

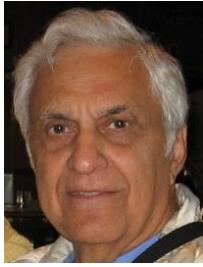
The
Gigabyte Gazette

The Monthly Newsletter
of the
Sun City Summerlin
Computer Club

FEBRUARY 2013

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President's Message

by George Lobue

Dear computer club members,

Our February monthly meeting offers a key presentation on the "State of the Club" 2013. 2013 has seen presentations on inauguration, the state of the union, the state of Nevada and the state of education. Now our computer club February 7th monthly meeting will offer the most important presentation.

All the others discuss what MIGHT happen. For our club our Vice President will offer a presentation of what WILL happen in his state of the computer club. The \$10.00 Annual club dues allow us to do many things to assist all of our members to fully utilize and enjoy their electronic devices. I know you have all heard the expression "we are from the government and are here to help you ". Well, your Sun City computer club board of directors is indeed here to help you. Attend the February 7 monthly meeting at 7:00PM in DESERT VISTA and hear about the positive accomplishments and plans for 2013.

The RESIDENTS' FORUM is having their annual club fair to inform all residence about our community clubs. We have committed to participate in their excellent event on February 13. We encourage any of our SIG leaders, class and seminar leaders to display their activities. Phone me to reserve table space.

TECH NOTE: Too many members come to our Tuesday 1 to 4 PM free repair clinic and tell us that they get NO help from Internet providers when they lose their Internet connection. The Hardware SIG suggests you DO NOT call the customer service department for help but rather call the TECH support department. DO NOT try to explain what your problem is. Simply tell them that you have lost their service and need someone to visit your home to fix it. Depending on the type of fix they do, there may be a small charge. Visit your Hardware SIG for more information.

Stay happy and healthy and enjoy your phones, tablets, lap tops and desk tops. Remember we are here to help.

George Lobue, President

256-0822 globue1@juno.com

Issue Contributors

Irene Burt	Tom Burt	Zane Clark
Tammy Collins	Stu Gershon	David Kretchmar
Pat Lemay	George Lobue	Howard Verne

Submissions Welcome

This month, **Zane Clark** joins our team of columnists, writing about iPads, iPods and iPhones. We are always looking for new information to share with our club members. If you have computer or technical information you would like to share with members of the club via our “Members Helping Members” section of the Gigabyte Gazette, send your articles to Tom Burt at tomburt89134@cox.net. Thank you to everyone for your contributions.

SCSCC Board of Directors Actions

The Computer Club Board of Directors took the following actions on January 9, 2013

- Howard Verne made a motion that the minutes of the December 12, 2012 Board of Director’s Meeting be approved as submitted. The motion was seconded by Ed Barkin and unanimously approved by the Board.
- Irene Burt made a motion that the checking resolution be approved and signed by the President and Secretary. The motion was seconded by Tom Kimber and unanimously approved by the Board.
- Tom Burt made a motion that there be no General Meetings held during the months of July and August 2013 and that the Club be closed for the holidays listed below. The motion was seconded by Tom Kimber and unanimously approved by the Board.
 - Memorial Day, Monday, May 27, 2013
 - Independence Day, Thursday, July 4, 2013
 - Labor Day, Monday, September 2, 2013
 - Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 28, 2013
 - Christmas Day, Wednesday, December 25, 2013
 - New Year’s Day, Wednesday, January 1, 2014
- Howard Verne made a motion to purchase Deep Freeze Programs for the Club in the amount up to \$1375. The motion was seconded by Tom Kimber and unanimously approved by the Board.
- Chuck Wolff made a motion to approve the budget as presented to the Board and to present it to the membership at the February Business meeting for final approval. The motion was seconded by Tom Kimber and unanimously approved by the Board.

General Membership Meeting

The February meeting will be held on Thursday, February 7th, 7PM at Desert Vista. Club Vice President Tom Burt will present the annual “State of the Computer Club” address. Following the presentation, we will have a short Business Meeting to approve the Club’s 2013 budget and spending plan which is posted on the Club’s website (www.scs-cc.com). Come join us for this informational presentation, refreshments and fellowship.

Welcome New Members

The following new members have joined the Computer Club since December 26th.

Theresa Atkinson	Elinor Mork
Jean Baudler	Evelyn Moss
Heidi Benson	Valerie Oill
Frank Bovi	Joyce O'Meara
Sid Dirstine	Bill Pendarvis
Barbara Dorway	Donna Pfeffer
David Dorway	Ronald Pfeffer
Barbara Fraser	Cricket Rotolo
Sue Grue	David Satkus
Constance Kwiatkowski	Maryellen Tatem
Thomas Lavery	Joanne Tessa
Carl Leatherman	Maryann Thompson
Sanford Leff	Peggy Widmer
Donald Lytton	Elenor Wilchins
Jordan Mehlman	Susy Wiley
Jeanette Miller	

February 2013 Calendars

To view the February classroom and lab calendars, click the following hyperlink:

http://www.scs-cc.com/Calendars/scscc_calendar_2013-02feb.pdf

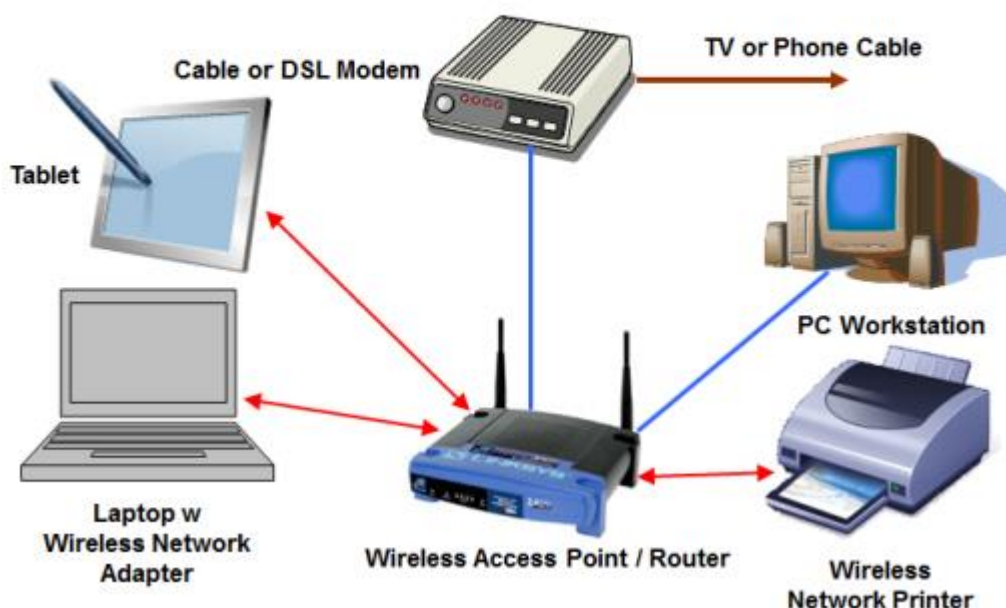
Members Helping Members

“Members Helping Members” is a column that includes computing tips that our members find useful and that they would like to share with their fellow SCSCC members. Please email your tips to the GG Editor, Tom Burt, at: tomburt89134@cox.net with the title “GG: Members Helping Members”.

Basic Network Troubleshooting Tips

Many of our members have configured simple home networks using a router in conjunction with their Cox cable or CenturyLink DSL modem. Most modern routers provide both wired (Ethernet) and wireless (802.11) connections. With the growing popularity of hand-held devices such as tablets, cell-phones and music/video players, wireless connectivity in the home has become essential for these devices to reach the internet. Here’s a diagram of today’s typical small home network:

Classic Small Mixed Network



Since home networks have become so integral to our computing experience, from time to time, I plan to offer network troubleshooting tips in this space. Today let’s focus on one of the most common issues – **“My Internet Connection Isn’t Working”**.

Possible causes and corrective actions:

1. Your PC has lost its connection to the router or the router is powered off.
 - Check that the router is powered on / plugged in (at both ends of the power cable). If connected to a power strip, make sure it’s turned on.

- For wired Ethernet connections, make sure the Ethernet cable is plugged in to the RJ 14 socket on your PC and also plugged in to one of the RJ 14 sockets on your router. The RJ 14 socket is an outside phone socket.
 - For wireless connections, especially laptops, make sure your PC or device has its wireless network adapter turned on. Then go to the “Wireless Connections” interface of your operating system and make sure you have connected to your router. The “Wireless Connections” system should display a list of available connections to choose from. Choose your router. You may have to enter a security password if your router is using encrypted transmissions (it should be set up that way).
 - If none of the above work, sometimes it’s best to just reset your router and reboot your devices (see next section).
2. Your router has lost its connection to the cable/DSL modem.
- Make sure the cable/DSL modem is powered on
 - Check your wired Ethernet connections between the router and cable/DSL modem.
 - If the above steps don’t work, try powering off both the router and the cable/DSL modem. Normally you just unplug the power cords from these devices. Wait about 30 seconds and then plug in the cable/DSL modem. Wait until it has finished booting up and reconnecting to the Internet. Then power on the router.
3. Your cable/DSL modem has lost its connection to Cox or CenturyLink.
- This may be because Cox or CenturyLink is experiencing an outage in their equipment. Sometimes after an outage, the modem may not automatically reconnect when the data signal is restored. Try power cycling both the router and modem as described above. Watch for the “online” or “Internet” light on your modem to be solidly lit.
 - If these steps don’t work, it’s time to call Cox or CenturyLink technical support to have them check out your connection.

To learn more, come to my “Home Networking Basics” seminar at 9 AM on Wednesday, February 27th.

Tom Burt

Special Interest Groups

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. All of the following meetings are held in the Classroom <W> or <M> or <H> indicate whether a SIG would be of interest to a Windows, Macintosh or Hand-held Device (i-thing or Android) user.

Android Devices Q&A Group <H>

3rd Wednesday, 1 p.m.

Jack Spargo and Pat Lemay

This group isn't quite ready to declare itself a SIG, but meets monthly. It serves as your forum for learning about and discussing Android-based phones, tablets and e-Reader devices. This group is for Android hand-held device users of all experience levels.

Creative Graphics <W/M>

Coming soon

Mel Neiman (228-6727)

Featuring tips, tricks, demonstrations and giveaways with information on greeting cards, business cards, labels, simple desktop publishing, digital photo tips and using photos in your projects, creating slide show informational frames, using fonts and creating your own clipart from fonts, e-mail stationery and animated signatures, journaling, and scrapbooking using computers, new tools for publishing found in Printmaster. Very basic photo imaging processing, using small utilities related to graphics, fonts and catalog.

Digital Media <W>

3rd Thursday, 9:00 a.m.

Tom Burt (341-7095)

The Digital Media SIG provides a forum for members interested in all aspects of computer-based digital sound and video to meet, discuss, and learn more about the topic. The SIG's target audience is intermediate to advanced digital media users, but all members are welcome.

Genealogy <W>

2nd Thursday, 10:00 a.m.

Karen Ristic (749-6489)

Genealogy is one of America's most popular and rewarding hobbies. Come; let us help you find your ancestors on the Internet. We will explore helpful, free, sites and assist you in building your family tree.

GMail and Other Google Programs <W/M>

1st Thursday, 10:00 a.m.

Pat Lemay (254-1499)

Pat has adapted her popular Gmail seminar to become a regular monthly SIG. All members are welcome. This is your place to learn about all things Google.

Hardware <W >

Every Tuesday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Chuck Wolff (233-6634), *George Lobue (256-0822)*

This SIG provides **CLUB MEMBERS ONLY** with no cost assistance for those having upgrades and / or problems with their computers. Bring in only your PC tower 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.

iPad SIG <iPod, iPhone, iPad>

4th Thursday, 10 a.m.

Zane Clark (562-3684)

This SIG will be your forum for learning about and discussing the Apple iPhone, iPod and iPad tablet devices. It's for Apple hand-held device owners of all experience levels.

Macintosh Users' Group <M/H>

2nd and 4th Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.

Ed Barkin (243-6597) and Rose Mary D'Aloisio (255-2813)

This SIG is for Macintosh users of all experience levels. We will have Q&A, so bring your questions and/or problems.

Photoshop <W>

2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.

Un-moderated discussion group

This SIG will provide you with an overview of many of the basic elements found in both Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Photoshop Elements, two extraordinary photo retouching, image editing, and color painting software programs. The Adobe Photoshop programs offer the tools to get professional-quality results. If you wish to enhance your photographs, this SIG will be most helpful and of great value. This SIG's target audience is intermediate to advanced digital imaging users, but all members are welcome.

Picasa <W>

3rd Mondays, 1:00 p.m. (Meets October through April)

Stu Gershon (255-3309)

Stu will be conducting this SIG as a monthly workshop, using Picasa 3 as the tool for organizing and editing digital photos. This SIG's target audience is beginner to intermediate digital photography users, but all members are welcome.

Kaffee Klatches

Kaffee Klatches provide a forum for general discussion on all computer-related subjects. Admission to all Kaffee Klatches is on a first-come, first-seated basis and is subject to the maximum allowed by fire code regulations. All of the following meetings are held in the Classroom.

Beginners Kaffee Klatch <W/M>

Every Saturday, 9:00 a.m.

Bill Wilkinson (233-4977)

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 the BKK sessions. At each session, attendees will explore from one to four topics of particular 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 message board. 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 BKK 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.

Kaffee Klatch <W/M/H>

Every Tuesday, 8:30 a.m.

Sandy Mintz (838-2525)

This KK is for all users from beginning to advanced. The 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." If you have a tip or information you would like to share, we encourage you to bring it in and share since the SCSCC is built on "neighbor helping neighbor." The fellowship is great, the coffee is good, and the education received from the KK attendees is priceless. Stop by on Tuesday morning and have a cup of coffee with us.

February 2013 Classes

Because there are a limited number of computer stations available for hands-on participation, pre-registration is necessary for all classes. See individual class descriptions for details on how to register.



BOOT CAMP CLASSES

February 18, 19, 21, 25 and 26

Each Session Meets from 9:00 am-noon in the computer lab

Lead instructor: Bill Wilkinson

If you know of friends in the Sun City Summerlin community who may be interested in taking this class (see below for course description), would you let them know that this program is available?

Boot Camp Course Description:

Boot Camp is an introductory course designed for residents who are new to computing and/or the Microsoft Windows operating system. **It also serves as an excellent review for intermediate users who want to fill some gaps in their computer knowledge.**

This hands-on class has a **limited enrollment of 12** with each participant working at an individual computer station in the Computer Lab. A multi-member team of lead instructor and three coaches will provide step-by-step instruction that will include demonstrations, guided practice and individual coaching assistance.

Participants will be introduced to the basic vocabulary and concepts necessary to establish an understanding of Windows. They will be instructed in practical techniques for managing and organizing their own data files, will be introduced to important strategies for working successfully with word processing documents, email, and the Internet, and will learn how to read and write data from and to a portable flash drive. Those participants who own a digital camera will be invited to actively participate in a hands-on experience of copying photos from their camera to their provided thumb drive, utilizing their newly acquired skills of file management.

Boot Camp Registration Details:

To seek additional information or to register for the class, please telephone **Bill Wilkinson at 233-4977**. He will register you for the **February** class and collect the course fee by mail.

Prerequisites: Must be a 2013 Club member (\$10 membership dues) and own a computer with the Microsoft **WINDOWS XP, WINDOWS VISTA, WINDOWS 7, OR WINDOWS 8** operating system installed.

COURSE FEE: Fifteen dollars (\$15.00); materials include a 159-page participant's manual specifically written for Sun City Summerlin residents, and a portable flash drive.



FireFox Class

Wed Feb 13th, at 1 PM

Instructor: Howard Verne

Location: Lab

Mozilla Firefox is a fast, full-featured Web browser. It includes a bevy of new features and changes, including a redesigned address bar pull-down menu that includes bookmarks and history, a new add-on manager, the ability to pause and resume downloads, malware protection, a better password manager, and OS-specific themes. No longer a fledgling upstart, Firefox is full-featured, lightning fast, and an able Internet Explorer foe. Many knowledgeable computer users have moved from Microsoft's Internet Explorer to Firefox.

This hands-on class has a limited enrollment of 12 with each participant working at an individual computer station. A multi-member team of lead instructor and coaches will provide step-by-step instruction that will include demonstrations, guided practice and individual coaching assistance. There is no fee for this class.

Registration: to register, send an email with your first and last name, association number, and the words "**FIREFOX**" in the body of your message to hverne@outlook.com. If you do not receive a reply from Howard within 24 hours, please contact him at 363-5337.

Handout: Can be found at <http://www.scs-cc.com/smnr/FireFox.pdf>. Please print it out and bring it to class.



Windows 8 Class

Wednesday, February 20th at 1 PM

Presenter: Howard Verne

Location: Lab

Get a peek into the future of Windows

Howard will demonstrate Windows 8. This seminar is for people considering Windows 8 as well as those with a windows 8 computer. The bulk of the class will be devoted to **using** windows 8 - both the Metro as well as the desktop interfaces.



He will also show how you can continue to use the desktop (used in previous versions of Windows). For those of you in love with the windows 7 desktop, Howard will suggest programs which can restore the Start Menu and *Gadgets*.

Handouts can be found at:

http://www.scs-cc.com/smnr/Windows_8_Seminar.pdf and

http://www.scs-cc.com/smnr/Windows_8_Shortcuts.pdf and

http://www.scs-cc.com/smnr/Windows_8_Mouse_Navigation.pdf

Registration: to register, send an email with your first and last name, association number, and the word “Windows 8” in the body of your message to hverne@yahoo.com

February 2013 Seminars

For Computer Club seminars, there is no requirement for advanced registration unless explicitly stated. Seating is first-come, first-seated.



Windows 8 Tutorial

Meets every Saturday morning at 10:30 am

Location: Computer Club Classroom

Tutor: Bill Wilkinson

Each session will be devoted to assisting new Windows 8 owners in becoming familiar and comfortable with Microsoft's newest operating system for desktop and laptop computers. Assistance will be given individually or in small groups as circumstances warrant. Bill's notes are available by clicking [HERE](#).



EBay Buying (including How To Use Auction Sentry and info on JBidWatcher and Auction Magic)

Monday, February 4th at 9 AM

EBay Selling

Monday, February 11th at 9 AM

Presenter: Tom Kimber

Location: SCSCC Classroom

Founded in late 1995, EBay is the leading online marketplace for the sale of goods and services by a diverse community of individuals and businesses. Today, the EBay community includes over 50 million registered users, and is the most popular shopping site on the Internet when measured by total user minutes. These seminars, presented by an avid EBay user will share his secrets for making good buys and effective sales at this Internet marketplace.

Auction Sentry is a sniping tool used to place a bid on EBay automatically during the last 20 seconds of the auction.



Introduction to Digital Photography

Monday, February 4th at 1PM

Presenter: Stu Gershon

Location: SCSCC Classroom

This session is for “Newbies” and “Intermediates”. Bring your cameras and learn the basics of digital photography.

Handout: <http://digitaldoonline.com/Introduction%20to%20Digital%20Photography%20HANDOUT.htm>



iPad Basics

Wednesday, February 14th at 1PM

Presenter: Zane Clark

Location: SCSCC Classroom

This seminar will provide an introduction to using the iPad tablet. It will cover all the basics needed for a novice user to become familiar with his/her iPad and begin enjoying its many capabilities.



Laptop Workshop: “How to Organize Your Hard Drive” (Not for Windows 8)

Monday, February 11th at 1PM

Presenter: Stu Gershon

Location: SCSCC Classroom

Learn how to organize your laptop’s hard drive and settings to get the most out of it. Bring your laptop along so you can follow Stu’s demonstrations.

Handout: <http://digitaldoonline.com/Organize.htm>



Exploring the Google Chrome Web Store

Thursday, February 21st at 1 PM

Instructor: Pat Lemay

Location: SCSCC Classroom

The Google Chrome Web Store is the place to download all types of apps to your Chrome Browser. There is everything from Business Tools to Games and Utilities that not only add functions to your browser but also many games for your entertainment. This seminar will explore the Chrome Web Store Apps. **This class will be taught on the Windows version of Chrome.**



Adobe Photoshop Elements 10

Monday, February 25th at 1 PM

Presenter: Stu Gershon

Location: SCSCC Classroom

Join Stu in exploring the many features of the Adobe Photoshop Elements 10 photo editing program.



Home Networking Basics - Wired and Wireless

Wednesday, February 27th at 9 AM

Presenter: Tom Burt

Location: Computer Classroom

Many households now have two (or more) PCs. How do you take advantage of the power of networking to get the most out of your multiple systems? This 2 1/2 hour seminar describes all aspects of setting up and securing a mixed wired and wireless home network. We will survey both wired and wireless networking equipment and software. We'll demonstrate how to set up your wireless network equipment to create a mixed wired and wireless LAN and how to secure it from undesired outside access.

We'll also briefly review how to share files, printers and your cable or DSL Internet connection between two or more PCs. We'll also demonstrate connecting to a network printer. And we'll keep some time open to answer your networking questions. This seminar will include wired and wireless networking on Windows XP, Vista, 7 and 8. This seminar's target audience is users who are pretty comfortable with their PC and Windows and want to move up to taking better advantage of having multiple PCs.

Handout: http://www.scs-cc.com/smnr/home_networking_basics.pdf



Digital Photography Column

by
Stu Gershon

Taking Good Pictures

I give a workshop three times each year on “How to Operate Your Digital Camera” and another class called “Introduction to Digital Photography” (coming up on Mon, Feb 4, at 1pm). Most people who have digital cameras eventually learn how to use them, but how many times have you said to yourself when looking over vacation pictures, “Why are these so lousy?”

I’m going to give you some tips on taking better photos (so you won’t keep blaming the kid behind the counter at COSTCO).

1. **HOLD THE CAMERA STEADY** - 95% of lousy pictures are “blurry” and most of those are caused because you moved or the camera wasn’t steady. Use two hands – the right hand holding the side of the camera with your thumb and index finger free to touch the buttons on the top or the back of the camera. The left hand should be flat under the camera giving it steady support so it will remain still. Also, remember, when touching the shutter release, **THE ONLY PART OF YOUR BODY THAT MOVES IS THE TIP OF YOUR INDEX FINGER!** Pressing harder does NOT make a better photo; it only causes the camera to move!
2. **TRY TO HAVE YOUR BACK TO THE SUN** - Light from behind will light up your subject, while looking into the sun only causes your subject to be in silhouette.
3. **SHOOT WIDE** - Many people try to get too close when shooting, especially a portrait of a person’s face. If you are too close, you have less depth-of-field and the lighting is uneven. If you step back a little (subject should be about one-third of the view finder) more of the details will be in focus and the light (from your flash) will have an opportunity to disperse (spread) and give you more even lighting.
4. **COMPOSITION** - Very often people center their subject right in the center of the frame, but most photographers consider this “dull” and would rather the subject be in any of the corners of a ‘center square’ (like tic-tac-toe). This gives you either more foreground or background and gives your photo a sense of movement.

For these and other tips on Digital Photography keep watching the schedule for my different seminars, including processing your photos with Picasa (Beginners) or Photoshop Elements (Intermediate).

Stuart Gershon, “The Digital Doctor”, has given over 500 presentations at 66 different venues in Nassau and Suffolk counties on Long Island, in Oak Park, IL and Las Vegas, NV. His website is: www.DigitalDocOnline.com. Email Stu at: stugershon@gmail.com.



iPad News and Tips

by Zane Clark

iPads, iPhones, and iPod Touches

Although most of what I will talk about in this column will apply to all of the portable devices from Apple, there will obviously be some things that will work better on some devices than others. One consideration might be the version of the device you own.

Since Apps seem to be the thing everyone talks about, I will suggest some ways to find apps, both free and paid. The App store is the first place to search for apps. Here you can search by:

Featured - lists apps that someone has decided should be noted. (I have wondered how much it costs an app developer to get their new app listed here.) **Top Charts** - lists the top downloaded apps, both free and paid, **Genius** - analyzes your previous downloads and gives you names of other similar apps you might like, **Purchased** - is a listing of everything you have ever downloaded, even if you have deleted the app. This last is handy if you delete an app in error or decide to give it another try. I have done this with apps that I couldn't figure out how to use, and then I read a description of it someplace and decide to try it again. Finally, **Updates** - notes those apps which have an update available for downloading. These updates can be very minor, correcting a bug you didn't even know about, to major changes. You don't have to do the updates, but it is free and might be an improvement.

Another way to find apps in the App Store is to use the Search box in the upper right corner. You can search for a very general term or a more specific term or the name of an app you have read about. Searching for general terms is interesting but not too helpful. For example I just now typed in the term "travel." This brought up 9,214 related apps. I then added "Nevada" to "travel" and found 10 apps, a much more manageable number.

There are several Apps to help you find other apps. Here some that I like. Some of these are very simple, such as **AppsGoneFree**, which lists those apps which were formally paid apps but are now free for at least a day or so. I found a good app the other day on editing PDF documents which usually sells for \$4.99 but was free for a few days. Another app finder is **AppStart** which has lists of good apps in various categories and links to other app finders. The ultimate app finder is **AppAdvice**, which has lists of new apps with descriptions as well as general app and news about your portable devices.

Another thing to remember is that like everything else, paid apps go on sale during popular sale weekends, holidays, etc. So if your newspaper is full of President's Day sales in February, there will also be sales on apps.

Kretchmar's Korner

By David Kretchmar, Computer Hardware Tech

Keep those PUPs Away

Of course within the context of the Gigabyte Gazette I'm not talking about juvenile versions of man's best friend but am referring to Potentially Unwanted Programs. A PUP is an application that is installed, sometimes along with the desired application the user intended to install on their computer and sometimes by accident, when a user clicks on a nasty link in an email or on a webpage.

Most often, the PUP is adware, spyware, or some other unwanted software. However, what makes spyware or adware a PUP, rather than pure malware (i.e. virus), is the fact that the end user license agreement (EULA) informs the user that this additional program is being installed. Since almost no one, including me, ever bothers to read the license agreement, the distinction is a subtle one.

Have you ever done a Google or other type of search for an item, or viewed an item on the Internet, then noticed ads for that or similar items appearing on the right side of your screen when you check your email? That's often the result of a relatively benign PUP-like piece of code that's been planted on your computer. That's the price we pay for otherwise "free" browsers, search engines, and email. Other PUPs might not be nearly as "helpful".

I'm going to make a few suggestions to help you avoid the bad PUPs that are out there just waiting to bite you – I mean infect your system.

Uninstall Java. Go into your Control Panel and remove this software. Also uninstall or disable Java if is an add-on in your browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Google, etc.). Most of us will find that our computer works just fine without Java, and vulnerabilities in Java have been identified as being a way some very nasty programs have found their way onto computers. Without Java some (usually unimportant) parts of a webpage might not load, but you can probably live without that flashing ad for Viagra.

If you are using some application that needs Java, most likely a game, a pop-up will appear giving you a pathway to install Java. You can decide if the risk/reward ratio works for you.

Don't confuse Java with its distant cousin JavaScript, which is imbedded on most web pages and make them interactive and livelier. JavaScript works just fine without Java.

Install MalwareBytes Anti-malware (MBAM). I recommend the Professional version vs. the free version. They are essentially the same program, except the MBAM Pro works in real time to prevent infections; it is always better to prevent an infection rather than attempt to clean it up after it is in your system. MBAM Pro works nicely with Microsoft Security Essentials in Windows 7. It also works great with the Windows Defender (essentially Microsoft Security Essentials) that is imbedded in Windows 8. MBAM Pro retails for \$25, but a lifetime subscription is occasionally on sale for \$10 – sometimes (very rarely) less.

Upgrade your system. Windows XP is infinitely more susceptible to malware attacks than Windows 7 or 8. I have seen a number of XP systems that were completely destroyed by malware, but this is much more unusual with Windows 7 and 8. Actually I've never seen a Win8 system destroyed by malware – Microsoft claims that Win8 is more secure than any prior operating system – but of course we are still in the first inning of the Win8 lifecycle. Remember Microsoft is completely ending its support of XP Home and Pro next year. Microsoft supposedly ended “mainstream” support of XP in 2009, which might help explain the vulnerability seen in XP.

Upgrade Microsoft Office. This is vital if you protect your data using Microsoft encryption. Files encrypted with any version of Office prior to 2007 can be cracked with any number of free programs available in the Internet. Office 2007 and forward file encryption are considered secure, assuming a strong password.

Backup your system! System backups are something all experienced computer users have always recommended. The most effective way to restore your system to the way it was before it was infected is to do a full system restore. Windows 7 and 8 have a system backup feature included in their operating systems, and third party software such as Acronis or Casper is not expensive can create system clones as well as backups.

February Lab Monitor Schedule

Marcy Ishum John Zuzich	Saturday February 2, 2013
Millie Taylor Carol Przybyclen	Monday February 4, 2013
Leo Jarzomb Rebecca Kinn	Wednesday February 6, 2013
Fred Cohen Jim Enlow	Saturday February 9, 2013
Enid Hopkins Blanche York	Monday February 11, 2013
Tom Brennan Jan Edwards	Wednesday February 13, 2013
John Zuzich Raymond Pun	Saturday February 16, 2013
Marilyn Halvorson Marti Hamilton	Monday February 18, 2013
Opal Smith John Pollet	Wednesday February 20, 2013
Don Pickell Linda McMullin	Saturday February 23, 2013
Lowana Mannelin Jeff Southwell	Monday February 25, 2013
Brian Cunningham Tammy Collins	Wednesday February 27, 2013