THE
GIGABYTE
GAZETTE

The Monthly Newsletter
of the

SUN CITY SUMMERLIN
COMPUTER CLUB

https://www.scscc.club

August, 2023

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President's Message

August News

by Jeff Wilkinson

Even though we're baking in the summer heat, our club has lots going on. This month we will continue our popular Apple iPhone/iPad and Android Smartphone sessions. We also have our usual SIGs and classes. For dates and times, check the SIGS and the Classes sections of this newsletter and also watch the club calendar at https://www.scscc.club/.

Tuesday morning Kaffee Klatch sessions (8:30 AM via Zoom) are continuing during the summer; all are invited to attend these informal Zoom meetings – simply click on the link on our website.

Our Tuesday Repair SIG (12:30 PM) is up and running during the summer and we are here to help with hardware and software troubles. The club hands-on lab is open each Saturday morning from 9-Noon and computers and printers are available for all community residents.

We continue working on deploying a Windows Server as an upgrade to our remotely-accessed Windows 10 Pro desktop PC where we store club data. The new server will allow up to 10 concurrent remote users to connect..

The Club's 2023 Charter has been approved by the SCSCAI Board and is now posted to the club website.

Recognizing that none of your Board members are getting any younger, a transition/succession plan for key club functions is in progress. In support of this, we are working to consolidate club information on our server and also to develop and document club policy and procedures. We need several willing and able volunteers to step up and take over some of the administrative activities that keep our club the biggest and best-run in Sun City. If you'd like to help, contact me.

Fall is only a few weeks away. Stay cool!

Jeff Wilkinson, President
(702) 527-4056 pres.scscc@gmail.com

General Membership Meeting

There will be no General Meeting in 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.scscc.club, contact Jeff Wilkinson, President at (702) 527-4056 or email him at pres.scscc@gmail.com.

SCSCC Board of Directors Actions

The Computer Club Board of Directors took the
following actions on July 12, 2023

Tom Burt made a motion that the **minutes of the June 14, 2023 Board Meeting be approved as submitted.** The motion was seconded by Chuck Hagen and unanimously approved by the Board.

George Lobue made a **motion** that the **meeting adjourn**. Neal Gronich **seconded** the motion, and it was unanimously **approved** by the Board. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 AM.

August 2023 Printable Calendars

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

https://www.scscc.club/Calendars/scscc_calendar_2023-08Aug.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 June 28 to July 29, 2023.

Diane Hamilton	**Diane McCracken**
Michael Kroll	

As of July 29th, the club has 519 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, August 17th

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, August 2 and August 16, 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, August 17th

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, August 5 and August 19, 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.

Passwords and KeePass Password Manager

Saturday, August 10th at 9 AM Live and Zoom
Presenter: Jeff Wilkinson
Location: Classroom

Jeff will discuss the need for strong passwords to secure your online accounts and demonstrate how to use the free KeePass password manager to manage and automate the entry of your passwords into your online account login screens.

Global Positioning System

Thursday, August 24th at 1 PM *via Zoom*
Presenter: Mary Lou Miles
Location: Zoom Webcast

Mary will reprise her interesting class on the global positioning system.

Google Suite – Drive, Docs, Sheets & Slides

Saturday, August 26th 9 - 11 AM Live and Zoom
Presenter: Gail Weiss
Location: Classroom

You don't need to pay a subscription for MS Office applications to create WORD documents, EXCEL spreadsheets or POWERPOINT Slides. If you have a Google account (FREE to setup), you can use similar applications from GOOGLE APPS. The Suite gives you DOCS (equivalent to WORD), SHEETS (equivalent to EXCEL) and SLIDES (equivalent to POWERPOINT). Your files will then be automatically saved to the GOOGLE DRIVE. Come and explore these applications with me on your computer, iPad or iPhone.

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.

Introduction to Investing Using the Internet

Wednesday, August 30th at 10 AM *via Zoom*
Presenter: Tom Burt

Every month I host the Internet Investing SIG, which is a discussion group that reviews ongoing events in the world of finance, investing, taxes and estate planning. This is a good forum for moderate to experienced investors but may be challenging for seniors who are just starting to manage their financial assets.

However, it's important that seniors follow and manage their investment portfolios. The Internet provides a wealth of helpful information and services for doing this. This 1½-hour seminar will do a brief review of the main classes of investments (stocks, bonds, funds, CDs, Annuities) available to senior investors. We'll then walk-through a few interesting websites to illustrate the many resources you can tap into to invest wisely and profitably and to follow how your investments are doing. We'll include a demo of tracking your investments using the Yahoo Finance portfolio tracker. We'll also actually buy or sell an asset at an online broker. The seminar will include lots of opportunities for Q&A.

The target audience is club members who are moderately comfortable with surfing the Internet, and who want to improve their own skills in managing their investments. However, all members are welcome! Presentation notes will be available about August 28th at: https://www.scscc.club/smnr/InternetInvestingBasics-2023-08-30.pdf.

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

Tom's Tech-Notes

Power Line Networking Hardware
Updated from July 2013

This month we'll look at what to do when your home router's wireless signal is too weak or intermittent to reach certain parts of the house. While home wireless technology has gotten much better, especially wireless 802.11ac (WiFi 5) and 802.11ax (WiFi 6), it still can be difficult to consistently get good wireless connections in all parts of the house.

WiFi home networking uses radio signals in the 2.4 GHz, 5 GHz and 6 GHz bands. These radio signals, especially 5 GHz and 6 GHz are degraded when passing through sheetrock walls. If your wireless router is in a back bedroom, the WiFi radio signals may have to pass through two or three walls over a distance of 30 or 40 feet to reach the living room. A weak WiFi signal is error prone and can cause many re-transmits to get a complete block of network data from the WiFi router to a wireless client device, such as a laptop, tablet or smart phone. This can cause irritating buffering when streaming content to your HDTV.

A second issue with wireless networks is that the WiFi radio signals are subject to external interference. The 2.4 GHz band is an open section of the radio spectrum and can also be used by cordless phones, emergency alert devices, home security systems, baby monitors and other systems. Microwave ovens also emit copious amounts of radio noise in the 2.4 GHz band, which can effectively block all 802.11 wireless radio signals. Another source of interference can be your neighbor's WiFi networking system.

To avoid some interference, especially from other WiFi routers, you can configure your router to use a different 2.4 GHz channel. There are 11 channels within the 2.4 GHz spectrum. To do this, use your web browser to log in to your router's administrator account and then configure the desired channel. Most routers default to channel 6. Try channel 1 or channel 11.

However, even these improvements can't always bring a good, strong wireless signal to the entire house and they can't overcome interference from other devices like cordless phones or microwave ovens.

A popular use of networks these days is streaming video through the Internet to your TV. Because video streams are time critical, the viewing experience can be very disappointing if your WiFi network connection is slow or intermittent.

For reliable video streaming, I have found that a good solution is to use a technology called **PowerLine Networking**. Here are some links to in-depth articles on this technology.

https://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/everything-you-need-to-know-about-powerline-networking/

https://www.techadvisor.com/article/723387/best-powerline-adapters.html

Powerline network adapters allow you to use your home's electrical wiring to create a remote Ethernet wired connection in a different part of the home than your computer room.

The units pictured to the left are TP-Link AV2000 (2 G-bits/second) adapters with pass-through electrical sockets and with two Ethernet connectors each (Sale price at Amazon for a two-adapter kit is $81).

TP-Link AV2000 Adapter Kit

You can buy a pair of adapters (or more). Plug one adapter into a wall socket near your router and then connect an Ethernet cable from your router to the adapter.

In the remote room, plug in the second power line adapter and connect an Ethernet cable from it to an Ethernet device, like a Smart TV, PC, Blu-ray player or cable receiver.

The newest high-end models of power line adapters have speeds up to 2500 M-bits per second but are fairly expensive. More moderately priced units have speeds of 1000 or 500 M-bits per

second, may only have one Ethernet connector and may lack the pass-through electrical connectors. However, these mid-range models are still excellent for streaming Internet audio and video from sources like YouTube TV, Netflix or Hulu Plus.

The units pictured to the left are TP-Link AV1000 (1 G-bits/second) nano-size adapters with one Ethernet connector each (Price at Amazon for a two-adapter kit is $37).

TP-Link AV1000 Adapter Kit

Most vendors' adapters now use a signaling standard called "HomePlug AV". The newest version of the standard is "Home Plug AV2" with which network speeds can reach up to 2500 M-bits per second. Real world performance will likely be lower, depending on the quality of your household wiring and the distance signals have to travel over your home's wiring. Over distances of 30 to 50 feet, powerline networking generally performs better than WiFi, because it isn't subject to radio interference.

In theory, different vendors' adapters should communicate with each other. However, for the best chance of success, you should probably stick with a single vendor.

There are a number of name-brand vendors, including TP-Link, NetGear, Zyxel and TRENDNet. Prices for a "starter" kit with two adapters run from about $40 to $120, depending on the speed and other features. Here's a recent hyperlink to a page on Amazon.com:

http://www.amazon.com/b?ie=UTF8&node=1194444

It's very easy to install Powerline Network adapters. Generally, you just plug the units in, connect the Ethernet cables and they work. There's no configuration to do.

Most Powerline network adapters have a button on each unit that you can press to optionally turn on encryption of the data being sent across your electrical wiring. Press the button on each unit to pair them for encryption. You will probably want to do this, especially if you live in a duplex unit or in an apartment, where the wiring may be shared by more than one dwelling unit. You don't want your neighbors to be able to access data flowing on your personal home network.

You can have as many Powerline network adapters plugged in as you want. They all act as extensions of your primary home network. You can also connect an inexpensive Ethernet switch to the remote adapter to connect multiple Ethernet devices. This can be handy at your home entertainment center for connecting a smart TV, cable receiver, Blu-ray player and possibly a PC media server to the single Powerline adapter.

Several vendors now have kits that combine a Powerline Ethernet adapter with a WiFi access point so that WiFi-only devices (like smartphones, smart appliances or digital assistants) located far from the main WiFi router can access a strong WiFi signal.

The kit pictured to the left combines an AV1000 nano adapter with a **TP-Link Powerline WiFi Extender** (1 G-bits/second Ethernet plus dual band WiFi access point). The price at Amazon for the kit is $90. This offering may be a better alternative than a pure WiFi extender, which still suffers from potential interference.

Home networking has become a complex endeavor with many solution technologies in play. Hopefully this essay has shed some light on how Powerline Networking might fit into your home network.

Kretchmar's Korner

What's the Strangest Thing You Have Found in a Computer?

David Kretchmar, Hardware Technician

I have been fixing other people's computers for over 32 years; 12 years with the federal government and almost 20 years in retirement.

My job with Uncle Sam was data recovery, not computer repairs, but to recover data I sometimes had to disassemble and reassemble machines, so I quickly learned what made them tick.

As a forensic examiner I have probably seen everything you could imagine on computers and some things you would never imagine. When a computer was being forensically analyzed as part of an investigation, naturally user created files were the focus of the examination.

Nasty Strip Club Computers

Computers seized pursuant to an investigation into a strip club and prostitution operation contained some of the most unusual documents and pictures. Their contents were interesting,

but they were the nastiest machines I have ever seen. They smelled very bad – cheap perfume combined with years of heavy cigarette smoke plus other smells and dirt from sources I don't even want to imagine.

The investigation focused on a legal strip club which was located next to a prostitution operation. The operators of the strip club claimed they had no association with the illegal adjacent business. However, they were unable to explain why spreadsheets relating to the prostitution business were on their computers.

It was even more interesting that the prostitution related files had recently been deleted from the strip club's computer. They had gotten a heads-up that a search warrant was about to be executed, from local law enforcement. That led to an even more significant investigation and convictions.

Murder, He Wrote

I don't know if anyone has ever been murdered using a computer, but computers have played an integral part in planning homicides. In one case I examined a computer used by a man who thought it was a good idea to drown his wife rather than divorcing her.

It was interesting that two weeks before the drowning the man Googled "accidental drownings in Missouri". This evidence along with other circumstantial evidence convinced him to do a plea deal for life in prison with no possibility of parole rather than face the death penalty.

None of My Business – Unless…

I never thought it was my business to snoop into a computer I was repairing. When working on a computer I have rarely found it necessary to view personal files such as documents or pictures. Thousands of porn pictures and videos on a hard drive (you can tell from the titles) – none of my business. However, if a user had child porn clearly visible on their computer, then it would legally have to become my business. Fortunately, this has never happened to me when repairing a computer.

Of course, I have seen a ton of porn when working on computers; most computers I've worked on owned by males contained porn. Not that women's computers did not contain porn, some did. But usually I saw pictures of women's fashions, most often shoes. I should note that most graphics contained in files on a computer are not purposely downloaded but are contained in temporary internet files which are downloaded automatically when a user visits a site, even for a second, even accidentally. Fortunately, it is easy to determine whether a picture was downloaded accidentally or on purpose.

Boys Will be Boys

In one incident a twelve-year-old was looking at porn and somehow got a ton of PUPs (potentially unwanted programs) into the family computer. The wife blamed the husband until I tracked the times of the files to when the kid got home from school, but the father was still at work.

The Keylogger

An interesting case was when a lawyer brought me a computer that was running very slowly. I ran some malware detection software (Malwarebytes) and found very little. Some more investigating revealed a keylogger, the only one I have ever found on a system. This keylogger transmitted everything typed on the system to who knows where. I removed it but it somehow came right back. Apparently, an executable file was buried in the system that recreated the keylogger when was deleted.

The lawyer had no idea how the keylogger got on his system; I suspected someone in his office had done it, but I had no evidence, and the lawyer did not want to pursue the issue. I had already spent too much time on this repair, so instead of continuing my investigation I just removed the user-created files on the system, formatted the hard drive and reinstalled Windows and his files.

CD Eating Machine

When I started working on computers in Sun City, I helped a lady who told me that she had a CD stuck in her PC. I checked the computer, and the optical drive was empty. She insisted that a disc was stuck in there and I did not know what to do as I didn't want to suggest she was crazy. Then she told me there were several discs, not just one. I then had an idea what had happened, so I opened the case of the PC and there were 4 CDs stuck inside of the PC. Instead of putting them in the disc drive she had managed to push them into a gap in the front of the PC. I showed her how to put a CD in the optical drive and we had a laugh about it.

Bugs in the System

I once found that ants were building a nest inside a computer that had been stored in a garage for a year. I have found other creatures that decided to make their homes inside of a PC, including mice and roaches. Fortunately, I have never run across a scorpion in a computer.

What Year is This?

My friend told me her son's computer was running weird and would connect to some web sites, but not others. I found that the problem was he kept changing the system clock forward to continue to play a game that allowed only limited turns in a time period on the free version he used. It was up well into the 2040's and this was in 2008. I corrected the system time and date, and secure websites came back.

APCUG Guest Article

Missing A Drive Letter? – This Might Help

By Phil Sorrentino, Secretary and APCUG Rep
Sun City Center Computer Club, FL
https://www.scccomputerclub.org/ philsorr (at) yahoo.com

When you plug a portable or external drive into a computer USB port, you expect the drive to be immediately available.

You may hear a few familiar sounds at first, but eventually, you expect to see an indication that the drive is usable. First, you should see the new drive in File Explorer with a new drive letter. The drive letter will typically be the next available letter in the alphabet. (Drives installed on your system start at the beginning of the alphabet with the exceptions that A: and B: are reserved for floppy drives (I wonder how many of us ever had a B: drive), and C: is reserved for the main drive, where the OS is located. So added drives can start at D: unless you have other mechanical, electrical, or optical drives.) So, in a typical laptop with a C: and D: drive, it will be assigned the E: drive letter when you add a USB drive.

Just as an aside, if you have a network of local computers, drive letters may also be assigned by the "map a network drive" feature. These drives typically start from the end of the alphabet, so the first will be Z, followed by Y, and so on. To map a network drive, open File Explorer and click "This PC." Click on the Computer tab, click "Map network drive, " browse, and select the network drive from the list. (To be on the list, the drive must have been shared on the computer it is attached to.)

While we're talking about temporarily added drives, when you are finished with the drive, it is always a good idea to eject the drive in the prescribed way by first clicking the "Safely Remove Hardware and Eject Media" icon. It should be in the notification area on the right side of the taskbar.

If you don't see it, you may have a taskbar setting chosen to not display the icon in the notification area, or there may be too many notifications chosen. If you don't see it and you see an up-pointing caret (^), click the caret, and the "Safely Remove Hardware and Eject Media" icon should show up.

Yesterday, I had a house full of friends and relatives I had invited over to see some movies that I created from some family and friend activities over the past few years. Knowing this, I connected the portable drive with the movies to my computer in the living room, where everyone could comfortably enjoy the pictures and movies on the connected big-screen TV. Unfortunately, the drive never showed up, though I did hear the familiar sounds. And I could tell the computer knew a drive was there because the "Safely Remove Hardware and Eject Media" icon was in the notification area, but no new drive appeared in File Explorer.

I couldn't show any of the movies on the new drive. So, what's up? I was anxious to show the movies on the new drive to a large group of friends and relatives, so I postponed trying to solve the immediate problem. Fortunately, the living room computer is on a network, so I removed the new drive from the living room computer, the safe way, and brought it to another computer on the network. When I plugged it into the kitchen computer, the installation went as expected, and the new drive showed up as the E: drive in File Explorer.

Now all I had to do was share the E: drive on the kitchen computer and then go to the living room computer and map the shared kitchen E: drive. All this went as expected, and we could watch all of the movies and pictures from the new E: drive, which was on the kitchen computer and the living room computer/TV; the party was saved. Everyone enjoyed the movies, but at the end of the day, I was still stuck with the problem of the missing drive letter.

Disk Management

So, before I head to the Computer Lab, I always take a little time to try to solve the problem, or at least try to narrow the problem down using Google to look for a solution. I tried "no drive
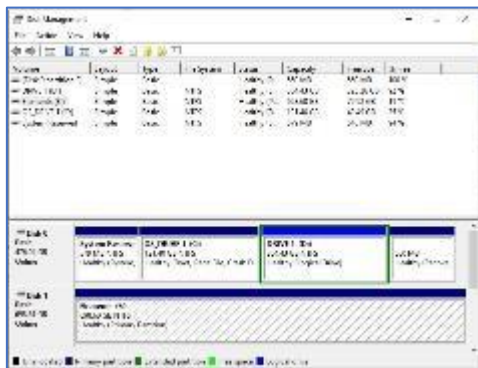
letter for USB device, " pointing me to a few possibilities. One Google hint showed me that related areas could be found with a right-click of the Start button. "Disk Management" is one of those areas. (Be very careful if you go into this area, you can easily turn your computer into a brick with a few short commands, and then you'll have no choice but to go and see "Bob.") When you click "Disk Management," you see the disk drives on your computer and their assigned letters.

After I plugged in the USB drive and got into "Disk Management" on the living room computer, I clicked on the newly added USB disk to select it. I noted that the USB drive was "Disk 1" and had a "Healthy Primary Partition," all good indications, but no drive letter was assigned. So, the next step was to click on the "Action" menu and then click "All Tasks," where "Change Drive Letter and Path" was found. Again, no drive letter was assigned, so I clicked "Add" to assign an unused letter, in my case, E. After I assigned E: to the USB drive, I could see the drive and its contents in File Explorer, as expected. When I removed and reconnected the drive, it connected as expected and had the E: drive letter.

Epilog: Unfortunately, when I used a different portable drive, it reacted the same way; it showed up without a drive letter. So, now I know how to get around the problem, but I should think that any portable USB drive connected should show up with the next unused letter. So, I may still have something amiss.

Lab Monitor Schedule

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

August	Monitor Schedule
Jeff Southwell Linda Muench	Saturday 8/5/2023
Fred Cohen Marilyn Gramms	Saturday 8/12/2023
Linda Muench Linda Mcmullin	Saturday 8/19/2023
Linda Muench Frances Sasaki	Saturday 8/26/2023