

The Monthly Newsletter of the

SUN CITY SUMMERLIN COMPUTER CLUB

https://www.scscc.club

January, 2024

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Issue Contributors

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President's Message

January News by Jeff Wilkinson

Join us for the first meeting of the new year on January 4th at 2 PM in Desert Vista Room 5. Our program will feature an animated video on Cyber Security plus a demo of Google account security features. We'll also have the usual cookies and coffee social. If you haven't yet renewed your club membership for 2024, you can pay dues at the general meeting, at the Tuesday Repair SIG or at the Saturday Open Lab.

With exciting new offerings planned for 2024, your club continues to strive to support the special needs of our community. This year will bring a further emphasis on Windows 11, artificial intelligence, image and video editing, finance and investment, computer security, Microsoft Office, the Google suite of applications, Android and Apple mobile devices. The Tuesday Repair SIG will continue to offer free repairs, upgrades and maintenance of your devices.

Happy New Year!

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

General Membership Meeting

The club's General Meeting will be at **2 PM on Thursday January 4th** in Desert Vista Room 5. Our program will feature an animated video on Cyber Security and a demo of Google account security features. We'll also have the usual coffee and cookies.

For Club information: go to <u>www.scscc.club</u>, contact Jeff Wilkinson, President at (702) 527-4056 or email him at <u>pres.scscc@gmail.com</u>.

SCSCC Board of Directors Actions

The Computer Club Board of Directors took the following actions on December 13, 2023

Chuck Hagen made a motion that the **minutes of the November 8, 2023 Board Meeting be approved as submitted.** The motion was seconded by Tom Burt and unanimously approved by the Board.

Neal Gronich 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 9:37 AM.

January 2024 Printable Calendars

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

https://www.scscc.club/Calendars/scscc_calendar_2024-01Jan.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 2023/2024 members have joined the Computer Club from November 29 to December 29, 2023.

Ansel Bolton Robert Broderick Karl Erickson Dennis Gilyan Russ Hunt Howard Jeross Rob Kirkwood Paula Padget Janice Routh Cheryl Waldman

As of December 30th, the club has 591 paid memberships for 2023 and 245 for 2024.

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

The Computer Club is now accepting new and renewed memberships for 2024.

Annual dues are \$10 per person, good for all of 2024.

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 Help <H> Live in the Classroom

Gene Koch

Third Thursday at 2 PM monthly

Next meeting: Thursday, January 18, 2024

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 Wednesday, 9 a.m. monthly

Next meeting: Wednesday, January 3, 2024

The help session offers one-on-one help with your questions and problems. 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, January 18, 2024

The Internet Investing SIG provides a forum for members interested in using Internet resources for researching and managing investments. The group 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 at 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 3:00 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, January 6 and 20, 2024

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 <u>club website</u> to see which mode the session is using. Unless explicitly stated, advance registration is not required for these sessions.

Windows 11 Basics - Hands On

Thursday, January 11th at 2 PM Instructor: Helene Orenstein Location: Training Lab

This class is available for up to 12 club members in our Computer Club Lab. It will feature hands-on examples using the club's laptop computers for eight attendees with room for four additional attendees who wish to bring their *own* laptop computers. With three on-site coaches assisting, each topic will be reinforced with the student performing specific examples shown by the instructor.

Reservations are required! Sign up at:

https://www.eventbrite.com/e/windows-11-tickets-756375478417



Organizing Your Photos iPhone And Google Photos

Saturday, January 27th 9 - 11 AM Live and Zoom

Presenter: Gail Weiss Location: Classroom

Chances are, you have too many digital photos on your computer or phone and the thought of managing, or even organizing them, seems daunting to impossible. This session will share some easy tips and tricks for managing and organizing them with both Google Photos and iPhone Photos. The class will focus on using these applications on both your computer (the web versions) and how it interacts with your mobile devices. We'll also show you how to upload and download photos between the two.

This class will be held in the Computer Club's classroom and simulcast on Zoom. Feel free to bring your own laptop or mobile device 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.



Tax Preparation Software – Tax Year 2023

Wednesday, January 31st 10 – 11:30 AM via Zoom

Presenter: Tom Burt Location: Zoom Webcast

Two of the most popular programs for preparing your personal income tax return are **H&R Block** and **Turbo Tax**. You can run these programs on your PC or Mac, or you can work with the online versions. Purchase one of these software programs, install it on your PC (or go to the maker's website) and answer the step-by-step questions that are presented to you. When you've finished, either program will provide you with a finished tax return ready for filing. You can even choose to file your return electronically! Happily, for 2023 the tax law changes for individuals were few and minor.

In this year's seminar we will discuss both programs briefly and then do a demonstration of the excellent H&R Block Deluxe program. We will create a 2023 tax return for a fictitious senior couple who have typical financial transactions such as: wage income or retirement benefits, interest and dividends, social security benefits, capital gains, itemized deductions, required minimum distributions, etc. You may be surprised how easy it is to prepare and file your own tax return. We'll also look at how to set up electronic payments on the IRS web-site.

2023 presentation notes will be available about January 26th at: http://www.scscc.club/smnr. We will be recording this seminar and posting it to the club website.



Tom's Tech-Notes

AI – What Next? By Tom Burt, Vice President

I recently came across an article from TechRepublic that was reviewing Intel's new line of Core Ultra and Xeon CPU chips that have onboard support for AI. Here's the link to that article: https://www.techrepublic.com/article/intel-ai-everywhere-event-2023.

I shared the article with our Tuesday Kaffee Klatch group. A friend replied back "Really interesting! What Next?" In this article we'll explore that question.

My first thought was, "What is AMD doing?" I ran a quick web search and immediately found that AMD has a family of Ryzen AI CPUs offering AMD's XDNA architecture. Here's a link to AMD's web page: https://www.amd.com/en/products/processors/consumer/ryzen-ai.html

My next thought was, "What is ARM doing?" Sure enough, ARM also has CPU chips with onboard support for AI. ARM CPUs are the dominant chips on cell phones and tablets and on recent Apple devices. Here's a link to ARM's web page:

https://www.arm.com/markets/artificial-intelligence

So, all the major CPU chip families used in servers, PCs, laptops and mobile devices are incorporating onboard support for AI. Broadly, this means that AI apps like ChatGPT, Bard and Claude can run on your own PC, laptop or mobile device, rather than needing to run on a cloud-based server farm. As this technology rolls out over the next few years, it will augment the available world-wide AI processing power by several billion devices.

Futurism

Normally, I avoid trying to predict the future, especially with technology. Reality tends to outstrip even "far-out-there" predictions. However, in a "What's Next?" article, I'll have to make a few SWAGs, especially since I'm writing this at the beginning of a new year. However, I'll probably look at this a few years from now at laugh wryly at my naiveté. Let's look at a few areas where this new onboard CPU support for AI may have a significant impact.

Speech Recognition and Generation

Speech recognition has come a long way since my software engineering days at Citibank's Transaction Technology Institute in the mid-1980s. Today, we are at the point where humans can talk to machines using natural, colloquial language and be understood. Even accented speech can be understood. Further, machines can now speak in natural voices and be easily understood by humans.

Machines can also translate textual content from one language to another. Combining translation with voice recognition and synthesis brings us to the realization of the science fiction concept of a universal translator.

A quick search on Google turned up two Android apps and an iOS app that offer this functionality today:

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.speakandtranslate.voicetranslator.alllanguages&hl=en US&gl=US

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.erudite.translator&hl=en_US&gl=US https://apps.apple.com/us/app/itranslate-voice/id522626820

For desktop computer users, Google Translate is able to recognize speech and translate it.

Currently, these apps, while very capable and well-rated, seem to depend on cloud-based servers for the actual translation intelligence. This means their ability to function depends on having an Internet connection. As the new CPU chips mentioned above become commonplace in mobile devices, look for more of this functionality to operate on the mobile device itself with better performance.

If you're a regular Zoom user, you've likely come across its live captioning and transcription features. Zoom is able to do real-time voice recognition of all the voices on a Zoom session and display the speech as text in a running window at the bottom of the screen. This is a huge aid to hearing-impaired participants. Similar technology is now providing captioning for online videos and other audio streams. For Android and iOS smartphones, there are Live Transcription apps: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.google.audio.hearing.visualization.accessib ility.scribe

https://apps.apple.com/us/app/live-transcribe/id1471473738

Looking ahead, with advanced CPU chips in smart TVs, it becomes feasible for the TV itself to automatically generate live captions of any incoming audio stream and also to do on the fly translation of the source audio stream language to another language.

Customer Service

A fertile area for applying the above-mentioned voice recognition and synthesis is in customer service. Consider a service application that can run on your smartphone, tablet, laptop or desktop or on a service kiosk, displaying a photo-realistic human face and torso, that can converse colloquially with you in any language and has a vast knowledge of the business's products, services and policies, federal, state and local regulations and has the reasoning and operational skills needed to resolve virtually all classes of customer support problems.

Customer Service is a huge cost for all businesses, a large part of which is recruiting and training service representatives. The service activity often has a high turnover rate, meaning that the training expense is recurring. Also, policies and products may change frequently, requiring training updates for existing staff. A key virtue of a "smart" customer service application is that only one master copy of the application needs to be updated and those updates can be replicated automatically and nearly instantly to all instances of the application. Another virtue

is that a "smart" service application is tireless – it will work 24 hours/day 365 days/year and it doesn't get sick or take vacations or lose patience with difficult customers.

Every business is somewhat different and, consequently, its customer service applications would need to be customized. Having AI support in CPUs of the business's in-house servers will make it easier to support this customization and give better performance than depending on cloud-based servers. It also gives the business greater control over what data stays "in-house".

AI Companions

Al companions are an evolution of "smart" assistants like Siri, Alexa and Cortana. Here are two articles that discuss the state of Al companion services:

https://cybernews.com/tech/ai-companions-explained/

https://theweek.com/tech/the-pros-and-cons-of-ai-companions

These systems today run on cloud servers, but with advanced AI CPUs, should migrate to running directly on user's devices. This will provide better performance and obviate some of the concerns about personal information learned by these companions being in the cloud.

Merging of AI and Robotics

In the past few years, there have been great advances in the field of robotics. Robots can now "see" via cameras, radar and lidar and "hear" via microphones. This has helped in factory automation and many other repetitive actions. Self-driving vehicles are a reality, though still needing refinement.

There's also a lot of work being done on humanoid robots – robots that have a head, torso, arms, hands and feet and can perform tasks traditionally done by humans. These robots have been research projects but are beginning to be deployed in manual labor settings. Here are two links that survey what's current in the field. The YouTube video is quite remarkable.

https://builtin.com/robotics/humanoid-robots
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gFp18nW7p34

The humanoid robotic form has some challenges: The mechanical and software algorithms to keep the robot upright, especially on stairs and uneven terrain are complex. The many small actuators needed to animate the robot's limbs draw a lot of power, which requires a large battery pack and regular recharging every few hours.

With advanced AI support in the CPU chips powering robots of all types, the robots should have more autonomy; they won't need to access the Internet cloud as much to provide their "intelligence". We can foresee a time not very far in the future when humanoid robots may serve as effective caregivers, nannies, servants and companions in home and institutional settings. This could greatly improve the quality of life for aging seniors who are often alone and frail.

Final Thoughts

As is often the case, I've barely scratched the surface of the vastness of artificial intelligence. As I wrote this article, I kept thinking of more things to discuss. I'll return to this topic now and then in 2024, both in articles and in a few of my monthly seminars.

Robotics and AI are not without concerns. Human workers, especially those in lower-skilled manual and clerical jobs are likely to be displaced. Even in creative professions, AI may be able to displace many workers by automatically synthesizing new works of art. Society must have a plan for repurposing these displaced workers.

Al will affect business, generally making it more efficient and productive. However, it can also make it easier for businesses to manipulate consumers.

Al can amplify, both for good and bad, the power of government. In the hands of despots, Al could become the ultimate tool for imposing tyranny. Used for good, Al may vastly elevate happiness and prosperity all over the world.



Kretchmar's Korner

A Cautionary Tale David Kretchmar, Hardware Technician

Last year I helped a club member regain control of their Yahoo mail account after they had been hacked by one of the most sophisticated computer intrusions I have seen to date. The



user became aware they had been compromised when people whose names were in their Yahoo Mail personal contact list reported receiving suspicious email from the hacked individual. Those emails contained a link to malware that would have caused similar problems for any user who clicked on the link. This scam has been around since I started working on computers in the 1990s.

The user immediately did the correct thing; they changed their Yahoo password. Subsequently the user was unable to log into their Yahoo mail account, instead getting a message that their account was locked and they would have to wait one hour to attempt to log on again. The users encountered this lock and countdown every time they attempted to access their Yahoo mail account. The timer was an interesting clue, since Yahoo's advertised lockout period, subsequent to a user's repeated incorrect password attempts, is either 12 or 24 hours, not one hour. Another clue: there is a countdown clock available for Yahoo and Google advertisers that could be set to run for one hour, or any preselected time.

A Google Chrome issue?

This user was attempting to access their Yahoo Mail via their favorite browser, Google Chrome. On a hunch, I attempted to access the Yahoo account using Microsoft's native internet browser,



Microsoft Edge. The user manually entered their Yahoo username and new password, and they got into their account with no problem! Yet the Yahoo account contained no recent email. I then downloaded and installed the Mozilla Firefox web browser and was again able to access their account (with no recent emails).

My suspicions turned to their default browser, Google Chrome. I checked the area in Chrome where browser problems are known to attack and reside, Extensions (Settings, More tools, Extensions).

I turned off or deleted all potentially problematic Extensions, yet the problem persisted. I then reviewed each application installed on the system and did not see anything suspicious.

Chrome seemed to be operating fine except for the Yahoo Mail issue. This begged the question, "Why does Chrome present problems with Yahoo, while 2 other browsers worked?" The



problem HAD to be with Chrome. I reset the Chrome browser and deleted any cached data, but the problem persisted.

I completely deleted the Chrome browser, restarted the computer, then downloaded and reinstalled Chrome. The problem persisted.

That pesky timer seemed to continue its countdown, and since I had been working on the issue for almost an hour, the lockout appeared to be about to expire. When the countdown clock dropped to less than a minute, I continued to attempt to login continuously, finally getting Yahoo to accept the user's

login and new password, and the problem was solved. Apparently, I had hit the program at the precise moment the lockout ended, but before the hacker, or hacking program could kick in.

But no matter which browser I used to access their Yahoo Mail account the inbox was empty. I sent an email from their Yahoo account to that same account, and it seemed to send OK but never appeared in the inbox. Yet it appeared as sent mail. I checked the filter settings on Yahoo Mail and saw that any incoming mail containing the Yahoo email address of the affected account, which of course would include every email going into that account, was diverted to Trash. Removing that filter was an easy fix for the rest of the problem.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The malware that caused the problem was probably accessed via a link in an email, received from a trusted friend. This is how most malware is spread. Remember, friends of the club member received email from the club member that no doubt contained the same malicious link.

To prevent email account lockouts, a user should limit the number of times they try to enter a password. If an account holder gets a "bad username or password" message 2 or 3 times, they should use the "Forgot Password" feature to reset the password. Passwords are virtually always the problem with email accounts, since we tend to keep the same username (email address) all our lives.

Consider using a password manager like the good ones built into Google Chrome, Edge, Firefox, and Safari. This will make it easier to use strong passwords that are almost impossible to hack, as well as making your life easier when you log in to sites. Also, a "keyboard logger" malware that records keystrokes would not be able to capture passwords, since they are automatically entered without the keyboard.

Don't count on antivirus software to protect you from hacks. The hacked users discussed in this article were running Malwarebytes Pro and Windows Security, two of the best PC defenses available today. This excellent protection did not prevent the hack, since the mischief did not touch their computer, but only messed up their Yahoo settings in the cloud.

APCUG Guest Article

YouTube, an Online Video Sharing Service, Parts 1 & 2

By Ron Sherwood, Member, East-Central Ohio Technology Users Club https://ecotu.club/ newsletter (at) ecotu.club

Part 1 - YouTube Overview

YouTube is an online video-sharing service currently owned by Google. According to the Wikipedia entry for YouTube, it is second only to Google Search as the most visited website. According to wyzow, *YouTube Stats: Everything You Need to Know In 2023!* "An average of 2,500 new videos are uploaded to YouTube every minute," so there is plenty to watch. Content covers the gamut from humor to science; my favorite is the how-to videos. Access is free; anyone with an account (any Google account will work) can have their own "channel" and upload content. As you might expect, this "anyone can upload" policy means the accuracy of the content varies from excellent to what I consider just plain junk. As you should with any Internet content, use caution and common sense when judging the accuracy of YouTube content.

To access YouTube, type YouTube.com into your browser's address box. The opening page shows a variety of videos available for viewing. Keep scrolling down for more and even more possibilities. To narrow the video choices, use the search box at the top of the page. I often search for "how to" videos. For example, I just replaced the weather strip around some doors. I've done this before, but I thought I'd see if I could find any "secrets" of the pros to simplify the job. I viewed several videos, and the creators generally agreed on what to do. Some said to start at the top; others started with the sides, but otherwise, there was agreement.

One tip I picked up was mitering the corners for a better seal. I also learned when and where to install foam wedges.

Want to learn how to cook a particular dish? Type the name into the search box, and you will likely get hundreds of videos to view.

A special tip: did you miss a presentation at an ECOTUC/LCCS meeting?

Type LCCS Media into the search, and thanks to club member Everett McKee, you will find videos of presentations at meetings. Everett also posts videos of general meetings.

Some content creators post new videos as often as daily. Other channels change infrequently. If you find a channel you want to follow, click the "subscribe" button to begin a list of channels for easy access. This is similar to "favorites" in other applications. You will need to sign in with a Google address to create a subscription list.

Part 2 – The YouTube Video Player

YouTube content, is it treasure or trash? You make that decision. But, if you view YouTube videos, here is an introduction to some of the basic controls that you may find helpful. Let's start with the basic playback menu at the video's bottom.



At the far left is the play-pause control. This image appears as an arrow or triangle on its side because the video is paused. Click on the arrow, the video starts playing, and the arrow changes to two parallel bars. These symbols should look familiar since they are used on most audio and video playback devices.

Tapping the space bar, clicking on the video, or pressing the letter "k" will also stop and start playback. The next icon, the arrow with a vertical bar, another icon used on most playback devices, jumps to the end of the current playback and starts a new video.

Next on the control bar is the volume control. Again, the symbol may be similar to other audio-video devices. Placing the cursor over the "speaker" image brings up a slider control used to increase (slide to the right) or decrease (slide to the left) playback volume. This control differs from the Windows volume control, which affects the entire system. To quickly mute a video, click on the speaker or slide the control all the way left. An "X" will appear over the speaker when playback is muted.

The numbers to the right of the speaker indicate the current playback position in minutes and seconds and the total time for the video. For example, this video is at the 2-minute 48-second position of a 15-minute 20-second video. "Nitecore EDC27 is the title of this presentation. The greater than character (>) opens a list of chapters if the video is set up with them.

Skipping to the right, the next control turns Autoplay on or off. In the image above, with the button to the right, Autoplay is on. Moving the slider to the left turns off Autoplay. With Autoplay on, playback will go to a new video and start playing it when the current selection ends.

Moving to the right, the CC icon turns closed captioning on and off. Generally, it works well, but

I have seen some strange words pop up in the caption dialog. Tapping "c" also opens captioning. Not all videos have the closed caption option.



The Settings gear lets you choose Annotations, Playback speed, and Video Quality.



Next, click on the open square of the screen. YouTube calls this "Miniplayer." Again, we have a one-key shortcut. This time it's the "I" key. The shortcut key is a toggle: opening the picture-in-picture

with a press, then reverting to the standard view with another touch of the "I" key.

The next icon, an open rectangle, controls "theater" mode. The standard view places a list of additional videos to the right of the one playing. Theater view toggles this list on and off. The shortcut key "t" does the same.

The four corner brackets that form an "open square" is the "full screen" icon. Click it to enlarge the current video to full screen. Pressing Escape returns to the standard view. The "f" key is a toggle for full screen and returns to the normal view.

We touched on the basic controls for viewing YouTube videos, but the site has many other features, such as sharing, clipping, saving, and transcripts. I encourage you to explore these features if you are a YouTube regular or just an occasional user.

Lab Monitor Schedule

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

| January | Monitor Schedule |
|----------------|------------------|
| Jeff Southwell | Saturday |
| Linda McMullin | 01/06/2024 |
| Fred Cohen | Saturday |
| Linda Muench | 1/13/2024 |
| Kathy Kirby | Saturday |
| | 1/20/2024 |
| Linda Muench | Saturday |
| | 1/27/2024 |