THE GIGABYTE GAZETTE

The Monthly Newsletter

of the

**Sun City Summerlin
Computer Club**

www.scscc.club

April, 2020

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Tom Burt	**Peggy Cushman**
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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
(702) 527-4056   *pres.scscc@gmail.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 March 11, 2020**

Chuck Wolff made a motion that the minutes of the February 12 Board Meeting be approved. The motion was seconded by Hagen and unanimously approved by the Board.

Howard Verne made a motion that the meeting adjourn at 9:40 AM. Chuck Hagen seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved by the Board. The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 AM.

General Membership Meeting

Our Thursday, April 2 General Meeting is CANCELED in compliance with the Association's cancelation of all community center meetings and the State's restriction of meetings to no more than 10 attendees.

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

Welcome New Members

The following new members joined the Computer Club between
February 28th and March 25th.

David Gilyan	**Mark O'Rourke**
Jehangir Jasavala	**Annette White**

As of March 25th, the club has 527 paid memberships for 2020.

April 2020 Calendars

To view this month's classroom and lab calendars, click the following hyperlink:
http://www.scscc.club/Calendars/scscc_calendar_2020-04Apr.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> *DARK*
4th Saturday, 9 a.m. to noon in the Lab
Next session: April 25th
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> *DARK*
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 > *DARK*
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> *DARK*
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> *DARK*
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> *DARK*
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 *DARK*

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.

~~Seminar - MS Excel Basics~~ *CANCELED*

Wednesday, April 1st at 1 PM
This session had been rescheduled from March 18th
Presenter: Howard Verne

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

~~Android Q&A~~ *DARK*

Thursday, April 15th 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.

~~"Ask Chuck" Q&A~~ *DARK*

Thursday, April 16th 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~~ *DARK*

4th Saturday (April 25th), 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.

Tom's Tech-Notes

Video Chatting Apps
Skype, Facebook Messenger and Others

Tom Burt, SCSCC Vice-President

What an amazing turn of events we've had in the last month. As I write this on March 25th, 2020, the Coronavirus pandemic has led to extensive 'stay at home" policies in New York, California and even here in Las Vegas. As members of the "Over-70" community here in Sun City Summerlin, Mrs. Burt and I have been pretty much staying in except for going out to get the mail and package deliveries.

While we're practicing "social distancing", I got interested in ways to use video chatting to have face-to-face interaction with friends, family and potentially with doctors (tele-medicine) and that led to this month's article. **Video chatting** is a real-time video/audio conversation between two or more parties connected via the Internet. They use your device's webcam, microphone and speaker to create a virtual face-to-face interaction between you one or more other connected parties. These connections can be full audio and video, audio only or even just text messaging, depending on what hardware features are available.

We'll start with an overview of some of the major video chatting apps and services and then delve into Facebook Messenger and Microsoft Skype in more detail to illustrate how it's done.

Video Chatting Apps Overview

I found a couple of good articles describing the best free video chatting apps:

https://parade.com/1010666/jessicasager/best-video-chatting-apps/

https://www.cnet.com/news/7-free-video-chat-apps-to-use-if-youre-social-distancing/

At the top of the list was Apple's **FaceTime**, which works for Mac and iOS devices, but not Android or Windows. Second was Facebook's **WhatsApp** for Android and iOS devices (but not for Windows or MacOS). High on the list was **Facebook Messenger** for smartphones, tablets and computers. Also high was **Microsoft Skype** for smartphones, computers, tablets, smart watches and Xbox One**.** Two others of interest are **Zoom** and **Webex**. All of these have free versions as well as higher end paid versions. There are links to the details of these in the articles referenced above.

Most video chatting services mediate the connections through dedicated web-based servers that can handle thousands of simultaneous connections. As a user, you set up an account with that service. Your login ID also serves as the "handle" to which other video callers connect. For instance, on Facebook Messenger, you use your existing Facebook ID and on Skype you use your existing Microsoft ID. You can easily create accounts if you don't already have them.

Some of the video chatting apps are implemented as web browser extensions. Others, including Skype and Facebook Messenger, have standalone client apps that run on your desktop.

What Hardware Do You Need?

Aside from some kind of computing device (smart phone, tablet, PC, Xbox) with a video display, the key requirements are a **webcam, microphone** and **speakers** connected to or built into the computing device. Laptop PCs, All-in-One PCs, tablets and smartphones normally have these built-in and also have the proper hardware drivers installed by the manufacturer. On desktop tower PCs the webcam, speakers and microphone are usually separate add-ons. In all cases, it's important to have the latest hardware drivers for your webcam, speakers and microphone.

Facebook Messenger

Facebook Messenger is available on Windows, MacOS, Android and iOS. It also can run via a web browser. For Windows, I recommend getting the free Facebook Messenger app from the Microsoft Store. Once it's installed, you can just launch it from the Start menu or a desktop icon. The first time you start it, you can configure and test your webcam, microphone and speakers. It then asks you to login using your Facebook ID (usually your email address).
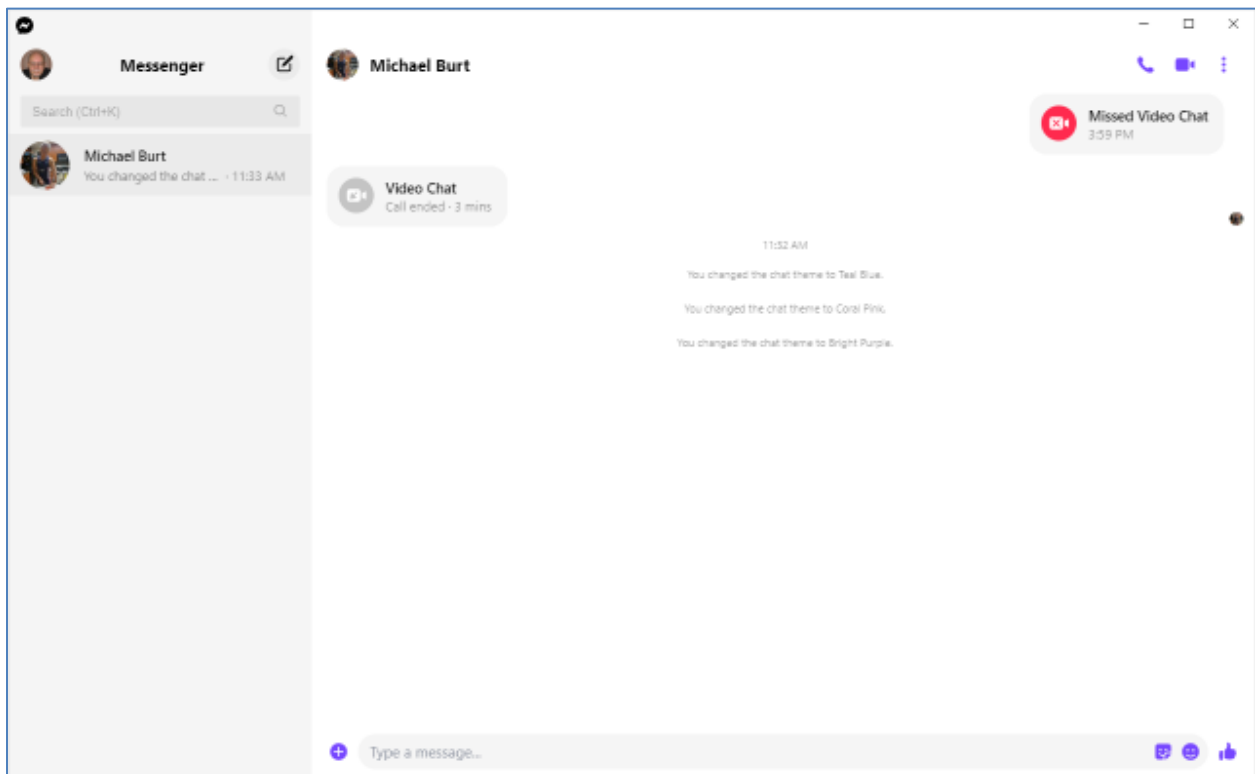

Facebook Messenger Windows App Main Screen

Once you're logged in, you can search for other Facebook users (family, friends, business associates), select one and then click an icon in the upper right to initiate a video or an audio call to that person. If the other party accepts your call, the screen will show what the other party's webcam is showing along with a small image of what your own webcam is showing them. This helps you stay "on camera" during the chat. When you're done, you can click an "end call" icon to close the connection.

Microsoft Skype

Skype is available on Windows 7, 8.1 and 10, Android, iOS and the Xbox game console. It is a built-in app on Windows 10 and is updated automatically via Windows update. You can download it from the Microsoft download site as well as the Android and Apple app stores.

When you launch Skype, it will first walk you through configuring your webcam, microphone and speakers. You can then login using your Microsoft ID and password. Once logged in, you can search for other Skype users or type in the Skype ID of a user. Then you can initiate a video or an audio call by clicking the icons at the upper right or you can type text messages.
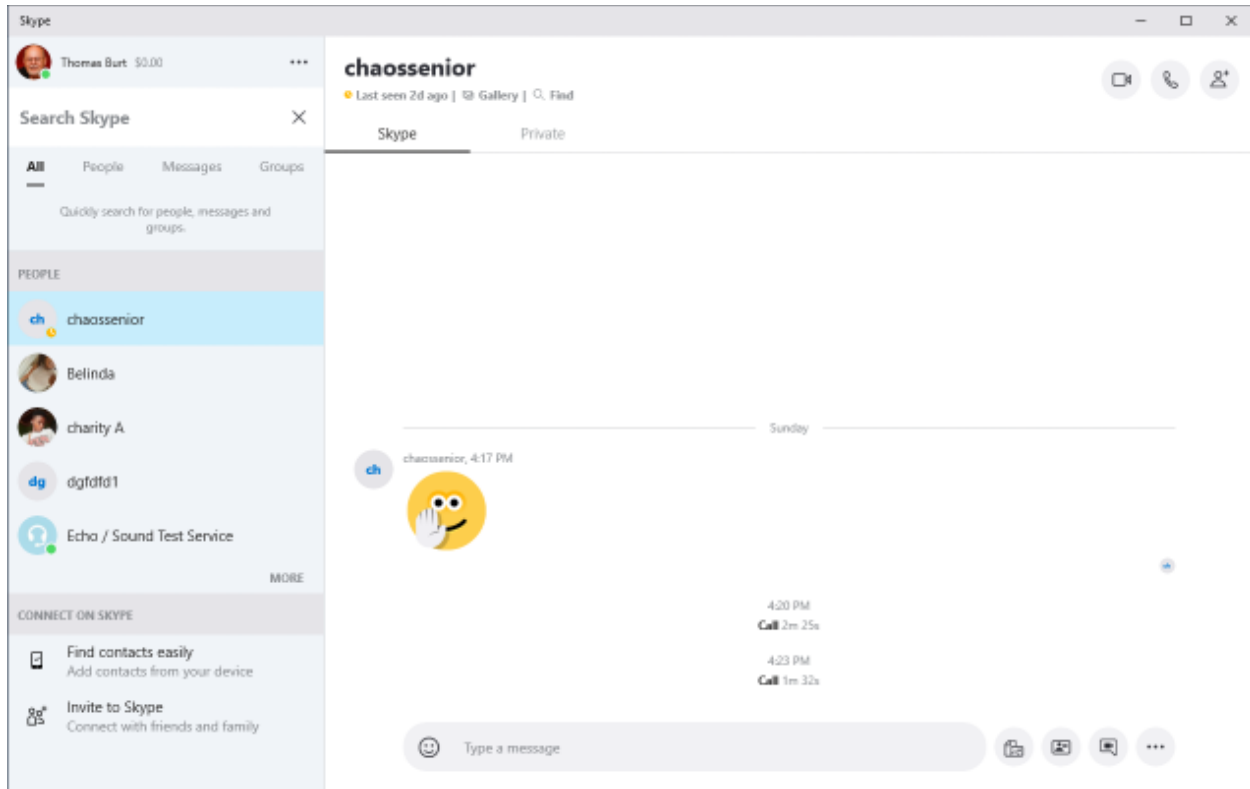
Microsoft Skype Windows App Main Screen

If the party you're calling accepts the call, the screen will display what their webcam is seeing along with a small image of what your webcam is seeing. When you're done, you can click an "end call" icon to close the connection.

Final Thoughts

As you can see, the Facebook Messenger and Skype desktop apps for Windows are very similar in layout and behavior. There's a lot I haven't touched on – especially chat's involving more than two participants. You will probably have a better experience of your desktop device is using a wired Ethernet connection, but a strong WiFi signal should also be OK. The video chat is definitely more engaging with a large screen that you don't have to hold.

Kretchmar's Korner

By David Kretchmar, Computer Technician
Make Windows 10 Faster

Support for Windows 7 is now history. Support for Windows 8 will last for 3 more years. Windows 8 mostly consisted of intermediate steps (and missteps) toward Windows 10. In 2020

I can think of no reason for any user to be running Windows 8 instead of Windows 10, especially since Windows 10 is superior and is a free update to Windows 8. So, if you are one of the few users still running Windows 8 there is no better time than now to upgrade to Windows 10.

Most of us have used Windows 10 for a few years now; Windows lacks the flexibility of the flavors of Linux, and the slick user interface of Mac's Catalina, but is the operating system installed on the majority of home computers now.

Windows 10 is Microsoft's best operating system so far but is not perfect. However, it is virtually infinitely customizable and I'm going to make a few suggestions that will help you get the most out of your windows 10 system.

Keep Windows Up to Date

Windows is issuing updates on a weekly basis and these are important not only for the operating system and peripheral issues corrected, but also for keeping your security malware

definitions current. Go to Update Settings and confirm that updates are current. Hit Check for Updates to verify this. This is also where you can learn if your system is running the latest update to Windows 10 (1909) and possibly complete this process (as is required in the dialogue box shown). Under Advanced Settings you can make sure auto-updates is checked.

Disable Cortana

She needs to just shut up. For most users Cortana is just an annoyance built into Windows 10. She mostly gives users annoying pop-ups, she is constantly gathering data, and does little more than try to force us into Bing searches. In this day of actually useful voice assistants, such as Google or Alexa, Cortana seems oddly dumb. I have learned to disable Cortana during the installation of Windows but if you have not had this opportunity shutting her off is easy. Go to Cortana under Settings and toggle all sliders off.

Go back to the main Settings window and under Privacy Settings you can turn off the sliders for speech and inking and typing to reduce the amount of data Cortana gathers on your computer usage. You can also block Cortana from accessing your microphone and camera on the privacy page. This is also a good time to review all your privacy settings to make sure you are putting as little information as possible out there.

Disable Notifications
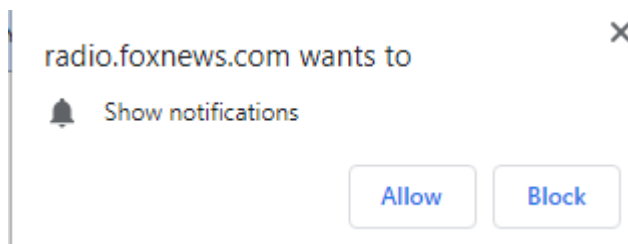
Many users are unaware why they are constantly getting popups rom the Notifications icon on the lower right-hand corner of your Taskbar. These popups obviously use system resources and can be a pain when they interfere with your computer use. Go to Settings, System, Notifications and actions and toggle off Notifications. Like magic, they will no longer appear! You will still have many web pages offering notifications, but you can just say "NO!" by hitting "Block" or "Don't Allow".

Disable Startup Apps

Go to your Task Manager Startup tab and disable any programs you do not need running immediately every time you go into your operating system. Microsoft OneDrive and speech recognition ore a couple of major resource hogs. Toggle off anything you do not need running all the time. Remember, you are not removing any programs and you are not preventing them from firing up when you need them.

Log-in Faster

The Windows 10 log-in screen is an excellent example of a worthless "improvement". Having to swipe up or down or hit "Space" is a step Microsoft somehow felt was necessary; typing in your password takes even more time. Most users prefer to use a four-digit PIN; just enter 4 digits and there is no need to even hit Enter. To set a PIN go to Settings, then Sign-in options. Click on Windows Hello PIN and set your 4-digit PIN. Note that a little further down on this page you can disable the requirement for a sign-in after you've been away from your computer for a while.

If you want to *remove* the sign-in password requirement, type "NETPLWIZ" in the search box then use this application to disable the password requirement for your computer.

Disable Background Apps

This is not necessary on a new powerful system, but if yours is older you might want to look at these under Privacy/Settings. With an older system performance might be improved by unchecking anything you don't need running.

Uninstall Unneeded Programs
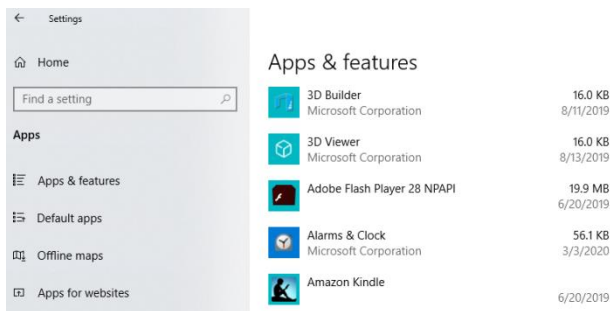
Talking about unnecessary stuff included with Windows 10, there is a ton of "Bloat ware" included on most new store-bought systems you can just ditch. Right click on Start and click on Apps and Features. Scroll through the list and you will see a lot of programs on your system that you never use. Games such as Candy Crush and security programs such as Norton or MacAfee are major offenders in this area. Here is where you can simply uninstall the unused applications, freeing up room on your hard drive and ensuring these programs will not try to load and take system resources in the future.

APCUG Guest Article

Windows FREE Snip and Sketch Tool

Author: Jim Cerny, Forums Coordinator
December 2019 issue, STUG Monitor
www.thestug.org jimcerny123 (at) gmail.com

The new Windows "Snip and Sketch" tool was part of the Windows 10 October 2018 update. This tool is intended to REPLACE the old "Snipping Tool" of previous Windows editions. But Microsoft did something to actually help us users this time – they kept the old tool! So, you can play and learn the new Snip and Sketch and keep the old Snipping Tool too! Maybe they learned not to force users into using updated or changed apps right away – we need time to adjust and learn, right?

Everything you could do in the old Snipping Tool you can do in Snip and Sketch, plus you get a few more tools and options. Thankfully these new additions are easy to see and use, and they can be ignored if you do not want to use them. Microsoft promises more options to come. Be sure to search Google for videos on how to use Windows Snip and Sketch! I am including here only the basic options.

Click on the Windows logo in the lower-left corner of your desktop and you will find Snip and Sketch in the alphabetical list of apps that appear. It is not inside the Windows Accessories folder of apps (where the Snipping Tool still remains). I recommend dragging this app to your desktop screen to always keep it handy. But you can also open it anytime by holding down the Windows key + Shift key + S on your keyboard.

Upon opening the app, your whole screen goes gray and you will see the small controls rectangle at the top. Here you select HOW you want to select what you want to snip or capture. From left to right you can select a rectangular area, freeform selection, the entire window, or your full screen. If you select the rectangle, you drag your mouse on the screen to select whatever you want. As soon as you release your mouse – presto, your selected image has been captured and saved on the clipboard to do with whatever you want! You can open a Word document for example, place your cursor where you want, and "paste" your clip right in your document. Or you can open the Windows Paint app and you can "paste" it there if you want to do more editing.

At the same time that your snip is placed on the clipboard, you will also see a popup message stating that you can edit, draw, or markup your selection. Click on the popup to do that and Snip and Sketch opens in its own window with its own menu of options. Various easy marking tools are available for you to play with and try. There are highlighters and markers, and clicking on the down arrows will open things like color choices, etc. Once you have "sketched" on your "snip" you can save it as a ".jpg", ".png", or ".gif" format by clicking on the old floppy disk save icon and selecting the file type you want. The new Snip and Sketch is easy to use and very helpful for saving and sketching on any image on your screen for any purpose. Why not give it a try?

Lab Monitor Schedule

April Open Lab Sessions are closed until at least April 15th and likely for the entire month.

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

April Monitors	Monitor Schedule