

# Interface

Lorain County Computer Users Group  
[www.LCCUG.com](http://www.LCCUG.com)  
Volume 33 Number 1 January 2021



2021

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**Tuesday  
January 12, 2021**

## YOUR ONLINE PRIVACY

Staying Safe and Secure



*Presented  
by*



**Bob Gostischa**  
*IT Security expert for Avast*



**NEW!!! \$5.00 given away to members joining our meeting. If your name is called you will receive the full amount, no matter how many names we pull before someone is at the meeting.**

## 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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**UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE MEETINGS ARE HELD  
ON ZOOM DUE TO COVID19**

**☺ New Meetings Now Held at LCCC ☺**

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

## A Word From Our President



Thank goodness, it's a new year! It's got to be better than last year.

For our December meeting, instead of going to a restaurant and enjoying good food with friends, we had a ZOOM meeting and did some fun ice breakers and chatting and sharing. We had 13 in attendance and we ended with drawing names so everyone won a prize. With the help of my granddaughter, I saw that they all got delivered. Our December meeting next year will surely be back to normal!!

We had announced that we would use our treasury to match donations made by our members to the Second Harvest Food Bank - (up to \$750). Our members were great. The total donations from our members was exactly \$750, so we sent them that and a matching donation of \$750 = \$1500 was given to the Food Bank!

### Here is a list of those who donated:

Bill Schubmehl  
Joe Harrold  
Jean Copeland  
Cliff Salisbury  
Sandee Ruth  
Margie Soto Rivera  
Don Hall  
Nancy Smith  
Pam Rihel

Our January 12 ZOOM meeting should be a good one: Bob Gostischa returns to us as a presenter from his NM home. Safety is his specialty as he simplifies, clarifies, and demystifies your devices, (gadgets or technology), so you can have a safe, secure, and enjoyable Internet experience.

Technology security, spam, scams, attacks of all kinds including from other countries are constantly an issue. Let's learn the latest information on staying safe (with our technology, that is).

I'd like to thank our LCCUG officers for continuing to keeping us going, especially in challenging times. Everyone helped to make the transition to online meetings with ZOOM work. Pam does our great newsletter and Richard keeps our webpage current and sends out mailings to our members. Dennis

## *LCCUG Officers For 2021*

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

has been handling membership issues and has always helped with our prizes and raffles. Don is our trusty secretary, making sure we have our minutes. Carole has been our vice president and longtime program chairman, although she is taking next year off from this position to concentrate on her yarn store in Elyria. Micky is our trusty treasurer carefully minding our money and helping with proofreading and technical issues when they arise. Without this crew we would not be able to continue. Thanks for our officers!!



**Sandra Ruth**  
**LCCUG President**

**Tuesday  
January 12, 2021**

## YOUR ONLINE PRIVACY



Staying Safe and Secure

*Presented by*

**Bob Gostischa**

*IT Security expert for Avast*



© Can Stock Photo



In today's "Online World," Safety, Security and Privacy need to be taken seriously. This presentation will aid in that mission. Using the right programs and apps can help keep you safe and secure as well as reduce your privacy exposure. Using free programs and apps whenever possible to accomplish this goal is an added bonus and this presentation includes information on many recommended free programs. Join presenter Bob Gostischa as he simplifies, clarifies, and demystifies your devices, (gadgets or technology), so you have a safe, secure and enjoyable Internet experience.

### About the Presenter:

**Norbert "Bob" Gostischa, after a successful career in banking, enjoys his retirement as an enthusiast IT security expert, most notably for Avast; the creator of Avast Antivirus software.**



GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS CONDUCTED VIA THE ZOOM APP UFA

### The Lorain County Chapter of OGS

is having it's next meeting at:

#### REGULAR MEETING LOCATION

Check our webpage for the next program.  
<http://loraincoogs.org/events.html>



**We are having our meetings virtual us ing bluejeans.com.**

To join the meeting on a computer or mobile phone:

<https://bluejeans.com/5006724159?src=calendarLink>

Also a link will be sent to you before the meeting.

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. **Can-celed Until further notice to to Covid-19**

Jean Copeland: [jecopeland1975@gmail.com](mailto:jecopeland1975@gmail.com).

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## Executive Board Meeting Minutes

**DECEMBER 1, 2020**

The board Zoom video meeting for December was attended by Sandee Ruth, Don Hall, Micky Knickman, Pam Rihel, Richard Barnett, Dennis Smith and Neil Higgins.

Pam will make sure the club PO address is listed in the *Interface* concerning Second Harvest donations.

Membership fee is due to APCUG for the coming year. Micky will make payment.

Sandee advised election of officers will be held at next week's meeting. There were no resignations from present officers. Sandee will check with Carole Doerr.

Discussion was held about proposed meeting places for the club when the present lockout is over.

Pam moved, Richard seconded the meeting be adjourned.



## General Meeting Minutes

**DECEMBER 8, 2020**

President Sandee Ruth called the Zoom video meeting to order. A motion to accept the minutes as shown in the December issue of the *INTERFACE* was made by Dennis Smith seconded by Pam Rihel. Motion passed by voice vote.

Sandee brought up election of officers. There were no nominations from the floor, including the empty Vice President position, so Sandee moved the existing slate be approved by unanimous ballot. Motion approved by voice vote.

Those attending participated in social interaction by discussing experiences and meaning of their name to themselves.

An attendance raffle was held with a prize for everyone attending. Jean Copeland won the first prize and chose an Echo Dot.

Ron Dix moved, Dennis seconded the meeting be adjourned.

**LCCUG**

### NEOPC Meetings

[lenorebman@gmail.com](mailto:lenorebman@gmail.com) if you plan to come.

**Meetings have been canceled due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) until further notice**

Check out their website at:  
<http://www.neopc.org>



### 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!***

**amazon**smile  
You shop. Amazon gives.

Thinking of shopping with Amazon? Well you can now go to our [lccug.com](http://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.

# NEED HELP?



## Here's Who to Contact:

### Neil Higgins

440-985-8507 - [higgins.neil@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:sandee29@gmail.com)

Basic Word Processing, Windows, & Web Design

Advanced Internet

### Pam Casper Rihel

440-277-6076

6:00 p.m. to 9:00 pm Monday thru Thursday

Genealogy help

[prihel1947@gmail.com](mailto:prihel1947@gmail.com)

### Denny Smith

440-355-6218 - [dennis.smith@windstream.net](mailto:dennis.smith@windstream.net)

Microsoft EXCEL

Leave message on machine if no answer

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 your name, what program or programs you would be willing to give help with, your email address and or phone number and when you would like to have them call

**Newsletter Editor:** Pam Rihel using Microsoft Publisher, 2013

**This Month's contributors:** Micky Knickman, Sandra Ruth, Pam Rihel, Don Hall, Dennis Smith, Neil Higgins, Michael John Neill, Steve Costello, Dick Maybach, Scambusters, APCUG, Leo Notenboom, NEOPC, Microsoft Office art online, Newsletter is now

Online at:

[lccug.com/newsletters](http://lccug.com/newsletters) or [lccug.com](http://lccug.com)

## Wohoo!

**Your renewal dues have been reduced from \$25.00 to \$15.00. When everything else is raising their prices our Computer Club is lowering their dues.**

## LCCUG ONGOING WORKSHOP

ALL ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

### Problem Solving Workshop

**Date:** Tuesday - January 12, 2021

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

**Place:** Lorain County Community College  
@ 2600 Ashland Avenue, Lorain

**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 & others.

### Learning About Electronics

**Date:** Tuesday - January 12, 2021

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

**Place:** LCCC @ 2600 Ashland Avenue, Lorain

**Learn how use your 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. The public is welcome to sit in on these classes.

### Learn About- Hands on Demonstration

**Date:** Tuesday- January 12, 2021

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

**Place:** LCCC @ 2600 Ashland Avenue, Lorain

Do you know the specifications of your computer? What is really inside? We'll demonstrate three portable Windows programs (run from a USB Stick) that will tell a computer's storage, CPU, video, and other useful information (including your Operating System Product Key). This will help determine if your computer will run certain programs, and will help find out what memory or video card upgrade you need.

Please bring a flash drive to obtain software and handouts. 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](mailto:Education@lccug.com).



# Lorain County Computer Users Group

2021 Calendar of Events

<http://lccug.com>

email: [info@lccug.com](mailto:info@lccug.com)



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

Doors open 6pm – program starts at 6:30

*2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month. Changes are announced on the webpage and the newsletter.*

*All meetings are open to the public*

**January 12, 2021, YOUR ONLINE PRIVACY**

**February 9, 2021 TBA**

**March 9, 2021 TBA**

**April 13, 2021 TBA**

**May 11, 2021 TBA**

**June 8, 2021 TBA**

**All other months to be announced.**



## **Our links can be found at:**

[LCCUG.com/links](http://LCCUG.com/links), There you will find many interesting places to visit. Check them out and see what you can find interesting

## **MEMBERSHIP WITH LCCUG:**

Yearly dues are now \$15.00. For more information contact:

Dennis Smith  
Director of Membership,  
[membership@lccug.com](mailto: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.

## **LCCUG WORKSHOP Class Ideas?**

Neil needs your input into what classes you would like him to present to our members.

Please tell Neil or one of the other officers what you would like to learn and we will be happy to hold classes on your subject./subjects.

Neil Higgins [Education@lccug.com](mailto:Education@lccug.com).

## LCCUG'S NEXT VIRTUAL GENERAL MEETING WILL BE HELD January 12, 2020.

This is our sixth virtual meeting. We are hoping for more members to join in on these programs.

These meetings are fun and interesting and you also get to visit with other members that you have not seen in months due to the Coronavirus - Covid 19 Pandemic.

It is not hard to join in on these meetings, as Sandee sends out the web address and all you have to do is click on it and when it opens up, find the icon that says JOIN. Its as easy as that. Then Sandee will sign you in.

So please join in the fun on:

**Tuesday January 12, 2020 at 6:30.**

## YOUR ONLINE PRIVACY

Staying Safe and Secure  
*Presented  
by*

**Bob Gostischa**  
*IT Security expert for Avast*

If you are in need of some help, well just call one of the board members and you will be helped.

If there is a program you would like to learn about just let the officers know and we can fix you right up.

Hope to see new faces at our next meeting. You know we miss you all. Be there or be square...



VectorStock



**Catherine  
A. Collier**

Dec 06, 2020 1:00 AM

Elyria Chronicle Tele-  
gram



Catherine A. Collier (nee Moore), 79, of Lorain, passed away Monday, November 30th, 2020 at Anchor Lodge Nursing Home following a lengthy illness. Kaye, as she was known to her friends and family, was born in Marion, Ohio. She became a longtime resident of Lorain.

Kaye spent 13 years teaching English in the Lorain City Schools. After retiring, she continued to enjoy mentoring writers for years afterwards, passing her love for reading and writing onto her daughter. She also enjoyed travel, especially back to her hometown of Marion, as well as to Boston. And her love of family led to an interest in genealogy.

A member of St. Mary's Church in Lorain, Kaye was very concerned with social justice. She spent her time helping with the food pantry as well as the monthly senior luncheon.

Surviving her are her husband, Claude Collier and daughter, Sharon Collier, both of Lorain.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Walter and Martha (nee Curl) Moore of Marion.

Due to the pandemic, there will not be a service at this time. The family would ask that people not travel, that they wear a mask and be safe. A celebration of Kaye's life will be held at a later date.

Any donations in her memory should be directed to your local food pantry or the Greater Cleveland Food Bank.

Funeral arrangements are under the direction of the Gluvna-Shimo-Hromada Funeral Chapel.

To share your memories and condolences with Kaye's family, please visit [www.gluvna.net](http://www.gluvna.net)

Kaye belonged to Lorain County Computer User Group (LCCUG) She was the newsletter editor and later she was Education Director. She did the Genealogy articles for the newsletter (Interface) for many years.

Kaye also belonged to the Lorain County Genealogy Chapter of Ohio Genealogy Society. She contributed much to both Club and the Society. She will be greatly missed.



## Three Rules for Dodging Fake Storage Cards and Memory Sticks

The cost of computer and mobile storage devices is falling rapidly — but not so fast that you can pick up a really big one for a really low price. That part of the market is the domain of scammers.

Storage capacity used to be measured in bits (a single unit of memory), bytes (eight bits), then kilobytes (kb — just over thousand bytes), and then megabytes (mb — over a million bytes).

That sounds like a lot, but these days, a megabyte is hardly enough to store a single high-resolution photo. So, today's storage devices run into hundreds of megabytes or, more often these days, terabytes (tb — more than 1,000 gigabytes).

For now, that's enough for most of us, although petabytes, exabytes, and a whole lot of other byte varieties are looming on the horizon. You don't even want to know how many zeroes there are in these numbers! ([Go here](#) if you really do want to know.)

Technology has enabled manufacturers to cram all those crazy numbers into tiny devices. These include secure digital (SD) cards, micro-SDs and USB thumb drives. Higher capacity storage, like terabytes, is usually to be found on pocket or desktop hard drives.

All most of us know is that we always seem to need more bytes than we used to. Or, what we used to think would be enough no longer is.

Which is where the scammers come in. Basically, they're producing cards and USB drives that they fake to appear as though they have much more storage capacity than they really do. Then they offer them for knock-down prices on sites like eBay and Amazon.

And there's no shortage of takers, if the feedback from disappointed customers is anything to go by.

For instance, a supposed 1tb micro-SD card was, at the time of writing, being advertised by a third-party seller on Amazon for \$10.99. A more realistic cost for the real thing is around \$200.

The knock-off, which seems to come from China, actually only has 32gb of storage space, but it's doctored to look like 1tb when it's first inserted into a computer, phone or tablet.

Only when the user starts trying to store stuff is the fraud revealed. Once the card is being used, it either fails or, in a worst-case scenario, it starts corrupting, deleting or over-writing existing data. That can be heartbreaking for someone without sufficient back-ups of the data.

Worse — and this probably won't surprise you these days — this particular fake has more five-star reviews than it has of all the other scores put together. Of course, these are likely phony reviews. Certainly, each review is only a few words long,

sometimes in broken English.

Only when you get down to the one-star scores do you read longer comments like this:

(Quote from an Amazon page)

"Do not buy this item! This is a Chinese fake! The card is claimed to be 1 TB (formally, it shows such a volume on a smartphone with a computer), but in fact, when you transfer files to it, it loads a little more than 20 GB, and then empty folders are simply copied. In fact, its capacity is no more than 32 GB."

(end quote)

There are hundreds of similar products to be found on the Internet, with equally irate comments from the hoodwinked victims. Sometimes, especially with USB memory sticks, the sellers claim storage capacities so high they don't even exist yet. How do they get away with it?

Well, the trouble is that sites like Amazon and eBay don't have the capacity to check third party sellers' claims. So, it's definitely a case of "let the buyer beware."

The best compensation a victim can hope for, even if they lose all their data, is to get a refund or an endless stream of equally phony replacements.

### How to Avoid the Tricksters

Here's how to make sure you don't get tricked by these scammers:

O First, apply the golden rule of anti-scramming: If the price looks too good to be true, as in the example we quoted, it's almost certainly a fake.

O Second, buy storage cards and USBs from reputable makers like SanDisk, Samsung, Lexar, and so on. But beware! While most of the fakes are unbranded — that is, they just have a label that says something like "Micro SD Card" with no other name — some of them are more cunning. They use tech-sounding names you never heard of. Or, in a couple of nasty examples, they actually fraudulently copy genuine labels.

O So, now it's time to check out the reviews — not the five-star type but those scoring only one or two stars on Amazon, or a low rate of positive feedback on eBay. Also, on eBay, steer clear of those low-price sellers who have only a handful of feedbacks. If the products are fakes, the seller will have arranged for the first few "positive" scores themselves.

O There's another important reason why you need to give these fakes a wide berth: the possibility that they carry malicious code that will be transferred to your computer or mobile as soon as you plug it in.

In this case, your personal data could be stolen or your computer locked up until you pay a ransom. (For the same reason, you should also be cautious about plugging someone else's storage device into your PC or mobile.)

*(Continued on page 9)*



(Continued from page 8) *Three Rules for Dodging Fake Storage Cards...*

There are some apps that claim to be able to check storage capacity and identify fakes. But if you have to use one of these, then, unfortunately, you've likely already been conned.

### Alert of the Week

If you use extensions — add-ons that are supposed to improve the performance of browsers like Chrome and Edge — stand by to start deleting some of them.

According to security firm Avast, an estimated three million users have been tricked into using extensions that spy on or steal information from users. Avast says it discovered 28 extensions that performed malicious actions.

Do you have one of these crooked extensions? Check here: [Three million users installed 28 malicious Chrome or Edge extensions](#). And then remove it.

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## How Do I Decrypt Files Encrypted by Ransomware?

by [Leo A. Notenboom](#)



*Once your files are encrypted by ransomware, your options are few. If you're not prepared, there are a few straws to grasp at.*

That was a question I received in my morning email from a friend.

While there are a few straws to grasp at, the news is really not good. The whole point of [ransomware](#) is that there's no easy, simple way to undo the damage. If there were, ransomware wouldn't be a thing.

I'll look at the few options you have, and then how prevention before ransomware happens can give you peace of mind.

*Ransomware is malware that encrypts your files, making them unusable. They promise to decrypt the files if you pay a fee (or ransom). You may get lucky and find decryption keys for the ransomware you face in a public collection, but it's unlikely. Backing up properly is the only sure-fire way to be able to recover from ransomware, next to avoiding it in the first place.*

### Encrypted by ransomware



[Ransomware](#) is a specific type of [malware](#). It encrypts your files so you're unable to access or use them, and then offers to decrypt them if you pay the ransom.

Unfortunately, the technology used — “public key [encryption](#)” — is generally good. It's the same encryption technology you

and I use to keep our data secure and our internet conversations private.

When done right, a file encrypted using public-key cryptography is essentially unrecoverable, unless you have the matching private key.

And needless to say, the hackers do it right. It's essentially impossible to decrypt files encrypted by ransomware without their private key.

### Ransomware private key collections

As the threat and impact of ransomware has grown, security pros and authorities have been working to track down the hackers and take down their operations. On occasion, they succeed, and that specific ransomware threat is stopped.

When this happens, the private keys the hackers had are sometimes, though not always, discovered, and made available to the public.

The [No More Ransom Project](#) maintains a database of known ransomware keys. Quoting their site:

... it is *sometimes possible to help infected users to regain access to their encrypted files or locked systems without having to pay. We have created a repository of keys and applications that can decrypt data locked by different types of ransomware.*

I've emphasized the word “sometimes” on purpose. There are no guarantees. In fact, in my experience, “sometimes” should really be “on rare occasions”.

If your files are encrypted by ransomware, that's a straw worth grasping. In fact, if you haven't prepared ahead of time, it's really your only option.

### Cures for ransomware

The best possible cure is to avoid having your files encrypted by ransomware in the first place. That means [using the internet safely and all that entails](#). Avoid malware, [phishing](#) schemes, and all the other ways that hackers get ransomware on to your machine.

The second best cure is to have a [backup](#). If you find your computer afflicted with ransomware and your files encrypted, restoring them from a backup is the only 100% reliable recovery method.

And since ransomware can, in some (fortunately infrequent) cases, even [encrypt your backups](#), you need to understand and plan for a robust solution that allows you to recover. Normally this means automated daily backups and periodically making an offline copy, out of ransomware's reach.

### Recovering from ransomware

By far, the simplest, fastest, most reliable solution to recovering files encrypted by ransomware is to restore them from a backup taken before the ransomware took hold. You restore

(Continued on page 10)

## (Continued from page 9) How Do I Decrypt Files Encrypted by Ransomware?

the backup image of your entire machine to its state prior to the infection, and it's as if the ransomware never happened. Hopefully, once restored, you'll know not to do whatever it caused the infection in the first place.

If you don't have a complete [image backup](#) of your machine, but you do have a backup of your data, recovery is possible, albeit somewhat more work. I recommend that you:

- Take an image backup of the infected machine. This is to preserve a copy of the machine in its current state, in case it becomes necessary to recover something from it in the future.
- Wipe the machine and install Windows from scratch.
- Install your applications from scratch.  
Restore your data.

If you have no backup of your data, things are significantly more dire.

### Decrypting ransomware-encrypted files

There's no magical solution for decrypting a strongly encrypted file.<sup>1</sup> If you don't find the decryption key in a service like [No More Ransom](#), then you're severely out of luck. Which leaves the ultimate question: should you pay?

First, let's be clear: these are *criminals* you're thinking of dealing with. There's no guarantee they'll follow through, should you elect to make payment. It could be the equivalent of simply throwing your money away.

Or ... it could recover your files.

Only you can decide whether or not to pay criminals the ransom.

My position is: don't. Doing so only encourages their criminal enterprise, and puts even more people at risk of finding their files encrypted by ransomware.

Instead, learn from the experience. Most importantly, *start backing up* so this never has to happen to you again.

**If you found this article helpful**, I'm sure you'll also love [Confident Computing](#)! My weekly email newsletter is full of articles that help you solve problems, stay safe, and give you more confidence with technology. [Subscribe now](#) and I'll see you there soon.

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Trying to find information on your WWII Veteran check out this new database. You may just hit the jackpot.

**New Database with Photos of WWII Soviet Army Veterans is now Online**

Just point on the blue and click the control it will take you right to the website

## E-books



By Dick Maybach, Brookdale Computer User Group  
[www.bcug.com](http://www.bcug.com)  
[n2nd@att.net](mailto:n2nd@att.net)

Although still small in comparison to print versions, the market share of e-books is growing, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-book>. In particular, the printed technical manual is disappearing, and when you purchase equipment, the printed material covers little more than its power switch and the URL where you can download detailed information. If open-source software has a manual, it's available only on-line or as a downloadable e-book. Not surprisingly, the largest commercial e-book vendor is Amazon, and Barnes & Noble also has a substantial stock. Many print magazines are also available in lower-cost electronic form.

There are many good sources of free literature, Project Gutenberg, <https://www.gutenberg.org/>, has an extensive selection of classic books. The Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/index.php>, has free books, software, music, and movies. Open Textbook, <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/>, as its name implies, has textbooks, most contributed by college faculty trying to lower the cost of education. Some organizations publish good e-zines covering topics they support, for example, the MagPi, <https://magpi.raspberrypi.org/>, covering the Raspberry Pi, and Full Circle Magazine, <https://fullcirclemagazine.org/>, on Ubuntu Linux. Finally, don't overlook your local public library.

E-book media can have several formats, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison\\_of\\_e-book\\_formats](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_e-book_formats).

The Portable Document Format (PDF) is popular, especially for manuals. It suffers from the disadvantage that line lengths are fixed, making the material awkward to read on small screens and difficult for those with impaired sight. True e-book formats, such as EPUB, are more flexible. Unlike PDF, they aren't images of printed pages, but just their contents plus embedded formatting commands that the reader software uses to set the displayed font sizes and line breaks. There are many variants; in particular, Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and others have their own proprietary forms. Many readers understand several.

Some readers can convert the format, but this isn't always possible, and often the results are unsatisfactory. I've found that conversion from PDF to EPUB never works well, and it's always better to put up with PDF's fixed formatting. Conversion from a document format, such as docx to EPUB often fails, because EPUB is fussy about formatting. For example, if images are anchored as characters, the conversions can be satisfactory, but if they are anchored to pages, it fails. Here too,

(Continued on page 11)

*(Continued from page 10) E-Books*

the safest course is to save the document as PDF and put up with the fixed format.

Digital Rights Management (DRM) limits e-book usability, <https://blog.the-ebook-reader.com/2010/10/09/the-ebook-drm-guide/>. If you purchase a print book, you can sell it, loan it, or give it away, but this is usually not so for e-books encumbered with DRM. E-books are typically licensed to one person, and perhaps to only one device. The terms vary widely; some allow the use of any device that the purchaser owns, and some allow lending. Some have geographical restrictions. If you cross a border and your reader has GPS, you may find some media unreadable until you return to the United States. But despite the rants circulating on the Internet, DRM is a legitimate feature that was developed to ensure authors and publishers receive payment for their work, but this doesn't mean it's convenient for readers.

You can view e-books on your desktop PC, your laptop, a dedicated e-book reader, or a cell phone, and you will probably use more than one. At home, the large screens on desktops and laptops make for comfortable viewing, and of course, the PC is right there for Internet searches and computing. Laptops are usable away from home, but unless power is available, only for relatively short times. You probably always have a cell phone, and using it is always convenient, although its small screen and limited battery life mean it's really useful only for very short reads. However, you can extend the time with an external battery that powers your phone through its USB port. Often, a short time is all you need. For example, I have my camera's manual on my phone, which has been helpful to figure out it's more obscure features when on a trip. If you want to read a book on a long flight, there is really no substitute for a dedicated reader, such as Kindle, especially one with a passive, monochrome display, as the battery life of such devices is multiple days.

There are many e-book software readers available for Linux, OS X, Windows, iOS, and Android. However, I know of no Linux readers for books with DRM, although there are techniques, of at least questionable legality, for removing DRM. If you like new e-books from sellers such as Amazon and want to borrow them from your public library, you will need a commercial reader that supports DRM, such as a Kindle hardware reader or the equivalent software, which means Linux users will be buying hardware. For reading DRM-free books on a PC I prefer Calibre, <https://calibre-ebook.com/>. With it, you can organize your collection into virtual libraries, edit your books, and change file formats, but with the caveats, I've mentioned. Organizing is straightforward. Editing is possible only if the book is in Amazon's AZW3 format (without DRM) or EPUB (both are a form of HTML), and this requires some expertise to edit.

As with most data sets, it's important to keep your book collection organized. Calibre assists this with its virtual libraries. Figure 1 shows Calibre's opening screens with

my virtual libraries displayed in a bar just above the book list. They are Calculator, Fiction, PC, Photography, and Technical, and Photography, which has been selected in the figure.



Figure 1. Calibre Opening Screen.

Figure 2 shows an EPUB book open, with its table of contents displayed on the left. You click on the “X” icon at the top right of the panel to close it.

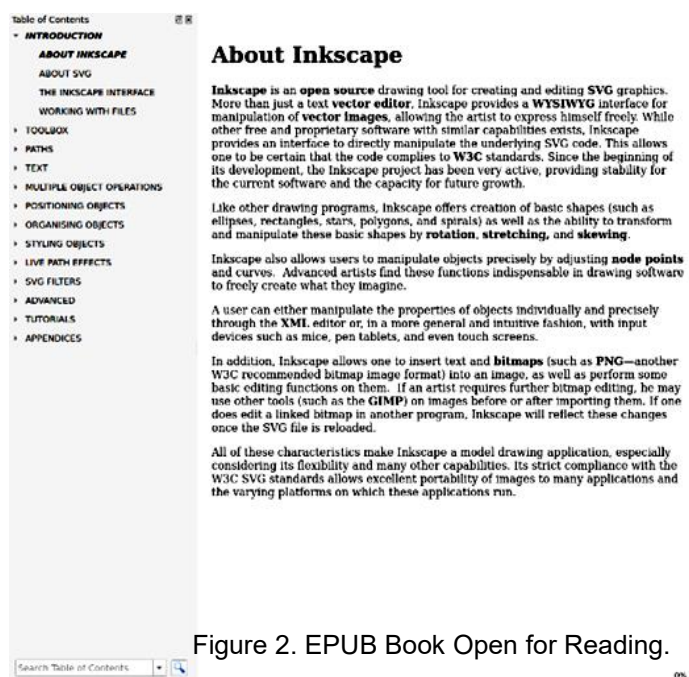
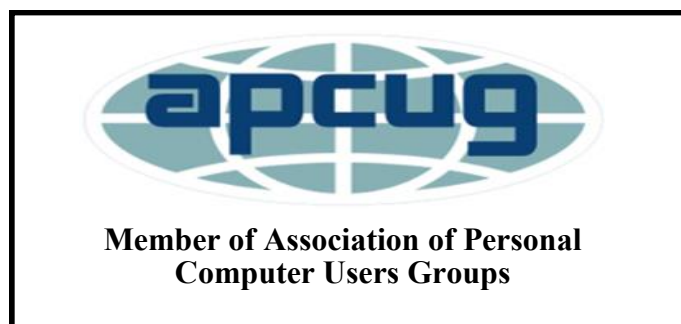


Figure 2. EPUB Book Open for Reading.

*(Continued on page 12)*





(Continued from page 11) E-Books

You can right-click any time on a page to display the menu shown in Figure 3. This is available only for books in EPUB or similar formats; in particular, it's not available for PDF books.

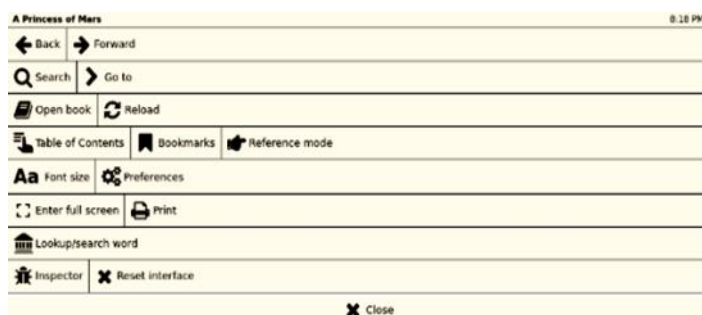


Figure 3. EPUB Book Menu.

One of the advantages of EPUB and similar formats is that you can change the font size to suit your screen size and vision. Figures 4 and 5 show the same passage with different font sizes. Note that the line lengths have adapted, and you don't have to scroll horizontally.

#### CHAPTER I.

YOU don't know about me without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*; but that ain't no matter. That book was made by Mr. Mark Twain, and he told the truth, mainly. There was things which he stretched, but mainly he told the truth. That is nothing. I never seen anybody but lied one time or another, without it was Aunt Polly, or the widow, or maybe Mary. Aunt Polly—Tom's Aunt Polly, she is—and Mary, and the Widow Douglas is all told about in that book, which is mostly a true book, with some stretchers, as I said before.

Figure 4. Passage in Normal Font.

#### CHAPTER I.

YOU don't know about me without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*; but that ain't no matter. That book was made by Mr. Mark Twain, and he told the truth, mainly. There was things which

Figure 5. Same Passage in Larger Font.

Calibre uses your default PDF viewer for such files, and this may provide some advantages. For example, Figure 6 shows an e-book with a note I've attached (highlighted with yellow). Normally you see only the small icon to the upper left of the note and display the note by selecting the icon. (Selecting the "x" at the note's upper right hides it.) This feature is not available in Calibre when reading books with EPUB and similar formats.

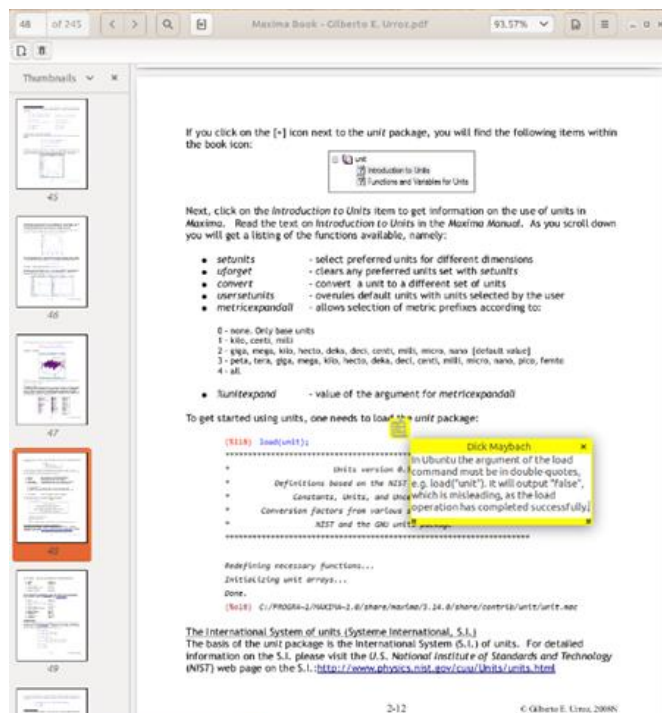


Figure 6. Note Added to a PDF Document.

Also note the page thumbnails displayed in the left panel, which help you navigate through the book. Some PDF books have a table of contents, but you normally have to scroll to their starts to see it. Fortunately, you can make a bookmark to return to your reading.

E-books will continue to proliferate, and to use them efficiently you need a good reader that helps you keep your collection organized. Realistically, no single one will cover all your needs, as your collection will likely be spread over all your devices and into the cloud. As with all your data, take some time to ensure your books are securely backed up, especially if they reside on portable devices.

## Genealogy Tip of the Day

Michael John Neill Genealogy Tip of the Day  
[Rootdig.com](http://Rootdig.com) [mjnrootdig@gmail.com](mailto:mjnrootdig@gmail.com)

### Do You Think You Know the Informant?

Posted: 02 Jan 2021 05:50 AM PST

Some documents used in genealogical research clearly state the name of the person providing the information. Others do not.

Knowing who provided information helps the researcher judge the probable reliability of that information. If you have a record that does not specifically state who gave the information, indicate *in your notes* who you think likely provided the information—and give a reason if possible.

Certain individuals are more likely to know certain details about the family or their lives than others are.



## Interesting Internet Finds

Steve Costello August 2020  
[scostello@sefcug.com](mailto:scostello@sefcug.com)



In the course of going through the more than 300 RSS feeds, I often run across things that I think might be of interest to other user group members.

The following are some items I found interesting during the month of July 2020.

### *Why Video Calls Are So Exhausting (And What You Can Do About It)*

<https://www.besttechie.com/why-video-calls-are-so-exhausting-and-what-you-can-do-about-it/>

Attending a lot of video conferences and now exhausted? Check out this post for some ideas on how to cope with that.

### *How To Enter BIOS In Windows 10*

<https://www.digitalcitizen.life/how-boot-uefi-bios-windows-tablets-convertibles>

You may never need to know this but if you ever need to access, or change, settings of the BIOS of your Windows 10 device, it is good to know.

### *3 Different Kindle Homescreens – Which Is Your Favorite?*

<https://blog.the-ebook-reader.com/2020/07/09/3-different-kindle-homescreens-which-is-your-favorite/>

I have been a Kindle user for a long time and did not know this. If you have a newer Kindle, and dislike the default homescreen check out this post for other options.

### *How To Get In-Ear Headphones To Fit Properly*

<https://www.techlicious.com/how-to/tips-for-getting-in-ear-headphones-to-fit-properly/>

I go through a lot of in-ear headphones, for some reason, so this is something I deal with frequently. If you have problems getting the earpieces to fit properly, check out this post for some possible solutions.

### *11 Handy Zoom Hacks To Make Your Digital*

### *Life Easier*

<https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/626634/zoom-meeting-hacks>

If you are like me, you are attending more zoom meetings these days. Check out this post to make things easier for yourself. There were some of these hacks I didn't know about before reading this post.

### *What Is SupportAssist and Should I Let It Run?*

<https://askleo.com/what-is-supportassist-and-should-i-let-it-run/>

If you have a brand name PC that is still under warranty and has this type of application installed, you should read this post. (Note: I have an HP desktop, and follow Leo's advice to keep things going while under warranty.)

### *July 2020*

### *How To Reduce Microphone Background Noise On Your PC*

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/reduce-microphone-background-noise-on-pc/>

I have been attending a lot of Zoom conferences since the COVID-19 crisis started. There are sometimes where participants have a lot of background noise in their audio. So, I thought this would be good to post for those having problems.

### *Can You Use Bluetooth Speakers If Your TV Isn't Bluetooth Ready?*

<https://thevisualcommunicationguy.com/2020/06/22/can-you-use-bluetooth-speakers-if-your-tv-isnt-bluetooth-ready/>

I have two TVs that are over 10 years old but work fine. I have plenty of Bluetooth speakers and headphones, but neither TV supports Bluetooth. (Note: I have a soundbar hooked to the main TV now, and it supports Bluetooth.)

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# Current location of LCCUG meetings

Lorain High School /  
LCCC

2600 Ashland Ave  
Lorain 44052

**No Meetings are being held at the College at this time, due to the Corvid-19 virus.**



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 an example of the classroom in which we will be meeting. Inside the door to the building entrance is an elevator that takes us to the second floor where this room is located.