetic USB adapters and charging cables to protect the phone's USB type C connector from excessive wear. I mostly charge my phone from a battery pack in a fast-charge mode and now use settings in the phone to limit charging to 85% of capacity most of the time, to extend battery life.

Over time I've found my use of the phone has only increased. With a higher resolution camera in my S22, I find I'm using it much more and my dedicated digital cameras much less often. Last fall the number of prescription drugs I needed to take increased and some came with restrictions I had to follow; I found the smart phone to be very useful in medication management. One medication required it be taken at least two hours after eating and at least one hour before eating; I found the best time to take it was immediately upon waking (I don't believe I do any sleep-eating). The problem is that I normally get up early and leave the house for work in less than an hour; this meant I often had to wait around a bit before eating breakfast and going to work.

I found my smartphone could be very useful in helping me manage this. The first thing I do when I get up is take this particular medication. I then immediately note the time on my phone and write that time into a document on the phone (for reference, should I get confused). I then set an alarm on the phone to melodically go off in an hour, indicating when I may eat breakfast. I often have to wait a little, but even though the time I get up can vary, this system keeps me from eating too soon after the meds. I have another medication I must take with food at dinner; another alarm set for a nominal dinner time each day helps remind me. I also take another medication once a week on a specific day, so another alarm on my phone reminds me of that.

The breakfast alarm could also be done using Alexa, but my talking to set it could be more disturbing to my sleeping wife. The other alarms on my phone can remind me even if I have gone out for dinner.

I used to wake up to a plug-in, battery-backed-up alarm clock at my bedside. It is more a wake-up alarm of last resort, as I typically wake up before it goes off. I always kept my phone in another room at night as I didn't want to be awakened by late-night spam calls. When we remodeled our bathroom last fall, we had to temporarily move into our guest bedroom. I didn't want to change my alarm clock, so I just used my smartphone alarm (which I do when I travel). I got used to it, and since there were no overnight spam calls, I've kept using my phone as my alarm clock since moving back into our bedroom.

My phone is also a convenient memory aid; I keep many lists on it in the Samsung Notes app. In addition to shopping lists, it has many pieces of information that I don't want to have to keep looking up. Printer cartridge part numbers, oil filters, and oil types for cars are easy to look up on my phone when I'm in the store.

Sometimes, when I get an idea for a newsletter column, I write down a few notes on my phone. I can keep an inventory of my mom's supplies on my phone, which can be easily updated when I visit her assisted living facility, and then needed items can be ordered when I get home.

Text messages are also a convenient way to keep track of information and events that can be referenced later.

My siblings have a text chain that we have used over the last few years to disseminate information about our elderly parents. It is easy to look in that text chain to see the events significant to my dad's passing, when my mom had medical issues, and how things have changed over time. Now that I'm overseeing my mom's care, my text reports to my siblings are a good record to keep.

Communication is a primary function of the smartphone, though how well it works often depends on the capabilities at the other end of the link. My mom has a "senior-oriented" smartphone but only uses it for phone calls. She can't send or receive text messages or photos connected to them. My other siblings live out of the area, limiting.

My wife found a great gift for my mom this last Christmas. It is a photo frame with an added capability. Its display cycles through the photos in its memory, but its Wi-Fi connection can add pictures to the frame. My siblings and other relatives can send photos to the frame from anywhere using a smartphone app. My brother even wrote a short note, took a picture of it, and sent it as a kind of text message.

I'm constantly finding new ways to use my smartphone. With new ways to use it being developed all the time, it continues to become a closer friend.

Where to Get E-Books
By Tom Burt, Vice President
Sun City Summerlin Computer Club
<https://www.scscclb.com> **tomburt89134 (at) cox.net**

As we approach summer, a perennial challenge is to find new, interesting, fun books to read. Lately, e-books have been a popular choice. With the maturing of the electronic book (e-book) format and industry, it should be more accessible than ever to find the right title, purchase it, download it to your book reader, smartphone, or tablet, and read it. In practice, things aren't quite that simple, so you may want to read on.

This article is based on a seminar I gave in December 2020 titled "E-Books and E-Readers." My seminar slides are at:
https://www.scscclb.com/smnr/E-Books_and_E-Readers_Seminar.pdf

E-book formats

There are two main e-book formats: Amazon Kindle and E-Pub. There are hardware and software readers for each. Both formats support digital rights management (copy protection) so that the purchaser of a book can't share it with more than a few others. Amazon mainly uses the Kindle format. E-Pub is used by Barnes & Noble and Kobo and for many self-published books. Adobe PDF and HTML are also often used for e-books. Apple's iBook format is a variation of E-Pub.

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Let's look at a few of them in more depth.

Amazon Kindle

The Amazon bookstore is vast. You can buy books in hardcover, paperback,

audio, and e-book format. As with all Amazon shopping, the search is very smart, and you can set filters to narrow choices. You can click on items in the search results to view details and add them to your shopping cart.

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If you subscribe to Amazon Prime, you can access an extensive collection of e-books at no charge via the Prime Reading service. You can access up to ten e-books for as long as you wish. When you want another, return or buy one of the ten you have.

The Amazon Fire HD 8 tablet with 64 GB of storage currently costs \$129.99.

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The Nook book reader is a 10.1-inch Lenovo Tab M10 HD Tablet, Android 9.0, with 32GB Storage. It has full access to the Google Play Store apps. This would include the free Amazon Kindle Reader app for Android. So, a Nook reader tablet could double as a Kindle Reader, allowing you to shop for books in either Nook or Kindle format.

Project Gutenberg

Project Gutenberg was founded by Michael Hart, who invented e-books in 1971. Its website claims to have 60,000 titles in its library. All these titles are completely free. Most are "classics" that are out of copyright. For example, I searched for Albert Einstein and found an English translation of his Special and General Relativity expositions.

I tried downloading a copy of Herman Melville's "Moby Dick" in Kindle format and was able to read it using the free Calibre book reader app on my PC. The Amazon Kindle Reader app wasn't able to open the book. I'll try to find out why and see if I can copy the e-book to my Amazon Fire tablet and read it there.

Hopefully, that will help you learn more about e-books and how to get them. I love them because of their convenience and ease of reading. And they take up zero space in the house.

Burned By Another Security Breach?
By Kurt Jefferson, Editor
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If you're reading this, there's a fair chance your personal data has been compromised. Stolen. As Malwarebytes Labs reports, "Earlier this week, the data of over 70 million people was posted for sale on an online cybercrime forum. The person selling the data claims it stems from a 2021 breach at AT&T."

If you think you might be a victim, you can type the email address connected to your AT&T account here on the Malwarebytes website. (Malwarebytes is a well-known company that produces anti-virus software and similar products.)

This security breach is especially troubling because, as Bleeping Computer notes, "AT&T says a massive trove of data impacting 71 million people did not originate from its systems after a hacker leaked it on a cybercrime forum and claimed it was stolen in a 2021 breach of the company." The stolen personal data is from an alleged 2021 AT&T breach that hackers calling themselves ShinyHunters attempted to sell on the dark web.

Search tools like Google, Yahoo!, or DuckDuckGo cannot reach the dark web. It's comprised of websites where everything from drugs to guns to personal information is sold for the right price. Whether or not the stolen data came from AT&T, the wireless giant says it has started notifying millions of customers about the data thefts.

AT&T says it has already reset the passwords of current customers and will be contacting others whose passwords, Social Security numbers, and possibly email and street addresses were compromised.

Prosecutors in New York are opening an investigation into the breach.

Numerous tech websites are urging AT&T's current and former customers to freeze their credit accounts at the big three credit agencies—TransUnion, Experian, and Equifax. In addition, sign up for two-factor notification on their AT&T accounts and change your AT&T password if it hasn't already been changed. Also, monitor your credit reports.

This isn't the first time the phone company has had problems. In a major AT&T outage in March, the company apologized for the disruption and offered a \$5 credit to customers.