THE
GIGABYTE
GAZETTE

The Monthly Newsletter
of the

SUN CITY SUMMERLIN
COMPUTER CLUB

https://www.scscc.club

April, 2024

Table of Contents

Issue Contributors

Tom Burt	*Gail Weiss*
Kathy Kirby	*David Kretchmar*
Jeff Wilkinson	*Greg Skalka*

President's Message

April News

by Jeff Wilkinson

Spring has arrived and your Computer Club is flowering with new ideas.

Our monthly calendar is busy with classes, SIGs and seminars and the lab is in business with hands-on training classes.

Our monthly meetings are looking at the future of "computing" and advances in Artificial Intelligence and Robotics.

We had a busy session at the March Community Club Fair and had 12 new members join us.

We are always looking for ideas and suggestions for classes, seminars, and meeting topics. As always, we welcome current and new members' inquiries and proposals.

We are always looking for members willing to share their experiences and expertise with a class or seminar. Contact either me or Education Coordinator Tom Burt (tomburt89134@cox.net 702-341-7095) if you're interested in joining our education team.

Stay safe and healthy,

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

General Membership Meeting

The club's General Meeting will be at **2 PM on Thursday April 4th** in Desert Vista Room 5. Our program will feature videos on AI and Robotics. Following the business and presentation will be a coffee and cookie social.

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 March 13, 2024

Jerry Sanderson made a motion that the **minutes of the February 14, 2024 Board Meeting be approved as submitted.** The motion was seconded by Tom Burt and unanimously approved by the Board.

Chuck Hagen 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 9:25 AM.

April 2024 Printable Calendars

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

https://www.scscc.club/Calendars/scscc_calendar_2024-04Apr.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.

<u>Welcome New Members</u>

The following new 2024 members have joined the Computer Club
from February 28, 2024 to March 28, 2024.

Lexie Akerman	**Diane Lais**
Jonathan Brown	**Barbara Langford**
Danette Carter	**Carol McCarthy**
Suzanne Dumont	**Wanda McCoy**
Maria Erali	**Louie Medrano**
Stanley Evans	**Barbara Persson**
Nancy Hoskins	**Floyd Persson**
Andrea Jentsch	**Roger Rossbach**
Denis Kallish	**Robin Smith**
Evangelia	**Burt Teh**
Kambouris	**Jean Tomkovitch**
Charles Kirby	**Debbie Valdez**
Anja Koot	

As of March 29th, the club has 464 paid memberships for 2024.

As of December 31st, 2023, the club had 591 paid memberships for 2023.

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 917-951-0698
Third Thursday at 2 PM monthly
Next meeting: Thursday, April 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, April 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, April 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, April 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 **club website** to see which mode the session is using. Unless explicitly stated, advance registration is not required for these sessions.

Android Basics 2024 Part 2

Wednesday, April 24th 10 – 11:30 AM *via Zoom*
Presenter: Tom Burt
Location: Zoom Webcast

If you want to get more from your Android smart phone or tablet, this may be the class for you. This 1½ - hour session will pick up from where my March "Android Basics – Part 1" session left off. Have your own Android device handy so you can follow along during the session. If you've attended before or if you missed Part 1, you're still most welcome to come and catch up or get a refresher.

We'll be demonstrating with my Moto G Power Android 11 phone. I'll also have Android 13 and 14 available via an Android emulator tool. We'll review how to set up and connect to a Google account and then spend time on how to change various Android Settings. We'll also cover how to take photos and selfies and how to move those and other files from your phone to your PC or to the cloud. We'll also demo a few useful and popular Apps, and we'll allow generous time for your questions.

Presentation notes for Part 2 will be available on the club website about April 22 at: **https://www.scscc.club/smnr/AndroidBasics2024-Part2.pdf**.

Presentation notes for Part 1 are currently available on the club website at: **https://www.scscc.club/smnr/AndroidBasics2024-Part1.pdf**.

There's a LOT of material. We'll try to cover as much of it as possible within the allotted time. I recommend downloading the presentation notes ahead of time; they should provide a good step by step reference.

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

Desert Survival Class

Thursday, April 25th 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.

iPhone Tips and Tricks - 2024

Saturday, April 27th 9 - 11 AM Live and *via Zoom*
Presenter: Gail Weiss
Location: Classroom

This class will be held in the Computer Club's classroom. We'll cover an extensive set of iPhone How Tos" and other knowledge nuggets. Feel free to bring your own 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.

Tom's Tech-Notes

EaseUS ToDo Backup – A Review

By Tom Burt, Vice President

March 31 was World Backup Day. In accord with that, I'm reviewing a free imaging backup tool called EaseUS ToDo Backup, offered by EaseUS. You can find the free download at: https://www.easeus.com/backup-software/tb-free.html.   EaseUS offers an extensive suite of modestly-priced disk management and other system utilities for Windows Vista/8/10/11. However, in this review, I'll stick to the free edition of EaseUS ToDo Backup, which has pretty much everything you need.

EaseUS ToDo Backup Main Screen

Above is a screen shot of the main screen. Shown on the screen is the only backup task currently defined – "Disk 1 C Drive". As configured, this task will create an image of all the partitions on my PC's boot drive and write it to the "EaseUS Backups" folder on my PC's D: drive. I can launch EaseUS ToDo Backup at any time I like and click the "Backup Now" button to make a new image backup of my boot drive. I can also click the "No Schedule" link to open a settings "Scheme" dialog that lets me set up a regular backup schedule (see screen shot below).
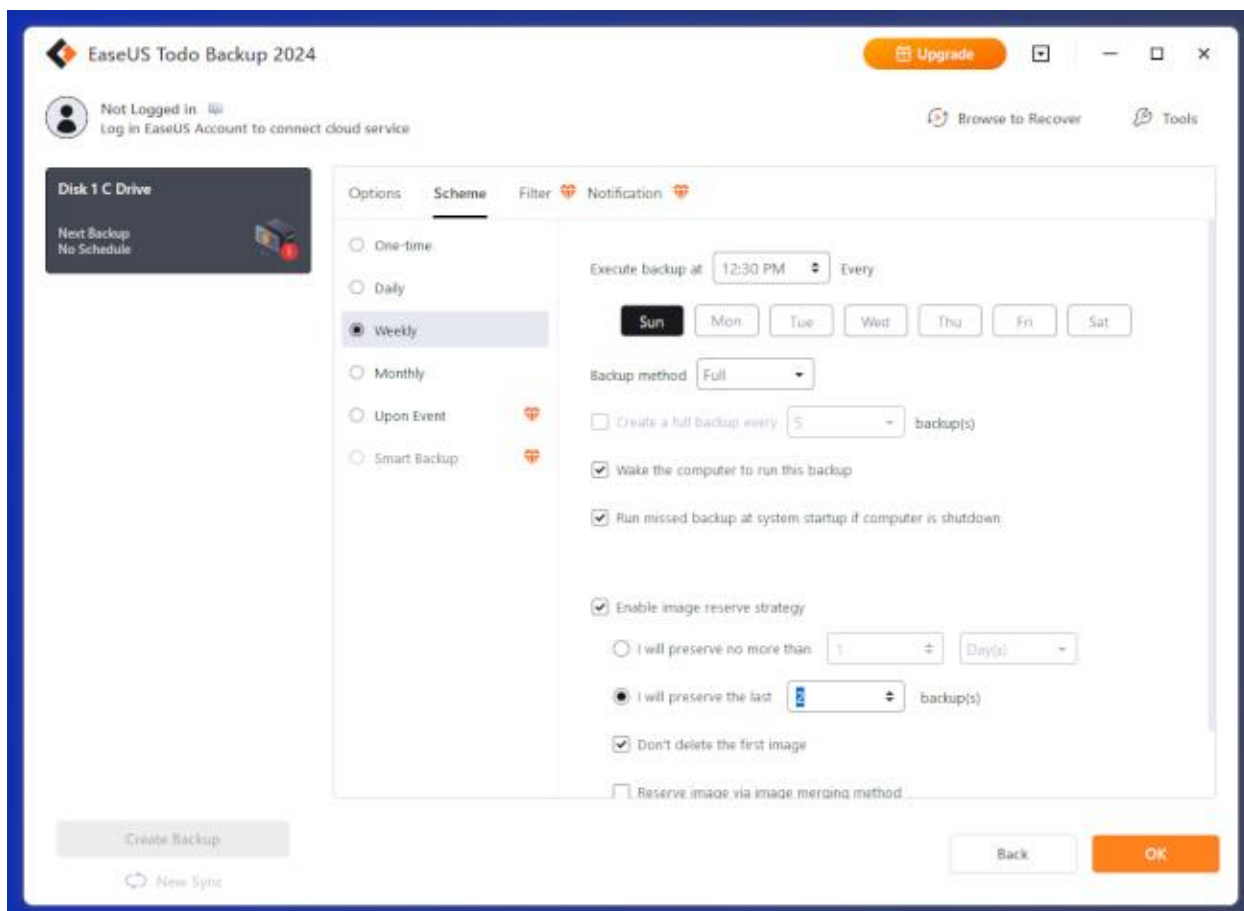
**EaseUS ToDo Backup Scheme Settings**

On this screen, I've set up a schedule for the backup to occur every Sunday at 12:30 PM. I've also set it up so that two backups will be retained. Once that limit is reached, the oldest backup will be deleted before the new backup is created.

Creating a New Backup Task

My desktop PC has a very fast NVME solid state drive for the boot drive and a larger SATA 3 hard disk drive for data storage. The hard drive's data partition is assigned drive letter E:. I needed to create a backup task for the E: drive. To do this, I clicked the orange Create Backup button on the main screen.

That displayed a dialog (See the screen shot below) asking what type of backup I want to create: File, Disk, OS or Apps data. It also allowed me to name the backup task – in this case "Disk 2 E Drive". Since I wanted to set up a full image backup of the E: drive, I clicked the "Disk" icon. That displayed another dialog in which I could select which drives/partitions I wanted included in the backup. I checked the E: drive partition and then clicked the orange OK button.

Back on the main screen, I now clicked on the icon for selecting the destination for the backup. This brought up a dialog for choosing the destination: Local Drive, EaseUS Cloud, Network, or Security Zone. I chose Local Drive. A chooser dialog for Drive \ Folder displayed. I chose the H: drive (my external USB backup drive) and the "EaseUS ToDo Backups" folder and then clicked the orange OK button.
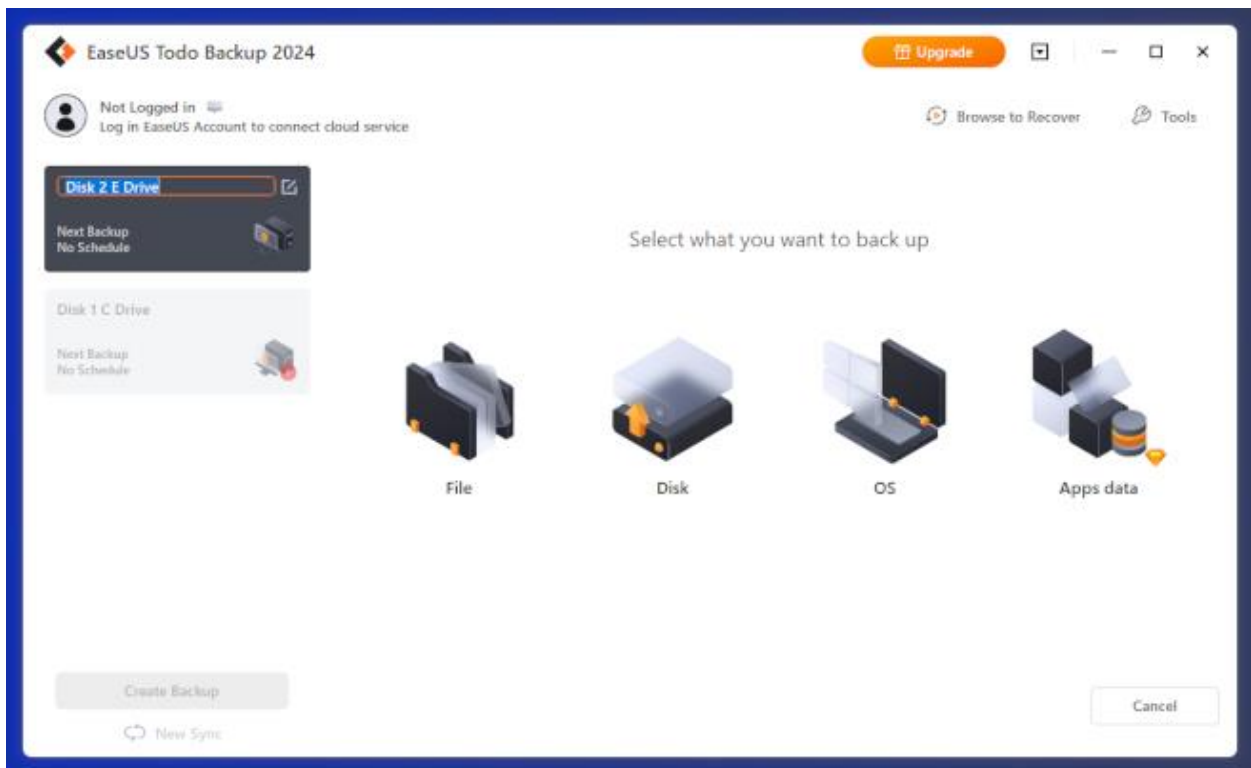
EaseUS ToDo Backup – Select Backup Type Dialog
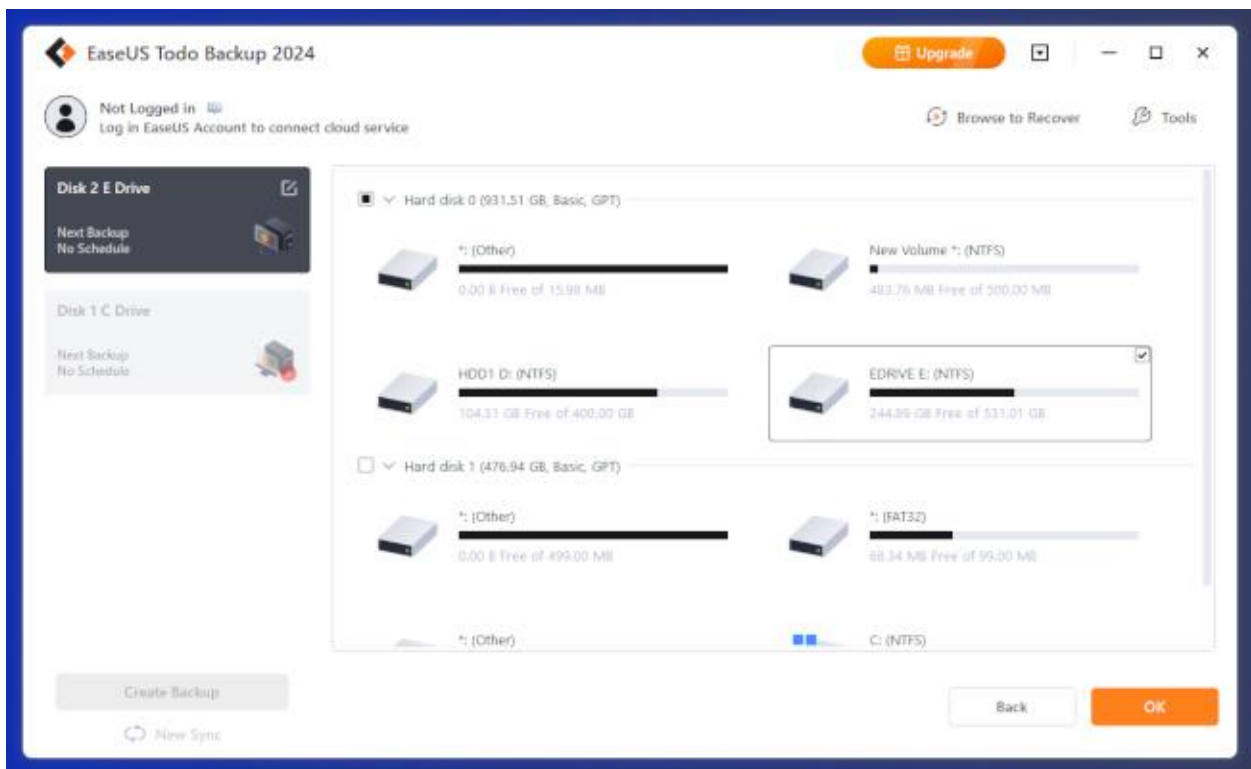
EaseUS ToDo Backup – What Disks / Partitions to Back Up Dialog
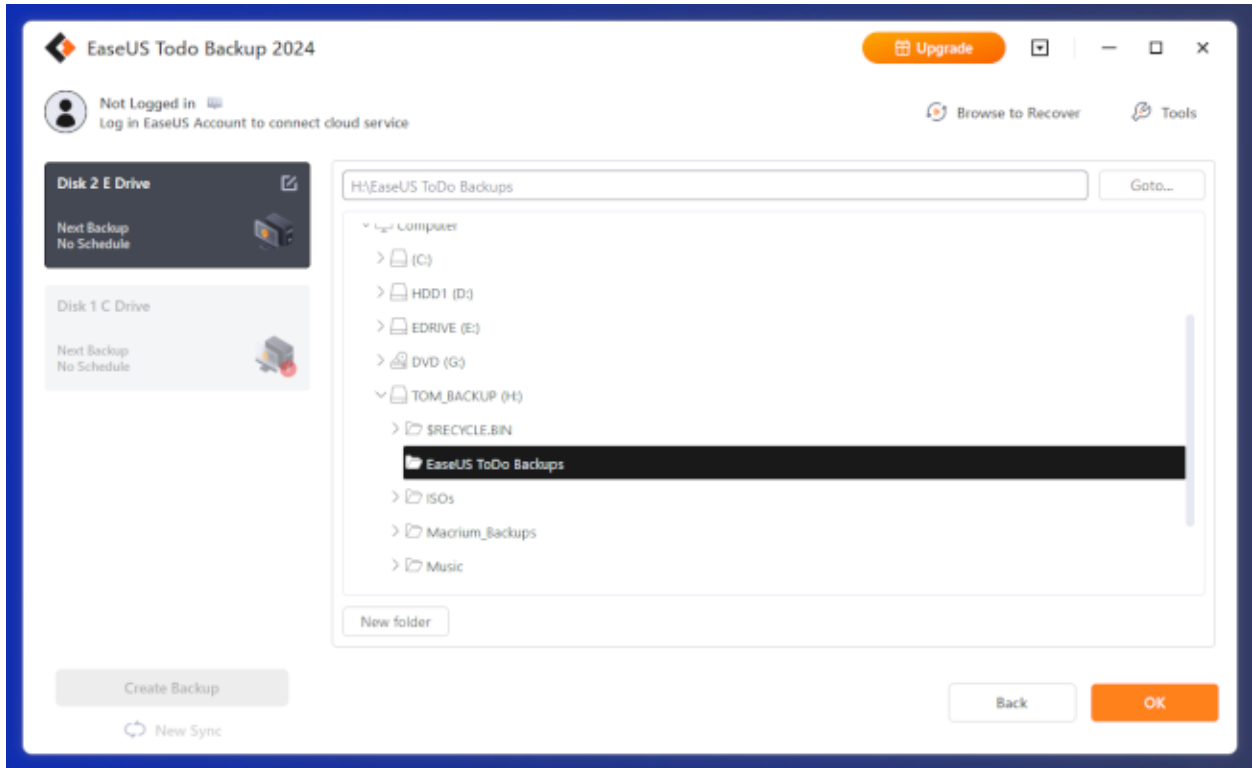
EaseUS ToDo Backup – Choose Destination Dialog

EaseUS ToDo Backup Main Screen With E: Backup Added

Back on the main screen, my "Drive 2 E Drive" task is now fully set up and ready to be run whenever I wish. I left the Scheme for the "Drive 2 E Drive" task as manual, one time. I typically back up the E: Drive once a month.

Emergency Recovery Disk

EaseUS ToDo Backup allows you to create a bootable recovery disk or flash drive that can be used to restore an image file in the event that your PC's boot drive or data drive fails. You will want to do that soon after installing the program. You can find the "Create Emergency Disk" function by clicking the Tools icon.

Accessing Files in a Backup Image

The EaseUS backup image is written into a .pbd file. Using the Windows File Explorer, you can browse to the backup folder and then double click to open the .pbd file. You can continue to double click on partition names and folder names to navigate the contents of the image. You can select one or more files and then right click and choose Open, Recover or Copy as actions for the selected file(s). This allows you to bring back specific files or folders from a backup image without needing to restore the entire image.

Observations and Conclusions

Writing to the internal D: partition on my PC's SATA 3 hard disk drive, the backup run for my desktop's boot drive, which had 380 GB of data, took 25 minutes. The final disk image size was 231 GB, so the image compression attained about 60.8% of the original size. For comparison, this was close to what Macrium Reflect Free attained on its last backup of the same drive.

Drives with a high volume of already-compressed content (pictures, videos, music) will take longer to back up and produce larger images.

EaseUS ToDo Backup Free has a lot of built-in upsells, so as you're using it be mindful not to accidentally upgrade, unless you wish to.

Overall, you can't beat the price for a nice packaging of basic backup functionality.

Kretchmar's Korner

Protect Your Privacy on the Internet

Invisible Browsing and Searching

David Kretchmar, Hardware Technician

As you browse the web, your browser remembers lots of information for you - like the sites you've visited and what you did on that site. However, there might be times when you don't want anyone with access to your computer to see your browsing history. Invisible browsing (also known as InPrivate, Private, or Incognito browsing depending on the browser you use) allows you to browse the Internet without saving any information on your computer about searches you've made, or websites and pages you've visited.

Any files you download and save to your computer while you are invisible mode will still remain on your system.

Private browsing helps keep you from being bombarded with advertisements relating to any product or service you've researched or bought on the Internet. Searches done privately cannot be filtered or modified based on any information previously gathered about you; therefore, you can be assured of getting a less pre-selected and filtered view of the world.

Remember that any browser's private mode only keeps that browser from storing information about the websites that you have visited. The websites you visit may still have a record of your visit, although they should NOT be able to identify you by name or collect personal information about you, unless you provide it. A site on the Internet will only see you as your Internet Protocol (IP) address; an IP address is something like, "68.227.63.194". This is all a site knows about you by virtue of your viewing the site, either in private mode or not. An analysis of that address reveals it belongs to Cox Communications in Las Vegas and probably northern Summerlin, but that's about all.

Internet Service Providers such as Cox and CenturyLink can and do store information about your surfing habits, which could make that 'incognito' surfing session on Google Chrome a little less incognito than you might think. Cox and CenturyLink do not reveal a customer's IP address logs without process (usually a summons or court order). In other words, don't think using any kind of private mode on the internet will necessarily hide your identity if you engage in illegal activity.

Cox states that it retains surfing records for up to 6 months, and CenturyLink says it retains these records for a year.

Currently there are no mandatory data retention laws in the United States. In Europe, Internet providers are required to track IP-address assignments so these can be linked to specific subscriber accounts.

There are Congressional proponents in favor of passing laws that would effectively reduce privacy on the Internet. This will be accomplished under a bill titled something like, "Protecting Children from Internet Pornographers Act" or "Securing our Homeland from Terrorists Act"; ISPs will be required to keep detailed IP-address logs for a specific period of time.

For now, no logs are required by law.

If you want to get serious about protecting your privacy on the Internet, here's how private browsing works in Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, and Google Chrome.

Microsoft Edge

Open Edge, click on the 3 dots icon in the upper right corner of your Edge browser window, Safety, and then select "New InPrivate window". Alternately you can press Ctrl+Shift+N.

Mozilla Firefox

Open Firefox, click on the 3 horizontal lines at the top right corner of the window, and click on "New Private Window". Alternately you can press Ctrl+Shift+P. Mozilla also makes the Tor browser, a favorite of users who visit the "Dark Net" anonymously.

Google Chrome

Open Chrome, click on the 3 horizontal lines at the top right corner of the window, and click on "New Incognito Window". Alternately you can press Ctrl+Shift+N.

Another Privacy Tool: DuckDuckGo "The search engine that doesn't track you."

DuckDuckGo is an anonymous search engine that has been around for just about 13 years. It

can be accessed using any browser by entering duckduckgo.com in the browser address bar.

DuckDuckGo has been retooled several times, so if you've been disappointed by the product in the past, you might want to give it another try.

I compared DuckDuckGo to Google in searching power, and the results were very similar. DuckDuckGo calls itself a search engine of search engines so of course Google results are among the results included. I think most of the search engines we use today do a good job of gaming the other search engines. Search engines are also competing in their use of artificial intelligence (AI). I have not found AI all that helpful so far, I would just like to see results for the item I entered, not necessarily an AI discussion.

DuckDuckGo is weaker in such areas as maps and conversions and of course cannot offer anything close to the full Google Chrome, Edge or even Firefox experience (and privacy compromises).

DuckDuckGo has a porn filter on by default, which might be a plus for parents attempting to limit a child's access to some parts of the internet (it rarely works). It also seems to do a slightly better job than Google of identifying which search results are paid ads, and which results are from a reasonably reliable source.

By doing a search in DuckDuckGo or in invisible mode in your browser, you can maintain your privacy and avoid the advertising thrown at you based on data harvested from your Internet activity.

Ed. Note … Another tool for enhancing privacy and anonymity while surfing the Internet is the **virtual private network** (VPN). Here's a link to the handout for a VPN seminar from June, 2023 by Tom Burt: https://www.scscc.club/smnr/VirtualPrivateNetworks_2023.pdf .
Here's the link to the video recording of that seminar:
https://www.scscc.club/smnr/Videos/VirtualPrivateNetworks_2023-06-28.html.
Quality VPNs aren't free, but are relatively inexpensive.

APCUG Guest Article

How Do I Love Thee – Let Me Count the Wyze

By Greg Skalka, President
Under the Computer Hood User Group
https://uchug.org/ president ** uchug.org

I grew up waking early each day. I never developed a habit of sleeping in, but I almost always got up at the same time each weekend or weekday. For nearly 40 years, I've been working full-time to support myself and my family, and I almost always have gone to work early in the day. For my present job, I wake before 4:30 AM and leave the house by 5:30 AM. This means that no matter the time of year, I'm getting ready for work and leaving before sunrise.

I'm very sensitive to light and sound when trying to sleep. To fall asleep and stay asleep, I must have darkness and quiet. I can sleep with uncorrelated sounds like white noise (I like having our Amazon Alexa play surf or thunderstorm sounds), but I can't sleep with a TV or radio on. On the other hand, my wife often falls asleep in the evening in her office chair at home with the lights on and the TV blaring. While I may imagine the flash of a nuclear bomb would not wake her, I try to be sensitive to my wife and keep sound and light from her as I get ready in the morning (she is almost always asleep when I leave).

My concern for her in this regard has always been an issue, as I have had a few near misses over the years for falls as I would stumble down the stairs in the dark. She wants the bedroom door left open for ventilation, so I can't turn on the lights over the stairs. I've tried carrying a small flashlight, but sometimes it would get misplaced, and I would be forced to descend without illumination. As I have gotten older, the risks to me from a fall have become greater.

Over the last few years, I have improved the situation by using smart home devices. For example, I programmed two Wemo smart lights to turn on each workday morning before I was scheduled to come out of the bedroom. One was in a bedroom at the far end of the hall, which provided just enough light to see the top part of the stairs. Another was in the living room at the bottom of the stairs. Both were far enough from our bedroom door that the bedroom stayed dark inside. In addition, the lights were programmed to turn off when I left for work, so little electricity was wasted.

This system worked pretty well but was not perfect. If my waking schedule varied a little, I could have the lights on unnecessarily or wait until the timer turned them on to go downstairs. In the winter, I would keep the far bedroom door closed to prevent having to heat it; if I forgot to open it when I went to bed, I'd wake to no light near the top of the stairs. Localized "path" lighting for the stairs would be optimal but challenging to install.

A few months ago, a visitor at one of our group's general meetings on Zoom told us about **Wyze Night Lights** (www.wyze.com). These small rechargeable stick-on lights use motion and light sensors to light your way at night. They can be linked so that one, sensing motion, can trigger multiple others (up to 10) to come on and light your path, and they go off after motion is no longer detected. They sounded like they would be perfect for my stairs.

I did not have time to try them, but our editor, who had a similar need, bought some and gave them high praise. So, after further discussions about them at our last meeting, I finally ordered a pack of three (model WLPNL) from Amazon ($26.99 at the time; they are $25.99 with Prime delivery today).

I was surprised by the small package when I received the shipment. Each light is only 3.25" x 2" x 3/8" thick. I charged all three before installing by connecting to the USB-C connector (charger and cable are not included; fortunately, I had them) until the small status LED went out. A small slide switch on each side can be set to Off, On, and Auto (under motion detection control).

The most challenging part of using the Wyze lights was mounting them. Each light comes with a 1.25" square thin metal plate; the Wyze light contains a magnet that sticks it to the plate. Each also comes with an "easy pull tape," which should work like the Command strips for removable hooks. The installation recommendation for the lights is between 1.6 and 3.9 feet above the floor, probably for the best motion detection performance. So first, I selected locations on the outer wall of the stairway, with one at the top, one at the bottom, and one in the middle (where the stairs turned a corner). After that, I decided to go right to a permanent installation, putting them up with the easy pull tape. I initially had trouble getting the plastic covers from the easy pull film, but I could use it to mount the metal squares where I wanted them. However, when I put on the lights, they tended to rotate from level to around 45 degrees.

I called our editor, who suggested putting blue painter's tape over the metal plates. He had not used the easy stick tape; instead, he installed the plates with tape over them, so they could be easily relocated. I tried putting tape over my plates, and the additional friction did help keep the lights from being as prone to rotating. I set all three lights to Auto, and they all started blinking. After 30 seconds, the blinking stopped, and all the lights were linked. I tried them out after dark, and they worked well.

At this point, my wife saw my installation and did not like it. She thought the lights were too visible and unsightly. She said they would only be acceptable if they were moved to the opposite wall and just below the handrail, where they were partially hidden. That is when I found the easy stick tape was easy to stick on but not easy to remove.

I tried pulling the removal tab as instructed, but the tab and tape snapped off, leaving about 1/3 of the tape remaining. This happened with all three lights. I used a thin metal ruler to pry the metal squares off the wall carefully.

I successfully removed two without wall damage, but on the middle one, it pulled some of the paint off the wall (now I'm in trouble). The easy stick tape was still sticky enough to put the squares up in their new, authorized locations,

though I put blue painter's tape over them for good measure. That's when I discovered why my lights had been rotating on the plates. It appears the metal plates were slightly convex (bulging out in the middle) when I first installed them, so there was only one contact point on the plate for the light to touch, allowing it to rotate around the point in the back where the magnet was located.

In my efforts to pry the plates off the wall from my first installation, I bent the plates so they were now more concave towards the light (the edges were bent out). This provided more contact points between the light and the plate and prevented the rotation I had seen previously.

I have been using the Wyze lights in the mornings and evenings for a week, and they work great. They provide plenty of light, and the linking and motion detection features work well. However, in their present locations, slightly under the stair handrail, they may be more shaded from daylight and possibly run more time each day, thus using more battery power. I have yet to charge the lights again; their website indicates they could go for a month on a charge. Now I have disabled
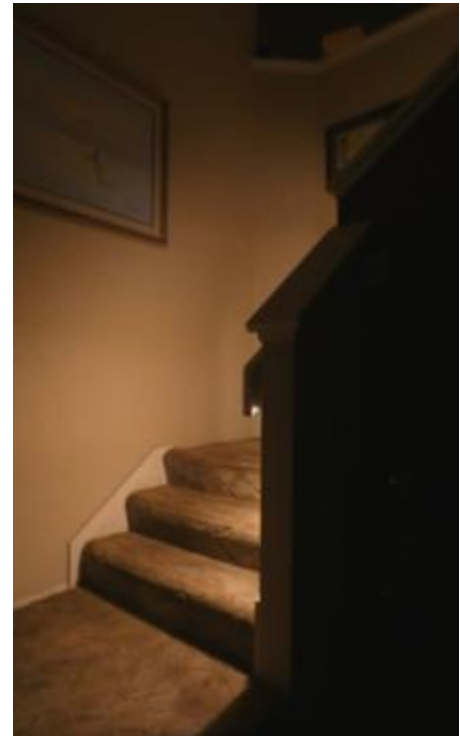
the programming on some of my smart lights, as the Wyze lights provide all the light I need on demand. Now if I fall down the stairs, it will be my clumsy fault, not because I can't see the stairs.

I'm now looking at other locations that could benefit from Wyze Night Lights, but I'll get authorization from my wife before any additional installations.

Lab Monitor Schedule

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

April	Monitor Schedule
Jeff Southwell	Saturday 4/6/2024
Fred Cohen Ann Warhaftig	Saturday 4/13/2024
Linda Muench Frances Sasaki	Saturday 4/20/2024
Jim Edwards Jan Edwards	Saturday 4/27/2024