THE
GIGABYTE
GAZETTE

The Monthly Newsletter

of the

Sun City Summerlin

Computer Club

www.scscc.club

August, 2020

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Issue Contributors

Tom Burt	Peggy Cushman
Kathy Kirby	David Kretchmar
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President's Message
by Jeff Wilkinson

Your computer club is remaining active during these trying times as we all try to remain healthy and active.

A new SIG (Special Interest Group) dealing with TCP/IP Networking will launch on Thursday, August 13, 2020. This group is open to all and can be a valuable resource in understanding a critical, but mostly invisible, part of our connected lives. Led by one of our club members with 25+ years of networking experience, we plan on covering the technology that underpins and enables the Internet. This should be an interesting group with lots of experienced users that can help provide a basic understanding of some of what's going on "under the hood"!

During this unusual summer we continue to offer our Tuesday morning "Kaffee Klatch" meetings via Zoom, and the Tuesday afternoon Hardware/Software Repair SIG is also operating. The "Kaffee Klatch" offers a chance to share and ask questions about technology related issues, not just computers, but smartphones, cable TV alternatives, latest products and updates and associated problems and solutions. All are welcome and the link is on the club website – simply click on the link to join the meeting!

Reservations are required for the Repair SIG. Members receive a weekly email with the link to make a reservation and that link is also posted to the weekly calendar on the club website. Face masks are required, and social distancing is practiced. The equipment and stations are cleaned after each use. This is a popular event and considered one of the best bargains in Sun City, since all that's required to receive assistance is a $10 club membership! We replace hard drives, setup new computers and transfer files from old machines, wipe hard drives from computers that are to be discarded or donated and help on many software and hardware issues. The synergy of the technicians can't be beat; we always come up with a solution or a path forward.

We're also offering a few other seminars and SIGs via Zoom; check the full August calendar.

With no predictable end in sight for the Covid-19 shutdown, our *monthly meetings will resume in September on Zoom*. We will miss the camaraderie and friendly faces, but Zoom does offer some significant advantages to those unable to attend in-person events. If you haven't yet used Zoom, there are many resources to help you get started, and after an initial shortage, web cameras are becoming available again - check out Amazon and Newegg.

Check the **club website** often for updates and check your email for club notices.

Keep safe and healthy!!

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

General Membership Meeting

Our August General Meeting is DARK.

For Club information: go to www.scscc.club, contact Jeff Wilkinson, President at (702) 527-4056 or email him at 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 July 8, 2020

Chuck Wolff made a motion that the minutes of the June 10 Board Meeting be approved. The motion was seconded by Tom Burt 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 9:50 AM.

Welcome New Members

The following new members have joined the Computer Club from June 28th to July 26th.

Sarah Edwards	**Doris Pierro**
Lemuel Evans	**Gerd Reeder**
William Mallard	**Barb Stevens**
Barbara Nichols	

As of July 26th, the club has 561 paid memberships for 2020.

August 2020 Calendars

To view this month's classroom and lab calendars, click the following hyperlink:
http://www.scscc.club/Calendars/scscc_calendar_2020-08Aug.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: August 22nd
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 >
Reservation Required
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> *via Zoom*

3rd Thursday, 9:00 a.m. in even months
Next meeting: August 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> *DARK*

4th Wednesday, 9 a.m.
Next meeting: March 25th
Moderator needed

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.

Networking SIG <W/M/H> *via Zoom*
2nd Thursday at 9 a.m.
Next Meeting: August 13th
Robert Ambrose (rna@muttsoft.com)

This SIG is a discussion forum on computer network technology including modems, routers, protocols and ISPs.

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 email 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> *via Zoom*
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.

<mark>"All Things Apple"</mark> Q&A *DARK*
9 AM on First and Third Wednesdays (August 5 & 19)
Presenter: *New Moderator Needed*

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.

Desert Survival Class

Wednesday, August 19th at 1 pm
Presenter: Mary Miles
Zoom webcast

Living here in Las Vegas, we know how brutal the hot sun and high temperatures can be in the summer. Your GPS led you out into the middle of the desert. You are out of gas and stranded. Your cell phone batteries are dead. Now what do you do? You have 15 items in your car that may save your life. The fun part of the class is you get to rank them by importance. *You might be surprised at what the top three items turn out to be.*

This is a really fun class and gets you to put your thinking cap on and use the best computer that you have with you - YOUR BRAIN!

All you need to bring is a pen or pencil. See you on Zoom!!!!

4th Saturday (August 22nd), 9:00 am to noon
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 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.

Karen 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 family history books. So, if you have a question or two about genealogy or you've hit a brick wall in your family history research, Drop by to "*Let's Talk*" to get direction and/or answers to your own genealogy questions. The computers in the Computer Lab all have Family Tree Maker installed.

Seminar – Linux Mint 20 – What's New?

Thursday, August 27th 9:30 AM – 11:00 AM *via Zoom*
Presenter: Tom Burt
Location: SCSCC Classroom

The Linux operating system has been around for quite a long time and is widely used on web and file servers. It has also continued to improve as an alternative to the Windows and Mac OS desktop operating systems. With Windows XP and Vista support long-gone from Microsoft, Linux may be a viable alternative to keeping older computers useful while offering the security needed for surfing the web.

Also, if you're weary of endless Windows Updates that YOU can't control, Linux Mint may be what you're looking for. Linux updates happen when YOU decide. Once again, you're in control of your own PC.

This 1½-hour presentation will look at the latest version (20.0) of the FREE Linux Mint "distro". Mint is a full-featured operating systems with Windows-like desktop and many built-in applications. We'll demonstrate installing Linux Mint into a Virtual Box virtual machine and then spend some time looking at its many features. We'll also look at how to extend desktop Linux Mint into a network file, database and web server, comparable to Windows 10 Pro.

Updated seminar notes will be available about August 21 at: www.scscc.club/smnr.

Tom's Tech-Notes

Mozilla Thunderbird
A Powerful Free Email Client
Tom Burt, SCSCC Vice-President
Updated from my column of August, 2014

Thunderbird is an open source, free email client available from the Mozilla foundation. There are versions available for Windows, MacOS and Linux. If you're a Windows 7 orphan and concerned about continuing to run out-of-date, insecure email clients, or if you're just weary of paying over and over again for the same old features in MS Office Outlook, Thunderbird might be right for you.

You can find the download for your PC at: **https://www.thunderbird.net/en-US/**. The website will automatically detect your configuration and offer the appropriate download hyperlink.

Once you have downloaded and installed Thunderbird, you can launch it and set it up to connect to your various POP/SMTP email providers such as cox.net or centurylink.net as well as to IMAP email providers such as gmail.com and outlook.com. Thunderbird now has a setup wizard that eliminates the need to know the details of your email service's server and port settings. Just put in the email address, and Thunderbird will automatically configure those settings for you. You can also opt to manually configure email connections.

Email Client
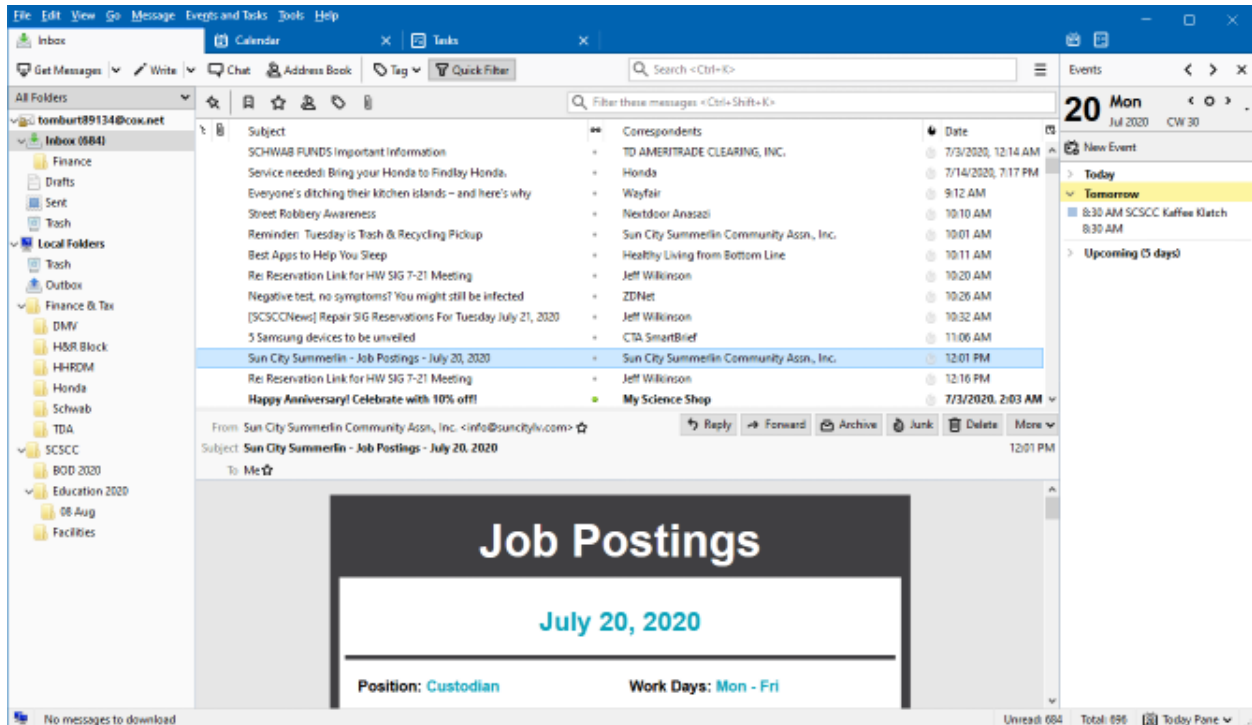
Thunderbird Email Screen

The screen shot above shows Thunderbird's main email window. Thunderbird's email user interface is similar to that of Windows Live Mail or Microsoft Outlook. In addition to the standard folders (Inbox, Outbox, Sent, Trash, Junk), under Local Folders you can create a hierarchy of other folders and subfolders for filing emails. Thunderbird also has rich search and filtering features for searching your collection of emails as well as the full Internet. You can configure a variety of highlighting options and rules to help manage your incoming emails. A key enhancement is tabbed email viewing, which allows you to have several email messages open at the same time and to easily flip between them.

In addition to Email, Thunderbird also features an Address Book, a Calendar and a Task Manager. AS the above screen shot shows, You can have Email, Calendar and Tasks open at the same time in different tabs. With all these features, Thunderbird offers functionality very similar to that of MS Outlook.

Address Book

Thunderbird has a very comprehensive **address book / contacts** feature, including a handy one-click "Add to Address book" function in the email viewer.
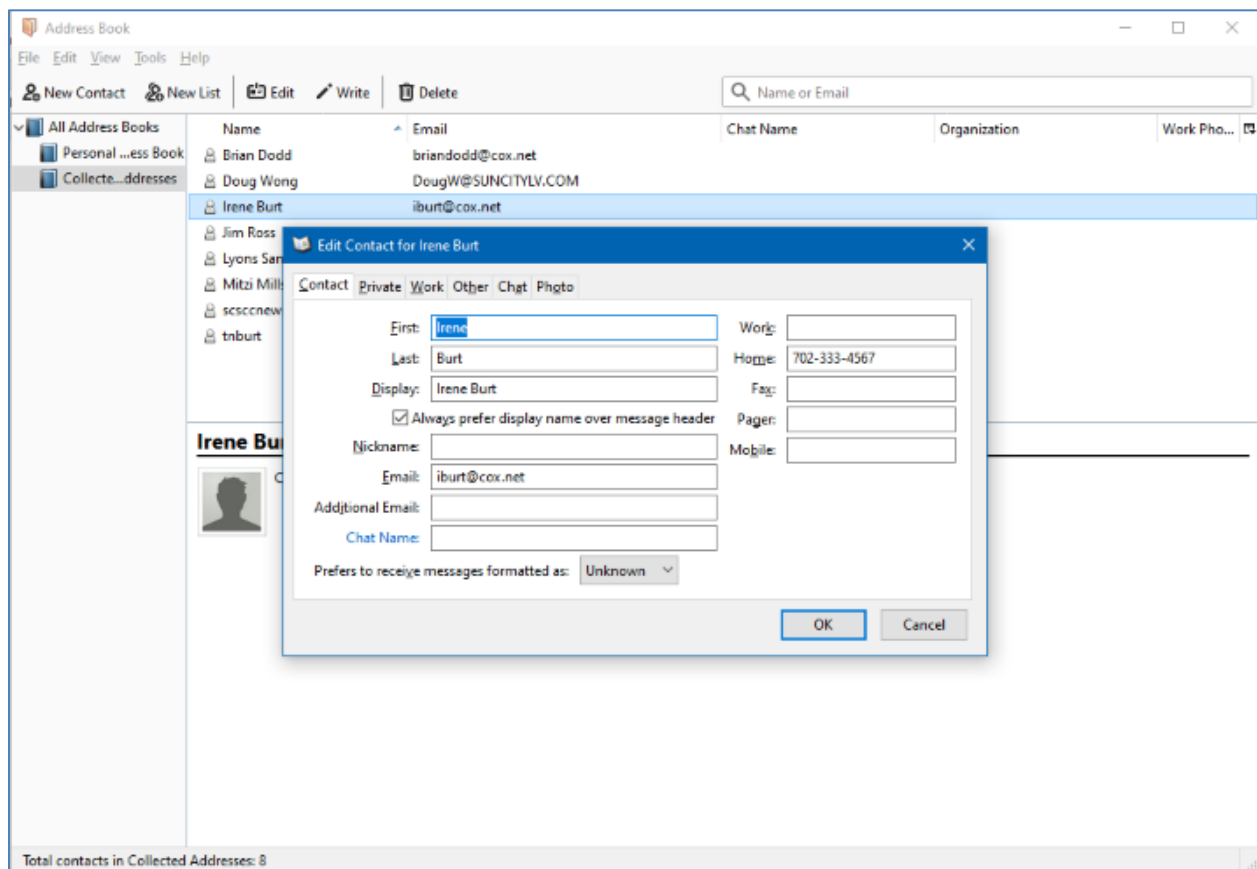
Thunderbird Addresss Book Editor

The screen shot shows the Address Book editor popped up over the Address Book viewer. You can create individual contacts in various categories and also create personal contact mailing lists.

Calendar
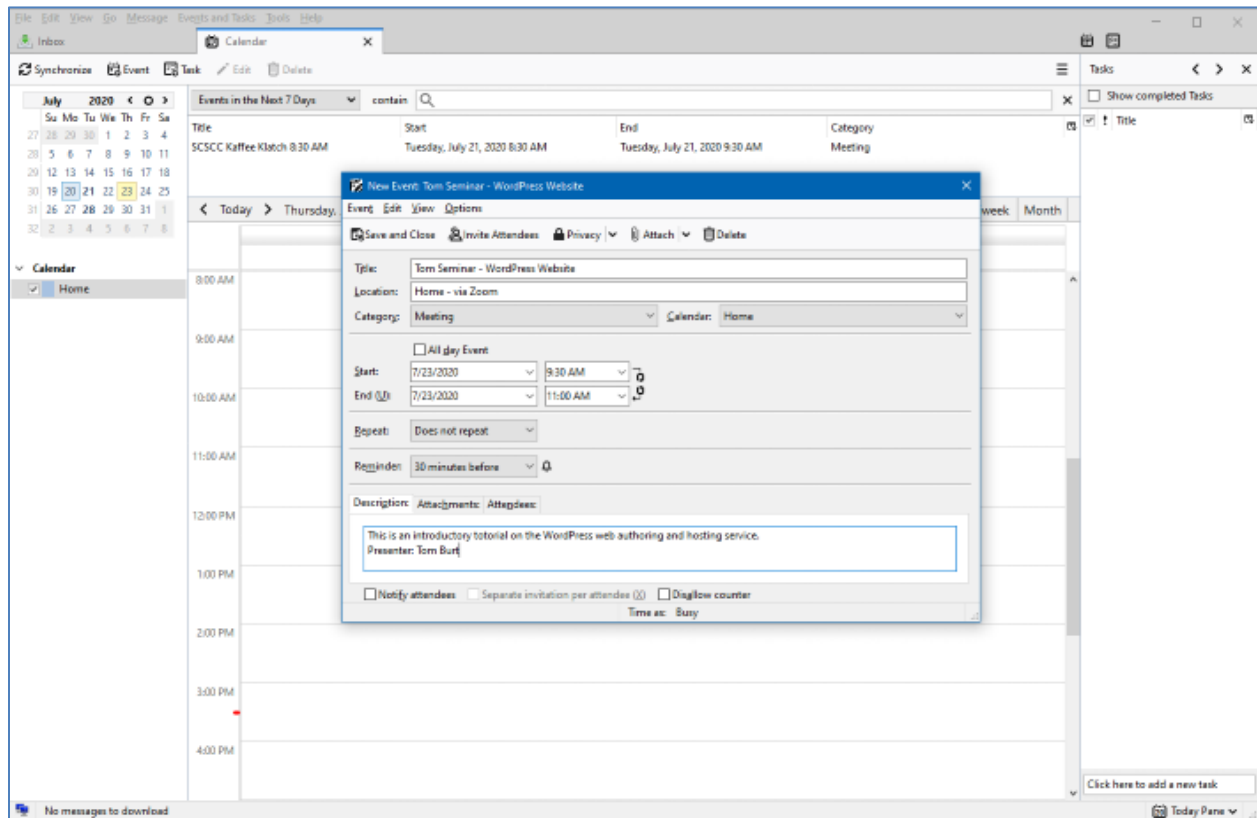
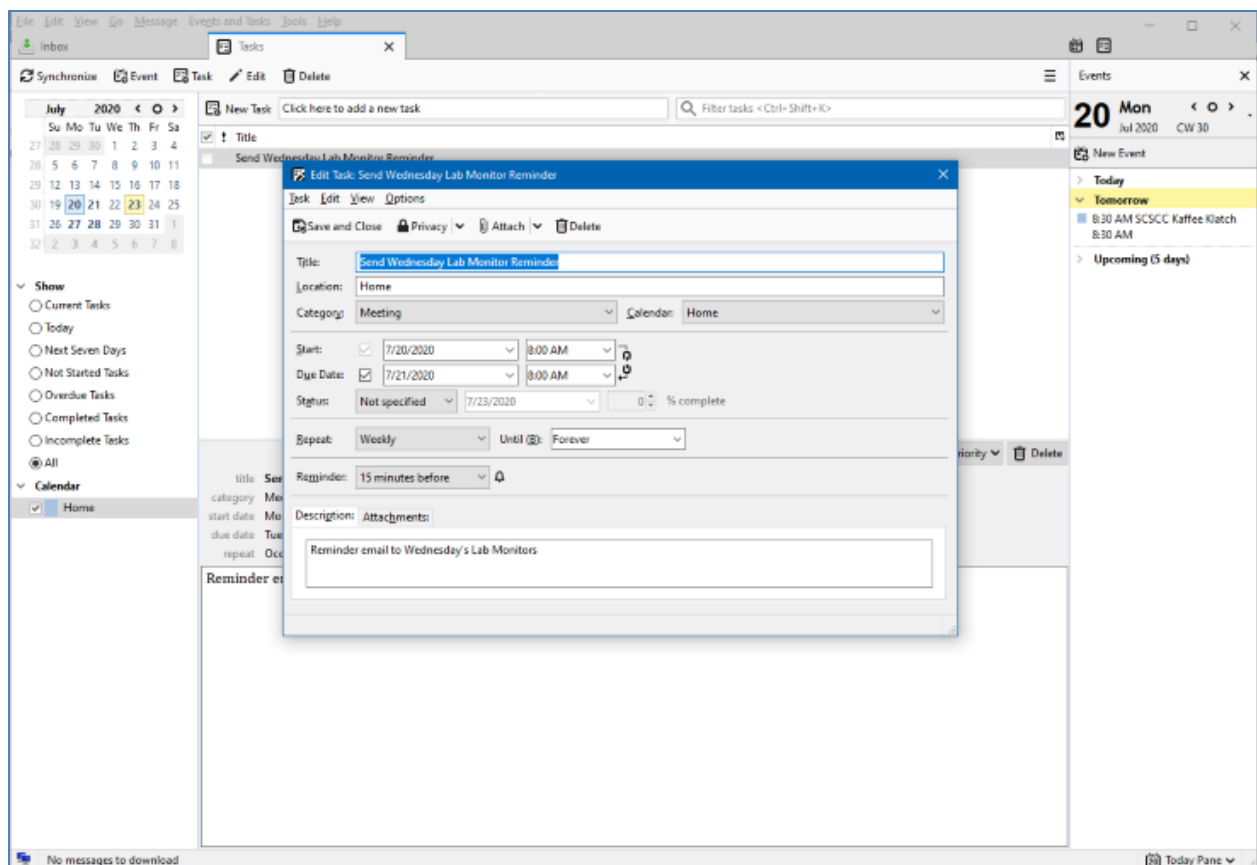**Thunderbird Calendar Viewer / Editor**

The screen shot above shows the Thunderbird calendar editor popped up over the calendar viewer. The Calendar is launched from the Events and Tasks menu. You can add single instance events and recurring events to your calendar. You can specify a list of attendees to a meeting. You can also import and export calendar items to .ics files for emailing in invitations.

Importing From Outlook and Other Sources

Under the Tools menu, Thunderbird has an import tool that can import email and contact information from MS Outlook and also several other file formats, including .csv and .vcf.

Task Manager

The screen shot following shows the Thunderbird Task Editor popped up over the Task Viewer. The Task Manager is launched from the Events and Tasks menu. You can add single instance and recurrring tasks with a variety of categories. As tasks reach their specified due dates, Thunderbird will prompt for status and display reminders. When a task is complete, you can update it to reflect its status and completion date.

Thunderbird Task Viewer / Editor

Other Features

Thunderbird email includes a powerful junk / SPAM filter that also learns as you indicate which specific emails are or are not Junk.

Thunderbird email also provides a "Quick Filter" toolbar that after only a few keystrokes narrows the list of displayed emails to just those matching what has been typed. This makes it very easy to find emails from a particular person/email address or pertaining to a particular subject.

Thunderbird email also can be set up to integrate with online cloud storage services so that it can automatically upload large file attachments to your preferred cloud service and include a hyperlink to the attachment instead.

Thunderbird also has a built-in email account password manager that includes a master password feature.

The Thunderbird community has developed an extensive set of Add-ons to enrich the base Thunderbird functionality. You can now browse this Add-on collection and easily install specific Add-ons directly from within Thunderbird.

In this article, we've barely touched on the highlights of Thunderbird. There's much, much more to be found. It's definitely worth a look!

Kretchmar's Korner

By David Kretchmar, Computer Technician

A Revisit to Virtual Reality

When Reality Stinks, is VR a Viable Alternative?

The October 2018 Gigabyte Gazette (https://www.scscc.club/Gigabyte_Archives/gg_2018-10Oct.pdf) featured an article describing my "Trip into Virtual Reality".

Last March, when it became clear that we'd be trapped inside our homes for many weeks (now months), I decided to give VR another try. What better time could there be to escape into virtual reality than during a global pandemic? I hoped it would give me a break from my daily surfing and Google, Netflix, and Amazon routines. And maybe I would find new ways to stay entertained and connected from the safety of my home.

Good News

The good news is that current VR systems have come a long way toward creating a realistic immersive experience. Many newer systems feature realistic graphics and user motion capture, and there are some excellent games and entertainment programs available. If you're a game player, a movie buff or just a person suffering from boredom, there are worse toys to spend a few hundred bucks than on a VR system.

There have been very few changes over the past couple of years since I got my Oculus Rift in 2018; virtual reality headsets have never really taken off as predicted. Many big-name tech companies have abandoned their VR projects. Google recently halted sales of Daydream, its VR headset, stating "there just hasn't been the broad consumer or developer adoption we had hoped". Facebook has sold its Oculus division, the brand of VR I discussed in the October 2018 article. And there were few big VR announcements at the January 2020 CES, the annual Las Vegas trade show for consumer electronics. Still many major vendors are maintaining some sort of VR offering.

Bad News

The initial cost is a barrier for many would-be home VR enthusiasts. Not only do you have to buy the VR headsets, controllers, and sensors, you need a gaming computer with a powerful video card, and several USB 3.0 connections available.

VR Causes motion sickness, as many new VR users discover, but there are adjustments that can be made. Our brain takes time when it comes to adapting to the stimulation coming to our eyes, ears, and touch that have nothing to do with what is going on in our real world, a perfect scenario for motion sickness. It is just a matter of getting used to it for a while if you want to adapt to VR. When my grandkids visit, I limit their initial VR sessions to 10 minutes. After a few short VR trips the motion sickness goes away. Some people experience excruciating headaches after their first (too long) VR session and never try it again.

My experience

The **Google Earth VR** is the application I found most interesting, probably because it was the

most liberating. Using this app, I could fly anywhere in the world in just seconds and walk down most streets in the world, at least those documented in Google Earth, which is a lot. After a little practice this became almost intuitive. I started out traveling around Sun City, then Las Vegas, and then around the US and finally the world! I wandered down the streets of Amsterdam and London, recognizing many of the buildings and monuments I saw there years ago.

I was especially excited to learn that many museums were offering free virtual tours. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and London's British Museum were great visits, and I plan to go back and see some of the exhibits I missed on my first VR visit.

Virtual reality has been emerging as one of the biggest technology trends for many years and although development has slowed, the ride is still going on in 2020. The technology is advancing, and we just have to embrace it and discover new ways that it can help human lives.

APCUG Guest Article

Freshly Squeezed Review
Elevate - It's All in the Mind, Y'know
By Frank Petrie
https://ympnow.com Phranky (at) mac.com

You pay close attention to what and how much you eat and drink. You work out religiously several times per week. How often do you exercise your grey matter?

Three years ago, I found there's an app for that. I've have been dutifully using it ever since and the app keeps getting better and better. I thought it well worth a revisit.

Elevate is a new type of cognitive training tool designed to build communication and analytical skills. Elevate has been selected by Apple as the App of the Year. Since launching in May 2014, Elevate has been downloaded more than 25 million times on the App Store and Google Play.

Elevate (https://www.elevateapp.com) runs your brain through a range of exercises from grammar to math and all variations in between. There are dozens of exercises with a game-like quality that will keep on challenging you, raising the bar as you improve your skillset.

You can customize your daily training focus, choosing between 3 to 5 games from a stable of 35+ games. If you'd like, you can measure your performance against yourself and others. Immediately, it doesn't take long to separate your weaknesses from your strengths.

Elevate collaborated with an independent research company and an independent analyst in four key skill groups.

Elevate users trained using our app during a four-week period, after which the Elevate users and the control group took identical post-tests.

Our analyst found that Elevate users improved 69% more than non-users, and the more they played Elevate, the better their results.

Over time, I have found that my strength lies in grammar but (although not terrible) I need to work on my mathematical aptitude.

The first thing that you'll notice is that the exercises are challenges yet simultaneously feel like games. Not in a Mario Bros. sense but sophisticated. This owes in great part to the different and inventive UIs for each exercise. And they challenge you more as you grow more proficient in any particular category.

Example: One of the math challenges has you calculate the average of two numbers, at first. As you become more proficient, the app ups you to three numbers, and then four. Then they toss you a curve. Instead of just whole numbers, they figure decimals into your calculations.

The one math exercise that I felt had the most interesting twist was Subtraction. I struggled at first but the app points out the easiest method to obtain the correct answer after it has detected a pattern to what you're doing wrong. What was fascinating was that for the first several months, the equations were laid out vertically, like this:

1945
-732

It was easy to concoct methodologies to arrive at your answer speedily. But then came the twist. Once you became proficient with this arrangement, they then presented the equations horizontally:

1945 - 732 = ?

Surprisingly, it tossed me for a loop. I had to ditch all of my previous visual cues and start anew. You wouldn't think it would be that hard but it was returning to square one.

I have recently discovered another category: punctuation. The first exercise dealing with commas, when they should be removed and where they should be added.

The same can be said for their grammar exercises. They'll provide you with two sentences with a word or two missing. You're presented with the choice of two options to complete the sentences. But once you've become competent at spotting the correct or incorrect phrase competence at that level, the options are upped to three.

Another grammar exercise requires you to decide whether a phrase is correct or not. In the beginning, they highlight the phrase to make it easier to focus on. Once you have proven agile at recognizing a phrase is proper or improper, they then remove the highlighting and you have to focus on the entire paragraph.

At the end of each exercise, Elevate tells you how your performance ranked overall of all the times you trained with that exercise.

After a session of five games, you will receive a brief overview of how you are progressing in those categories, how you compare to all Elevate users in a specific topic such as grammar, and how many consecutive days you have completed.

All-in-all, Elevate is a challenging collection of exercises that will help you achieve your top form mentally. And the developers keep on introducing new ones.

Elevate is available for free on the iOS store. There are in-app [various subscriptions] (https://apps.apple.com/US/app/id875063456#?platform=ipad) you can purchase. Unfortunately, you're told the fees but not which apply to which devices or their duration (one month, one year, lifetime, etc.).

Still, if you are as serious about staying in shape mentally as physically, I still encourage you to give Elevate a bash. You'll bash it at least twice if you're smart or want to be.

Lab Monitor Schedule

Facial coverings and social distancing of 6 feet required.

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

August	Monitor Schedule
Jeff Southwell Linda McMullin	Saturday 8/1/2020
Mitch Swetsky	Wednesday 8/5/2020
Fred Cohen	Saturday 8/8/2020
Marilyn Gramms Kathy Kirby	Wednesday 8/12/2020
Mary Hedin John Zuzich	Saturday 8/15/2020
Blanche York Marilyn Gramms	Wednesday 8/19/2020
Karen Ristic Ray Ristic	Saturday 8/22/2020
Mitch Swetsky	Wednesday 8/26/2020
Gail Weiss	Saturday 8/29/2020