

The Monthly Newsletter of the

Sun City Summerlin
Computer Club

www.scscc.club

February, 2020

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President's Message

by Jeff Wilkinson Modern Television Technology

After a recent class on "Getting the Most From Your Roku" and in preparation for a March General Meeting update on "Cutting the Cord" I reflected on how different television viewing is today. Growing up in San Francisco my family had just a few choices for television viewing, all over the air, and received with an antenna either mounted on the roof or rabbit ears that sat on top of the huge console. I'm sure we all remember the gyrations we went through when using rabbit ears in an attempt receive a stable snow and ghost free picture! And, of course, the drudgery of walking over to the TV to manually change the channel.

How times have changed, now we change channels from our favorite viewing spot and control source, volume, channel and even record our favorite shows!

Today, we watch TV on smart phones, tablets, computers and television sets in various resolutions. We stream to TV's using different devices like Roku, Fire TV Stick and Android boxes and we do it in a multitude of formats.

Many years and millions of dollars have been spent to build a streaming infrastructure capable of on-demand and live streaming to a myriad of different devices and configurations. The internet wasn't really set up to do this – top quality video in such a large scale according to said streaming media consultant and expert <u>Dan Rayburn</u>. Streaming isn't a static medium like TV, and our on-demand consumption pattern requires video to travel through lots of steps as it's formatted for the final destination device.

If you look at some of the parts of the required process of streaming a live event, it is a complicated and involved process. First you must capture the event, then convert the file format and maybe add a content protection scheme or ad insertion for on-demand revenue models and, finally, formatting for delivery through the internet to a multitude of devices.

According to Mr. Rayburn, it's a lot more complicated. There's no standard for encoding, so video files need to be "wrapped" differently for every platform they're delivered to; files are wrapped differently for Roku than they are for a desktop browser, a smart TV, or an Android or iOS device. A single video file could be wrapped 20 times or more depending on the devices to which it's being delivered. Enjoying video on a powerful computational device such an Xbox or PlayStation is different than streaming to a device with less memory and computational power such as a Fire Stick. The size of the video file segments must be adjusted as well as the metadata payload. And we have begun to take for granted that the video we desire will be available in 720, 1080p or even 4K quickly and reliably when and where we want it.

Gigabyte Gazette 1 February, 2020

Video streaming is a whole new frontier to be developed and as the deployment of streaming options continually expands, so must the technology and computing power needed to reliably deliver it.

Just a little background as to what is involved in streaming content as we all anxiously look for ways to improve our television viewing experience.

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

Submissions Welcome

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, send your articles to editor **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 8, 2020

Chuck Wolff made a motion that the minutes of the December 11 Board Meeting be approved. The motion was seconded by George Lobue and unanimously approved by the Board.

Howard Verne made a motion that the meeting adjourn at 10:05 AM. Chuck Hagan seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the Board. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 AM.

General Membership Meeting

Our next General Meeting will be held at 2 PM on Thursday, February 6, 2020 in Desert Vista Room 5.

The club will have a presentation from Wells Fargo about online banking security.

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>.

Welcome New Members

The following new members joined the Computer Club between December 28th and January 27th.

Ron Brow Jack Lohman
Fred Deuley Doug Riach
Lynn Elvaiah Maria Riach
Felix Faella, jr. May Sciascia
Charlotte Green Judith Williams
Gary Green

February 2020 Calendars

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

http://www.scscc.club/Calendars/scscc calendar 2020-02Feb.pdf

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>, <M> or <H> indicate whether a SIG would be of interest to a Windows, Macintosh or Hand-held Device user.

Genealogy Q&A <W/M>

4th Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon in the Lab Karen Ristic (702-749-6489)

Genealogy is one of America's most popular and rewarding hobbies. With billions of records now available online, researching your family tree has never been easier – if you know where to look and which keywords you'll need to use to create an accurate family tree from start to finish.

Hardware / Software Repair Lab <W/M >

Every Tuesday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Chuck Wolff (702-233-6634) and Chuck Hagen (702-418-2614)

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**.

Internet Investing <W/M/H>

3rd Thursday, 9:00 a.m. in even months Next meeting: February 20th Tom Burt (702-341-7095)

The Internet Investing SIG provides a forum for members interested in using Internet resources for researching and managing investments to meet, discuss, and learn more about the topic. The SIG's target audience is members with intermediate computer skills and investment experience, but all members are welcome.

iPad/iPod/iPhone <H>

4th Wednesday, 9 a.m. Zane Clark (702-562-3684)

This SIG is your forum for learning about and discussing the Apple iPhone, iPad tablet and iPod devices as well as Macintosh PCs. It's for Apple users of all experience levels.

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. 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 (iOS or Android) user.

Windows 10 SIG / Q&A <W>

First and Third Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. Bill Wilkinson (702-233-4977)

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 these Win 10 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 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.

Kaffee Klatch < W/M/H>

Every Tuesday, 8:30 a.m. Sandy Mintz (702-838-2525)

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." Since our SCSCC is built on "neighbor helping neighbor," if you have a tip or information, we encourage you to bring it in and share. 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 2020 Education Offerings

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



"All Things Apple" Q&A

9 AM on First and Third Wednesdays (February 5 & 19)

Presenter: Zane Clark

Location: SCSCC Classroom

Bring your Apple iPhone, iPad, Watch or MacBook to get one on one help with your questions about how to use any Apple device and popular iOS or MacOS apps.



"Ask Chuck" Q&A

Thursday, February 13th at 1 PM Presenter: Chuck Strickland Location: SCSCC Classroom

Chuck will hold forth in the classroom, answering your technical questions. If you wish, you can e-mail your questions ahead of the session to: chuckstr89134@gmail.com.



Introduction to Photoshop Elements & Layers

Wednesday, February 19th at 1 PM

Presenter: Mary Miles

Location: SCSCC Classroom

Mary will provide a beginner-level tutorial on the powerful Photoshop Elements image-editing program, including how to use the Layers capability to create some exciting effects with your photos.



Android Q&A

Thursday, February 20th at 1 PM

Presenter: Susan Heifetz Location: SCSCC Classroom

Bring your Android phone and Susan will answer your questions about how to use the phone and popular Android apps.



Let's Talk (Genealogy) and Lab Monitors

4th Saturday (February 22nd), 9:00 am to 12:00 pm Presenters/Monitors: Karen and Ray Ristic Location: SCSCC Computer Lab

Genealogists ask a lot of questions. That's what research is all about! Google can provide you many websites with genealogy questions to ask of those you are researching for family information. Many websites are particularly of value especially when you have little or no data about your ancestors.

So, if you have a question or two about genealogy or you've hit a brick wall in your family history research, come for a visit to the Computer Lab and we'll talk about it. The computers in the Computer Lab have Family Tree Maker on all of them.

Karen Ristic and Ray Ristic have been doing family history research for over 40 years, teaching classes, members and officers of genealogy societies, and have published two of their own family history books. Drop by to "*Let's Talk*" to get direction and/or answers to your own genealogy questions.



Managing Your Digital Videos

Thursday, February 27th, 2020 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Presenter: Tom Burt

Location: SCSCC Classroom

With the widespread adoption of smartphones, everyone now has a ready-to-use digital camcorder right in the palm of their hand. Anytime, anywhere, you can just launch the Camera app, aim and tap the video record button and morph yourself into the next Cecil B. DeMille. The challenge is what to do with those recorded video clips and still shots to turn them into interesting, unified and artistic productions, worthy of deployment to Facebook, Twitter or YouTube or perhaps just for entertaining visiting company.

In this two-hour session, we'll cover the end-to-end process:

- Recording digital videos on your cell phone
- Moving video clips and still photos to your PC or Mac
- Using a video editing tool to combine and cut your video clips and stills, add sound, titles, transitions and effects
- Rendering the finished movie to a video file or DVD
- Sharing your finished video file on social media sites

For the video editing demo, we'll explore a new open source (free) program called **OpenShot**. The content and methodology of this seminar would also generally apply to other programs like Movie Maker, VideoPad, Pinnacle Studio and even iMovie.

The target audience for this seminar is SCSCC members who are comfortable using a PC and are interested in learning to produce their own videos. However, all members are welcome. Seminar notes will be available about February 23rd at www.scscc.club/smnr.



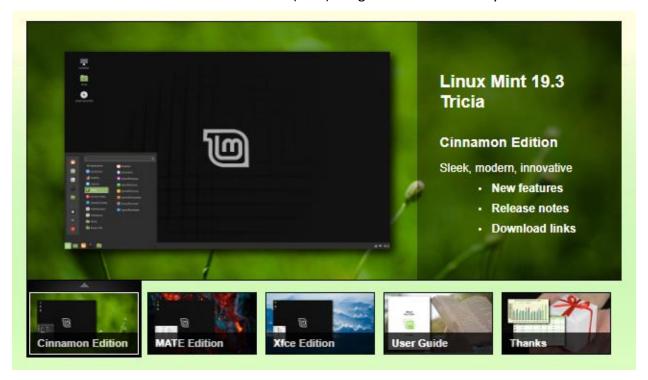
Tom's Tech-Notes

Desktop Linux Mint 19.3 Tom Burt, SCSCC Vice-President

Even though I'm predominantly a Windows 10 user, every 18 months or so, I teach a seminar on "What's New with Linux". As you might guess, it doesn't usually draw much of a crowd. My favorite "distro" (version) is Linux Mint because it's free (open source), it comes with a very nice graphical desktop (actually, a choice of three), it includes lots of bundled applications, it's well-supported and it performs great on old, low-end hardware. Also, because it its internal design, Linux is innately very secure. With Windows 7 losing support from Microsoft as of January 14th, if you're now among the Windows 7 orphans, you might want to consider installing Linux Mint to replace or run alongside Windows 7 on your "well-seasoned" PC. Following is an overview of Linux Mint 19.3, the newest version released in December, 2019.

How to Get and Install Linux Mint 19.3

Browse to: https://linuxmint.com/. The home page has lots of links to information about Linux. Click one of the buttons to choose which desktop version (Cinnamon, Mate or Xfce) to download. A page of information, including download links, will appear. Click one of the "USA" download links to download a 64-bit "ISO" (DVD) image file to a folder on your PC's hard drive.



LinuxMint.org Home Page with Cinnamon Desktop Version selected

Once the Linux Mint ISO download is complete, you can burn the ISO image to a DVD to make a bootable setup DVD. Or, you can download and use a free program called **balena Etcher** (https://www.balena.io/etcher/) to convert the ISO image to a bootable USB flash drive.

To get a feel for Linux Mint, you can simply boot and run Linux Mint from the boot media without installing it. This is called a "live session". The live session desktop includes an "Install Linux" icon that will let you install Linux. In the installer, you can choose to replace the current operating system, or you can install Linux Mint alongside the current operating system. This will configure your PC to dual-boot Linux and Windows. The 64-bit Linux Mint configuration defaults are fine and the installer will automatically handle secure boot and UEFI issues.

For comprehensive Linux Mint installation instructions, see: https://linuxmint-installation-guide.readthedocs.io/en/latest/index.html

Another alternative is to set up Linux Mint in a virtual machine. For this I use **Oracle Virtual Box** (https://virtualbox.org). After the empty virtual machine has been set up, boot it from the Linux Mint ISO and install Linux Mint to the virtual machine's virtual hard drive. To learn more, see my **Virtual Machine seminar** at: https://www.scscc.club/smnr/Virtual Machine Primer.pdf.

Exploring Linux Mint Cinnamon



Linux Mint with Cinnamon Desktop

Linux Mint is a Windows 7 work-alike, so it's relatively easy for a Windows user to get going with it. The above screen shot of the desktop shows desktop icons, a Task Bar with a Start button, "quick launch" icons and a tray area and a customizable desktop background.

You open the Start Menu by clicking the lower left corner. The Start

Menu has a pane at the left for launching key applications and functions, a search window at the top, a column of application categories and, for a selected category, a list of the applications in that category. A scroll bar appears at the right edge when needed.



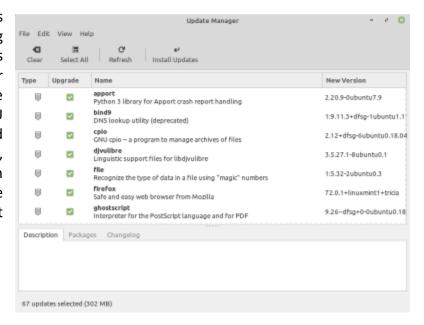


Linux Mint Cinnamon Start Menu Screen Shots

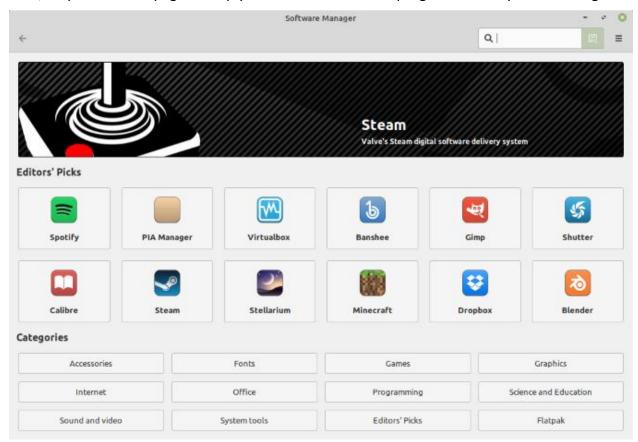
Among the bundled applications in Mint 19.3 are **Libre Office**, which includes a spreadsheet, word processor, presentation graphics, drawing and flowcharting, and several others. Libre Office is able to open and save in MS Office file formats. The Firefox web browser and the Thunderbird email program are also bundled. Mint 19.3 features a new video player named Celluloid and a music player named Rhythmbox. Accessories include a calendar, calculator, file viewer, a password manager and a note-taking tool.

The **Preferences** settings tool allows you to customize the look and feel of Linux Mint. This includes choosing your desktop background (pictures, solid colors, gradients).

The **Update Manager** handles checking for and installing updates to Linux Mint and its applications. The Update Manager alerts when new updates are available via its tray icon, but YOU decide when to actually download and install them. To launch it, click its icon on the tray. You can select any or all of the available updates. Generally, you will want to install all of them.



The **Software Manager** allows you to access Mint's online repository which claims over 60,000 free, open source applications and install whichever ones you desire. Launch the Software Manager from Start Menu > Administration > Software Manager. When you click the link for an item, it opens a detail page to help you decide whether the program is what you're looking for.



Final Thoughts

I set up Linux Mint 19.3 in a Virtual Box virtual machine to get the screen shots for this article. I booted the virtual machine from the downloaded Mint 19.3 64-bit ISO image and then double-clicked the "Install" icon on the desktop. Other than that, I made a few clicks to select language, keyboard and time zone and entered my account credentials. The entire setup was done in about 15 minutes. I chose a desktop background and was ready to go. My virtual machine boots to the Linux desktop in about 15 seconds. What could be easier?

That's about all I can cover in my allotted space. Check out my Linux seminar handout at: https://www.scscc.club/smnr/Desktop_Linux_Fresh_Look.pdf.

Until next month ...



Kretchmar's Korner

By David Kretchmar, Computer Technician

Recover Your WiFi Password

Computer users often seek technical support when they are unable to access the Internet via their home wireless system.

First the technician will usually walk the user through the reset procedure for the router or router/modem (turn them off and on). If that does not fix the problem and it is determined the router is putting out a good signal the subsequent conversation often goes something like this:

Technician: What is your password for your router?

User: I don't have a password.

Technician: If your router is not secured (i.e. password protected) you should be able to connect to it.

User: I don't have a password. I just click on the Google (or other browser) icon and get online.

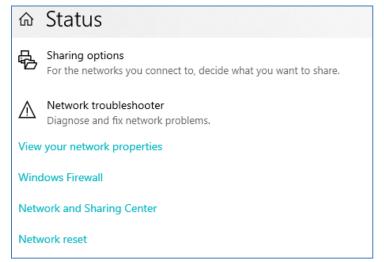
At this point Technician explains to User that the WiFi password is stored on User's computer, and that a few steps are required to access that password. The technician might guide the user through a process to recover the password using the following procedure.

If the computer connects to the WiFi automatically

With the latest version of Windows 10 Microsoft has buried the WiFi password on a computer more deeply than with prior versions of Windows. You can still find your WiFi password using the following procedure:

Find your way to the "Wireless Properties"

Right click on the Internet access icon on the right side of your Taskbar then click on "Open Network and Internet Settings". Click on "Status" then click on "Network and Sharing Center".



Under "Internet" click on your network name (in blue) then click on "Wireless Properties".

Under "security" you can see the hidden password after you click on "show characters".

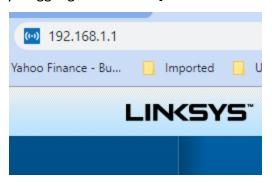
If you only own a smartphone/tablet or have a PC which has not stored the WiFi password

Log in to your router as an administrator. You can access your

router by entering its IP address into your browser, such as Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge. You can research the default IP address of your router by Goggling "IP address [brand name of

your router]. Every router I've dealt with had an address of "192.168.X.Y". The most common value for both X and Y is the number 1. If that does not work, try substituting the numbers 0 or 2 for X.

After you've logged in, you should be able to find the WiFi settings on the Administrative pages of your router. There you can look up your WiFi password.



If you are like many people

The WiFi password is written on a sticker at the back of your router. This is how I usually set up home routers and it might be a good thing to do after you have recovered your WiFi password.

This is a simple but effective strategy, since it is so easy to find.

A burglar would have to break into your home to steal your password, and they probably would focus on more tangible items.

APCUG Guest Article

Google Fi

(Short for Fidelity, maybe a country code for Finland, or a new network?)

By Phil Sorrentino, Secretary & APCUG Rep
The Computer Club, FL
www.scccomputerclub.org / philsorr (at) yahoo.com

All are correct, but it is the new service that Google is making available that is the real news. At the last meeting where I had a chance to ask, "how many have a smartphone," there was a resounding show of hands that indicated almost 100 % of the attendees had one. (There were actually a few "flip phone" hold outs.) Although this was a "technically inclined" group of people, it is still amazing since the smartphone was only invented in 2007. In just 11 years the smartphone has had an enormous market penetration. Actually, the statistics show that 95% of all Americans own a cell phone and that 77% of all Americans own a smartphone. That's around 250 million people in the US using smartphones.

The smartphone is the device that we come in contact with and are most familiar with, but it is the underlying network that the smartphone uses that allows it to connect to all the people and servers that we want to contact. Yes, we use the smartphone to contact people by voice, video and texts, but we also contact and communicate with servers like Google, Yahoo, Facebook, Amazon, Wikipedia, Alexa, Twitter, CNN, SunTrust, etc. to do our bidding. None of this contact would be possible without the network that connects these servers to our clients (smartphones, tablets, and computers). That's right, our smartphones are the clients in the Client-Server arrangement that makes our phone so useful. (If you had attended one of my internet related classes you would have known that.) So, without the network, our clients would not be able to contact the servers and the servers would just be left idle. But there is a network; in fact, there are 4 major networks in the United States that offer nationwide wireless services: AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, and Verizon. (Listed alphabetically, not by size or customer service quality or any other quality.) US Cellular also provides regional wireless services, but not quite nationwide.

And now Google is proposing another network service. No, it's is not going out and building cell phone towers; it is putting together the already available cell phone tower networks from some of the other network operators and making them available through a service called Google Fi. Google Fi will provide your phone the best of any of the three networks, Sprint, T-Mobile, or U.S. Cellular, by intelligently switching to the best network at that time and location. (Notice the two missing providers.) And it will use Wi-Fi to make calls and send texts whenever it can, thus possibly saving data. And when it connects via Wi-Fi, it automatically employs a Virtual Private Network (VPN) which encrypts all of the communications to keep them safe. They say that calls and texts work on Wi-Fi just as they do when you're using mobile data, and you can continue your phone call as your phone switches between the networks. To do all this magic, Google Fi uses a special Subscriber Identity Module (SIM) card. A SIM card usually identifies the phone (device) to the network. This special SIM card can identify your device to all three networks, T-Mobile, Sprint, and U.S. Cellular. And the really neat feature is that it can switch

between the networks on-the-fly, based on many factors. You can order a free SIM card during the sign-up process or you can purchase one at an authorized retailer. SIM cards are now available at Best Buy and online from their website. The SIM card costs \$10, but it comes with a \$10 account that essentially makes it free.

Not all phones can be used on Google Fi; only *unlocked* phones can be used with the service. Recall that a locked phone can only be used on one specific network. (If you purchased your phone through Google Fi or the Google Store, your device is unlocked.) So, the phone you use must be unlocked. If you aren't sure if your phone is unlocked, you can contact your current network or the place where you purchased your phone. Also, you need to make sure you don't owe any payments on your device. All Android phones must be using Android 7.0 as a minimum and have LTE bands 2 and 4 (again, the place you bought your phone could probably help you with this.) The Samsung Galaxy 6, 7, 8, and 9, as well as the Motorola G5, 6, and Z 2 & 3 will probably work. And all iOS models must run iOS 11 or higher. The Apple 5, 6, 7, 8 and X should also be ok. (Phones that have been designed specifically for Fi, like the Pixel 2 or 3, sold by Google, will probably give you the best experience.)

The cost for the Google Fi service is not cheap but its billing is fairly straightforward. You pay \$20 per month for unlimited talk minutes and texts, and a flat rate of \$10 per gigabyte of data used (in .1gigabyte increments) until you get to 6 Gigabytes (\$60) for the month. At that point you enter the "Bill Protection" level and effectively you have an unlimited plan for the rest of that month. That way you can use as much data as you need for the month without paying over \$80 total (\$20 base + \$60 data). Most of us would probably never get to the Bill Protection level, but if you did by accident you would be protected with this maximum expense cap. (There is another change at 15GB but most of us will probably never reach this.) With this type of billing, you don't have to pay for an "unlimited" plan every month, but you have one for any month when it may be required. This may be interesting for frequent travelers because the Bill Protection applies to international data usage as well as data usage at home. You can also set up a Group Plan for up to six people to share a single account. With the Group Plan, each additional person is \$5 less for the base plan charge, or only \$15 per month. Billing is handled by the account owner who is charged for the total bill, though it can be set up for each individual Group member.

So now you can get your network service through Google Fi, which tries to give you the best experience from three networks, instead of your smartphone being married to one specific network as most phones are.

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February Lab Monitor Schedule

Open Lab sessions are held twice per week: 9 am to noon on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

February Monitors	Monitor Schedule
Jeff Southwell	Saturday
Ann Warhaftig	2/1/2020
Bonnie Lum	Wednesday
Mitch Swetsky	2/5/2020
Jim Enlow	Saturday
Fred Cohen	2/8/2020
Jim Edwards	Wednesday
Jan Edwards	2/12/2020
Mary Hedin	Saturday
John Zuzich	2/15/2020
Blanche York	Wednesday
	2/19/2020
Ray Ristic	Saturday
Karen Ristic	2/22/2020
Mitch Swetsky	Wednesday
	2/26/2020
Gail Weiss	Saturday
Linda McMullin	2/29/2020