CAEUG — Computers Are Easy User Group

Left column

Confirmed meeting dates

2024
January 27

February 24

:: ::

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
:: ::

Main content

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PER GLENSIDE Library (Masks are optional)

INFORMATION for Saturday **January 27th** 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 January presentation will have various short video presentations about Pi-Hole and Hardware

Make sure your software is up to date. Stay safe.

Dues for 2024 are due.
Mail dues to CAEUG, P.O. Box 3150,
Glen Ellyn, IL 60138
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Thank you to all who will pay 2024 dues!

Table of Contents

Join CAEUG meeting in Library or from Home,
Stay Safe! Update information on our website at

https://www.CAEUG.net

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 264
January 2024
by John Spizzirri

There is a camera at Churchill, Manitoba, Canada **(1)** pointed at the sky. At night, when the weather is clear, you can check for Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis). You can check the weather at the polar bear site **(2)**. It is off season for polar bear watching. Churchill is in the Central Time zone. If you stay up really late or get up early, try the Alaska Borealis cams **(3)** or Yellowknife cam in the Mountain Time zone **(4)**. Two places to try offer various cams from around the world **(5, 6)**. Keep in mind that the eagles may return to the nest at any time, but will not start rebuilding in earnest until mid to late January **(7)**. The brown bears are hibernating. The videos show highlights of the past. To check on the space weather (for aurora forecasts) try here **(8)** and NASA **(9)**.

1) **https://is.gd/3RjcRQ**
2) **https://bityl.co/Nj7m**
3) **https://auroranotify.com/aurora-links/**
4) **https://auroramax.com/live**
5) **https://seetheaurora.com/webcams**
6) **https://lightsoverlapland.com/?p=79**
7) **https://is.gd/YAuMF0**
8) **https://www.spaceweather.com/**

9) https://www.swpc.noaa.gov/

Encryption **(1)** in the information age is one of the essential components of computer privacy and thus personal privacy. Privacy is a necessity to keep other people (including government and corporations) out of your business. Don't give me the old saw that you have nothing to hide. If you had nothing to hide, there would be no interior doors on ANY rooms (bed, bath) in your home, no drapes or blinds and ANY windows in your home, and no locks or latches on any doors or windows of you home just to name a few things that require privacy. Phil Zimmermann **(2, 3)**, literally, gave us small computer (PC) encryption in 1991 by writing and releasing Pretty Good Privacy **(4, 5 PGP)**. He was investigated for three years. The U. S. Government gave up the investigation because there was nothing to prosecute him on. He did nothing wrong. He did not sell the code. He released it as open source. Other people sent it to other countries on the Internet which was brand new. At the time doing that was illegal. I recall that you could purchase a tee shirt with all the PGP code printed on the front for $15, still can but costs more (**6)**. With all that said lets talk about the present. Privacy is under a new attack from a couple of members of the five eyes **(7, 8)**. The Australian government wants to undermine end to end email encryption **(9)** in a move similar to that of UK Online Safety Bill **(10)**. The United States has a bill that keeps rearing its ugly head every year or two called the Kids Online Safety Bill **(11 KOSB).** These bills or regulations all have a similar theme in that they want to end encryption of communication and thus privacy of communication. If it happens in the UK and / or Australia, your right to communicate with people there will be limited to unencrypted email, Instagram, TikTok, Skype, Jitsi, Zoom, etc. Who knows what will happen with the Tor Project **(12)**. Proton mail (**13)** and Tuta mail (**14)** will become useless.

1) **https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Encryption**
2) **https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phil_Zimmermann**
3) **https://philzimmermann.com/EN/background/index.html**
4) **https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pretty_Good_Privacy**
5) **https://www.openpgp.org/**
6) **https://bityl.co/Nj7s**
7) **https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five_Eyes**
8) **https://is.gd/Ippjzo**
9) **https://bityl.co/Nj7y**
10) **https://www.eff.org/node/108670**
11) **https://www.eff.org/node/108342**
12) **https://www.torproject.org/**
13) **https://proton.me/mail**
14) **https://tuta.com/**

23 and me **(1)** had a breach of 14,000 client records last October. They responded to the breach in January stating that it was the fault of the clients

(2). Bleeping Computer **(3)** and Malwarebytes found that more than 14,000 records were breached due to 23 and me's policy of connecting genetic relatives. A number of class action law suits were started. 23 and me denies any responsibility for the breach(es) **(4)**.

1) **https://www.23andme.com/**
2) **https://www.malwarebytes.com/?p=101607**
3) **https://is.gd/YKE3Ri**
4) **https://bityl.co/Nj86**

A federal judge in Washington state ruled that car companies can collect smart phone data using the automobile's 'infotainment' system. Data includes text messages, call logs, social security number, information about your religion, your marital status, genetic information, disability status, immigration status, race, and where you drive. The manufacturers are selling the information to retailers for targeted advertising. The automobile brands involved were Honda, Toyota, Volkswagen, and General Motors. Malwarebytes researchers recommend turning your smart phone off before you turn on the car.

1) **https://www.malwarebytes.com/?p=97290**

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

Without a Manual, Can Understanding be Automatic?
By Greg Skalka, President
Under the Computer Hood User Group
https://uchug.org/
president ** uchug.org

Not long ago, writing was the primary format for human knowledge. Once we graduated from cave drawings to the written word, our knowledge was stored this way. Information was preserved and passed on through writing, from stone tablets to books. Though a picture may be "worth a thousand words," it often needs some explanation. Libraries were the repositories of knowledge from ancient times through just recently. Now the Internet and the World Wide Web are vying for that position.

While stone tablets have lasted for many thousands of years, and printed books have been around for a little over a thousand years; the Internet has existed for only about 50 years, and the World Wide Web for a little over 30 (the Web is a service that runs on the Internet). It has been estimated that all the books ever printed would be equivalent to about 175 terabytes of storage; that is only 175 of those one-TB hard drives you probably have. In contrast, the amount of data estimated to be on the Internet in 2022 is 94 zettabytes (an unimaginable 94 x

10^10 one TB hard drives). We are generating more data than we know what to do with. It is believed that 90% of the world's data was developed in the last two years.

Product user manuals used to be actual printed books, but now they are migrating to the Web. In the best case, the manual is a pdf. In most cases, however, the only product information is web pages, separate articles, and user forums. The printed manual for many products consists only of some basic connection and power-up directions, along with a web link to additional information. Sometimes the manual information is built into a help menu in the product.

A few types of products remain where detailed paper user manuals are still usually provided; automobiles are one example. However, the manual is very limited or nonexistent for many of our most complex high-tech products. Computers, televisions, cell phones, and most software have little or nothing for user manuals. Since those hardware products heavily depend on software, I guess it is unsurprising. Since software and software-based products can be easily updated and changed, making a detailed manual would be like aiming at a moving target. For particularly complicated and widely used products, sometimes third-party vendors provide manuals confused users can purchase (the "for Dummies" series, for example).

What is a Windows 11 user to do with a question or problem? Do they go to the Microsoft website to search for answers? Do they turn to a search engine and comb the Web for help? Do they turn to friends, family, or the tech guru they hopefully know to get advice on their problems? Do they look for a product forum online for answers? Do they join a user group? Do they simply figure things out by trial and error? Do they just remain frustrated?

Today's tech products are too unfamiliar, complicated, and unsupported for many seniors. For example, the smartphone is probably the most complex consumer product ever made for its size and weight.

Even when put into the hands of someone familiar with the concept and use of a conventional telephone, its menus and features can be overwhelming. In the last year of his life, my 85-year-old father went through several cell phones and smartphones (some "senior-friendly"), looking for one he could understand and use. Unfortunately, he was unsuccessful in his search. He was not technology-challenged; my father had used and even built computers for many years. He was losing his tech edge with age but struggled to learn a new tech tool. While it is a device that young children can often pick up and use (at least in some way), he could never utilize a smartphone to his satisfaction.

Even I feel behind the curve on smartphone knowledge. I am sometimes frustrated with my limited understanding of the features and capabilities and

the lack of documentation. I admit I wasn't an early adopter of smartphones as I thought they were too expensive. I still feel that way, but I now appreciate their importance in our society. I used my first smartphone, a Samsung Galaxy J3, for five years and have had my second, a Samsung S22, for almost a year. I thought I knew something about using smartphones until I got my new one. While from the same manufacturer and using the same OS (Android), the new instrument and the new OS version were sufficiently different to require some relearning. And, of course, there was no user manual to help guide me.

The lack of standardization in products does not help in understanding products. For example, my old phone had four hard buttons, while my new one has only three. A lot of the basics of operation were the same, but one of the first problems I had with my new phone was shutting it off. On my old phone, holding the power button (the unpaired side button) would bring up the phone's power-down menu. On my new phone, doing the same brought up Samsung's Bixby app (a voice-activated assistant similar to Google Assistant). I finally figured out that I had to simultaneously press and hold the power and volume down buttons to get the power-down menu on my new phone.

I have learned some new phone tricks for my Samsung S22, but they were difficult to figure out. I imagine every software developer believes the features they add to a product are "intuitive" and don't need any explanation or directions. Unfortunately, intuition does not seem standardized in humans; what is obvious to one person may not be to another. A good friend with the same S22 phone showed me a neat capability in the new Android version – the ability to nest icons in icons. Instead of having all apps represented by icons at the same screen level, he showed me that I could create a Home Control icon and put all my home control app icons into it (like a folder on the screen for grouping icons). It is a good feature, but now I can't remember how to do it again (and I have no manual to refer to). It does not seem as intuitive as when he first showed me.

I paid my friend back by showing him a new feature he did not know about. I don't recall where I found it, but if you double-press the power button, it brings up the phone camera (and bypasses the PIN entry). This is handy if you need to take a quick photo with the phone. Another new feature I found is that a quick double tap on the screen will soft start the phone (the same as a quick press of the power button).

There are some things I have not figured out, and so far, I've not found the answers on the Web. For example, in some Samsung TV commercials, phone users were shown taking selfies using Google Assistant ("Hey Google, take a selfie"). I tried this at the time (a month ago) and was successful. Unfortunately, now this no longer appears to work for me. I did get a recent Android update, which could have changed things. My web searches give various instructions for doing this, but none seem to work for my phone now.

http://www.caeug.net

What I'd give for a manual (that is, of course, accurate and complete).

More Inconsistencies

Whenever there is more than one way to do something, there will be a different opinion on how it should be done. One example of this is the low battery charge indicator on a product. I have three different products, each indicating battery charge with a single LED indicator differently.

My old Philips Norelco rechargeable electric razor has a single LED to indicate battery charging status. When the charging cord is first plugged in, the LED turns on solid to show the battery is charging. When the razor's battery reaches a full charge, the LED switches to flashing. My Cygolite rechargeable rear bike light has a single red LED that can flash in various patterns to indicate my presence to cars approaching behind me. When the charging cable is plugged into it, the LED flashes low to indicate the battery is charging. When the battery reaches full, the LED switches to a low-intensity solid.

My Wyze Night Lights have a single LED to indicate battery status. When the charging cord is first plugged in, the LED turns on solid to show the battery is charging. The LED switches off when the Wyze light's battery reaches full charge.

Each of these charging indicator methods is valid, but with the razor and the bike light, I can never remember which situation indicates a full charge. When I come back a few hours later, I'm typically scratching my head, wondering if flashing means fully charged or still charging. The Wyze method seems the least ambiguous. Why can't everyone do the same?

Interesting Internet Finds
by Steve Costello scostello ** sefcug.com

While going through the more than 300 RSS feeds, I often encounter things that might interest other user group members.
The following are some items I found interesting during December 2022.

Should UPS Be Plugged Into Surge Protector?
https://www.thewindowsclub.com/should-ups-be-plugged-into-surge-protector
https://www.howtogeek.com/825921/should-you-plug-a-ups-into-a-surge-protector/
I have no opinion one way or the other on this issue. However, these posts make points for both sides, so I am putting them out there for you to read and decide.

How To Make Sure Your VPN Is Working and Protecting Your Privacy

https://helpdeskgeek.com/how-to/how-to-make-sure-your-vpn-is-working-and-protecting-your-privacy/

Do you use a VPN? If yes, do you know how to ensure it works correctly? Check out this post to learn how to check your VPN for various issues.

Guide to FaceTime Calls Between iPhone and Android Users
https://www.askdavetaylor.com/guide-to-facetime-calls-between-iphone-and-android-users/

As an Android user, I did not know there was a way to participate in FaceTime calls with Apple users. If you use Android and know Apple users you want FaceTime with, check out this post to see how.

How to Fix the "This site can't be reached" Error in Google Chrome
https://www.online-tech-tips.com/google-softwaretips/how-to-fix-the-this-site-cant-be-reached-error-in-google-chrome/

I used to get this error frequently when using Google Chrome, but not so much anymore. That said, if you should be getting that error, several suggestions will help you resolve the problem.

10 Amazon Kindle Features You Should Be Using
https://www.howtogeek.com/854816/10-amazon-kindle-features-you-should-be-using/

Do you use a Kindle? If you answered yes, and have a recent one, check out this article. I found features I didn't know about that make things much better for me.

What Is WiFi Calling & How To Get It On Your Phone
https://www.techlicious.com/tip/how-to-get-wifi-calling-att-sprint-t-mobile-verizon/

WiFi calling is great. I don't know why some don't know about it, and it is free if available. Check out this post to learn about it and how to use it yourself.

Alexa Device Is Unresponsive: 6 Fixes
https://www.groovypost.com/howto/alexa-device-is-unresponsive-fixes/

Is your Alexa device unresponsive? If so, try these fixes before deciding to junk it and replace it with a new one.
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Interesting Internet Finds
by Steve Costello   scostello ** sefcug.com

While going through more than 300 RSS feeds, I often encounter things that might interest other user group members.

The following are some items I found interesting in March.

How (And When) To Reset Your PC's Network Adapters
https://www.ricksdailytips.com/reset-network-adapters-windows/

I get problems with my network adapters, so I keep a copy of this post handy now. (Note: This does not happen frequently, but knowing how to fix the problem is good to know before it happens.)

Is Facial Recognition And Fingerprint ID Safe?
https://askleo.com/is-facial-recognition-and-fingerprint-id-safe/

Leo Notenboom gives his take on this question. If you watch a lot of TV and movies, you might think these options are easily bypassed. If that is the case, check out Leo's post.

How To Find The Right Kindle For Your Reading Needs
https://www.reviewgeek.com/144298/how-to-find-the-right-kindle-for-your-reading-needs/

Are you Thinking about buying a Kindle? If so, check out this Review Geek post outlining the different options and why each is best for different needs.

Chrome High Efficiency Mode
https://cynmackley.com/2023/03/13/enable-chromes-high-efficiency-mode/

If you use Google Chrome, and you probably do, following these instructions will help with memory issues if you have a lot of tabs open.

10 Ways To Improve Your Wi-Fi Without Buying Anything
https://www.howtogeek.com/874841/10-ways-to-improve-your-wi-fi-without-buying-anything/

I am always interested in ways to improve things without buying anything. This HowToGeek post shows different ways to improve your Wi-Fi at no cost. Some of these ways are very simple but often overlooked.

Google Keeps Asking To Fill Image Captcha? 6 Ways To Fix It
https://techviral.net/google-keeps-asking-to-fill-image-captcha/

I don't use the Google Search engine much anymore, but when I did, frequent captchas were annoying. If you use Google Search and get asked to fill image captchas often, check out this post to fix it.
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