

Interface

Lorain County Computer Users Group
www.LCCUG.com
info@LCCUG.com
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2018

Inside This Issue

President's Letter	Pg.2
LCCUG Officers	Pg.2
Minutes	Pg.4
Arlene Hall's Obit	Pg.5
Back to the Basics	Pg.5
Classes & Workshop	Pg.6
OGS News	Pg.11
Genealogy	Pg.8
Is the CHEX Bank Account Monitoring Agency Watching You?	Pg.9
Ask Leo	Pg. 10
Wi-Fi Dead Spots	Pg.11
Our New Location Map	Pg.14



**Tuesday
April 10, 2017**

Are You an Energy Saver?



by



Amy Carles,
*Office of the Ohio Consumers'
Counsel*

RAFFLE ITEMS

1. ONN Virtual Reality Headset for Smart Phones
2. Easy Handheld Label Maker by Brother
3. Recharge Power Bank 2600 mAh
4. Energizer LED Slim Nightlight (2 pack)



Come learn with us!

The Lorain County Computer Users Group
P.O. Box 792
Amherst, Ohio 44001
Phone: 440-363-1232

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☺ **New Meetings Now Held at LCCC** ☺

LCCC Community Learning Center
at Lorain High School
2600 Ashland Ave. Lorain, Ohio

Doors will open at 6:00 PM, program starts at 6:30 PM

A Word From Our President



I'd like to start with a reminder that LCCUG offers a workshop on the 3rd Tuesday of each month in the same room as our monthly meeting. At this workshop member can bring in their computer, laptop, tablet, e-reader or smart phone and ask for help. Where else can you get personal service like that for free? We used to have a line of people waiting to take advantage of this service and since we've moved, few people are coming in with their questions. Be sure to make use of this club benefit.

I have heard that some members still don't like Windows 10. Neil, Micky and Sandee have gotten used to it and don't mind it. This is something you can stop in on the 3rd Tuesday to get help with. Learn to like Windows 10 – it's here to stay!

The word that we've received is that the new Windows 10 "Spring Creator's Update" (or it can be called an upgrade - and we should be at Windows 14 coming up). This update is coded as 1803, will actually start coming out in April. So be watching for it sometime in the Spring. It won't come out at the same time for everyone using Windows 10 will get it eventually. Watch your computer for a notice that 1803 has downloaded and is ready for installation.

We have a relationship with the NEOPC Users group. This group meets in the Westlake Public Library. You can always check their website www.neopc.org to see what their next meeting is. They meet the second Wednesday of the month, often the day after ours. Some of us have attended some of their meetings and they have good topics. I recommend it!

I want to remind members that email coming from LCCUG will soon have a different look. We are changing the service that we use to send our reminders and manage the membership and email will be coming from MailChimp. Be sure to pay attention to these messages from us when they arrive with this new look.

Now that it is spring and the weather is decent and it's light longer -- it's a great time to come to our meetings and workshops. I will see you soon! Bring a friend!

Sandra Ruth
LCCUG President

April Fool

LCCUG Officers For 2018

President	Sandee Ruth president@lccug.com
Vice President	Carole Doerr vp-programs@lccug.com
Secretary	Don Hall secretary@lccug.com
Treasurer	Micky Knickman treasurer@lccug.com
Newsletter Editor	Pam Rihel newsletter@lccug.com
Web Page Editor	Richard Barnett webpage@lccug.com
Statutory Agent	Sandra Ruth statutory_agent@lccug.com
Director of Membership	Dennis Smith membership@lccug.com
Director of Advertising	Richard Barnett advertising@lccug.com
Director of Education	Neil Higgins education@lccug.com

Computer Systems Unlimited, Inc.

We are a full service computer/peripheral sales and repair Company specializing in custom built Pc's, network design, software integration, and everything in-between. We are located in the small college town of Oberlin, Ohio, and for fourteen years have been providing unrivaled service to home users, small and large businesses all over Ohio as well as State and local government agencies. All of our systems and networks are tailored to meet the individual needs of our customers.



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* Computer Systems Unlimited is happy to offer a 5% discount on all computer systems ordered by LCCUG members.

* Computer Systems Unlimited will also offer a free computer diagnostics check, (a \$25 value), for all LCCUG members.

Visit our web site at www.csuoberlin.com for more of what we can do.
Store Hour Monday 9-5:30 - Thursday 9-5:30 - Friday 9-5 - Saturday 9-1

**Tuesday
April 17, 2018**

Are You an Energy Saver?

by

Amy Carles,
Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel



Amy has been a very popular speaker and will return for a third year to help us understand our rights with utility companies, things we buy to use in our homes, robo calls, etc.

Tonight Amy will tell us how we can continue/become Energy Savers.

How much do you really know about energy efficiency and keeping energy bills low? Test your knowledge during this fun and interactive presentation while learning fun facts and ways to reduce energy usage.

You may be surprised to learn what the true energy users in your home are, and you may discover you can lower your utility bills even more!

Attention! Attention! Attention!



Now you can get a 5 year membership subscription to LCCUG for only \$75.00.

This is a savings of \$50.00. Can't beat this price.

So talk to Micky Knickman our Treasurer and get started on your 5 year membership today.

Don't wait until this great offer disappears.
Sign-up today...

WE HAVE MOVED

Lorain High School / LCCC
2600 Ashland Ave.
Lorain 44052

Directions on back of newsletter



MEETING CANCELLATION NOTICE

When a meeting is cancelled, the notification will be on our Websites and emails will be sent out to our members.

Our Website is: www.lccug.com

If you think the weather is too bad to drive in then don't try to come to a meeting that may already be cancelled. Please check your email boxes and our websites.

Thank You

The Lorain County Chapter of OGS

is having it's next meetings on :



REGULAR MEETING LOCATION

April 09 – check our website at:
<http://loraincoogs.org/events.html>

North Ridgeville Library, 35700 Bainbridge Rd. North Ridgeville, Ohio. Meetings are free and open to the public. Social time is at 6:30 PM and the program begins at 7:00 PM.

Jean Copeland: jecopeland1975@gmail.com.



Executive Board Meeting Minutes

MARCH 6, 2018

The board Google Hangout video meeting was attended by Sandee Ruth, Don Hall, Micky Knickman, Pam Rihel, Richard Barnett and Neil Higgins.

Due to the limited space available in the existing computer meeting room Sandee will check on the availability of the classroom without computers down the hall from our present meeting room.

The board discussed the possibility of changing the meeting time from 6:30 if that would increase attendance. It was agreed the present meeting time should remain.

The board agreed to give a free software / hardware raffle ticket to members for each ink cartridge they turned in for recycling by the club.

Neil proposed, Pam seconded a motion to give the Workshop Players a \$100 gift in memory of Edie Lewandowski. Motion passed.

Pam moved, Richard seconded we enter into a 5 year contract with Mail Chimp for accounting software. Motion passed.

Neil moved, Richard seconded meeting be adjourned.

MEMBERSHIP WITH LCCUG:

Yearly dues are \$25.00. For more information contact:
Dennis Smith
Director of Membership,
membership@lccug.com.

Meeting Location:

LCCC Community Center at Lorain High School
2600 Ashland Ave, Lorain Ohio
6:00 - 8:00 PM
Meeting room is on the second floor.
Elevator access is available for those in need.



General Meeting Minutes

MARCH 13, 2018

Sandee announced the March issue of the *INTERFACE* has not been released.

Sandee also gave a rundown of the programs for April, May and June.

Sandee and Micky presented an informative program "Interesting Websites, Questions & Answers".

They reminded members of what was on the club webpage. They pointed out the links to the club newsletters encouraging members to go there and explore some of the websites discussed there.

Then they showed the resources that could be accessed by clicking on Presentation Weblinks. There you will find the presentation and all the links from last months program. Under that you will find links to other presentations and other useful resources collected for the benefit of club members.

A few useful websites were pointed out such as download-duck.com which is an online tool to download the music from your favorite YouTube presentation

Doug Smith won the attendance raffle, Ellen Endrizal won the Rollover and Nancy Smith won the Software / Hardware raffle.

Dennis moved, Ron seconded meeting be adjourned.

Computer Club News

**Don't Forget to Bring
in Your Used Ink Cartridges
LCCUG is collecting empty ink
cartridges**



*For every cartridge you will receive a
ticket for our special drawing.
Recycle & Help Our Club Too!*

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Thinking of shopping with Amazon? Well you can now go to our lccug.com website and just click on the amazonsmile link and start shopping.

Our club gets rewarded for any items purchased from our website. So the more you buy the better it is for our club. SO START SHOPPING.

Arlene D. Hall of Oberlin, Ohio 1928 - 2018 | Obituary

Arlene D. Hall

December 10, 1928 - March 09, 2018



Arlene D. Hall (nee Dorow), 89, of Oberlin, passed away peacefully in her home, March 9, 2018. She was born December 10, 1928 in Dover (Westlake), Ohio. Following graduation from Oberlin High School and Oberlin Business College, she was

employed by the Lorain County Health Department and became their first Deputy Registrar for births and deaths. She began her career at Oberlin College in 1962, retiring in 1993 as Executive Secretary to the Secretary of Oberlin College.

Arlene enjoyed hosting and spending time with family and friends. As a member of First Church in Oberlin UCC, she worked diligently on the IHN project and with Prayerful Stitchers. Other interests included traveling, gardening, ballroom dancing and dancing with the Poco Loco Line Dancers. She had a natural eye for home and landscape design.

Left to cherish her memory is her beloved husband of sixty seven years Donald; daughter, Julie (Dene) Welshans and family; son, Jon (Brenda) Hall; and grandsons, Christopher and Matthew Hall. She was preceded in death by her parents, Florence and Albert Dorow; sisters, Marjorie Wyler and Virginia Wyler; and a brother, Donald (Lorraine) Dorow.

A memorial service will be Saturday April 7, 2018 at 11:00 AM at First Church in Oberlin. A special thank you goes out to Stein Hospice. Memorial donations may be made to a charity of the donor's choice. Arrangements are in the care of Dicken Funeral Home & Cremation Service, Elyria, OH



Arlene D. Hall

A memorial service for Arlene D. Hall, 89 of Oberlin, who died Friday March 9, 2018. Will be Saturday April 7, 2018 at 11:00 am, in the First Church of Oberlin. The Reverend David Hill will officiate.

Arrangements were in care of Dickens Funeral Home and Cremation Service, of Elyria.

Back to the Basics Basic iPhone Texting



By Jim Cerny, Forum Leader, Sarasota Technology User Group, Florida

October 2017 issue, Sarasota TUG Monitor

www.thestug.org

jimcerny12@com

Whoever thought that "texting" would become such a common communication method? I mean, who would need to TEXT someone and spend all that time using their fingers (or thumbs) when you can just CALL the person and talk to them directly (or at least leave a voice message)? Well, texting is indeed very popular and is found to be useful by many people. The definition of "texting" or "messaging" is using your iPhone to send text messages to another phone or device. The receiver will hear a tone that indicates a message has been received and may read it or reply to it at their leisure. This article is intended to help you with the basic texting functions. Be aware that there are more texting options and abilities beyond what is presented here.

The texting "app" (application or program) for the iPhone is called "Messages" and comes free with your iPhone. You cannot delete this app. The app logo is a white cartoon word "balloon" on a green background. Touch this app to open it for sending and reading text messages.

You can think of texting (most people use the term "texting" instead of "messaging") as another form of email, and we all know how to use email, right? When the app is open, the starting screen will have the word "Messages" at the top center. To the left will be "Edit" and to the right will be the NEW MESSAGE icon – a square with a pencil on it. If you have any text messages on your phone you will see them listed here, the most recent

(Continued on page 7)



CGB TECH



CGB Tech Solutions Inc is a full service computer sales and service company. We help commercial, residential and non-profit clients throughout Northeast Ohio by providing professional on-site service, sales and repairs. We are industry certified in the repair and design of computer systems and networks. CGB Tech offers sales and support for a wide range of hardware.

Specialize in providing services to non-profit clients throughout Northeast Ohio. Take pride in our fair pricing, quality service, prompt response and accessible staff.

Come on in! We mainly focus on you the customer directly in computer repair at this location. Just stop by and drop off your computer, no appointment is necessary. Most repairs are completed within 48 Hours. if it takes, longer you will be notified. We also have computers and computer accessories available!

Members receive a 10% discount

To Learn More Contact Us

Avon
36964 Detroit Rd
Avon, Ohio 44011
(216) 373-9449

Support@CGBTech.com or Web site: CGBtech.com

NEED HELP?



Here's Who to Contact:

Neil Higgins

440-967-9061 - higgins.neil@gmail.com

Evenings 6 p.m. - 10 p.m. + Weekends

Hardware, Linux & Windows Operating Systems,
Chromebooks, Tweaking your system

Micky Knickman

440-967-3118 - micky@knickman.com

Daily 6:00 am to 4:00 pm. Leave message if no answer.

General Software Configuration, Hardware Installation,
Basic to Advanced Windows

Richard Barnett

440-365-9442 - Richard216@aol.com

Evenings & Weekends

General Software Configuration, Hardware Installation,
Basic to Advanced Windows & Web Page Design

Sandee Ruth

440-984-2692 - sandee29@gmail.com

Basic Word Processing, Windows, & Web Design
Advanced Internet

Pam Casper Rihel

440-277-6076

6:00 p.m. to 10:00 pm Monday thru Thursday

Genealogy help

prihel1947@gmail.com

Denny Smith

440-355-6218 - dennis.smith@windstream.net

Microsoft EXCEL

Leave message on machine.

If any of our members are interested in helping other users with what programs you are adept at, please contact any of our officers with you name, what program or programs you would be willing to give help with, you email address and or phone number and when you would like to have them call you. Thanks

Neopc

April 10, 2018

Northeast Ohio PC Club ***MORNING Fundamentals Special Interest Group*** (SIG). Fairview Park Senior Center 9:30 - 11:30am. Fundamentals of computer use - OPEN FORUM - Any and all topics discussed - Bring a question, bring a topic - Guests always welcome - Always coffee. Always free and open to the public. Second Tuesday of the month.

2018 OGS Annual Conference

April 11-14, 2018

Hyatt Regency

Columbus, Ohio

Register now

<https://www.ogs.org/conference2018/index.php>

LCCUG ONGOING WORKSHOP

ALL ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Problem Solving Workshop

Date: Tuesday - April 17, 2018

Time: 5:30 - 8 pm Instructor: Micky Knickman, Neil Higgins, Richard Barnett

Place: Learn how to repair or update your computer by changing hard drives, memory, CD ROMs, etc.

Members are encouraged to bring their computers anytime before 7:30 pm for assistance from Micky, Neil & Richard.

Learning About Electronics

Date: Tuesday - April 17, 2018

Time: 5:30 - 8 pm Instructor: Sandee Ruth

Place: Learn how use you electronic devices.

Members are encouraged to bring their tablets, iPod, kindles, etc. at 5:30 pm for assistance from Sandee and any other knowledgeable members. Public is welcome to sit in these classes.

Learn About- Hands on Demonstration

Date: Tuesday- April 17, 2018

Time: 5:30- 8 pm Instructor: Neil Higgins

Place: Lorain County Community College 2600 Ashland Avenue, Lorain

Instructor: Neil Higgins

We'll be demonstrating a program called YouTube Downloader HD. You can run it directly from a flash drive (does not require installation) to download and save YouTube videos in high quality format. YouTube Downloader HD is the fastest free video downloader. Download and convert videos into avi video format or into mp4 (compatible with iPad, iPhone). You can download High Quality videos, High Definition and Full HD videos from YouTube. YouTube Downloader HD is free-ware. <http://www.youtubedownloaderhd.com/>

Please bring a flash drive to obtain handout materials. If you would like to participate and get copies of the material for this presentation, please let Neil know by sending an email to Education@lccug.com.

Newsletter Editor: Pam Rihel using Microsoft Publisher, 2013

This Month's contributors: Micky Knickman, Sandra Ruth, Pam Rihel, Don Hall, Dennis Smith, Neil Higgins, Carole Doerr, Dick Eastman, Phil Sorrento, Jim Cemy, Leo Notenboom, Scambusters, APCUG, Microsoft Office art online, Newsletter is now

Online at

lccug.com/newsletters or lccug.com

message on top. You should be in the habit of DELETING text messages you no longer need, just like you do your email. There is a setting in your iPhone to set how long you wish to keep your text messages (including a “forever” option!). To DELETE a text message, touch “Edit” and an empty circle will appear next to each message sender – touch the circles of the text messages you wish to delete, and the circle will change to blue with a white check mark indicating you have SELECTED that message. Then touch on “Delete” at the bottom of the screen to delete that message.



When you SEND a text message to someone and they text you in return, you are carrying on a “conversation” with that person. Your conversation of multiple messages sent and received will all be associated with that person (actually, that person’s phone number). When you delete a message, you are really deleting that conversation you had. But do not worry, when you text that person again or they text you, it begins a new conversation!

Sample Conversation Screen



To SEND a text message, it is easiest and best if that person is in your contact list or directory. Touch the NEW MESSAGE icon (to the right of “Messages”) and you will see the “New Message” screen with your insertion point in the “To:” box at the top. Start typing in the name (the keyboard should appear on your screen) and the iPhone will look up that person in your contact list. If

the person is NOT in your contact list, you will need to enter their phone number here. Remember the “To” person must have a phone that is capable of receiving text messages for your message to be sent. You can NOT text to an email address, texting is not email. Touch on the small oval area just above the keyboard display to begin entering in your text message. A text message can be any length, but why send a long message when you can CALL the person and leave a voice message?

Well, I guess it is all up to you. When you have completed your text message, touch on the GREEN CIRCLE with the up arrow in it to SEND your message. This message will be added to your message list on the home screen of “Messages”. If you change your mind and do not wish to send it, touch “Cancel”. Be POLITE and nice.

Your text messages can be kept forever and are admissible in court just like signed letters and email. When you RECEIVE a new text message you may hear a tone (which is set under “settings – sounds” on your iPhone) and the new message will appear on the “Messages” home screen. These are only the basics.

You can send and receive text messages from GROUPS or more than one person. You can send EMOJIS – those cute little symbols – to help make your text more colorful and fun. You can send and receive photos too. You must “save” the photo to your phone if you want to keep it, otherwise it will be deleted when you delete the text message.

You can also “speak” your text message by touching the microphone icon or by using Siri, you may want to try it just for fun! As always, please use Google and YouTube to view text or video instructions for texting and exploring all the options that come with it. Be sure to specify “iPhone” in your request.

Give your fingers and thumbs a workout!



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Pam Rihel prihel1947@gmail.com
Dick Eastman <http://www.eogn.com>

Siblings Can Have Surprisingly Different DNA Ancestry

When it comes to tracing your roots through your genes, biological siblings may have less in common than many people expect. The fact is that one sibling might inherit more from Mom than from Dad while the other sibling might inherit a different mix.

An article by Nicole Wetsman in the *National Geographic* web site explains it all at <http://bit.ly/2DPLSBj>.

Do you have comments, questions, or corrections to this article? If so, please post your words at the end of [this article](#) in the Standard Edition newsletter's web site where everyone can benefit from your words. You might also want to read comments posted by others there.

Meritorious Service Medals now available online at The Genealogist

The following announcement was written by the folks at TheGenealogist:



TheGenealogist has released the records of 29,000 individuals who were decorated with the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM). The roll of names for those who were awarded this British honour in the First World War have been released by TheGenealogist. Researchers can now look for holders of this medal up to 1920 from within their ever growing military records collection.

- See a copy of the image of the Medal Card with the

theatre of war where the medal was won

- Details the name, rank, regiment and service number
- Unique "SmartSearch" links to the comprehensive military records on TheGenealogist.co.uk

These new records cover British servicemen from The First World War.

The medal was first awarded in 1845 to non-commissioned officers in the British Army who had a record of long service in the forces. Given originally for long service of at least 20 years to servicemen who were of irreproachable character and already held the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal of their service, the First World War saw it awarded to those who performed acts of non-combatant gallantry in the performance of their military duty. In the second case the bravery was not necessarily while the serviceman was on active service and may have been in the saving or attempted saving of the life of an officer or an enlisted soldier.

Family history researchers searching for ancestors who had been awarded the Meritorious Service Medal in the First World War will be able to find their forebears in this new addition to the military collection of records on TheGenealogist.

Read our article on a First World War NCO awarded his medal 'For exceptionally good work' operating night and day to keep the RFC's aeroplanes at El Hammam flying.

<https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/featuredarticles/2018/finding-ancestors-awarded-the-meritorious-service-medal-768/>

Do you have comments, questions, or corrections to this article? If so, please post your words at the end of this article in the Standard Edition newsletter's web site where everyone can benefit from your words. You might also want to read comments posted by others there.

This article is from Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter and is copyright by Richard W. Eastman. It is re-published here with the permission of the author. Information about the newsletter is available at <http://www.eogn.com>.



Is the CHEX Bank Account Monitoring Agency Watching You?

You probably thought you knew about all the bureaus and agencies that keep tabs on your credit, insurance and financial dealings, but here's one you may not know about: CHEX.

As you know, monitoring the information these agencies hold is an important part of your financial security. They're a way of spotting if you're a victim of identity theft or if the agency is storing and reporting incorrect information about you.

In the past, we've explained how to get your credit report and score from the three big credit reporting agencies — TransUnion, Equifax and Experian. And we've also reported on the system that insurance companies use to track any claims you make and certain other financial information — CLUE: the Comprehensive Loss Underwriting Exchange.

In fact, there are scores of organizations who keep track of various aspects of your consumer behavior. You can find them all listed in a [newly-published, downloadable list](#) from the U.S. Consumer Finance Protection Bureau.

So, What is CHEX?

It's a banking credit agency used by nearly all banks which, among other things, ranks your wealth on a scale from 0 to 6. CHEX and a number of other agencies, including TeleCheck and Early Warning Systems, monitor your bank accounts and how well, or otherwise, you handle your relationship with the bank — such as having an overdraft or a bounced check.

But from a personal security and ID theft point of view, CHEX also monitors any attempts to open a new account in your name.

According to a recent investigation on the New Jersey website nj.com, CHEX information does not affect your credit score or loan applications. Its main purpose is to identify if you've ever "abused" your bank.

"That's a pretty good reason to make sure your report is accurate," says report author Karin Price Mueller, "but you have an even better reason to check these reports: to make sure no one is using your personal information for nefarious purposes."

"A scammer could open an account in your name. Perhaps the con artist writes checks in your name — checks that are sure to bounce. Or they open a credit card along with the checking account, and start shopping, hoping to leave you with the bill."

There's another important reason for seeing what CHEX has on you: Remember the Wells Fargo scandal in which it was disclosed that bonus-hungry employees had opened millions of fake accounts in customer names in order to earn new-business commission? Your CHEX report would have shown if you were a victim.

Another valuable reason for checking your CHEX is to discover possible old, disused accounts you never closed and forgot you had. If they're with the same bank you currently use, you may be running up account maintenance charges without realizing it.

Zombie Accounts

In the banking biz, these are referred to as "zombie accounts" and you could be on the hook for charges you're not aware of. *"The negative balance could result in a stain on your ChexSystems report, which in turn could prevent you from opening new accounts at other banks and credit unions," Price Mueller writes.*

"The stain could spread if the bank turns over the negative balance information to a collection agency, and that would hurt your credit score."

Fortunately, it's relatively easy — or should be — to get a copy of your report from CHEX or any other bank account monitoring agency.

In the case of CHEX, you're entitled to a free copy of your report, something CHEX calls a FACTA report, every 12 months. Or if you've been denied an account and CHEX was used in the decision, you can ask for a "consumer disclosure report."

CHEX also creates a Consumer Score for banking customers. This is similar but not the same as the credit scoring system used by the "big three." It uses the same range — 100 to 899.

In all cases, start at the [ChexSystems Consumer website](#). Here's an [example of what a full report looks like](#). And here's a [video produced by CHEX](#) showing how to review a consumer report.

You can request your information online, by phone or via snail mail, and CHEX says you'll receive your information via USPS within five business days. If you find any errors in your report, you can contact them to challenge the information they're holding about you.

Of course, it's possible your bank might use another bank credit agency to monitor your activities — so ask them who they use. If it's not CHEX, find out who it is and do an online search to find out how to get your report and challenge inaccuracies.

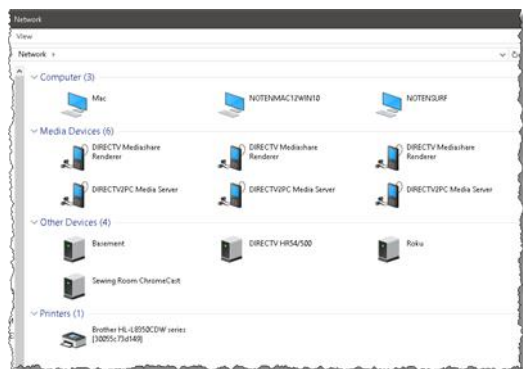
Alert of the Week

The U.S. Social Security Administration won't be phoning you to tell you about a computer glitch that's mixed up your Social Security number and that they need you to confirm the number. We've seen a spate of these phishing scam calls recently, so just hang up if you get one

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Networking Sucks



I apologize for the slightly coarse language, but sometimes only the right word will do.

Computer networking is way, way, *way* harder than it should be, and much harder than it could be. Quite honestly, it's still too frequently beyond the abilities of the average computer user.

The state of networking

This is an update to an editorial — OK, a rant — I first posted nearly 13 years ago.

In the intervening years, not much has improved.

Connecting Windows computers together over a local network remains incredibly difficult for the average user. Making a connection that is both secure and flexible — two concepts inherently at odds with each other — is a common stumbling block.

Heck, making a connection that works at all can be a problem. No simple solutions.

There's no getting around the fact that networking is very complex. But complex tasks are what we look to computers and technology to simplify for us.

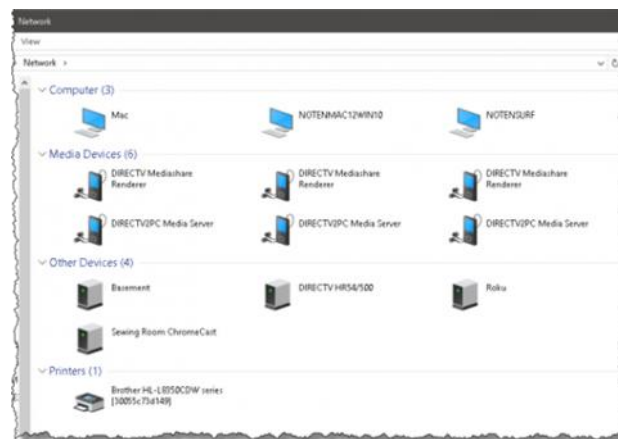
And it's letting us down.

Almost everything impacts networking. Operating system versions, or even variations between flavors (like Windows Home and Pro) can make a difference. Setting consistent Workgroup names or log-in credentials can make things easier or harder. Occasionally there are obscure Windows settings you may or may not have direct access to alter. Then there's the hardware: a wide variety of inconsistently-named devices called “access points”, “routers”, and “modems”, that — regardless of name — can act as modems, routers, and access points ... or not. Add in cabling, wireless protocols, and more, and you've got a recipe for confusion that can stymie even the most patient user.

Heaven forbid you want cross-platform

Problems are, of course, multiplied dramatically should you want two devices using different platforms to interact. A Mac and a PC? perhaps. Macs, PCs, and Linux machines? There are still connections I've yet to figure out how to make consistently across all my machines.

With the advent of additional networked devices, including gaming consoles as well as mobile devices and tablets, life continues to get more complex.



I still don't know why devices like my DirectTV receivers appear (twice each), why my Roku and Chromecast devices appear, or what the device labeled “Basement” is at all! Not to mention that I have *many* more computers than the three that show up.

Homegroup was a start

I'll be honest, I never liked Homegroup. It was never enough, and it made too many assumptions. That being said, it was a solution that worked for many people.

So, while I didn't like it, I'm frustrated that Microsoft elected to remove the feature from future versions of Windows.

I would have preferred continued investment in Homegroup, or something built on it, that would make networking incrementally easier for more people in more situations.

Instead, we're back to old, confusing, obscure networking tools.

There has been some improvement.

I don't want to be all doom-and-gloom. It's important to recognize improvements have been made over the last decade.

Wireless networking, for example, was once *exceptionally* difficult, with little standardization, and operating system support that could be characterized as “bolted on” at best. Today it's natively supported, and for the most part, is something we typically assume will work, at least for direct internet access.

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10) Ask Leo

Similarly, I've been particularly impressed with recent machine setups where networked printers magically appear as immediately available or as easily installed. That's a level of simplicity — or at least lack of undue confusion — that works well for what, under the hood, is amazingly complex.¹

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Wi-Fi dead spots? — Try a Wi-Fi extender, or maybe a mesh network

By Phil Sorrentino, Technical Thoughts, Sarasota Technology Users Group, FL September 2017 issue, The Monitor
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If your home is very large or if there are many walls between your router and the location at which you want Wi-Fi access, you may have Wi-Fi dead spots. Your Wi-Fi signal, as all electromagnetic emanations, is diminished by distance and by certain intervening objects, such as walls. (Your specific Wi-Fi capability is dependent on many things, but a typical Wi-Fi router, using the 2.4GHz band and 802.11n, can work 100 to 150 feet with no intervening objects.). Not to get very technical: for distance, the signal drops off proportional to the inverse of the square of the distance; and for intervening objects, the loss getting thru the object is dependent on the type of material and its density; metal may stop the signal dead in its tracks. So, if there is a line-of-sight back to the router, dead spots are probably far from your router. If there is no line-of-sight back to the router, you might have dead spots wherever the signal encounters a lot of loss going thru walls and objects. (I have seen a reference to Wi-Fi as being a “3 wall solution”, meaning that the signal may get through no more than three walls, so if you have a spot more than three walls away from the router you will probably have a dead spot.)

So, if you have a dead spot, or dead spots, you may want to think about a Wi-Fi extender (a simple solution), or even a new “mesh network” (a more involved, more expensive solution). A Wi-Fi extender is a device that may look like a router, but is a receiver and transmitter. It receives the Wi-Fi signal and immediately retransmits the signal. The retransmission may then be received by a device that is in a dead spot of the

original signal, (but not in a dead spot of the extended signal). The Wi-Fi extender simply extends the area that the Wi-Fi signal may be received. When you set up an extender, you do have to make sure that the Wi-Fi extender is not placed in a router dead spot. If the Wi-Fi extender can receive the router signal, it will retransmit it and devices that can receive the extender's signal will be included in the Wi-Fi network as if they got the signal directly from the router. Wi-Fi Extenders can be purchased for anywhere from about \$50 to \$200, depending on features and capabilities. You may even find one below \$50 if you wait for a sale; I found one for \$25 and it seems to do the job quite well. If you are interested in reviewing some possible choices, just Google “Wi-Fi extender reviews” and you will find a good number of reviews based on price, features, and specifications. So that is the easy (and less expensive) solution, and probably the one you will want to try first.

The other solution, the Wi-Fi Mesh Network solution, is more involved and usually much more expensive. A mesh network may be \$200 to \$400, or more. Basically, a Mesh Network is a communications network made up of many nodes (access points), organized in a highly-interconnected grouping where all nodes cooperate in the collection and distribution of data in the network. Each node is a router and an access point for your devices. The size of the area to be covered will determine how many nodes you would need to install. (One recommendation I saw was to install a node every 50 to 75 feet, but that depends entirely on the shape of the installation area.). From Wikipedia, “Mesh” refers to a rich interconnection among devices and nodes. Wi-Fi mesh networks consist of routers and devices that use the network. The devices are typically the laptops, tablets, and smartphones you have in your home. The mesh routers (access points) send messages to the devices, and other routers. The routers are placed in an arrangement so that each one can send and receive from at least one other router. The more routers that can send and receive messages from many other routers, the more robust the network will be. (Though I have seen some indications that there may be some practical limits as to how many nodes can be used in a home mesh network.). A mesh network is usually highly reliable due to its multiple redundant paths to a device. If one node is inoperable, the other nodes can still communicate with each other directly or through one or more of the other nodes. This type of network can be very dynamic, much like the internet itself. (The internet topology and design allow for messages to be re-directed around nodes that may be inoperable so that a message always arrives at its intended destination. Though, this may be hard to believe if you have ever had an unexpected and unexplained temporary problem with an internet session.).

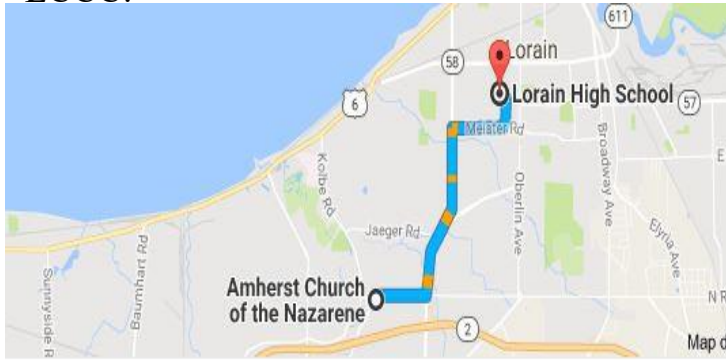
From reviews I've seen, a mesh network may be a great solution for a large home or a home with multiple levels. If a mesh network seems to be a solution for you, do a little research before you jump in. Google the term “Wi-Fi mesh network” and look at some of the reviews. You will find many of the router manufacturers you are familiar with, like Linksys and Netgear, but you will also find some new names such as Eero, Luma and Amped Wireless, as well as Google. So, if you think you have dead spots in your Wi-Fi setup at home, you may want to give one of these two possible solutions a try.



Current location of LCCUG meetings

Directions:

from the Amherst Church of the Nazarene to Lorain High / LCCC:



From the Church in Amherst travel north on Leavitt Rd (from Dunkin Donut) to Meister Rd, turn right (East) on Meister to Ashland, turn left and travel .5 mi to LCCC, our new location

Lorain High School / LCCC
2600 Ashland Ave.
Lorain 44052

9 min (3.4 mi) via N Leavitt Rd



The East side of the new Lorain High School is the College annex as seen in the photo.

You see parking area in the front there, facing Ashland Avenue.

Note: This building is behind the Frank Jacinto Elementary School.

Note: 26th St runs from the LCCC Bldg on Ashland Avenue to the George Daniel Fields football stadium on Oberlin Avenue.



This is the classroom that we will be meeting in. Inside the door to the building entrance is an elevator that take us to this room.

