

***THE
GIGABYTE
GAZETTE***

The Monthly Newsletter
of the
***SUN CITY SUMMERLIN
COMPUTER CLUB***

<https://www.scsccl.com>

July, 2023

Table of Contents

President’s Message	3
General Membership Meeting	4
SCSCC Board of Directors Actions	4
July 2023 Printable Calendars	4
Submissions Welcome	5
Welcome New Members	5
Special Interest Groups and Kaffee Klatches	6
Class and Q&A Offerings	8
Tom’s Tech-Notes	10
Kretchmar’s Korner.....	15
APCUG Guest Article	18
Lab Monitor Schedule.....	21

Issue Contributors

Tom Burt

Gail Weiss

Kathy Kirby

David Kretchmar

Jeff Wilkinson

Bob Woods



President's Message

July News

by Jeff Wilkinson

This month we will continue our Apple iPhone/iPad and Android Smartphone sessions which have proven popular. Check the club calendar at <https://www.scscclab.com/> for dates and times. And, as a reminder, our Tuesday Hardware SIG is up and running during the summer and we are here to help with hardware and software troubles. The club lab is open each Saturday morning from 9-Noon and computers and printers are available for all community residents.

A copy of our revised club flyer is prominently displayed on the [Link Tuesday Newsday](#) web site to further inform the community of our club offerings.

This month I made a short presentation at the NPT (**N**eighborhood **P**reparedness **T**eam) on computer security, passwords and phishing. Judging from the audience response, it was enlightening for many of them.

We are working on deploying a Windows Server as an upgrade to our remotely accessed desktop PC where we store club data. This will allow up to 10 remote users concurrently.

Tuesday morning Kaffee Klatch sessions are continuing during the summer; all are invited to attend these informal Zoom meetings – simply click on the link on our website.

A transition plan is underway as we consolidate club information on our server and develop and document club policy and procedures.

The signed Club Charter has been submitted for SCSCAI Approval.

As we approach July 4th we wish everyone a safe and happy holiday

Jeff Wilkinson, President

(702) 527-4056 pres.scscclab@gmail.com

General Membership Meeting

There will be no General Meetings in July or August. The club's next General Meeting will be at 2 PM on Thursday September 7th in Desert Vista Room 5.

For Club information: go to www.scscclub.com, contact Jeff Wilkinson, President at (702) 527-4056 or email him at pres.scscclub@gmail.com.

SCSCC Board of Directors Actions

The Computer Club Board of Directors took the following actions on June 14, 2023

George Lobue made a motion that the **minutes of the May 10, 2023 Board Meeting be approved as submitted**. The motion was seconded by Jerry Sanderson and unanimously approved by the Board.

George Lobue made a **motion** that the **meeting adjourn**. Jeff Wilkinson **seconded** the motion, and it was unanimously **approved** by the Board. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 AM.

July 2023 Printable Calendars

To view this month's printable classroom and lab calendars, click the following hyperlink:

https://www.scscclub.com/Calendars/scscclub_calendar_2023-07Jul.pdf

Submissions Welcome

We are always looking for new information to share with our club members. If you have computer or technical information or tips you would like to share with members of the club, send your articles to editor **Tom Burt** at tomburt89134@cox.net. Thank you to everyone for your contributions.

Welcome New Members

The following new 2023 members have joined the Computer Club
from May 28 to June 28, 2023.

William High
Wayne Ikeda
Linda Mundale

Rickie Orzen
Gayle Sarry

As of June 29th, the club has 507 paid memberships for 2023.

As of December 31st, 2022 the club had 570 paid memberships for 2022.

The Computer Club is now accepting new and renewed memberships for 2023.
Annual dues are \$10 per person.

Special Interest Groups and Kaffee Klatches

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) provide a forum for general discussion on a specific computer-related subject. Admission to all SIGs is on a first-come, first-seated basis and is subject to the maximum allowed by fire code regulations. <W>, <L>, <M> or <H> indicate whether a SIG would be of interest to a Windows, Linux, MacOS or Hand-held Device user.

Android Q&A <H> *Live in the Classroom*

Gene Koch

Third Thursday at 1 PM monthly

Next meeting: Thursday, July 20th

This hands-on Q&A session offers one on one help to Android phone and tablet users.

Apple iPhone / iPad Help <H> *Live in the Classroom*

Zane Clark 702-332-5747

First and third Wednesdays, 9 a.m. monthly

Next meetings: Wednesday, July 5 and July 19, 2023

The help sessions will be in the usual format, one-on-one help with your questions. Come anytime, leave anytime.

Internet Investing <W/M/H> *via Zoom*

Tom Burt (702-341-7095)

3rd Thursday, 10 a.m. monthly

Next meeting: Thursday, July 20th

The Internet Investing SIG provides a forum for members interested in using Internet resources for researching and managing investments. The groups meets to discuss, and learn more about investing, finance, tax, estate planning and legal matters. The SIG's target audience is members with intermediate computer skills and investment experience, but all members are welcome.

Kaffee Klatch <W/M/H> via Zoom

Jeff Wilkinson (702-527-4056)

Every Tuesday, 8:30 a.m.

This Kaffee Klatch is an open, free-form discussion group for all users, from beginning to advanced. KK discussions are not restricted to any one subject, computer platform or computer-knowledge level but should be computer or technology related. We will try to answer your questions, help you keep your systems updated and provide some useful “tips and tricks.”

Repair SIG <W/L/M> Live in the Classroom

Chuck Hagen (702-418-2614)

Every Tuesday, 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The Repair Lab provides **CLUB MEMBERS ONLY** with no-cost assistance for those having upgrades and / or hardware and software problems with their computers. Bring in only your PC tower, your Mac or your laptop and your problems. Our TECH team will give you our best effort. ***Be sure to mark your cables so you can re-connect when you get home.***

Windows 10/11 SIG Live in the Classroom

Bill Wilkinson (702-233-4977)

First and Third Saturdays at 9:30 a.m.

Next meetings: Saturday, July 1 and July 15, 2023

If you are a novice or near-beginner computer user, or if you just want some refresher information together with a refreshing cup of coffee, then jump-start or recharge your computing knowledge by attending these Windows 10/11 SIG / Q&A sessions. At each session, attendees will explore several topics of interest to beginners and near-beginners. The topics are always announced a couple of days in advance via e-mail to SCSCC members who have subscribed to the club’s SCSCCNews mailing list. Each topic is presented in a step-by-step manner and is supported by “how to” notes that can be easily and conveniently downloaded from the SCSCCBKK.org web page. Following each “up front” presentation of one or more topics (approximately 60 minutes in duration), an informal open-ended Question and Answer period takes place for those who wish to participate, listen, reflect, or inquire.

Class and Q&A Offerings

The club's educational sessions are being conducted either as Zoom webcasts, live in-person or a hybrid of the two. Check the weekly calendar on the [club website](#) to see which mode the session is using. Unless explicitly stated, advance registration is not required for these sessions.



Desert Survival

Wednesday, July 19th at 1 PM *via Zoom*

Presenter: Mary Miles

Location: Zoom Webcast

Mary will reprise her interesting class on how to survive when stranded in the desert.



Gmail – Web Version and Mobile App

Saturday, July 22nd at 9 AM Live and Zoom

Presenter: Gail Weiss

Location: Classroom

If you still aren't using Google Email and don't have a Gmail Account, it is time to come into the 21st century. With a Gmail account, you can have access to any of Google's other applications for FREE.

In my July class I will go through setting up a Google Email account on your computer and smartphone (Apple & Android). I will show you all the settings you can opt for and review all the menus and icons. I will also show you how to manage your contacts and will show you how to send and download attachments. Bring your questions.

This class will be held in the classroom, so please bring your own laptops or mobile devices if you want to follow along. For more information about this class or if you have any questions or ideas for future classes, please email me at gmweiss5@gmail.com.



A Tour of Google's Bard AI Chatbot

Thursday, July 27th at 10 AM via Zoom

Presenter: Tom Burt

I recently wrote an overview of Google's Bard AI chatbot. This class will expand on that topic, exploring ways you can use Bard to assist you in many knowledge tasks. If you haven't yet tried your hand at Bard or the more famous ChatGPT, this session should prove interesting.

I'll talk a little about what these chatbots are and how they are "trained" as well as their foibles and limitations. But we'll spend most of our time asking Bard questions and seeing what kind of answers it produces.

The presentation notes will be available about July 23rd at:

<https://www.scscclub.com/smnr/GoggleBardTour>.

This session will be recorded and posted to the club's website.



Tom's Tech-Notes

Backup Tools and Procedures - 2023

Tom Burt, SCSCC Vice President

It's been a few years since I've written about tools and procedures for backing up your computer. With the growing popularity of smart phones and tablets, the need for backup has expanded to include those devices as well as traditional Windows, Macintosh and Linux PCs. I can't stress enough how important it is to make regular backup copies of your data files and of your computer's entire hard drive. The backup landscape has changed somewhat, so it seemed like a good time for an update.

What is Backing Up?

Backing up means making an accurate copy of some or all of the data and software stored on your computer's storage drive. The copy is commonly stored on some type of external storage device that is not normally connected to your computer. The external device may be a USB hard drive or flash drive, a removable rack-mount hard drive, a folder or partition on another computer on your in-house network or a server elsewhere on the Internet such as Dropbox, MS OneDrive or Google Drive. A personal backup solution may include some or all of the above.

Why Back Up?

The reason to make backups is that (putting it politely) **BAD STUFF HAPPENS!** Computer equipment is highly reliable and may run for years without failing, but sooner or later, storage devices fail. More common is that accidents (drops and spills, turning off the PC's power, power failures and power surges and so forth) happen, causing a storage device or other device component to fail. A vast array of malicious software waits for any opportunity to attack and damage or lock up saved data. There's also basic human error – accidentally deleting a file or a folder.

Without a safe backup copy, data saved on your computer may be irretrievably lost. For example, consider digital photos, videos, music and financial / tax records. Also, if you had to start over with a new, blank hard drive, it would be relatively easy to reinstall Windows, Linux or MacOS, but what about all the other programs, settings and all your data?

Full Disk Backup – Cloning and Imaging

A **clone** of a hard drive is a complete copy to another hard drive. All information needed to boot and run the computer, as well as all the programs, settings and data are written to the backup hard drive. A clone completely consumes the backup hard drive; only ONE clone can be written to the backup drive. To **restore** after the computer's internal hard drive has failed or been corrupted, one can either clone from the backup drive to the computer's (possibly new) internal drive or one can remove the failed drive and install the backup drive in its place. On a

laptop or all-in-one computer, cloning back should be the first choice, provided the internal drive hasn't failed. Removing and replacing a laptop's internal drive is a challenging task.

An **Image** of a hard drive is a complete copy written to a single compressed file on another storage device. The compressed image file doesn't typically use up as much space as the original data, and only actual space used is backed up. It's usually possible to keep several image files on a single external storage device. As with a clone, the image file contains all the information needed to boot and run the PC along with all the programs and data. However, the image file is not itself bootable.

For **restoring** either a clone or an image file, a **bootable recovery disk** (CD or DVD) or **flash drive** is required. All the major backup tools include a tool to create bootable recovery media.

Popular Full Disk Backup Tools for Desktop Computers

There are several well-known software tools for backing up the hard drives of desktop PCs and Macs.

Acronis Cyber Protect Home (2023)

- <https://www.acronis.com/en-us/> or <https://ugr7.com/>
- Integrated suite of backup, anti-virus and ransomware protection.
- Excellent for backing up entire hard drives or partitions.
- Makes both "clones" and "images".
- Can "mount" a backup image as a logical drive.
- Can make bootable "Rescue Media" for both backup and restore.
- Can also can back up individual files and folders.
- Single PC basic subscription lists at \$50 / year, family pack of 3 about \$80 / year
There are premium offerings including cloud storage.
User Group Relations (Gene Barlow) prices are 50% lower.

CASPER by Future Systems Software

- <https://www.fssdev.com/products/casper/>
- Makes "images".
- Features bootable images.
- Single system price about \$60; family pack of 5 for \$80.
- Has a 30-day free trial.

Macrium Reflect 8 Home

- <https://www.macrium.com/products/home>
- The free version has been discontinued but continues to work on Windows 10 and 11.; you can subscribe to the "Home" edition for an annual fee of \$50 or you can buy a single year license for \$70 (no support after the first year). They offer a 30-day free trial.
- Can back up entire hard drive or partitions.
- Makes both "clones" or "images".
- Can "mount" a backup image as a logical drive.

- Can make bootable “Rescue Media” for both backup and restore.

EaseUS ToDo Backup FREE

- <https://www.easeus.com/backup-software/tb-free.html>
- See feature comparison,
- Makes “images”. You can “boot” from an image.
- You can upgrade to a fuller-featured “Home” edition for \$40 or a “Enterprise” edition for \$49.
- Not an annual subscription.

I tried using EaseUS ToDo Backup to back up my C: drive to a USB 3 external 7200 RPM hard drive. It required 52 min to back up 300 GB of data. The resultant image size was 184.5 GB. There were a substantial number of MP4 files on the C: drive that were already compressed.

Windows 11 Backup (Windows 7) FREE (built-in to Windows 10 and 11)

- This backup tool is reached via:
Control Panel > All Control Panel Items > Backup and Restore (Windows 7)
- You can use it to back up key library folders or you can choose to “Create a system image”. Once there you can choose to add additional drives or partitions to the basic C: drive partition set.
- I set it up and let it run to make an image of my C: drive (300 GB of data). It ran for 92 minutes. The final image file size was 300 GB; there was NO compression.

Of the above offerings, Macrium Reflect Free Edition *has* been my personal favorite. It’s been fast, easy to use and does everything I need for whole disk backup. And the price was right! However, I’m presently evaluating free and paid alternatives. Here’s a link to a good article listing some free backup software tools: <https://www.techradar.com/best/best-free-backup-software>. I’m disenchanted with the built-in Windows 7 backup. It’s too slow and the images aren’t compressed. I’m also disenchanted with Acronis and Macrium going to an annual subscription model. EaseUS ToDo Backup Free edition looks promising as a replacement for the Macrium Reflect 8 Free edition.

File Backup Tools

Full disk backups are great, but users don’t typically run them every day because they take time to run and the backup drive has to be retrieved and connected to the computer. This creates a risk that data files that change often may not be accurately reflected in the backup. Think about your saved email and contacts, financial and accounting files, other documents and spreadsheets you may be working on.

Windows File History or MacOS Time Machine

One approach is to use an automated file backup tool that scans a designated set of folders at some specified time interval (say every hour) and makes a copy of any new or changed files to a

backup storage device such as a flash drive, external hard drive or a shared folder on another computer. I use File History, checking once an hour, to supplement full disk backups for certain key file folders.

Windows File Explorer or MacOS File Manager / Finder

For simple one-shot backups, you can still use the built-in file manager programs to select a set of files and copy them to an external flash drive or hard drive or to a network shared folder.

Cloud Backup Tools

There are many free and paid cloud backup services. Most of these include an automatic sync tool that copies files from your computer to your private space on the cloud server. Here are some of the free ones:

Google Cloud (Google Drive) - FREE

- <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/my-drive>
- Requires a Google / Gmail account
- 15-17 GB of free cloud storage
- **Install Google Backup and Sync** app (Windows)
- Use Settings to specify a set of folders to be monitored and backed up to the Google Cloud whenever a change is detected (very similar to Windows File History)

Microsoft OneDrive - FREE

- <https://onedrive.live.com/about/en-us/>
- Requires a Microsoft Account
- 5 GB free (more if you've had a Microsoft ID for a long time). If you're subscribed to Microsoft 365 (the Office suite) you get 1 TB per user of the license up to 6 TB total.
- Syncs from a OneDrive folder on your PC or device to your OneDrive cloud storage.

Apple iCloud – FREE

- www.apple.com/icloud
- Requires an Apple ID (Account)
- 5 GB free, can add more space for a fee
- Built into all Apple devices, can install an App for Windows
- Syncs across all your devices

What About My Smart Phone or Tablet?

Many computer users now rely on a mobile device as their main computer for communication and for consuming news and entertainment as well as for taking photos, video clips and recording sound. What are the options for backing up mobile devices?

Android Phones and Tablets

If you have a Google account and have configured your device to link to it, you get quite a lot of automatic backup of files to your Google Drive cloud space. You will want to be

connected to a WiFi router when this is going on or your Android device may use up a lot of your monthly data allotment.

You can also connect your Android device via a USB cable to your desktop computer and use the Windows File Manager or MacOS Finder to copy files from the mobile device to a folder on the desktop computer. You can also copy files from the desktop computer to the Android mobile device.

To fully back up all your Android device's data, you can purchase and install third-party backup Apps. Try a web search for **Android Full Backup** to see what's available.

Apple Phones and Tablets

If you have an Apple ID, all your devices: iPhone, iPad, Mac, Apple Watch already have built-in iCloud support and will back up data files to your iCloud private storage space on Apple's servers. If you have several Apple devices, a concern is using up your free 5GB allocation; you may have to buy some extra space to cover backups from all your Apple devices.

You can connect your iPhone or iPad to your PC or Mac via a USB cable and then use Apple's iTunes program to synchronize various file types between your mobile device and your desktop computer. This isn't quite as general as what Android offers, but it takes care of many file types. iTunes also offers an easy way to make a full backup of all the data on your Apple mobile device into a file on your desktop computer.

It's a good idea to have the iCloud backup enabled on your mobile device. This takes care of frequently changing files. Use the iTunes full backup occasionally to make sure ALL your devices' files are backed up.

With these backups in place, if your phone or tablet is damaged, goes up in flames or gets lost, you can replace the phone or tablet and with relative ease, restore all your saved data files and be back in business.

Getting Help

The Computer Club's Tuesday afternoon **Hardware / Software Repair Lab** is a great resource (free to club members) for getting help with backup and restore issues and with reviving failed or corrupted computers. However, they can't bring back lost data if you haven't made a backup. Help them help you. Make a backup today!



Kretchmar's Korner

Clean Your Dirty Laptop

David Kretchmar, Hardware Technician

After being used regularly for months or years, our laptops accumulate dust, grime, skin oils, sneezes, and who knows what else. Your laptop is most likely due for a cleaning, and I'm going

to pass along some suggestions for how to do it effectively without harming this delicate piece of equipment.



You know your laptop is filthy. You can see the dirt and grime on your screen and keyboard. You might also be able to see grime accumulated on your trackpad. So, it's time for a cleaning.

A shining newly cleaned laptop should be a joy to use; the keys are clean, and the screen is free of smudges and splatters. These cleaning suggestions might also be useful if you buy a used laptop since the previous owner doesn't always leave them in pristine condition.

Your Supplies

You don't need much to clean a computer: rubbing alcohol, a mild dish detergent, soft lint-free



cloths (microfiber cloths are ideal), Q-tips, and canned air. Ninety percent or higher isopropyl alcohol is what you want since it won't damage the internal components. And if you have some particularly embedded dirt, a Mr. Clean Magic Eraser (or other melamine sponge) can also work wonders, though it should be an absolute last resort since it's abrasive and can leave permanent scratches.

Don't waste your money on specialty cleaners you see at Amazon or big box electronics stores like Best Buy. They work just fine but

no better than what you already have at home.

Start With the Inside

Starting with that dirt on the keyboard and screen might be tempting, but you should start with the internals. Canned air will blow dust and dirt everywhere, so if you started by cleaning the screen, you'll just end up having to clean it again after you've used canned air. Start by blowing out the dust, then move on to the outside.

You shouldn't have to open your laptop to clean the inside. Turn off the laptop, unplug the power cable and remove the battery, if it pops out (removable batteries are becoming a thing of the past). Give it a quick burst away from the laptop to get rid of any condensation, and then start blowing air into any cracks and crevices: the keyboard, the vents and even the USB and other ports. Blow in short bursts, since longer sprays can cause moisture to accumulate inside your computer. You can also damage the fans by making them spin too fast.

You probably won't see a big change after doing this. The goal is to prevent dust buildup over



time, which can cause your laptop to overheat and possibly spontaneously shut down. If you can see dust bunnies in the vents, you've let it go too long without a cleaning. If you see dust stuck behind the vent that you can't dislodge by blasting it with compressed air, consult your user manual on how to open the case. Be sure you remember which screws went where for the reassembly. Snap a picture or two of your laptop for reference before opening the case, and be super-organized with the screws as you remove them.

Smokers and pet owners should take special care to clean the inside often, since you're likely to experience much quicker buildup of dust, smoke, hair and other dirt. Computers exposed to smokers can have their useful life cut by as much as half.

Wipe Down the Outside

Remember, when cleaning a laptop (or desktop) computer, to apply the cleaning product to the tool you're using to clean, NEVER directly onto the computer. So, grab your microfiber cloth, pour a little alcohol onto it, wring it out so it isn't dripping wet, and wipe down the surface. Cotton swabs and alcohol is useful for the keyboard keys and the small spaces between them. (If there are marks that won't come off, you can try rubbing them with a Mr. Clean Magic Eraser



or other cleaner very lightly, but again, they're mildly abrasive and this can alter the finish of the surface.)

It may take a few passes to get all that grime off, but once you do, you should notice a dramatic difference. If your laptop is particularly old, you may not be able to get rid of the shine on the keys; some of us may have worn down the top layer of plastic and

even the letters on the keys. There's not much you can do about that.

You should be able to wipe fingerprints off your screen with a dry microfiber or soft terry cloth. If you need some more cleaning power, a slightly damp cloth that has been completely wrung out first, can help. Some manufacturers, including Dell and Lenovo, even say you can use a 50:50 mixture of isopropyl alcohol and water, if need be to remove really tough dirt. Just avoid household cleaners with harsher chemicals like ammonia or Windex on the screen.

Get Rid of Bad Smells

Let's say you have a particularly terrible case of gross laptop, and even after the above steps,



your laptop still carries the essence of whatever it has been exposed to. I've seen many laptops that smelled like smoke, and getting rid of that is a challenge or maybe impossible. Cleaning the surface can help, but a lot of those smells may also be inside the computer. For that, you can turn to a natural deodorizer: charcoal. Don't go digging through your grill for briquettes! Cooking charcoal is different from activated charcoal. Activated charcoal is made with much more (micro) surface area to be more absorbent.

Another common household item will do: kitty litter. Because most kitty litter formulas have activated charcoal in them to neutralize litter box smells, it's a great odor eliminator.

Seal the laptop up in a bag or closable bin with a cup or so of the activated charcoal or litter and leave it for at least 24 to 48 hours. If you don't have a cat, people also had good luck with diaper pail deodorizers, which are neat little packets of charcoal you can throw away when you're done. The longer you leave the computer in the bin, the better.

APCUG Guest Article

So Long LastPass – Hello NordPass

By Bob Woods, Co-Webmaster, Under the Computer Hood User Group
<https://www.uchug.org/> Webmasters (at) uchug.org

For several years, I used LastPass as my password manager. The free version allowed my PC and Android devices to use the same encrypted vault. In 2021 there was a change. Only paid accounts could have PC and Android using a shared vault. The free version no longer did. This required one vault for the PC and another for Android devices.

Because of this, a few UCHUG members changed to the free open-source BitWarden for their multi-platform password management, which uses the same vault across all platforms. I tried BitWarden and did not care for the interface. LastPass either auto-filled or only required a single mouse click to fill in the login information. BitWarden usually needed two or three clicks. But it may have just been me or an incorrect setting. At any rate, I didn't want to change. So, I created an account for my Android devices and exported the PC vault. I also had different master passwords for each version. It required me to sink the two different vaults manually, but I was willing to accept this inconvenience for free.

Then, last year one of the LastPass backup servers was breached, and some user information was stolen. LastPass Corporate informed their users and assured everyone that sensitive data (usernames, passwords, credit card information, etc.) was encrypted and safe. This prompted me to re-evaluate password managers. After online reviews of password managers, I decided to give NordPass a try.

My reasons to try were:

1. They are highly rated in many password manager reviews.
2. They recently had and passed an independent security audit.
3. They have never been breached. LastPass has. In 2022, LastPass suffered significant security incidents. User data, billing information, and vaults (with some fields encrypted and others not) were breached, leading many security professionals to call for users to change all their passwords and switch to other password managers.
4. NordPass is based in Panama, which has no mandatory data retention laws and does not participate in the Five Eyes or Fourteen Eyes alliances. This means that the company isn't required by law to keep logs or share them with governments.
5. Your NordPass vault is encrypted with the XChaCha20 encryption algorithm. XChaCha20 is more modern and faster than AES 256-bit. For an explanation, go to [XChaCha20 Encryption vs. AES-256: what's the Difference? | NordPass](#)

6. They have a family plan that allows up to 6 independent accounts. You can also share your vault with a family member. For example, this will allow me and my wife to have a synced vault.
7. The software is multi-platform. Even the free version can be used on all my devices using the same vault.

After loading the NordPass free version, it asked for some account setup info: username, password, and Master Password. You should make it different from your account password, as it will be the magic key to decrypting your vault. I used a phrase that would be easy to remember containing the normal mix of upper/lower case, symbols, and numbers. You will use this key on all your devices to decrypt the vault.

DO NOT FORGET WHAT THE MASTER PASSWORD IS! You are the only one that knows what it is. NordPass support cannot help if you forget it. There is one thing that may help. When you create your master password, you will receive a 24-character alphanumeric recovery code. The recovery code will allow you to create a new master password. You should lock this code away in a safe place. During the Windows setup process, you will be prompted to install the browser extension for whatever browsers you have installed. Setup will help you get and install the extension as needed.

After the setup, I exported my password vault from LastPass and imported it into NordPass. Everything went in without a hitch. Next, I went into settings, turned off launching at startup, and set the auto-lock to four hours. That way NordPass will only launch if I need it, as there are times I am not doing anything that would require a login. Also, the four-hour timeout will keep NordPass from requiring a re-login unless I go over four hours or shut down. I set the password generator for upper/lower case numbers and symbols. I also set it for 16 characters.

Next was to install NordPass on my Android phone and tablet (both Samsung). The app is available in the play store and can be installed easily. The app also installs into your web browsers, so there isn't a separate extension installation that I had on the Windows PC. You can launch the NordPass app on Android devices, but I find that just going to a site requiring a login will bring up NordPass as a selection for a spelling selection atop the onscreen keyboard. You select NordPass, which will open the window to input the Master Password. Then you can populate the login info for the site you are accessing.

On my phone, I left auto lock at five minutes as a trial time. If I go to another location requiring login info within five minutes, I do not need to input the Master Password again. Better to be more careful with the phone auto lock settings than the PC on my desk at home.

After using NordPass for a few days, I liked how it worked. Since I wanted to have NordPass available to my wife and share the vault with her, I opted for the family plan. The cost for the two-year plan is \$68.00. But with six separate accounts available, I can offer an account to both my wife and my son. Also, the paid plan offers a weak and reused password check and a data breach scanner to scan the web for data breaches. I spent some time doing some cleanup.

When checking for weak passwords, a change password button will launch a browser to the site needing a password change. Unless you want to create a new password, NordPass will manually offer to autofill the new password per your password settings and save it to the vault.

I am happy and comfortable with NordPass. However, if you have never used a password manager or are looking for an alternative to one you may be using, go to <https://nordpass.com/> and check the personal free version.

Lab Monitor Schedule

The Open Lab session is held once per week: 9 am to noon on Saturdays.

July	Monitor Schedule
Jeff Southwell Linda Muench	Saturday 7/1/2023
Fred Cohen Ann Warhaftig	Saturday 7/8/2023
Marilyn Gramms Frances Sasaki	Saturday 7/15/2023
Linda Muench	Saturday 7/22/2023
Linda McMullin Edith Einhorn	Saturday 7/29/2023