

THE GIGABYTE GAZETTE

The Monthly Newsletter
of the
*Sun City Summerlin
Computer Club*
www.scsccl.com

March, 2020

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President's Message

by Jeff Wilkinson

Thinking of Buying a New Router?

Purchasing a new router can be an intimidating task. Trying to decide what you need and how to make the correct selection from the myriad offerings can certainly use some clarification. Having just gone through this experience, I thought I'd offer some guidelines.

If you have a modem/router supplied by your internet service provider and you are tired of paying a rental fee each month, you may also want to consider *purchasing* your own modem and router.

Overwhelming as it can be, let's see if we can sort it out. Your router is the central hub of your home network. The internet connection is input to the router from the cable modem and the signals are "routed" to your devices by either direct connection or WiFi. You will want to choose a router that is powerful enough and has enough features to service all your current devices and has some expansion or growth capacity for future needs.

A first step would be to estimate the number of devices you expect to connect to you network via WiFi – such as your smartphone, laptop computer, streaming device like a Roku or Amazon Fire TV, WiFi thermostat, newer IoT appliances and Kindle devices. Next look at the size of your home and the locations where you will be using any of the wireless devices. If your home is over 2,500 square feet, you may want to consider a mesh wireless system. That requires multiple devices and can become expensive and is generally not needed in our community. Expensive doesn't always mean better!

Then consider the location of your internet connection, where your cable modem is located or where the internet connection enters the residence. This is the location where you would most likely locate your router and you would want it to allow for strategic placement of the router. Up high rather than on the floor is desired. Open surroundings rather than behind equipment or in a cabinet would also be preferred.

Looking at routers and their advertised specs, they often sum up speeds of the various bands which is a meaningless number for all practical purposes. If the top speed from your Internet Service Provider (ISP) is 100 Mbps having a router capable of 800 Mbps is not necessary. An AC750 would work well for a single user.

You will want to look at routers with an "AC" prefix on the model number, AC750, AC1750, AC1900 etc. The AC prefix indicates WiFi-5 standards and AX indicates WiFi-6, which is the current latest standard but can be a bit pricey. Many of your current WiFi devices won't support the AX standard. The iPhone 11 and Samsung Galaxy S10 are exceptions.

The numbers after the prefix give you a rough sense of the combined speeds of each of the router's bands - typically 2.4 and 5GHz, and perhaps a second 5GHz band if we're talking about a triband router. Since a device can only use one band at a time the number is not all that

relevant and is a theoretical number achievable in a controlled lab environment, maybe. Of course, your speed will vary!

For the typical user in our community, someone who uses the internet to check email, surf the internet, buy on-line occasionally, and has a smart phone, a dual band router can be had for under \$100. I don't think our internet speed will increase much from where it is today given the infrastructure upgrades required, so a superfast tri-band router is generally not needed although that is what I wound up with.

The common manufacturers are Netgear, Asus, D-Link, TP-Link and Linksys but there are many others. A router should be easy to setup and require little to no maintenance. You can read users' reviews at many web sites to help make a decision.

Routers are fairly easy to install and setup. Many come with Apps for your smartphone which can guide you through the process. We also have club members who can help install and setup a new router.

So, in conclusion, a router upgrade can be a major improvement to your home network.

Jeff Wilkinson, President

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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 February 12, 2020

Chuck Wolff made a motion that the minutes of the January 8 Board Meeting be approved. The motion was seconded by George Lobue and unanimously approved by the Board.

George Lobue made a motion that the meeting adjourn at 10:35 AM. Chuck Hagan seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the Board. The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 AM.

General Membership Meeting

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

The club will have a presentation from club President Jeff Wilkinson: "Cutting the Cord - Update"

For Club information: go to www.scsccl.com, contact Jeff Wilkinson, President at (702) 527-4056 or email him at pres.scsccl@gmail.com.

Welcome New Members

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

**Barbara Beck
Helen Delahunt
Dori Gonzales
Eugene Hergenreder
Nancy Hergenreder
Valerie Hodgson
Margaret Huebner
Alice Huie-Stein**

**Suzanne Hurley
Mark James
Paula James
Tom Jenks
John Kraus
John Liebmann
Suzi Longfield
Nancy Maier**

**Greg Pearson
Elaine Richard
Tony Richard
Mickye Sedler
Judy Stanek
Michael Stein
Carol Tanko
Steven Williams**

March 2020 Calendars

To view this month's classroom and lab calendars, click the following hyperlink:
http://www.scsccl.com/Calendars/scsccl_calendar_2020-03Mar.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

Next session: March 28th

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.

Internet Investing <W/M/H>

3rd Thursday, 9:00 a.m. in even months

Next meeting: April 16th

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.

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.***

iPad/iPod/iPhone <H>

4th Wednesday, 9 a.m.

Next meeting: March 25th

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 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.

Education Offerings

Unless otherwise noted, Seminars, SIGs, Q&As and Kaffee Klatches are held in the Computer Club classroom at the Pinnacle community center. Unless explicitly stated, advance registration is not required for classroom sessions. Seating is first-come, first-seated.



“All Things Apple” Q&A

**9 AM on First and Third Wednesdays (March 4 & 18)
Presenter: Zane Clark**

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.



“Cutting the Cord” Q&A

**Wednesday, March 11th at 5:30 PM
Presenter: Jeff Wilkinson**

Jeff will answer your questions about “cutting the cord” – alternatives to Cox, DirecTV and Dish TV services.



Seminar - MS Excel Basics

**Wednesday, March 18th at 1 PM
Presenter: Howard Verne**

Howard will present an introduction to the Microsoft Excel 2016 spreadsheet program.



Android Q&A

Thursday, March 19th at 1 PM

Presenter: Susan Heifetz

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



Seminar - Building a WordPress Website

Thursday, March 26th 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Presenter: Tom Burt

Location: SCSCC Classroom

Building and managing a personal or business website can be a challenge, even for experienced computer users.

WordPress.com offers an alternative that allows you to set up and manage a professional-looking website in the form of a Web Log (BLOG). Even better – it's **FREE!** WordPress currently hosts many thousands of business and personal websites. Most paid web hosting services like GoDaddy and HostGator also allow you to install WordPress on your site and use its tools and content management.

This two-hour session will walk through the steps to set up a free account at WordPress.com and then to use the WordPress web-based authoring tools to create an interesting, great-looking custom personal website. We'll cover how to do simple text posts and then add pictures, additional pages and other media and widgets. We'll look at how to customize the look and feel of your site using themes. We'll review some of the WordPress tools that help you manage your site. Finally, we'll look at some guidelines to help make your website easy to use.

Updated seminar notes will be available about March 21 at: www.scscclub.com/smnr.



"Ask Chuck" Q&A

Thursday, March 26th 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.



Let's Talk Genealogy Q&A *and* Lab Monitors

4th Saturday (March 28th), 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.



Seminar - Tips and Tricks for Gmail

Saturday, March 28, 2020 at 9:30AM

Presenter: Gail Weiss

Gmail is one of the main email service providers with many great features. Although a lot of users use it, only a few of us are aware of the advanced Gmail features that are available. Many amazing features are hidden within your Gmail account in plain sight. With a Gmail account, you can also have access to any of Google's other applications for FREE.

In my March class I will share some of these advanced features with you. Please bring your own questions as well.

For more information about this class or if you have any questions or ideas for future classes, please email me at gmweiss5@gmail.com.

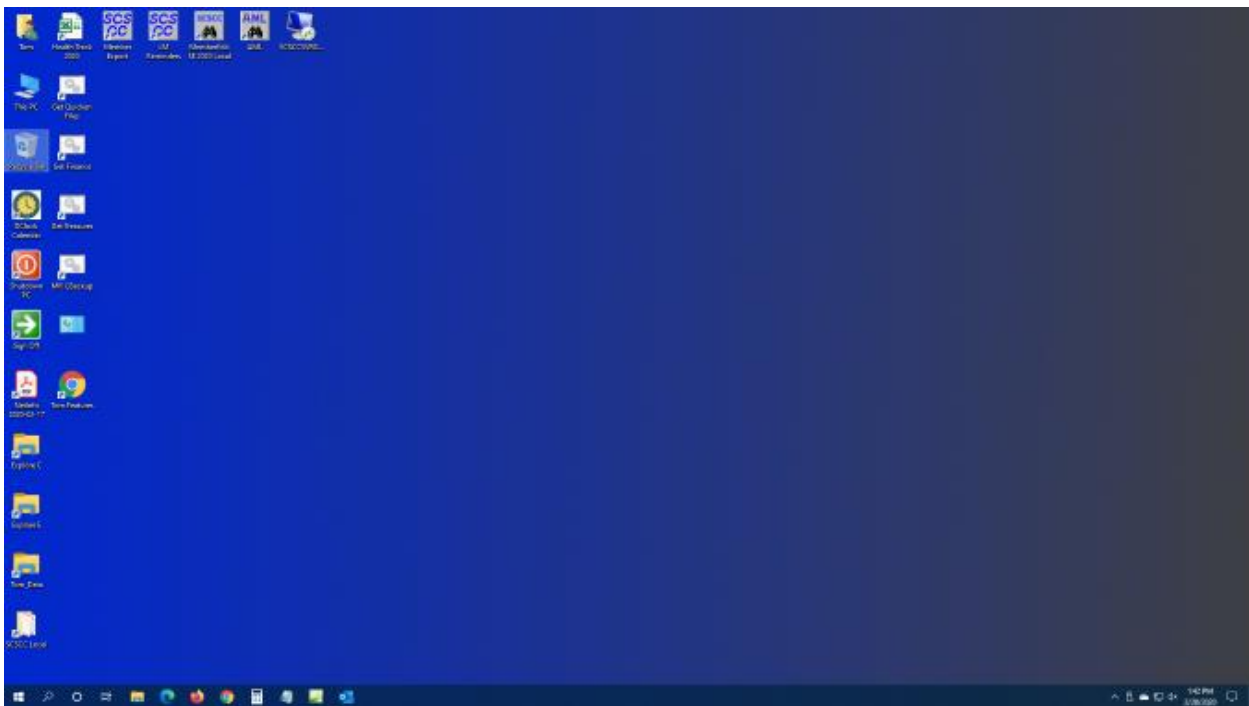


Tom's Tech-Notes

Tuning Up Your Windows 10 Start Menu *(Updated from November, 2016)*

Tom Burt, SCSCC Vice-President

Windows 10 was originally released in July, 2015. It's latest major update is V1909 – Fall, 2209. By now, most Windows 10 users have received that update. Originally, I had mixed feelings about Windows 10's new hybrid "list and tiles" Start menu. However, I gradually came to like it as a way to declutter my desktop and actually make it easier to find things. Here's a screen shot of my desktop today:



Tom's Windows 10 Desktop

The exact details don't matter. As you can see, I have about two dozen icons on the desktop that I use to launch applications, access data folders or run command scripts. Over four years of using Windows 10, I've steadily reduced the original number of desktop icons by half. However, even now, when I'm working intensely and need to start an application while I have others running, it gets irritating. Often I have to minimize or move those other apps to uncover the desktop icons so I can double-click the one I need to launch the new app. Also, to launch from a desktop icon I need to *double-click* it – something my aging fingers no longer do well. (Note - I prefer *not* to use the "single click to open" setting - too many misfires.)

The Windows 10 V1909 Start Menu is the best incarnation yet and helps me with some of the above issues. You can open the Start Menu by clicking the flag icon at the far left of the task bar or by simply pressing the Windows key. Following is a screen shot of my current Start menu:



Tom's Windows 10 Start Menu

I have stretched the Start menu out to allow three 3-column groups and have all my tiles sized to the medium, square size. In this layout, I don't need to scroll to find a particular tile. The tiles are grouped and labeled along functional lines, such as "Useful Tools", "Image and Video Tools", "Finance, Business and Tax", "MS office 365" and others. The app tiles I use most are at the top left.

To launch an app, I just press the Windows key to pop open the Start menu and then click the tile of the app. The app starts up and the Start menu closes back up. I no longer need to uncover desktop icons and double click. Tiles are especially nice on hand-held touch screen devices .

Down the left side of the Start menu is the standard complete, alphabetical list of all installed programs. You can right-click on any program in the list and choose "Pin to Start" to add a tile for that program to the array of tiles. You can then drag the tile to wherever you want it in either an existing group or a new group. You can right click the tile to adjust its size to small, medium, wide or large. The wide and large sizes are useful for "modern" apps that animate their tiles with "live" content. News and Weather apps are examples. The medium tiles display the app's name and an icon.

You can adjust the width of the Start menu by opening it, positioning the mouse cursor over the right edge until the cursor turns to a double arrow, and then dragging to the right (to widen) or to the left (to narrow). Tile groups will automatically move to fit the new shape of the Start menu window. You can adjust the height of the Start menu by opening it, positioning the mouse cursor over the top edge until the cursor turns to a double arrow, and then dragging up or down.

You can rename tile groups by clicking the space just above the group and then typing a name. You can move entire groups around by clicking and dragging the group's title space.

To remove a tile from the Start menu, right click it and select "Unpin from Start". That program will still be listed in the Start menu's left-side list of all installed programs. I got rid of quite a few of the Windows default tiles for apps like Candy Crush that I never use.

To add a tile/icon to the Windows Taskbar, right click either the tile or the program name in the program list. In the pop-up menu, hover the mouse over the "More" option to get a second pop-up and choose "Pin to Taskbar". After the icon appears on the Taskbar, you can drag it left or right to where you want it to be permanently.

You can also add desktop (or other) shortcut icons to the Start menu's tile set. Just right click the desktop shortcut and choose "Pin to Start". This will create a new tile on the Start menu that points to the app or folder targeted by the original desktop shortcut. You can then remove the original shortcut from the desktop. This can help to further declutter your Windows desktop.

You may have noticed that my Start menu is colored differently than the Windows 10 default. It's easy to customize the Start menu's color. Go to **Start > Settings > Personalization > Colors** and then, under "**Choose your accent color**", pick a color from the Windows colors palette or click the + icon to choose a custom color. The accent color is used as the color of window title bars and as the background for the Start menu. The background color of the tiles is also colored to complement the accent color.

So that's a quick summary of things you can do to make the Windows 10 Start menu work better for you!

Until next month ...

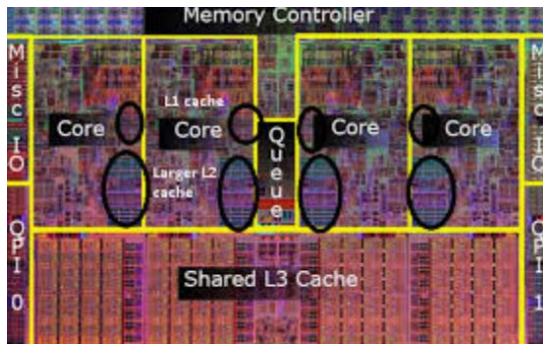


Kretchmar's Korner

By David Kretchmar, Computer Technician

What is Computer Memory and How is it Used?

CPU Cache



Think of your computer as analogous to a workshop creating widgets.

The CPU (central processing unit) core is the worker, so a dual-core CPU would be the equivalent of two workers working together, a quad-core CPU would be four workers and so on. Obviously, the more cores you have the more work you can get done in the same amount of time. CPU cores have their own small amount of memory called the CPU cache. This form of memory is the shortest-term memory. It is also the fastest form of memory.

System RAM

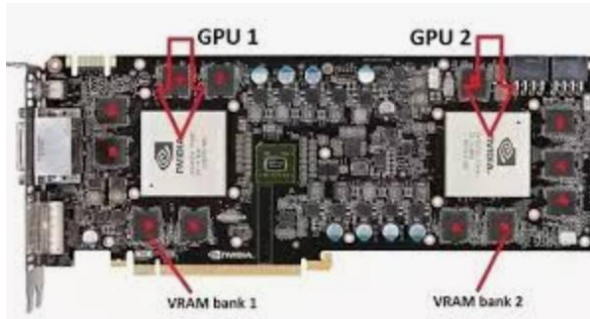


The system RAM (random access memory) could be the equivalent of the work area (working surfaces), so the more RAM you have the more available workspace that your workers (CPU cores) can use to speed up various tasks. Microsoft recommends a minimum of 2GB of RAM for Windows 10, but the standard new computer today comes with a minimum of 8GB. System RAM is much faster than a

typical hard drive.

System RAM is used up in two ways. First is to store information that will be frequently referenced like data for a program you are running and overflow from the CPU cache. The other way is as improvised VRAM. If you have a dedicated graphics card, that seriously reduces the stress on your RAM. However, if you do not have enough RAM it slows down your system notably.

Video RAM



VRAM (Video Random Access Memory) is pronounced "V-RAM." System RAM is great for loading and running programs, but when you need graphics power, VRAM is where it's at. This is the memory used to store screen image data that the computer displays; it acts as a buffer between the CPU and the video card. VRAM tends to be significantly faster than system RAM. It is RAM that is dedicated to the

Graphical Processing Unit (GPU) and some other applications that require tremendous amount of computing power (i.e. blockchain). GPUs usually utilize RAM that will not be released to be used for system RAM for several years.

The Hard Drive



The hard drive would be the longer-term storage area, where all the materials are kept until needed. Finished work is then stored on separate storage areas. Hard drives are by far the slowest form of memory in your computer.

By having a large work area (lots of RAM), the workers have to make less trips back and forth to the storage area to retrieve materials and put away anything they have completed or don't need at that moment, which speeds up overall workflow.

You can see from this analogy how having multiple cores and large amounts of RAM and hard drive space really works together to make a computer faster and more responsive. When you double the amount of working space your machine has available, minimizing hard drive access, which is slower than reading and writing to RAM. That alone should give you a noticeable performance increase.

Conclusions

The amount of system RAM you have doesn't really matter as long as you have enough. If you do not have enough RAM, then your computer is forced to create virtual RAM on your slower hard drive. If you do not have a video card, system RAM is used as a substitute for VRAM, which slows performance.

Obviously, when you have 8GB of RAM, that is twice as much RAM space as 4GB, meaning that you can store twice as much data in your RAM before your computer is forced to resort to utilizing hard drive storage. The main goal with system RAM is to avoid, if possible, using hard drive storage. Most computer experts today recommend a minimum of 8GB for a computer or 4GB for a smartphone.

APCUG Guest Article

Let's Be Safe Out There! (Review of havelbeenpwned.com)

By Matt Batt, President, The Computer Club, FL
<https://www.sccccomputerclub.org> mbatt453 (at) gmail.com

We've all heard about all the hackers and the data breaches that have happened to so many on-line sites. We shudder when we hear the names of the sites. But ... what we don't know is if our *own* email address and passwords were actually compromised.

There is a website, havelbeenpwned.com, that has collected the information published by hacked companies when they disclose those email addresses that have been compromised. This website has been operational for five years, gets about 60,000 visitors a day and seems to be a safe site to use. Its purpose is to provide the general public a convenient way to see if their private information has been leaked or compromised.

When you bring up the havelbeenpwned.com site, you are greeted with a field to type in your email address and instructions to "Check if you have an account that has been compromised in a data breach." It is safe to type in your email address. You aren't disclosing any information that isn't all over the web already.

After you type in your email address and click on "pwned?", you will either get Oh ho – pwned! Or Good news – no pwnage found! If you have been part of a breach, you will see a description of each breach along with the date of the breach and what was compromised. In my case, my email address and password were compromised in the Adobe breach of 2013 and in the Zomato breach in May of 2017. It suddenly seemed like a really good idea to change my password.

You can select an option for the site to notify you if your email address shows up on any new list of breaches email addresses. When you select "notify Me" from the page menu, you'll have to prove you are not a robot and you'll be sent a verification to confirm that you are real.

If you discover that you have been breached, do change your password on that email account. Also, if you use that same password on other accounts, change them also.

"Let's be careful out there!"

Lab Monitor Schedule

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

March Monitors	Monitor Schedule
Bonnie Lum Mitch Swetsky	Wednesday 3/4/2020
Jeff Southwell Linda McMullin	Saturday 3/7/2020
Jim Edwards Jan Edwards	Wednesday 3/11/2020
Jim Enlow Fred Cohen	Saturday 3/14/2020
Blanche York	Wednesday 3/18/2020
Mary Hedin John Zuzich	Saturday 3/21/2020
Mitch Swetsky	Wednesday 3/25/2020
Ray Ristic Karen Ristic	Saturday 3/28/2020