

# Interface

Lorain County Computer Users Group  
[LCCUG.com](http://LCCUG.com) (or) [info@LCCUG.com](mailto:info@LCCUG.com)  
Volume 34 Number 10 October 2023



2023

#### Inside This Issue

President's Letter	Pg.2
LCCUG Officers	Pg.2
Program	Pg.3
Minutes	Pg.4
LCC-OGS	Pg.4
Genealogy Tip	Pg.5
Calendar of Events	Pg.5
Workshops	Pg.6
What is and Isn't Spam	Pg.7
Copy & Paste Plea Exposes Your Identity	Pg.9
Personal Computer Security	Pg.10
Save Money, Buy Your Own Wi-Fi Gear	Pg.12
Interesting Finds	Pg.12 & 14



**Tuesday  
October 10, 2023**

## Hodgepodge of Tips and Tricks, How-to. and Much More Information

Presented by



LCCUG Officers  
Also Geeks on Tour



**zoom**



### Using Zoom & In Person Meeting

**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

**LCCUG Meetings will be happening on ZOOM  
& in Person**

**At our new time: from 10 am. - noon**

**Workshop will be held after the meeting starting at Noon**

**Please Email: [info@lccug.com](mailto:info@lccug.com) if you have any questions or concerns!**

**We are back on the 2nd Tuesday of the month**

# A Word From Our President



## Happy Fall!!

At our September meeting, Judy Taylour of APCUG was again our speaker. Her talk on home automation, especially in the kitchen, led to a fun discussion among our members on what home technologies we had already. I always appreciate Judy getting up early and speaking to us from California.

At our October meeting we will again have a hodgepodge of tips and tricks and how-to's. This type of program has been popular in the past, so let's do it again! There are always new things to discover.

As we start to be thinking of next year – let's look at some of the things that the major companies such as Apple and Amazon are coming out with: new products and new standards in time for us to be tempted for the Christmas shopping season.

In October we can take a quick look at the new version of Windows 11 (with co-pilot). We can take a quick look at the many new features that are coming and what they will cost.

We will look at how to scan all photos to create digital versions with Chris from Geeks on Tour.

Cybersecurity Awareness Month 2023 is in October.

**At the very least** we can focus on 4 key behaviors:

Use strong passwords and a password manager  
Turn on multifactor authentication  
Recognize and report phishing.

### Update software

We would like to meet again for lunch at the Golden Corral for our December meeting. Details will be forthcoming.

Glenn Pubal of Royal Business will be our speaker again, but not until January. Looking forward to that!

Join us in person or by ZOOM as we learn to use new technology and how to be safe doing it!

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

## LCCUG Officers For 2023

<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>	<b>Vacant</b> membership@lccug.com
<b>Director of Advertising</b>	Richard Barnett advertising@lccug.com
<b>Director of Education</b>	Neil Higgins education@lccug.com



### MEMBERSHIP WITH LCCUG:

Yearly dues are now \$15.00 For 3 years. For more information contact:

LCCUG  
Director of Membership,  
membership@lccug.com.

Meeting Location:  
At a new time: from 10 am. - noon  
in a new location: LCCC facility at  
[201 W. Erie, Lorain](#)

Our meeting space is on the first floor – easily accessible – larger – refreshments available! Please email  
info@lccug.com if you have any questions.

**Tuesday  
October 10, 2023**

## Hodgepodge of Tips and Tricks and How-to. Much More Information



Presented by

LCCUG Officers



At our October meeting we will again have a hodgepodge of tips and tricks and how-to. This type of program has been popular in the past, so let's do it again! There are always new things to discover.

As we start to be thinking of next year – let's look at some of the things that the major companies such as Apple and Amazon are coming out with: new products and new standards in time for us to be tempted for the Christmas shopping season.

In October we can take a quick look at the new version of Windows 11 (with co-pilot). We can take a quick look at the many new features that are coming and what they will cost.

We will look at how to scan all photos to create digital versions with Chris from Geeks on Tour.

Cybersecurity Awareness Month 2023 is in October. We will look at some of issues we face in trying to keep safe online.

And a favorite subject of mine, learn how Artificial Intelligence has just made 5000 books available as audiobooks for all of us to enjoy!!

### Woohoo!



Your renewal dues have been changed from \$15.00, To 3 years for \$15.00. When everyone else is raising their prices our Computer Club is lowering their dues, so tell your friends to come and Join in the fun and learn computer information.

Tell your family and friends about this great deal. Once in a lifetime opportunity.



365-2288 - Elyria 1-800-238-8973 - USA  
591 Cleveland Street Elyria, Ohio 44035

- \* COMPUTER REPAIR
- \* PRINTERS & SUPPLIES
- \* UPGRADES
- \* CUSTOM PC'S & LAPTOPS
- \* CALL FOR BEST PRICES
- \* EDUCATION DISCOUNTS
- \* LCD MONITORS & TV'S



Shop at [www.ROYALBUSINESS.com](http://www.ROYALBUSINESS.com) and save \$\$\$

Financing Available - 90 days same as cash



## Executive Board Meeting Minutes

SEPTEMBER 5, 2023

The board Zoom video meeting for September was attended by Sandee Ruth, Don Hall, Micky Knickman, Pam Rihel and Neil Higgins.

The program for September 12 will be "WHAT'S COOKIN! HOME AUTOMATION FOR YOUR KITCHEN".

The program for October 10 will be "CYBER AWARENESS".

Sandee will see if Richard will check with Glenn Pubal for the November program.

The December meeting will be lunch at Golden Corral.

Neil moved, Pam seconded the meeting be adjourned..



## General Meeting Minutes

SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

President Sandee Ruth called the hybrid meeting to order. A motion to accept the minutes as shown in the September issue of the **INTERFACE** was made by Pam Rihel and seconded by Micky. Motion passed by voice vote.

Judy Taylour of APCUG presented a program "What's Cookin! Hone Automation for your Kitchen". She showed many, many electronic appliances available to make your work in the kitchen easier. An example: a \$800 coffee maker.

Pam moved, Micky seconded the meeting be adjourned

### The Lorain County Chapter of OGS

is having its next meeting online:

Check our webpage for the next program.

<http://loraincoogs.org/events.html>

We are having our meetings virtually using [bluejeans.com](https://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. **Canceled Until further notice due to Covid-19**

John Kolb

[secretary@loraincoogs.org](mailto:secretary@loraincoogs.org)



### LCCUG is on Facebook

Come and visit our Facebook page for interesting facts and ideas. You can get a lot of computer information from our Facebook page. Have a question ask it on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/lccug>

**Newsletter Editor:** Pam Rihel using Microsoft Publisher, 2019

**This Month's contributors:** Micky Knickman, Sandra Ruth, Pam Rihel, Don Hall, Neil Higgins, Michael John Neill, Steve Costello, Dick Maybach, Kurt Jefferson, Scambusters, Ask Leo, APCUG, Google images, Microsoft Office art online, AARP

Newsletter is now  
Online at:

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



# Lorain County Computer Users Group

2023 Calendar of Events

<http://lccug.com>  
email: [info@lccug.com](mailto:info@lccug.com)



## Using Zoom & In Person

Meeting & program starts at 10 am

*2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month. Changes are announced on the webpage and the newsletter.  
All meetings are open to the public*

January 11, 2023 - QR Code 101 **ZOOM ONLY**

February 9, 2023 - Artificial Intelligence

March 9, 2023 - Google Voice, VPNs

April 13, 2023 - Amazon Warehouse & Digital Payments

May 9, 2023 - Cellphones, Learning Tips and Tricks

June 13, 2023 - Cybercriminals are out to get Us-Senior Scams

July 11, 2023 - Useful Tips & Tricks, by LCCUG Officers

August 8, 2023 - What is Another Name for the Library of Things

September 12, 2023 - Cookin! Home Automation for your Kitchen! Judy Taylour from APCG

October 10, 2023 - Tricks, Tips & much more by LCCUG officers and the Geek Squad

November 13, 2023 TBA

December 12, 2023—Please check our website [LCCUG.com](http://LCCUG.com) for more updates. If you have anything you would like to know about, PLEASE let us know. We would really like your input.

LCCUG

### Genealogy Tip of the Day

michaeljohnneill, 22 Sep 12:34 PM

#### Children in Census Household May Not Be “Children”

US censuses between 1850 and 1870 list every name in a household, but bear in mind that not all children are children of the head of the household. They may be step-children, foster children, nieces, nephews, other relatives, etc. Even in the 1880 and later census where relationships to the head of household are given, “children” of the head of the household may not necessarily be their children.

Use the census as a starting point to other records suggested by the enumeration, particularly vital records, property records, military records, etc.

### US Census Dates

michaeljohnneill, 22 Sep 12:34 PM

From the years from 1790 to 1820, the US census was conducted as of the first Monday in August (August 2, 1790; August 4, 1800; August 6, 1810; August 7, 1820). From 1830-1880 and 1900, the census date was June 1. The 1890 census taken as of June 2. April 15 was the official census date in 1910. The 1920 census was taken as of January 1. Since 1930, the date of the US census has been April 1.

Remember that the official census date may not have been the date that your relative actually answered census questions. It is also possible that your relative was confused because of the difference between the official census date and the date the census taker came to the door.

# 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 5:00 am to 3:00 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 or 440-308-8196  
6:00 p.m. to 9:00 pm Monday thru Thursday  
Genealogy help  
[prihel1947@gmail.com](mailto:prihel1947@gmail.com)

### Denny Smith Unavailable at this time

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 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



## LCCUG ONGOING WORKSHOPS

ALL ARE FREE AND SOME ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

### Problem Solving Workshop

**Date:** Tuesday– October 10, 2023  
**Time:** 12PM –Please show up by 12:30  
**Instructor:** Micky Knickman  
**Place:** LCCC @ 201 W. Erie Ave., Lorain, OH

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

**This workshop is limited to LCCUG members in good standing.**

The Problem Solving Workshop is being held at our new building, LCCC, 201 W. Erie Ave. Lorain, Ohio

You are asked to bring in your computer, laptop and other electronics that you need help with unless the problem/question can be replicated on any device.

### Learning About Electronics

**Date:** Tuesday - October 10, 2023  
**Time:** 12PM –Please show up by 12:30  
**Instructor:** Sandee Ruth  
**Place:** LCCC @ 201 W. Erie Ave., Lorain, OH  
**Learn how use you electronic devices.**

Members are encouraged to bring their tablets, iPod, kindles, etc. for assistance from Sandee and any other knowledgeable members. The public is welcome to sit in on these sessions.



Member of Association of Personal Computer Users Groups

# What Is and Is Not Spam

## Using the Report Spam button properly.

by [Leo A. Notenboom](#)



Understanding what is and is not spam is important to make sure you get what you want and improve spam filtering for everyone.

There's a right way and a wrong way to use the Report [Spam](#) button, or its equivalent, in your email program.

It all boils down to answering the question: exactly **what is spam?**

### What is spam?

- Spam is email you didn't ask for.
- Any email you did ask for is by definition not spam (unless you ask them to stop and they don't).

Getting it right is important to make spam filters better, support mailers who are doing it right, and help everyone get the email they asked for.

### Spam: email you didn't ask for

Almost any email you didn't ask for runs the risk of being classified as spam.

And yes, that could range from unsolicited sales pitches to email from people you don't know trying to contact you for some legitimate purpose. All run the risk of being classified as spam.

Spam, after all, is in the eye of the beholder.

I typically recommend hitting the "this is spam" button for the things you recognize instantly as spam: pornography, obvious scams, [phishing](#) attempts, getting added to mailing lists you've never heard of, and so on.

It gets dicier when it's not obvious. Perhaps you get an email from a local retail store you've never done business with. Perhaps a friend keeps including you on their forwarded humor, or worse, political missives.

In my case, I get pitches all day long from people I've never heard of offering to write articles, pay for article placement, help improve my site's SEO, or pitch me on some technology that will make all the difference to my business's success.

It's in the eye of the beholder, and I don't feel one moment of remorse for marking them as spam. (Especially when it's clearly templated email indicating they've never once looked at my site.)

### Not spam: email you asked for

If you signed up for a newsletter and start receiving that newsletter as a result, that's not spam.

Most email newsletters are what's called "double opt-in", meaning you have to say yes *twice*: once when fill in the sign-up form, and then again when you act on the confirmation mail asking if you really want to get that mailing.

Email you receive after asking for it and confirming that you want it is not spam by any reasonable definition. If you don't like it, unsubscribe.

Similarly, if you purchase something from a company or otherwise enter into some kind of sales/business arrangement with them, the email they send you is not spam. It's part of what you asked for: it's part of the transaction and relationship.

### Spam: email that keeps coming after you say no

In all these examples of "not spam" — email you asked for — there should be a way to unsubscribe. If you do that and the email contin-

*(Continued on page 8)*

(Continued from page 7) What is and is not Spam

ues to appear after some reasonable period<sup>1</sup>, then it's spam.

You asked for it, and then you asked for it to stop. If it keeps coming, it's spam.

And while I know it makes life more complicated, that first part is key:

- *If you asked for it*, you should be able to ask for it to stop. Unsubscribe.
- **If you never asked for it, you should never try to unsubscribe.** That acts as a signal to send you even more spam. Mark it as spam instead.

### “Mark as spam” can hurt the innocent

Unfortunately, some users click the “this is spam” button on [email they explicitly asked for](#). This harms everyone involved.

It wasn't spam, but you said it was. This harms the legitimate sender's reputation. Services using that data to tune their spam filters may prevent other subscribers from getting the mail they asked for.

It can also backfire on you. In some cases, if a mailing system knows that you explicitly confirmed you wanted an email and then later mark it as spam, you may be blocked from signing up for any newsletters or other email provided by that service.<sup>2</sup>

### Do this

Do your best to understand what is and is not spam. Educate those around you to use the tools appropriately. Unsolicited email is spam. Requested newsletter subscriptions are not.

And, yes, I realize it shouldn't be this way — spam simply shouldn't exist — but it does. We all have to learn how to deal with it properly.

Contents Copyright ©

Leo A. Notenboom & Puget Sound Software, LLC.

**Ask Leo!** is a registered trademark © of Puget Sound Software, LLC

[ScamBusters.org](http://ScamBusters.org)

## COPY AND PASTE PLEA EXPOSES YOUR IDENTITY

### WHY YOU SHOULD BE WARY OF FACEBOOK COPY AND PASTE REQUESTS: INTERNET SCAMBUSTERS #801

What crosses your mind when a Facebook friend asks you to copy and paste their post rather than just sharing it?

Their intention may be a genuine attempt to widen the spread of their message -- but there's also a downside if the original poster was planning to harvest information about you.

In this week's issue, we'll explain the risks of copying and pasting, as well as highlight a couple of other tricks to be wary of.

Now, here we go...

## COPY AND PASTE PLEA EXPOSES YOUR IDENTITY

If you're a Facebook user, have you ever wondered why some of your "friends" post items they ask you to copy and paste rather than share?

Do you feel a little uneasy about why they asked you to do this?

Well, of course, they likely didn't ask you. They simply copied and pasted the item themselves that one of their friends previously posted -- and the request to pass it on in this way was already built in.

The trail goes all the way back to the original poster. It's a sort of chain letter, which aims to reach as wide an audience as possible. But why? Is it a scam?

Its purpose could certainly be dubious -- but not always. First, you need to understand something important about the way sharing and

(Continued on page 9)



(Continued from page 8) **Copy And Paste Plea Exposes Your Identity**

copy/pasting work on Facebook.

In very simply terms, when you share a post from someone who has tightly controlled privacy settings, their privacy status effectively restricts who can see it. It can't be made "public" and may not even be further shareable.

But when you copy and paste an item, you're really creating a new post that can be seen by all your friends and beyond. In other words, it gets wider circulation.

So, you're being used to help amplify a message. That may or may not be a good thing depending on its content.

But that's not all. By copying and pasting, you're effectively enabling the original poster to track everyone else who is repeating it.

## How?

The original poster inserts some text with a couple of spelling mistakes in the message. Then they do a search using the misspelt phrase. This returns a list of everyone who has copied and pasted the message.

Now, let's say the message was about gun control, animal abuse or another contentious subject.

The original poster will now have a list of people who seem to support his/her cause and they can go about trying to contact them via Facebook with "friend" requests and other messages.

Their findings could also contribute to a profile of you that some marketing and research companies build.

Furthermore, the original poster can delete their message and, therefore, not be easily traceable, while the copied-and-pasted versions live on.

That's not what happens with a shared mes-

sage. If you delete something you shared, all the forward-shared versions of it disappear as well.

## AMEN TO THAT

The same tracking tactic works for any message. You know, the type that says something like, "If you agree, comment 'Amen'." Again, by doing a search, the original poster will be able to identify all his/her supporters.

Copy-and-pasting can also be used for other sinister purposes.

For instance, if the original message is a hoax or fake news of some sort, the copy and paste version becomes much more difficult to delete because each is effectively a new original.

So, as mentioned above, while deleting a shared message would remove the entire chain of forward shares (note, not earlier shares), that wouldn't happen with a copy and paste.

And, again, the original hoaxer could delete their message to keep their own identity secret, while their false message continues to circulate. Another chain-style trick that sneaky Facebook users apply is to solicit information about you by offering to tell you something trivial about yourself, like which celebrity you most resemble, or which one would make you a perfect partner, or some other trick created to pique your curiosity.

They might ask your birth date, your favorite color or even your mother's maiden name. See where this is leading? You're giving information about yourself that potentially could be used for identity theft.

Plus, by taking part in this "game," your celebrity identity (or whatever) is entered into the post's comment field, which means the message will now most likely go to your friends. And so it goes on.

So before copying and pasting, adding "Amen" etc., or playing the celebrity game, it makes sense to pause and consider the possible impli-

*(Continued on page 10)*

cations of what you're doing -- and the information you're giving away about yourself.

The original poster's intentions may have been perfectly honorable. Or maybe they're not. And you may not find out until it's too late.

## ALERT OF THE WEEK

Imposter scams were the most costly frauds of 2017, draining an estimate \$328 million from the wallets and purses of Americans, according to newly published figures from the U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

The Commission's annual summary of complaints shows consumers lost a total of more than \$900 million to scammers last year, up by \$63 million on 2016.

But this is likely only the tip of an iceberg, since many scams never actually get reported to the FTC.

In terms of the number of complaints, debt collection scams took the number 1 slot, accounting for almost a quarter of all crooked tricks, followed by identity theft and then imposter scams.

Another interesting finding was that more young people than older people reported being scammed. But, on average, people in the older age group actually lost more money.

Read the full report, officially titled [Consumer Sentinel Network Data Book 2017](#).

*Copyright Audri and Jim Lanford. All rights reserved.  
Reprinted with permission. Subscribe free to Internet  
ScamBusters at  
<http://www.scambusters.org>*



## Personal Computer Security

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

Home users must manage three types of security:

- information security – protecting their information,
- application security – securing their applications against modification and misuse, and
- network security – preventing access to their network.

Only a small portion of your data, such as passwords and credit card numbers, is sensitive and needs special protection. For most, you are concerned only with recovery if lost, and here a good, well-tested backup discipline is the solution. It doesn't matter if the loss was because of hardware failure, operator error, or malicious software. Please note the "well-tested." If you haven't recently and successfully restored data from a backup, you don't have a backup discipline, only a backup hope.

Sensitive data must be encrypted. I use KeePassXC, <https://keepassxc.org/>, for passwords, PINs, and financial access data, such as credit card and bank account numbers. The program stores these in an encrypted database, which I keep on my PC. If you keep it on the cloud, it will be available to all your devices with Internet access, but it's also more vulnerable to attack there. This means it needs a stronger password. A compatible Android app uses the same database as KeePassXC, which means the data is also safeguarded on your smartphone. The application also generates passwords of arbitrary complexity, making using a unique, strong password for each account easy. Other password programs have similar features. I use VeraCrypt, <https://www.veracrypt.fr/en/Home.html>, to encrypt files, directories, and storage media on my PC. I've seen reports that the EDS app allows ac-

cess to VeraCrypt files on Android, but I haven't tested it.

Many financial institutions require two-factor authentication when you access your account. The most common is texting a one-time PIN to your cell phone after you log into your account with a username and password. You need both your password and the registered smartphone with them. Also, be careful when you travel that you can receive text messages in the countries you visit if you use credit cards.

Phishing attacks, where you get calls or messages asking you for sensitive information, are far more common than those through your PC. I get these almost every day, such as:

- "Your bank account has been locked; click this icon to unlock it,"
- "Your email storage is full; click this icon to free some,"
- "Your PC is infected with viruses; click here, and Microsoft will help you solve this,"
- "Amazon is about to ship you a new cell phone and charge your account; click this icon to prevent it," and
- "You owe money for past-due taxes; call the IRS at this number."

Usually, these are obvious scams, but occasionally you must do something. For example, your credit card company may contact you about a questionable purchase. In such cases, log into your account with the contact data in your password file or call the number on the back of the card. Also, never use a link in an email.

Many attacks occur when you contact disreputable websites. However, you can protect yourself by improving your browser's security.

- Chrome – <https://support.google.com/chrome/answer/10468685>
- Edge – <https://www.makeuseof.com/guide-to-security-settings-in-microsoft-edge/>

- Firefox – <https://trendoceans.com/firefox-privacy-and-security/>

Browsers are becoming more secure, which means keeping yours up to date is especially important. However, browsing can be dangerous; you feel safe because you are comfortable in your own home, but you are poking through the back alleys of the world. If you have any concerns, use the Tor browser, <https://www.torproject.org/download/>, to protect yourself. Even better, install Tails Linux, <https://tails.boum.org/>, on a memory stick and explore from there rather than your usual operating system.

Be careful where you obtain software. Years ago, we would go to a tech store to buy a box with the storage medium and a manual, but the stores, boxes, media, and manuals have all but disappeared. We now download or install it directly from the Internet. I prefer to obtain mine from its developer's website after verifying that the URL is valid, and the developer is reputable. I've learned to avoid sites that warehouse many programs, as their downloads often include unwanted extras or malware. Check any download for malware before you run it, and if possible, test it on a secondary computer or virtual machine before you install it on your primary PC.

Keep all your software up to date, not just the operating system but all your applications. Many have bugs, some of which have security flaws, and anti-malware software may not protect you from someone exploiting these. Delete those applications you no longer use, as every one you have installed is a potential security risk. This also applies to smartphone apps.

Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are notorious for not updating the software in their terminal equipment. Unfortunately, your home network may not be secure, which can be problematic, especially if you have local file servers or other network devices. You can reduce your risk by installing your firewall between your home network and the ISP hardware, providing that you keep it updated and properly configured.

(Continued on page 12)



Some companies promote Internet-of-Things devices, such as video cameras that allow you to check on your home from work. Unfortunately, not all are designed for good security; others can also check on your home. Always change the usernames and passwords of such equipment from their defaults. Consider carefully whether the convenience of these is worth the risk, and purchase only those for which you can find thorough valid reviews.

Using a laptop on a public hotspot is much riskier than using one at home, as all your Internet data packets are visible to others using the same hotspot. Be sure to set your PC firewall for this environment and use a Tor browser or a VPN to encrypt your packets. Of course, encrypting sensitive data on a laptop is even more critical than on a home PC, as laptops frequently go missing. They are also more easily damaged, so they should be backed up, preferably by storing that data remotely. All this is even more true for smartphones.

Some PC users think that security begins and ends with anti-malware software, but reading the above should convince you otherwise. Such programs are helpful but address only a small portion of the risks.

## Save Money, Buy Your Own Wi-Fi Gear

By Kurt Jefferson, Editor, Central Kentucky Computer Society  
<https://ckcs.org/>  
lextown2 \*\* gmail.com

Prices are slowly coming down, but it still pays to economize.

One of the best ways to save money is by not paying your Internet provider to lease their equipment. Instead, if you have cable Internet, you may use the company's Wi-Fi router and cable modem – typically, one unit resembles a big black block.

You could be paying \$120, \$130, or more each year for your ISPs (Internet Service Providers) gear when you could put that money to better use by buying your own equipment.

Buying your own cable modem and Wi-Fi router could pay for itself in a year or less. However, if you rely on fiber optic service instead of the Internet from your cable TV company, you still need a Wi-Fi router. And, again, you can save money by buying your own.

You will probably have to use the small white box provided by the fiber optic Internet company (that box is called the optical connection node and allows for high-speed Internet connections.)

That box is typically provided through your monthly Internet fee. But you don't need to use the company's Wi-Fi router. Of course, you need to install your own equipment – or find a friend, relative, or someone who knows about technology – to do it.

If you have cable Internet, you need to notify the cable company that you are installing your own cable modem – and they have to switch it

*(Continued on page 13)*

**Interesting Internet Finds** 

by Steve Costello  
scostello \*\* sefcug.com

**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.



on from their end once it's connected. (Most cable companies use the term "provision" to add your cable modem to their network.

If you have a cordless landline phone with a signal provided by the Internet, remember your phone won't work during the transition, and you'll need to use a cell phone to call the cable company.)

In addition, you'll need to call your cable company to return their equipment. More and more cable firms are not allowing customers to return company-owned equipment to their stores.

Instead, you'll probably be asked to ship the equipment back to the cable company. It's free, but it's an extra step you'll need to take to avoid being charged for failing to return the gear.

If you live in a larger home, you probably have dead spots where you cannot connect to the Internet. This is a widespread occurrence.

A mesh Wi-Fi network can solve that problem, and as prices drop, more folks are utilizing those to spread Internet signals throughout their homes and eliminate so-called dead zones. Finally, experts recommend replacing your Wi-Fi router every five years – at the least. Touch your router, and you'll notice it can get very warm.

The high temperatures generated by Wi-Fi routers wear the units out faster than you might think. If the company that made the router is no longer providing firmware updates – it usually means it's time to replace the router with a newer model. Firmware updates are software patches you download from the Internet.

These downloads include security updates that prevent hackers from breaking into your home network and stealing your data. Consumer Reports writes, "If no update has been available for months or years, the router is probably no longer being supported.

As a rule of thumb, a Netgear representative told us that consumers should consider replacing their router after three years. Representa-

tives from Google and Linksys said a three-to-five-year window was appropriate. Amazon, which owns the popular Eero brand of routers, put the range at three to four years."

However, CR's own survey data indicates that one-fifth of consumers wait more than four years to replace their router. That's cutting it close.

"All of the data that we have shown that consumers hold onto their router for dear life and for as long as possible," says Richard Fisco, who oversees electronics testing for Consumer Reports.

Tech Gear Lab: How to Choose a Wi-Fi Router

<https://www.techgearlab.com/topics/small-and-home-office/best-Wi-Fi-router/buying-advice>

Lifewire's Nine Best Mesh Wi-Fi Network Systems For Full Coverage

<https://www.lifewire.com/best-mesh-wi-fi-network-systems-4139748>

Make Use Of: Seven Reasons Why You Should Replace Your ISP's Router

<https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/reasons-replace-isp-router/>

Tachus: Why You Should Use Your Own Router Instead of Your ISP's

<https://www.tachus.com/post/why-you-should-buy-your-own-router-instead-of-using-the-one-provided-by-your-isp>

Tech Gear Lab: Best Wi-Fi Router of 2022

<https://www.techgearlab.com/topics/small-and-home-office/best-Wi-Fi-router>

Tech Gear Lab: Best Wi-Fi Mesh Systems of 2022

<https://www.techgearlab.com/topics/small-and-home-office/best-Wi-Fi-mesh-system>

Consumer Reports: How To Tell When It's Time To Replace Your Router

<https://www.consumerreports.org/wireless-routers/how-to-tell-when-its-time-to-replace-your-router-a5475786635>







## 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.

### Guide to FaceTime Calls Between iPhone and Android Users

<https://www.askdaveytaylor.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.

### What Is Wi-Fi Calling & How To Get It On Your Phone

<https://www.techlicious.com/tip/how-to-get-wifi-calling-att-sprint-t-mobile-verizon/>

Wi-Fi 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.

### Faster And Safer Internet? Here's How...

[https://askbobrankin.com/faster\\_and\\_safer\\_internet\\_heres\\_how.html](https://askbobrankin.com/faster_and_safer_internet_heres_how.html)

Do you want to know how to have faster and safer internet? I am sure you do, so check out this post from Bob Rankin. I have done this on PCs, Linux, and Android devices for years.

### How to Change Name on Zoom for PC or Mac

<https://www.groovypost.com/howto/change-name-on-zoom/>

Do you Zoom? If so, did you know you can change your name? Check out this post to learn how to change your name on Zoom.

*This work by Steve Costello is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.*

