

# Glendora's Computer Club Gigabyte Gazette



October 2017, Volume 22, Issue 6  
Editor: Judy Taylour

**Wednesday, September 11, 2017**

## **Evernote with Hewie Poplock**

I'm glad you have re-scheduled Hewie's presentation. I started using Evernote after viewing Hewie's presentation several years ago. This is one of the ways I use the program: when I am getting ready for a presentation, I copy and paste URLs with information about the topic into Evernote so I have my resources in one place and can refer to them when putting the presentation together. I call it my yellow post-it program. Back-in-the-day, most of us had yellow post-its around our CRT monitor so we could remember things. Evernote is a great place to put information you want to remember and, of course, it's free.

**Wednesday, October 25, 2017**

## **Scanning to Have Less Paperwork and to Preserve Family Treasures Connie & Annemarie**

Do you have old photo albums with yellow photos, the glue and the pages falling apart, and your family treasures fading away?

Do you have stacks of bills, medical records, brochures, paperwork, you would like to keep but they are taking up too much room, and then are hard to find?

There is a solution: scan these items into your computer, keep everything preserved, organized and easy to locate.

Connie and Annemarie will bring their scanners to this meeting and show how to scan and find your documents again.

**Meetings**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday**  
**1:00 – 3:00 pm**  
**La Fetra Community Center**  
**333 East Foothill Blvd.**  
**Glendora CA 91741**  
**626 914 8235**  
**www.gscclub.org/**

## **In This Issue**

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Planning Meeting  
after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday  
membership meeting  
All are welcome to attend

**President's Corner**  
**High-Tech Remembering**  
**By Greg Skalka, President,**  
**Under the Computer Hood User Group, CA**  
**October 2017 issue, Drive Light**  
**[www.uchug.org](http://www.uchug.org) / [president \(at\) uchug.org](mailto:president@uchug.org)**

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As we get older, our human memory seems to fail us. For some of us, this seems to start at a relatively early age, while others have good recall into our twilight years. Sometimes we have a greater problem retaining short-term memories, like what we had for dinner the night before or where we left our car keys, but can recall in detail events of many decades ago. Most of us just slowly start forgetting things. Of course, a blow to the head or a stroke can degrade even the best of memories.

Our technology today is filled with memories of various kinds - volatile and non-volatile, fast and slow, large and small capacity. The SDRAM (synchronous dynamic random-access memory) used for the main storage in most computers and smartphones is the ultimate in short-term memory. If power is removed, all the information stored in it quickly fades away. Flash memory (for small capacity applications) and magnetic media like hard drives (for large capacity) are non-volatile, and can retain their stored data for long periods of time without power. These memory types can suffer losses of data due to electrical, magnetic and cosmic ray abuse, and do also degrade over time just from normal use.

In these respects, the memories in our tech devices suffer from the same issues as our human, brain-based memories. Just as with our brains, semiconductor and magnetic memories lose their ability to reliably store information over time. Abuse to these memory devices, through actions like static discharge, extremes in temperature or mechanical shock (to a hard drive) can cause permanent damage, as a concussion or stroke does to a brain.

One means of information loss in our tech memories that does not really have an equivalent in the brain is in deletion. Information in semiconductor memories or hard drives can be deleted or overwritten. We humans don't really have a way to intentionally delete or forget information (this might be convenient for lost loves or humiliating experiences), though trauma may cause memories to be repressed or unconsciously blocked. In theory, therapy may be able to recover repressed memories in humans. In theory, there are also techniques that may be effective in recovering deleted files in semiconductor and magnetic memories.

Deleting a file from your computer (stored on a hard drive, or in semiconductor memory device like a flash drive or memory card) does not initially eliminate the data file, but instead removes the file's location from the computer's file system. In Windows, the deleted file goes into the recycle bin, from which it can be easily recovered. Even if the recycle bin is emptied, the file's data remains in the storage media until it is overwritten. Special software tools (data recovery software) can often recover these deleted files from hard drives, USB flash drives and memory cards. I recently had need of such

software, as I accidentally deleted photos and videos from the memory card in my smartphone.

When my wife and I went on vacation to Nebraska to view the total solar eclipse on 8/21/17, I left my Windows laptop at home and instead traveled with my smaller and lighter Chromebook. For its main job, it was well suited - accessing the internet and viewing web pages while on travel. It was less capable at its secondary task, copying photo and video files from the many cameras we took with us to a mass storage.

With four still and four video digital cameras being packed for this trip, I did not want to bring the multiple memory cards for each camera that would be necessary to hold all the files we would generate over the week we would be traveling. On past trips, I'd simply copied the contents of the memory cards from the cameras to the hard drive in my laptop, and then erased the cards for reuse. Since the Chromebook has no large internal storage, I planned to use it to copy my photos and videos to an external USB hard drive I brought.

I practiced copying these files before we left, and this all worked well for the files on my digital still cameras and digital video cameras. For some cameras, I removed the SD memory card and used the Chromebook's SD card reader. For others, I accessed the camera memory through a cable between the camera and the Chromebook's USB port. I also copied the photos and videos from the memory card in my smartphone, also through a USB cable. Since I had switched the micro SD card in my phone to be a 128 GB card the day before we left, I was in no risk of filling it up and really did not need to copy from it, but I did it anyway to be consistent. This later proved to be a big mistake on my part.

I am very familiar with the Windows file manager, but not so much with the file manager in the Chrome OS. While copying the folders of photos and videos from my Samsung Galaxy J3 Prime, an Android-based smartphone, to the external USB hard drive late one night in our hotel room, I got an error message that some files did not copy. I should have stopped right there and then, but haste and late nights make waste. I decided to delete those incompletely copied folders from the hard drive and try again, but due to my lack of familiarity with the Chrome OS file manager, I accidentally deleted the photo folders on my smartphone instead.

In the panic of the realization of what I had just done, I doubled down on my error and immediately copied those folders back from my external drive to the smartphone memory card. After reviewing the photos now on the smartphone, I found many photos and videos, including all I had taken in the last few days on the trip, were missing.

Fortunately, I finally stopped and calmly took stock of my situation. I had deleted all the photos from my smartphone, but fortunately I had backups of all but for the last few prior days of my trip. The photos taken with my smartphone were mainly just supplementals; most of my photography was done with my digital cameras. There were only a few cases where I had lost unique photos not duplicated by my cameras, amounting to perhaps several dozen files. If those missing smartphone photos were lost forever, it would not be the end of the world for me, but I would still like to get them back. If I

stopped further photography with my smartphone, I could try to recover the missing files when I returned home. Unfortunately, I had already copied back to the memory card the files I did have on the external drive, and so may have already overwritten some files, and thus lost them forever.



When I returned home, I started looking for a solution to my deleted file problem. A web search turned up many software options for file recovery from memory cards. There were a few programs that were free, but many were not. I then recalled a program I had seen demonstrated at one of the Southwest User Group Conferences. I believe it was Terry Currier of the WINNERS group (WINdows usERS)



that gave the presentation, and one program he recommended and demonstrated was Recuva. I decided to make this attempt with something I had seen, rather than an unknown.

Recuva is produced by Piriform ([www.piriform.com](http://www.piriform.com)), the same company that makes CCleaner (recently purchased by Avast). Recuva comes in a free version, as well as a Pro version for \$19.99 (both as downloads). My recollection was that Terry used the free version, so I downloaded it and installed it on my Windows 7 laptop. To make things as simple as possible for Recuva, I removed the micro SD card from my phone and put it in an SD adapter I could plug into my laptop's memory card reader, rather than connect through a USB cable on the phone.



When Recuva starts, it uses a wizard to simplify the process, though you can easily skip it. Being relatively unfamiliar with the program, I used the wizard, which asks just a few simple questions of the user. The first wizard screen asks you to select the type of files you are trying to recover. Since it would not allow the selection of multiple types (pictures and video), I selected "all files". In the next screen, I specified the location of the SD memory card (drive letter). The final screen had a start button, which initiates the search for deleted files. It also has a check box for "deep scan", which I skipped initially.

The first pass took only a few minutes and found 32 files. I selected them all to be copied to a folder on an external hard drive. I examined the folder and found the files recovered were all JPEG photos, almost all from before my trip, and none of the ones I really wanted.

I ran through the wizard a second time, this time with the deep scan selected. It took about two hours, but this time Recuva found 351 files. I had it save them all to a second hard drive folder. There were a lot of files that I already had from back-ups, but there were also the JPEG and MP4 files that I was looking for. It appears that Recuva could recover all the missing files that I could remember.

It will take me a while to sort through them and remove the duplicates, but between the back-ups and what Recuva recovered, I believe I did not lose a single file in my accident. Now I can view those photos and videos and relive those moments. I'll be more careful in deleting files with my Chromebook in the future, and I'm sure glad

Recuva works so well and is there when I'm not so careful. I sure wish there was a Recuva program for the human memory.

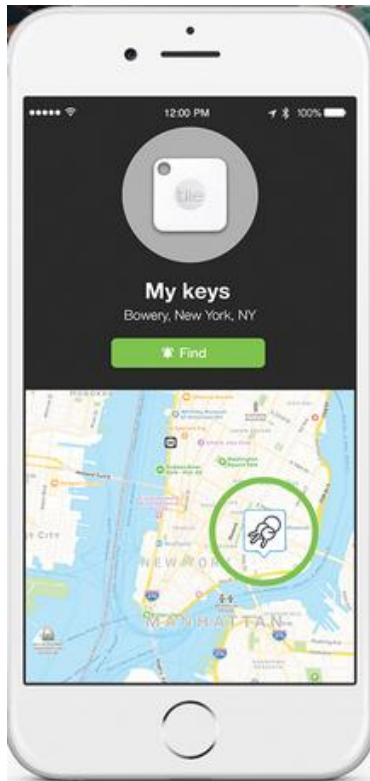
## The Tile

Review by Matt Batt, The Computer Club, Inc., Florida

August 2017 issue, The Journal

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Do you spend as much time looking for your keys or your phone as I do? I've could solve this problem using a Bluetooth tracker known as a Tile and an app on my smartphone. The Tile is a small device about 1-inch square and ¼ inch thick. Here's how it works. I attached a Tile to my key ring. The app in my phone can see the keys and keeps track of their location. When I can't find my keys, I can make the Tile ring from my phone if it is within 100 feet. If I have my keys and have misplaced my phone, I can make my phone ring from the tile on my keys even when it is on silent. I use the ringing feature a lot.

If my phone gets out of range of the tracker, the app records the physical location that the keys were last seen. Later, when I'm looking for my keys, the app can give me the address and mark on a map where I left them.

I have a Tile tracker attached to my USB drive that I am constantly leaving in someone's house or the lab after I repair a computer. When I discover that I've misplaced my USB drive, the app can tell me where I left it.

I was traveling in Western Scotland last year. We were on one of those tours where we made several stops that day. I left my pack, which had a tracking Tile, at the restaurant where we ate lunch, but I didn't realize that until later that afternoon when we were many miles away. The app told me the exact address where I had left it. I was able to call the restaurant and they were nice enough to mail the pack to a place where I could pick it up a few days later.

I keep a tracking Tile in my luggage when I travel. Using the app, I can tell when my luggage is approaching baggage claim.

Another incredible feature of these Tiles is that if the item has been stolen or isn't where you last saw it, you can select "Notify When Found" in the app. When any other Tile user passes close to your missing item, you'll automatically be notified of its location. This feature works 100% anonymously and automatically to protect your privacy. I was traveling from Montreal to Milwaukee and my luggage didn't make it. I reported it lost to

the airline and selected “Notify When Found” in the app. After a few frustrating days, when the airline finally shipped my luggage to Milwaukee, someone passed by it that had the app and I was notified the luggage was in Milwaukee before the airline could even notify me. There are 10 million Tiles in use, so it is no wonder that someone passed by my luggage.

Can you tell I’m sold on these things? The cost is 4 Tiles for \$70. The website is [www.thetileapp.com](http://www.thetileapp.com). Also, they are an excellent gift.

## Smartphone Tips & Tricks

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### Turn your Smartphone into a level

If you want the look and feel of a real, honest-to-goodness level with the liquid and the bubble, that’s where the iHandy Level for iOS and Android app comes in. This app works as a level by using your phone’s sensors.

Use it for hanging picture frames, TV mounts, light fixtures, anything you want to straighten out.

Handy Level is one of the 5 tools in the iHandy Carpenter toolkit

Video at: <https://www.komando.com/apps/369090/turn-your-phone-into-a-level>

### Turn your smartphone into a metal detector

Believe it or not, one of the most unexpected things your smartphone can do is search for metal.

If you own an iPhone, download a free app called *Metal Detector*. This app taps into your phone’s built-in magnetometer, which helps your phone detect the X, Y, Z axes for certain objects. It uses the same components for the phone’s built-in compass.

Accuracy is sometimes hit-or-miss, but don’t discredit this app’s ability. For it to work, simply open the app and point your phone’s camera toward a metal object and turn up the dial to increase the intensity.

Make sure the sound is on as well. It beeps more incessantly as it gets closer to the object, just like a real metal detector.

You’ll be surprised by the things it picks up. The app detects any metal that is magnetic.

If you don’t have an iPhone, a similar app (which is also called Metal Detector) can be downloaded for Android devices. Although these apps share the same name, they were created by different developers and have slight differences. Happy hunting!

<https://www.komando.com/apps/3159/metal-detector-app>



## **Monitor your heart rate the easy way**

Gone are the days where you must depend on finding your pulse and counting the seconds on your watch to get a reading on your progress. Now you can just pull out your smartphone with the Instant Heart Rate app.


Instant Heart Rate uses your phone's camera and flash to take a reading of your pulse. Just place your index finger on the camera and the app will automatically measure your heart rate by detecting color changes.

The app also collects data from each reading to create charts that help you monitor your heart rate over time. To keep your various readings organized, you can add tags such as "Just woke up," "Before bed," "Exercising," and "Resting." It's also helpful if you have a medical condition such as cardiovascular disease or diabetes and need to monitor your heart rate closely.

A free basic version is available for both Apple and Android users. However, there is also a Pro version (Apple, \$2.99/Android, \$1.99) that's ad-free and offers unlimited data tracking.

<https://www.komando.com/apps/3000/check-your-heart-rate-instantly>

## **Taking a nap, in a meeting, driving your car, etc. and don't want to be disturbed by your smartphone?**

iPhone –Go to Settings > Do Not Disturb to turn on Do Not Disturb manually or set a schedule. OR Swipe up from the bottom of the screen to open Control Center. Then tap do not disturb icon. 

You can set a schedule: Tap Settings > Do Not Disturb and turn on Scheduled. Then set a time.

You can also choose when you want to receive alerts, calls, and notifications:

- Silence: Choose to silence calls and notifications always or only when the device is locked.
- Allow Calls From: Allow calls from everyone, no one, your favorites, or specific contact groups stored on your device or iCloud.
- Repeated Calls: If someone calls you twice within three minutes, the second call isn't silenced.

<https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT204321>

**Android** - Swipe down from the top of your screen to open the notification shade and tap on the Do Not Disturb icon. On most phones running Android 6.0 Marshmallow or later, you'll get a menu with three options:

- Total silence: Nothing will interrupt you.
- Alarms only: Any alarms you have set can disturb you.
- Priority only: Alarms can get through, but you can customize exactly what else should and shouldn't disturb you.

Underneath that, you will see the option to specify how long Do Not Disturb mode should be active. You can set it to an hour to cover a meeting you're going into, specify a time when it should turn off, or tell it stay on until you turn it off again yourself.

If you want to use the Priority only option, you need to define what a priority notification is.

- Go to Settings > Sound & notification > Do not disturb and tap Priority only allows. If you have a Samsung Galaxy phone, then it's Settings > Sounds and vibration > Do not disturb > Allow exceptions > Custom.
- You can choose Reminders, Events, approved contacts, messages or calls from specific contacts, or repeat callers who call twice within 15 minutes.

You can also have Do Not Disturb mode turn on automatically, based on an event or time, by setting some rules.

- Go to Settings > Sound & notification > Do not disturb and tap Automatic rules.

You might find some slight differences in the menu options from phone to phone, depending on the manufacturer.

<https://www.digitaltrends.com/mobile/do-not-disturb-mode-in-android/>

## **What do you do with your computer?**

**By Phil Sorrentino, Contributing Writer,  
The Computer Club, Florida**

**The Journal of The Computer Club, Inc.**

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A long time ago, circa 1980, when personal computers first made their appearance, there was very little that us ordinary citizens could do with them. But as they found their way into the hands of some very smart people, who were also practiced in the art of programming, useful programs, or what we now call Apps, started to appear. You may have a slightly different view, but to my recollection, replacing the typewriter was the first “killer app” that appeared. Word processing took advantage of the computers capabilities and allowed many people to create works of literature quickly, accurately and by themselves. Over time, word processing on a computer completely replaced the typewriter and the many thousands of people it took to keep them operating; the typing pool disappeared. Many people were caught off guard. Because many people always had a person to create their inter-office memos, they never had to learn to use a keyboard. (Fortunately, I was forced to take a keyboarding course in the 9th grade. Its value became quite evident later when I had to use a keypunch machine to create lines of source code for a main-frame computer.) So, now with word processing available, most people could create their own inter-office memos and eventually turn those memos into emails (initially only within the company). Email was one of the next “killer apps” to appear. These early applications started before and without the benefit of the internet.

But before we get to the internet, there were many other “killer apps” that became part of computing. Here’s a brief walk down software memory lane. Spreadsheet software started as VisiCalc and evolved thru SuperCalc, Lotus 1-2-3, MultiPlan, and finally to the current Excel. Graphics software, software that allows one to manipulate images on



the computer, came on the scene early and now is represented by Adobe Photoshop, CorelDRAW, Microsoft Paint, and probably some others that I am not familiar with. Presentation software, that provides a sequence of slides for presentation before a large group, became a popular addition to other software used in an office setting. Presentation software is currently dominated by Microsoft's PowerPoint. Photo Editing software became popular after picture file types, like .jpg, .png, and .bmp, were invented, around the mid-nineties. Music player software became available after the invention of music file types, like .mp3, again, in the mid to late nineties. Video player software also arrived in the nineties, with the invention of video file types like mpeg-1, mpeg-2, and mpeg-4. Boy, the nineties were a busy time for inventing useful computer file types. Database software was also another "killer app" that came on the scene in the late 1980s and early 1990s; remember dBase II, or FoxPro, or Paradox.

Communications software and the internet changed everything. They allowed computers to communicate with other computers which allowed people to take advantage of computers that were in remote locations. Networking software made computer to computer communications possible. Networking software, which was initially an addition to the Operating System, eventually became, and is currently, an integral part of the Operating System. In the very early nineties, the World Wide Web appeared and with it, browsers. Browsers are another "killer app" and are what give us the ability to visit any website on the internet. You may remember some of the first browsers; MidasWWW, Lynx, NCSA Mosaic, Internet Explorer, Netscape Navigator, and Opera. Safari, Firefox, and Chrome came along a little later. It's through using the browser that you can get to all those wonderful retail sites for shopping on the internet.

So, early on, before the internet, the answer to the question of what you will do with a computer was simpler and was probably one of the following: Word processing, Graphics manipulation, Database development and uses, Communications. The uses were limited. But today, there is a much wider choice of activities to answer the question. The computer is a very versatile machine and today you could be using your computer in many ways, to accomplish many different things, such as:

1. Keeping in touch with your friends and family using email or social networking apps.
2. Watching movies or videos, (that you have purchased, borrowed, or created), on your living room big screen TV.
3. Watching movies that you are streaming from the internet (Netflix, Hulu, YouTube, etc.) on your living room big screen TV.
4. Listening to music, from your local music database of tunes that you have purchased or "ripped" from CDs or converted from older tapes or vinyl.
5. Listening to music that you are streaming from a cloud music source (server) like iTunes, Pandora, Google Play Music or Spotify.
6. Organizing your picture database so you can locate a particular event or specific picture.
7. Showing certain photos, from your picture collection, to your family and friends, on your living room big screen TV.
8. Fixing the exposure on some of the pictures you recently took with your smartphone.

9. Creating “Movies” of your latest vacation from the pictures and video clips you took with your camera or smartphone, while on vacation.
10. Managing your home family finances using a few basic financial spreadsheets, or a financial software App like Quicken or MSN Money.
11. Scanning old paper pictures to create a pictorial family history.
12. Scanning documents to create a database of important documents for your estate or your children.
13. Writing your own personal history to pass down to your children or other family members.
14. Checking your calendar for today’s activities or to see if you can make an appointment for 2 o’clock, in three weeks.
15. Reading or keeping up with the current news.
16. Checking on your financial accounts.
17. Checking on the stock market, or a particular stock, or trading stock in your brokerage account.
18. Sharing 200 pictures of the wedding you recently attended, with other wedding attendees using your OneDrive cloud account.
19. Researching “hip injury” using Google because of a twinge you noticed when you woke up this morning.
20. Checking “The Computer Club’s” website to see when the next “File Explorer” class is scheduled.
21. Writing an article for the next month’s newsletter.
22. Creating a PowerPoint presentation to give at the next club meeting.
23. Backing up your computer so your very valuable data will never be lost.
24. Playing the latest shoot-em-up, or “brain training” game.

And finally, 25. Shopping on the internet.

One reason for knowing what you do with your computer is to help you decide on what computer to buy, or more importantly, how much computer you may want to buy, the next time you purchase a computer. You don’t really need the fastest computer around if all you are going to do is shop on the internet, a Chromebook might even be appropriate.

**Want a nice virus on your PC?  
Here are the things you need to  
keep on doing.**

**By Cynthia Mackley**

**October 3, 2017 - <https://cynmackley.com/>**



Since telling people NOT to do things doesn’t always work so well, I’m going to try a little reverse psychology and tell you exactly how to get a virus.



***Run an unsupported operating system.*** Want to up your chance of coming down with a bug? Start by running an outdated operating system like Windows XP or Vista. Even if you run a third-party security software, it can’t protect you. Why? Because

third-party software counts on information from Microsoft to get down into the system to hunt and fix viruses. Without that information, they can't stop them. To make matters worse, crooks check out the security patches for supported operating systems and reverse engineer them to create new malware. Hackers have managed to reverse engineer ransomware that's crashed an entire country's health system. If you have an unsupported system, don't take it online.



**Don't update your system.** The purpose of having a supported system is that you'll get security and but updates on a regular basis. But if you don't download and install updates, they aren't going to do you much good. Hackers are working 24/7 to create new malware, viruses, and ransomware. Fortunately, so are security researchers. But you must install their updates and patches. The same goes for software like Java and Flash.



**Don't use security software.** You'd probably be stunned to learn how many people don't run any security software on their PC or mobile device. (especially young people.) There are a variety of free and paid programs available for every type of device. It's especially important for phones as they are increasingly becoming the target of criminals. At the very least, if you have a Windows PC, make sure Defender is activated. I know that the cost of a security program like Norton can seem expensive, but it's a lot less expensive than losing your PC or having your bank account emptied.



**Click on everything without thinking.** Get an email with just a link and no explanation? Click right on that link. How about a friend request from someone you've never heard of that says he's a retired astronaut in Nigeria? How about a Facebook post that says your favorite store is giving everyone who shares or clicks on a link a \$100 gift certificate to your favorite store? Sounds legit to me. A site promising to allow you to stream normally premium programming for free? Sign right on up. It's time to use your noggin. If someone approached you with an offer like that on the street, would you believe it? Why are you buying it on the Internet? Read things and think about them, especially if they require you to click on links or register. Not only are you exposing yourself to hackers, you could potentially expose your friends and contacts.



**PANIC!** Crooks love to go for that fear response. Your PC starts making a warning noise and a pop-up tells you that you have ten minutes to call a number or you'll lose your Windows license. You get a phone call from a guy claiming he's with Microsoft and that errors have been detected on your system. He needs your credit card and immediate access to your system to fix it. An email turns up in your box saying that your device is going to be locked by the FBI if you don't respond immediately. Or that your bank account will be locked if you don't click and reconfirm your account number and password. So, you panic. And do exactly the wrong thing. That fear response will get you into trouble every time. No

matter what's happening, try to take just a couple of minutes to take a deep breath and ask yourself if this is a real thing. Sometimes just a minute will help you get a clear head and avoid a costly mistake.

## **Potpourri of Tips**

### **August Meeting Review: Golden Gate Computer Society**

**September 2017 issue, GGCS Newsletter**

**[www.ggcs.org](http://www.ggcs.org) / [editor \(at\) ggcs.org](mailto:editor@ggcs.org)**

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Steve Shank led off the panel of GGCS gurus tip-talking during the August 28 General Meeting. Other panelists included Marcelino Nogueiro, James Gafford, and Barbara Hansen.

### **Password Manager**

Steve says, LastPass offers a free version and, for \$24/year/person, a premium version. The two versions are identical when used on computers. The difference is that only the premium version can also be used on mobile devices. In both cases, LastPass offers unlimited password storage and syncing across multiple devices that have LastPass installed, and two-factor authentication. It operates as a browser extension, with support for all major browsers and operating systems.

LastPass Premium adds enhanced password sharing options, storage of desktop-app passwords and support for physical authentication devices. LastPass automatically captures all passwords as you enter them into a website. All passwords are encrypted with your master password before they are stored in the Cloud and are encrypted on your hard drive.

You must create a strong Master Password, which ensures that nobody, even at LastPass, has access to your data.

This password must comprise at least 12 characters, including at least one digit, and a mix of capital and lowercase letters.

Multi-factor authentication requires that, when you log in, you will need a onetime code generated by the app, as well as your Master Password.

Dashlane and Roboform are prominent among many other password managers.

Marcelino then offered a house-generated password option where the main part of the password would have at least eight characters, including numbers, upper and lowercase letters and punctuation. Then, for each site, you would add, say, two more characters, to distinguish that site from others. He recommends a minimum overall total of 12 characters.

## **Snipping tool**

Marcelino, assisted by James, explained that the useful Snipping Tool is a free screenshot utility and demonstrated that it permits screen shots of full screen, rectangular areas, or free-form areas using a mouse or a tablet. The image can be saved as JPEG, GIF, or PNG, it can be copied and pasted, and it can be emailed.

Colored pens, eraser, and highlighter allow annotating the image (You cannot make direct changes to the snipped image. An image editing program would have to be used for any edits). It also has a Delay function that allows for timed capture of screenshots.

## **Link shorteners**

Steve demonstrated a link shortener, in this case [www.bit.ly](http://www.bit.ly) by pasting a long web link URL into its webpage and the page generated a shortened version in the format [www.bit.ly/xxxxx](http://www.bit.ly/xxxxx). When the shortened link is clicked, the user is redirected to the full web link.

For example, you could shorten a 500-character, three-line link to say 12 characters. Bit.ly will shorten any link given to it even if you don't have an account.

However, with an account (free), you can have some degree of customization of the shortened result. (It also offers an enterprise version with more customization.) The shortened link is then owned by you and cannot be changed by others.

## **System tray**

The system tray at the bottom right side of the computer screen and the icons in the tray are for programs that run all or part of the time and show current status of systems, Marcelino said. Some icons may be hidden, but can be selected by left clicking the up-facing arrow and dragged onto the bar, if required.

The system tray shows the date and time as well as the status of the various icons in the tray. At the extreme right side is the Notification icon which, when clicked, shows an Action center, and with a left-click, the status of all your Windows settings, and network and internet settings.

Right-clicking an icon, such as the Speaker icon, gives choices as to how to make changes. Marcelino suggested it would be a good idea to have Windows Defender on the system tray. Marcelino also recommend adding the Snipping tool to the Taskbar. Note that the Taskbar is the set of icons to the right of the Start button and to the left of the System tray.

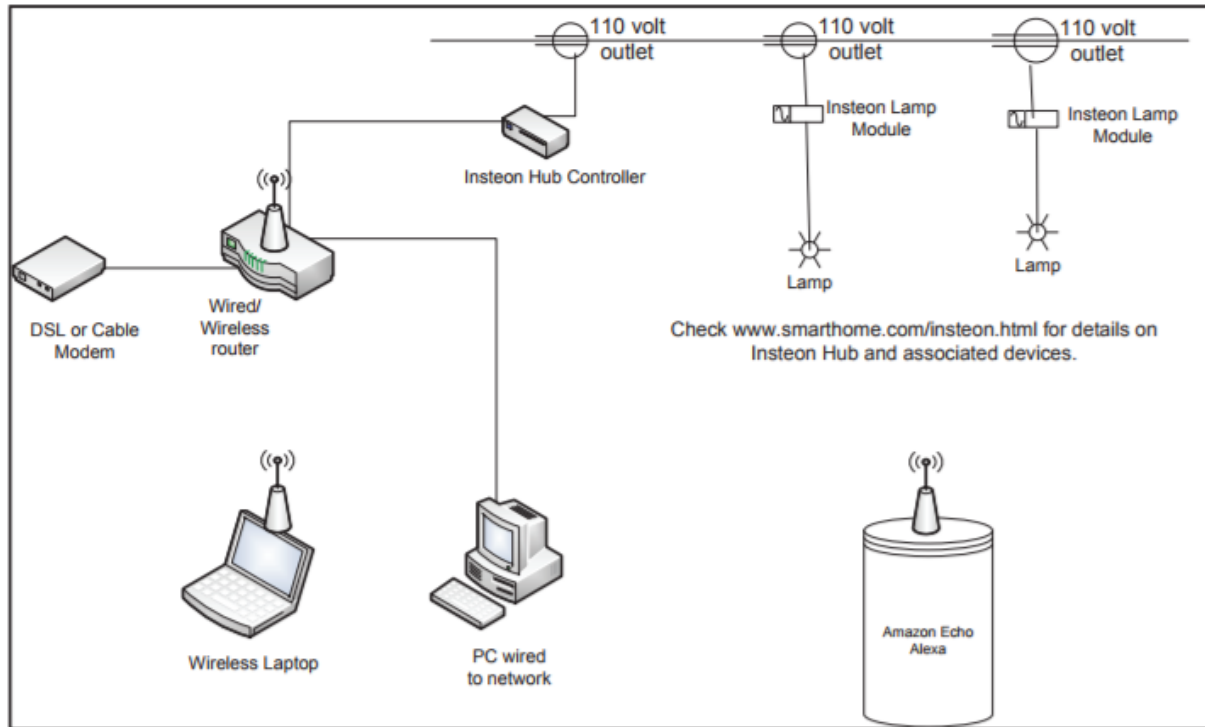
## **Alexa**

Alexa Dot and its big sibling, Echo, are well-known personal assistants, Marcelino said, and now have a multitude of voice-activated capabilities, including playing music, playing radio, giving reminders, setting timers, setting lamps, telling jokes, giving weather reports, etc.; additional control of lamps and other electrical systems are available by using modules like the Insteon Hub. Both the Echo and Dot can interface with home automation systems enabling voice activated commands. It acts as a hub for other Dot or Echo units in the house.

Barbara Hansen has the (free) Alexa app on her iPhone and uses it to ask Alexa for the current time and for news briefings from, say, the BBC, WSJ, NPR, The Economist, etc.

Barbara also uses Alexa to add to her calendar, and to advise her of calendar activities and their date/time. She also asks Alexa to read to her from a Kindle book.

Amazon Echo/Alexa can be set up to control lights and appliances around your home using an Insteon Hub controller and corresponding control switches, as was done at the meeting, and explained by Marcelino (see diagram, Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1. How Alexa works.**

Additional information can be found at <https://www.smarthome.com/insteon.html>. Microsoft's Cortana, and Google's Home offer similar services.

## Google Forms

Steve demonstrated how, with Google Forms, he created a survey voting form for members of his wine club to register their individual scores for various wines that had been tasted at a meeting.

Once the form has been created, the link is sent to others. Google Forms has a simple user interface and powerful editor, and works together with Google Sheets spreadsheets. Results can be listed or presented automatically as a graph. It is an easy-to-use form builder with a spreadsheet backend, with only nine question types and basic color plus photo themes, and it can be customized. Google Forms is free with a Google account, but you don't need a Google account to respond to Google Forms.



**Interesting Internet Finds – September**  
**By Steve Costello, Boca Raton Computer Society**  
**<http://ctublog.sefcug.com> / editor (at) brcs.org**

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While 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 September 2017.

**The Ultimate Firefox Privacy & Security Guide**

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/ultimate-firefox-privacy-security-guide/>

If you use Firefox, you should read this post and make sure you are secure and as private as you can get.

**How to Get Free eBooks In Exchange for Online Reviews**

<https://www.howtogeek.com/323375/how-to-get-free-ebooks-in-exchange-for-online-reviews/>

I know there are a lot of readers out there. Check out this post to find out how to get free eBooks to review and keep. I have done this myself, with both print and eBooks. These are going to be mostly indie writers, but they need your help to improve their craft. Be honest in your reviews, and be aware that you are not going to like everything.

**How Can I Create an Encrypted Zip Archive in Windows?**

<https://www.askdaveytaylor.com/can-create-encrypted-zip-archive-windows/>

For some reason, you can no longer easily create an encrypted zip archive in later Windows machines. Dave explains how to use 7-Zip to do it.

**LastPass Password Manager Review**

<https://www.tomsguide.com/us/lastpass,review-3775.html>

I use LastPass, and this review just might convince you to use it too. If not LastPass, use some other password vault to help keep you safe and secure.

**If Influencers Are Paid, They Must Disclose It**

<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2017/09/if-influencers-are-paid-they-must-disclose-it>

It is the law that those giving endorsements must disclose if they are being paid to do it. Keep that in the back of your mind when reading online reviews and endorsements, and form your opinion accordingly.

**How Do I Know VPNs Won't Intercept Bank Login Details?**

<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/vpns-cant-intercept-login-details/>

There has been a lot of talk about VPNs on the web lately. This post explains why they can't intercept your banking logins. It is my opinion that everyone should use a VPN

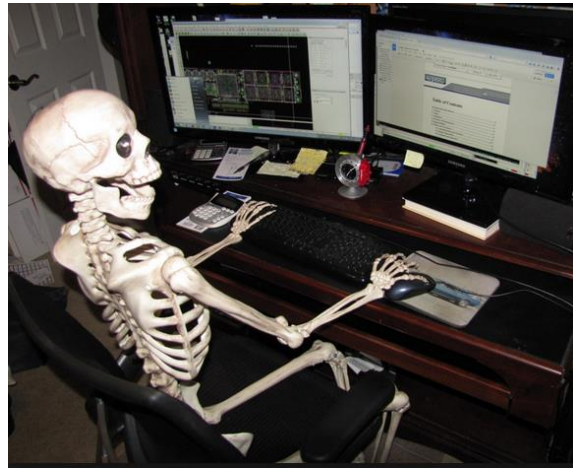
when using public Wi-Fi. Also, my VPN is one of the few things I pay for. A free VPN might be OK, but I am not that trusting.

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Most Fridays, more interesting finds will be posted on the Computers, Technology, and User Groups Blog:

<http://ctublog.sefcug.com/tag/interesting-internet-finds/>

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Mike Powell. Getty Images

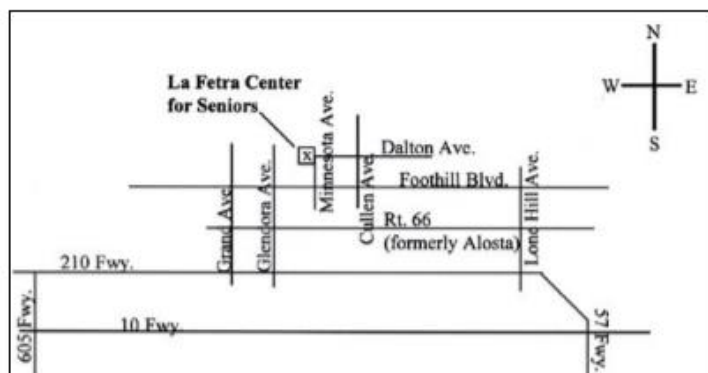
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