Next Meeting – Tuesday, December 13
a presentation via Skype
Free, and Alternatives to Free, Software
by John Kennedy, East-Central Ohio Technology Users Club

In This Issue

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Windows 10 - Resistance is Futile

By Greg Skalka
President, Under the Computer Hood User Group

In the fictional Star Trek universe, the most dangerous adversary ever faced by the starship Enterprise and her crew was the Borg. A far greater threat to the United Federation of Planets than the Romulans or Klingons, the Borg was a collective of beings that acted as one, like a hive of insects. Their goal was to seek perfection in advancing their race; the result was the elimination of individuality.

As individuals, the Borg were organic humanoid life forms of various species that were extensively augmented with technology (Is a cell phone seemingly permanently affixed to a hand our start down this dark road?). Not only

were they injected with microscopic nanomachines, many of their organs and limbs were enhanced synthetic replacements, resulting in a race of beings that were part organic and part machine. Through implanted cybernetic devices, all Borg were connected to the hive mind, sharing thoughts over a Borg version of Wi-Fi internet. The Borg drive for "perfection" causes them to abduct and assimilate suitable beings they encounter into their hive collective, and incorporate captured technology into the collective for their own use. Borg seldom speak as individuals, but often send audio messages from the collective to other species they encounter, often using the phrases "You will be assimilated" and "Resistance is futile".

The Borg first appeared in the second season of the Star Trek: The Next Generation television series in 1988. In addition to other Star Trek: TNG episodes, they appeared in the Star Trek: First Contact movie (1996), many episodes of the Star Trek: Voyager television series (1995-2001) and one episode in the Star Trek: Enterprise series (2001-2005). The Borg are finally defeated in the Voyager finale.

Around the same time in our real universe, Microsoft Windows was far and away the dominant computer operating system. Windows 3.1 was released in 1992, a few years after we were introduced to the Borg on TV. By the time the Borg were making their final TV appearance, Windows XP was dominating the computing world as the most popular desktop/laptop OS ever. I think XP was a great OS (I'm writing this on my last remaining XP computer, and I still use XP at work), but some felt Microsoft's dominance in the OS and office software product areas made them seem like the Borg. One member of our group (I think it was the original Ol' Whitebeard, Al Brengle) had a tee shirt with a picture of Microsoft's then-leader Bill Gates made up as a Borg, with the caption "Resistance is futile, you will be assimilated."

Unfortunately for Microsoft, they dropped the ball on seeking perfection, and later lost the war over computing device OS market dominance to a little robot (Google's Android) and a fruit (Apple's iOS). Their Surface tablet and Windows Phone OS could not compete after smart phones and tablets came on the scene in 2007 and have since become the dominant computing devices in terms of numbers. Microsoft still reigns supreme in traditional desktop/laptop (non-mobile) OS installations, but that slice of the overall computing pie continues to shrink.

Microsoft appears to share another attribute with Star Trek - the 'Alternating Good / Bad Syndrome'. For at least the early releases, the Star Trek movies seemed to alternate between good and dud, according to most fans. The first movie, Star Trek: The Motion Picture, and other odd-numbered releases, are not fan favorites, while the even-numbered ones, like Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan, are generally regarded as superior. Microsoft seems to have followed the same pattern for OS releases since Windows 98, which was a success. The next offering, Windows ME, was kind of a flop. Win XP was a big hit, while Windows Vista was generally a disappointment. Windows 7 is currently the most popular desktop OS (nearly 45% of desktops), while Windows 8/8.1, its immediate successor, has only one quarter of 7's market share. Though the pattern would predict that Windows 10 will be a success, it had a little less than half the market share (by browsing statistics) of Windows 7 in April 2016.

When Microsoft released Windows 10 on July 29, 2015, it appears to have desperately wanted a success, and have most users switch to their latest OS right away. Users had definitely shown a preference for hanging on to their old operating systems in the past. XP retained the top spot in use over Win7 until just before it lost Microsoft security support, and it is likely Win8 will never top Win7. To boost acceptance of Win10, Microsoft announced it would offer all legitimate owners of Win7 and Win8.1 a free upgrade to Win10 for one year from the release date. If you see the little Windows symbol in your system tray, you are entitled to the free upgrade.

My "if it's not broke, don't try to fix it" philosophy has so far led me to want to stay with Win7 on the four

"Your Computer User Group of the Air", Saturdays from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm with Nick Francesco, Dave Enright, and Steve Rae. Broadcasting on JAZZ 90.1 FM from Rochester, NY.
Call 966-JAZZ (585-966-5299) or 1-800-790-0415

The RCSI '**Monitor' newsletter** can be found in most public libraries in Monroe County. *Free* copies can also be found in the following computer stores: Microworx, Just Solutions, TSC Electronics, and Pod Computers. Digital copies may be obtained from **www.rcsi.org** or my cloud storage at **http://tinyurl.com/tonydel-rcsi-newsletters/**.

Some Past Presentations:
Keeping Mobile Devices Secure
Mobile Payments
Flash Drives-Not Just for Storage
Features, Mac OS X & Windows
Tablets, the Programs and Uses
Preview of Windows 10
Personal Finance Software
Amazing Browser Tips
How Domain Name Sys Works
Linux is Like Cars
Close up Photography

computers I've bought with it in the last four years. Windows 7 won't be getting any more feature fixes, but Microsoft is committed to providing security updates for it until January 14, 2020. By that time, I'll have probably lost interest in the hardware in these PCs anyway. Only once have I ever updated to a new OS on a computer (from ME to XP). When it is time to buy a new computer, I'll probably wind up with Windows 10 on it.

Microsoft's free offer was initially a soft sell. The Get Windows 10 (GWT) app got installed in every Windows 7 and 8.1 system tray, but it remained just an annoying pop-up on start-up. It was easy to decline the upgrade and continue with your business. Windows 10 started to appear under Windows Update, but only as an optional update. I have all of the computers I use set to check for updates, but let me choose when and if they are installed. I believe security updates are important, but am annoyed when I need to shut down my laptop to take it with me and am forced to wait on the shut-down while Windows installs updates. Since I don't get on my wife's desktop PC as often as I'd like, I have it set to automatically install important updates.

At some point this spring, Microsoft must have decided that we Windows 7 users were not adopting Win10 fast enough (this was predicted by Computerworld and reported by CNET - see links below). Apparently Microsoft became more like the Borg, insisting that our resistance was futile, and we would be assimilated. According to CNET, they changed the Win10 pop-up to trick users into scheduling the upgrade, and changed the upgrade from 'optional' to 'recommended' in Windows Updates.

I had heard rumors of this but it didn't hit home until my wife came running on Sunday, May 1, to tell me that Windows 10 was in the process of installing on her desktop PC. She claimed she didn't click on anything to initiate this, but I could imagine her being tricked fairly easily. Since the upgrade was in process, there was not much I could do but watch for 30 minutes or so while the upgrade completed. I spent some of the time on-line on another computer, researching how to undo the upgrade.

Once the upgrade was complete, the Microsoft software license screen appeared. By declining the software license terms, I was provided a choice to undo the Windows 10 upgrade. It only took about 10 minutes to uninstall, and then it appeared her Windows 7 installation was back to normal. I verified some of the basic programs she uses for work still worked, and then went back to my computer to research how to prevent this from happening in the future.

When I came back to her computer a while later, I found that Windows 10 was once again in the process of installing. I had to wait again for the install to complete, and then once again decline the license agreement, so that Windows 7 would be again restored. I had read online about remedies to this upgrade problem, but most were rather complex. There were things I'd have to do to prevent the upgrade, and things I'd had to do to remove the upgrade from her hard drive (now the large update file was sitting on her hard drive, taking up space, just waiting for the opportunity to install).

In the end I chose a simple but so far effective way to stop the installation - I set her Windows Update settings to only update when and if I agree. This means the Win10 upgrade file is still sitting on her hard drive. I now must schedule myself to check for updates on her PC on a regular basis. Since Windows Update now always recommends the Win10 upgrade, I must go through a few more steps and deselect it from the list of recommended updates.

I do have one Windows 7 computer that I am considering allowing the free Win10 upgrade on; I need to figure this out soon, as their offer may run out in a month. I wonder what will happen after July 29, 2016. Will Microsoft stop trying to assimilate my computers? Will they extend the free upgrade deadline, due to the poor acceptance of Windows 10 so far? In either case, I do hope resistance is not futile, and that no matter which OS I choose (and it remains my choice), my computers will live long and prosper.

From the July issue, Drive Light, www.uchug.org, President@uchug.org.

Special **I**nterest **G**roup

Linux Sig

The workshop is the **third Saturday of each month**, at Interlock Rochester, 1115 East Main St. www.interlockroc.org
Enter through door #7 on the end of building, near *Comics Etc* and Goodman St. Find 'Interlock' on the intercom directory to get buzzed in and go upstairs to suite #200. We have experts on hand to fix problems and answer questions about Linux and FOSS (free and open source software). Bring your system in so we can help you get the most out of it. Hope to see you there.

Open Source Lab
Keeping Up with Open Source

By Cal Esneault, former President of CCCC and leader of many Open Source Workshops & SIGs

Once someone starts using open-source software, either by running a Linux OS or by installing cross-platform tools on Windows or Mac OS systems, the reality sets in that there is a whole new world of vast opportunities available without the drawbacks of financial cost or restrictive licenses. But how does one navigate this new environment? My personal advice is to use the DistroWatch.com site as a key resource. Besides being a jumping off point to find Linux distributions, it also has a great newsletter with links to current information. In particular, I like to keep up by reading recent newsletters and listening to the latest podcasts. Below is a sample of the left-hand pane on the DistroWatch web site that has links to newsletters and podcasts.

Latest Newsletters

03/14	Ubuntu Weekly Newsletter 458
03/11	Raspberry Pi Weekly 143
03/11	Red Hat's Friday Five 03/11

Latest Podcasts

03/17	BSD Now - 133 (OGG, MP3)
03/15	FLOSS Weekly - 379 (MP3)
03/15	LAS - 408 (OGG, MP3)
03/14	LinuxGameCast - 186 (MP3)
03/14	#systemau - 27 (OGG, MP3)
03/14	Living Linux (de) - 20 (MP3)
03/10	Bad Voltage - 1x62 (OGG, MP3)

For newsletters, you can see the variety of platforms: Ubuntu, a Debian-based OS; Raspberry Pi, a single board computer using ARM processors; and, Red Hat, an RPM-based OS used in enterprise environments. The resources are listed chronologically, and the list changes with time as new issues are made available. Podcasts (or netcasts for purists), are audio files where there is a general discussion with recurring hosts typically focused on recent news items of interest to users of open-source programs. The two common audio coding formats, MP3 and OGG, provide "lossy" data compression which reduces file size while still providing sufficient dynamic range for conversational programming.

BSD Now and LAS (Linux Action Show) are both productions of Jupiter Broadcasting, an organization that has been producing audios and videos since 2008. From their studios in Washington State, they now produce ten shows, most produced weekly. In general, shows follow a news format covering recent events with a main segment of more in-depth coverage of a specific open-source software item.

FLOSS Weekly is a netcast produced by TWiT.tv, a company in central California started in 2005 with about two dozen weekly podcasts now being produced in both audio and video formats. FLOSS stands for "Free, Libre, and Open-Source Software", and shows generally concentrate in depth on a particular application or set of software tools. Content is aimed at more experienced users.

Podcasts usually follow a pattern of style set by the hosts, and whether you like a particular show is very subjective for each individual. Prepare to take some time to sample a variety of podcasts before you find a set that meets your own views and needs. Here are a few other shows that may be of interest (many available in both audio and video formats):

- GNU World Order
- Hacker Public Radio
- Mintcast
- Linux Luddites
- Sunday Morning Linux Review
- Blender Podcast
- LinuxLUGcast
- Category 5 Technology TV

If this is not enough, go to the "Tech Podcast Network" site to view their list, or simply use your Internet search engine to search for new shows. Once you find a suitable list of shows that you personally like, you will have a continual flow of information and entertainment to keep you up to date.

   From the Cajun Clickers Computer Club News, April 2016, www.clickers.org, tsa70785@gmail.com.

Find Your Tech Support Match

By Nancy DeMarte
1st Vice President, Sarasota Technology User Group, FL

W e all run into occasional problems with our computers and digital devices. Finding the solution can be a nightmare, especially if the problem is unique or you are not fluent in tech terms. There is a wealth of support available, but it's a matter of finding the right kind of help to fit your kind of problem and your learning style. Let's take a look at some of the popular support options and the kind of people who might benefit most from them.

Good options for people who learn best by reading:
Website support: A visit to the website most closely related to your problem can often give you the answers you need, even if your device is past warranty. If your computer isn't working properly, for example, or you need to update drivers, you can go to the website of the computer's manufacturer and search its Support pages. If you need help understanding how to use a certain feature of your device, you can go to the manufacturer's site and download a User Manual for your model. Or you can try the Frequently Asked Questions list (FAQ). These are questions most commonly asked about the product with answers by support professionals. Most large sites also have Discussion forums where you can post a question or search through questions on your topic and find answers.

Google it: Some people say that whenever they have a tech problem, they type it into the Google search box and often find the answer. This approach is fine if you can sum up your issue accurately and choose the right website. Be aware that not all independent blogs or tech help sites have correct information. And in these dangerous times, not all are legitimate. Choose sites familiar to you, like pcmag.com or cnet.com; they are more likely to be reputable.

Good options for people who prefer to interact with a real person:
Tech phone support: This was the standard method in the early days of personal computers. It is still a viable option if you are experienced enough to be able to explain your problem and possibly make changes to your device while on the phone. The advantage is you get to speak with a real person. Disadvantages may include a long wait time before reaching the right person and being unable to understand unfamiliar accents.

Live Chat: If you don't like phone support, you can still get personal support by trying Live Chat, which is found on many website support pages. Live Chat doesn't involve talking; it's done by typing, much like a text message, but in real time. You request a chat session by clicking a link and choosing or typing your problem category. A chat window opens and a support person types you a "Hello, my name is __. What can I help you with today?" message. You type back what you know about your problem, and he or she attempts to resolve it. The big advantage is you are interacting with a real person without having to think quickly, as you might on the phone. Plus, your person will help you narrow down your issue and, if not solve it, transfer you to someone who can.

Good options for those who learn best by seeing it done:

Video Tutorials:. If you like hands-on demonstrations, a good choice is the video tutorials on tech websites (Microsoft has excellent ones) or on YouTube, where you can search for videos on practically any topic and watch it being done and explained. A lesser known, but excellent website with many instructional videos on computer topics is a North Carolina site sponsored by Goodwill. Go to www.gcflearnfree.org/technology.

Remote assistance: These days it's not uncommon for a phone support or live chat person to offer to access your computer remotely and make changes to it to resolve your problem. If you have initiated the request for help, and the support person is employed by a reputable company, you can be quite confident that your computer will not be compromised during this process. You will be asked for permission before the person begins remote assistance. You sit in front of your computer and watch what's going on. You may be asked to participate, such as logging into your device yourself to protect your password. Be sure you have a good backup of your data prior to using this option.

If you've tried everything:

Take it to the shop: If you have what appears to be a serious hacking or malware breach or mechanical problem with a device, taking it to a reputable repair shop or having a tech person come to your home may be your best solution. Yes, it will cost you something, but if you've tried other options and still have an unworkable device, this may be the answer.

Good help is out there. Know your style and choose a support method that matches it.

From the May 2016 issue, Sarasota Technology Monitor, www.thestug.org, ndemarte@verizon.net.

Hello? Is that Direct Marketing Callups Inc? You didn't call at dinner time today and I'm just wondering if everything is ok over there.

sangrea.net

Extending Your Network With A Wireless Access Point

Adding a wireless access point to extend your network's range can be confusing. Many routers come with wireless capability, but you only need one router.

Here's the scenario: you have an existing connection to the internet that is connected to a router of some sort, which in turn connects to your other computers via ethernet or built-in wireless access point. You want to extend your wireless range by adding another wireless access point (WAP). Sounds easy, and it can be. However, there are a couple of "gotcha's" along the way.

Routers and access points

The first point of confusion is simply this: routers and wireless access points are *two different devices*. If you have a "wireless router", a router that provides wireless connectivity, what you really have is two separate devices in a single box:

- A **router,** which handles routing data to and from the various devices connected to it.
- A **wireless access point,** which allows devices to connect using Wi-Fi.

Two devices, one box, very convenient.

Router &
Access Point

We often refer to these two devices packaged together as a "wireless router", or just "the router", or even as "the access point", which blurs the distinction between the two. The *gotcha* is that not only do not all routers come with wireless access points, but sometimes what you really want is a wireless access point without a router .

Router   Access Point

That's the situation we're in here.

Adding an access point

You almost certainly have a router of some sort, particularly if you share a single internet connection among multiple devices. It handles all the communication to and from the internet, distributing it among the various computers and devices you connect to it. Whether or not it already includes wireless capability is actually irrelevant. One network, one router.

Internet

Wireless Connection(s)

One Router

Wired Connections
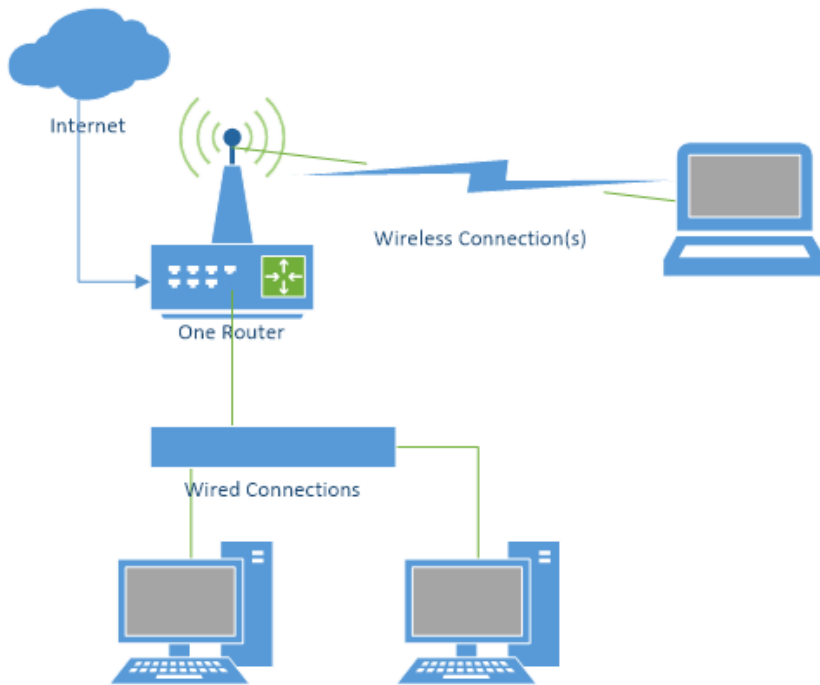
The simplest approach to adding a wireless access point is to add *only* a wireless access point, and not another router.

Internet

Wireless Connection(s)

One Router

Wireless Connection(s)

Wireless Access Point (Only)

Wired Connections
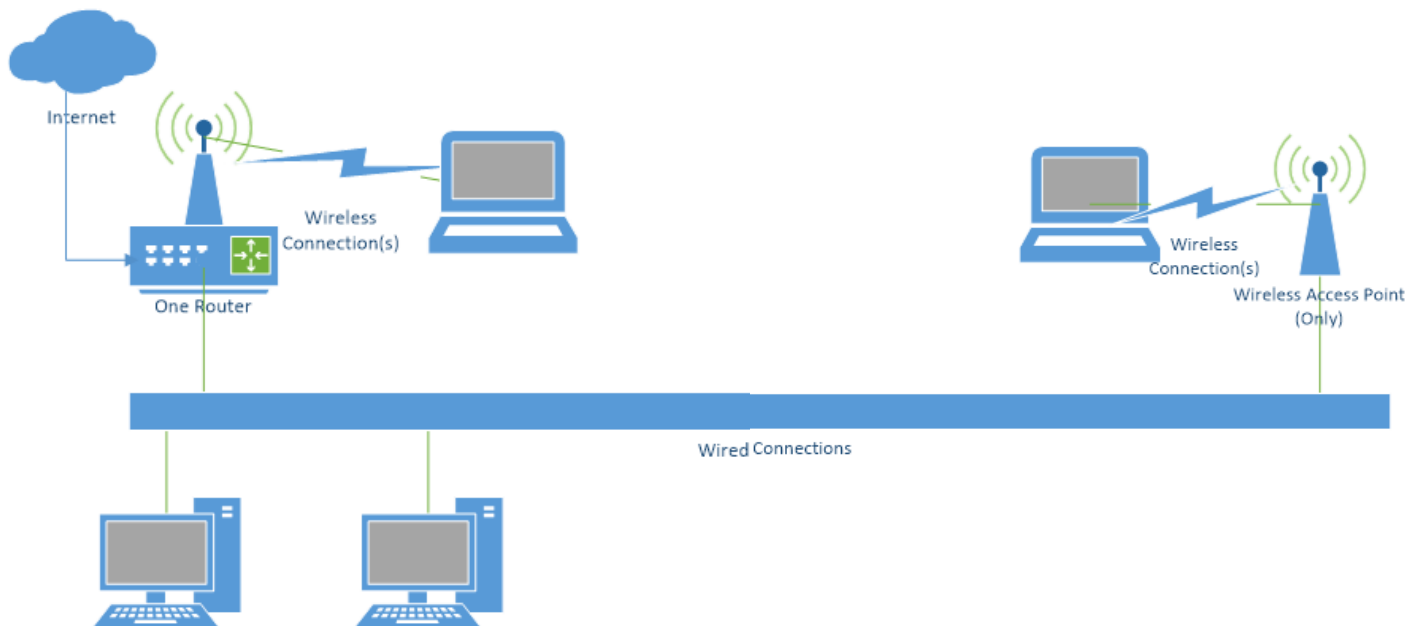
Unfortunately, searching most online stores will return you a list of wireless access points and – you guessed it – routers that include wireless access points. It often takes a close reading of the specifications to understand exactly what it is you're getting. If the description includes terms like "router", "wireless router", "NAT", or "DMZ", these are all indications that what you're looking at is actually a router. However, if it says "wireless access point", perhaps with terms such as "bridge" or "repeater", then it's very likely you're looking at something that – perhaps among a few other things – can be used as only a wireless access point.

A router in the hand…

Sometimes you already have an additional wireless router you'd like to use as if it were simply an access point.
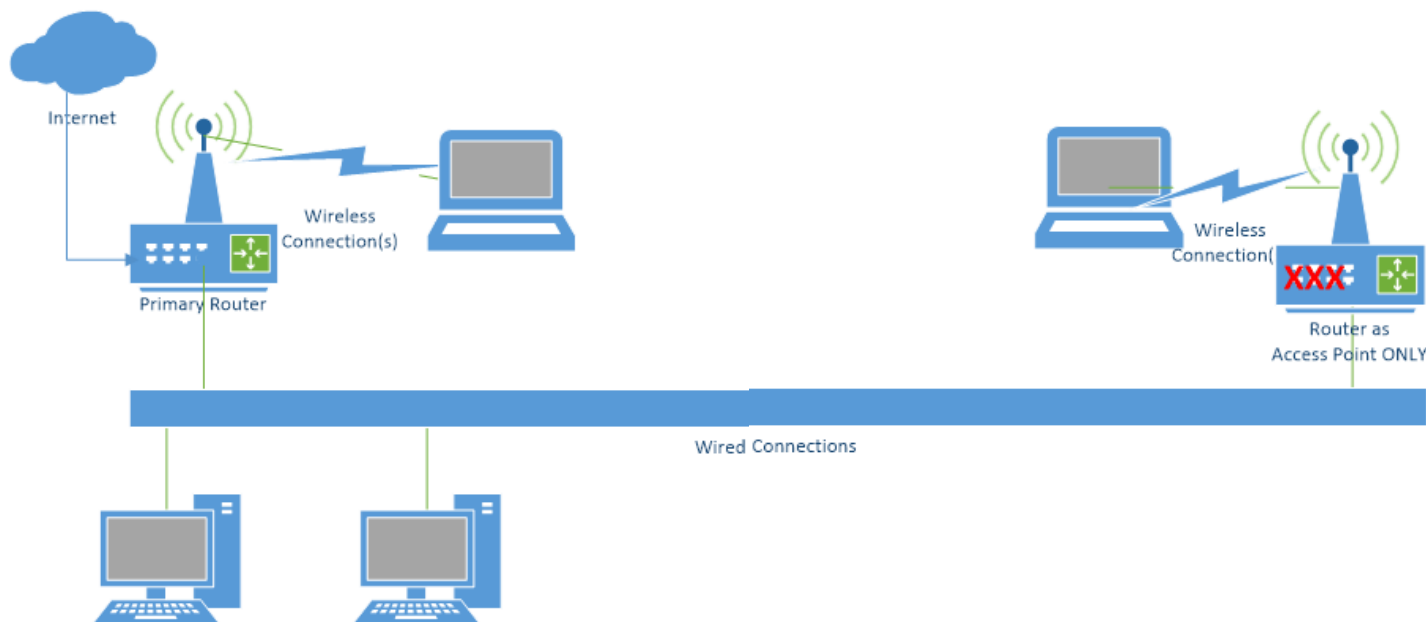
The best I can say here is that it *could* work, but it's not guaranteed. It's also not necessarily easy.

The most important thing is to make sure the wireless router is not actually "routing". Typically, that means making sure it's not attempting to perform network address translation, known as NAT, or providing DHCP services. NAT is the technique that lets multiple machines on one side of your router share a single internet connection, and, most importantly, a single internet IP address as well. The router does this by using DHCP to hand out local IP addresses to each machine on your local network, and translating between those addresses and the "real" internet IP address when the local computers access the internet. If NAT is turned on at both the main router *and* the router you're attempting to use as a wireless access point, all wireless devices go through two levels of NAT to access the internet. Not only is that adding unnecessary overhead, but it can introduce some real problems. NAT "protects" the "local" devices from the remote devices … in this case, the wireless access point will "protect" the wireless machines from the rest of your local network. In effect, it'll make them inaccessible. Unfortunately, exactly how you prevent your wireless router from actually routing varies based on the specific brand and model. Check your documentation for NAT or for *providing* DHCP services to connected clients, and turn that *off* on the router you want to use only as an access point. It might work. It might be easier just to get a dedicated wireless access point.

Musings of an Apple Tyro

By Lorrin R. Garson
Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society

Protection against Ransomware

Ransomware is malicious software that blocks access to your computer or files, usually by encryption, until money is paid. This type of malevolent software is an increasing threat. Short of paying up, which is no guarantee of recovery, what can you do if you're hit with this plight? Of course, the best protection is to prevent infection by properly using anti-malware software and employing good user practices (ignore email from unknown sources, don't click on unknown or suspicious links, etc.). Even though ransomware may infect your backup files, if you use versioning backup software, you have a reasonable chance to recover from earlier, un-infected backups. I suggest you have two or three backup drives and cycle them every week or two, leaving only the current drive attached to your computer and thus the Internet. In the Apple world, Time Machine provides versioning and there are numerous backup products in the Windows environment such as Acronis True Image 2016, StorageCraft ShadowProtect 5 Desktop, Genie Timeline Home, and NTI Backup Now 6. Windows 10s File History backup can also be useful for this purpose as can some (most?) Cloud storage systems. See http://bit.ly/1sy4MYp and http://bit.ly/1sr6XME.

Dangerous Computer Cords

Do you own a Microsoft Surface Pro, Surface Pro 2 or Surface Pro 3 (2013 through early 2015)? Microsoft is replacing about 2 million power cords for these computers because these cords can overheat and shock or cause a fire. For a free replacement, call 855-327-7780 or go to http://bit.ly/1XzqiaF.

Update to OS X

On May 16th, Apple released an OS X update (from v. 10.11.4 to 10.11.5). This is probably the last release before a major release in October or November. The forthcoming OS, code named Fuji, will likely be revealed at the Worldwide Developer Conference WWDC) on June 13th.

Update to iTunes

As part of the OS X update, Apple released iTunes 12.4 (v. 12.4.0.119). While improvements have been made, iTunes still remains a generally unloved application. Initial reviews are tepid. See http://bit.ly/1rTF9Rn.

Fastest Internet Speed

What country would you think has the fastest Internet speed? It isn't the U.S.— it's Singapore. This shouldn't be a surprise because Singapore is a very small, rich country. So we're number two, right? Nope. Table 1 below shows the 10 countries with the fastest average peak connection speed (from http://til.ink/1TYolik).

The U.S. is number 24, with an average peak connection speed of 50.4 Mbps, after Bulgaria (51.0 Mbps) and the United Kingdom (50.9 Mbps). Other reports show the U.S. at number 15 (see http://ti.me/23X7aDd) and number 21 (http://bit.ly/1WDYsuu). For detailed information see http://akamai.me/205LeoB.

Table 1

Adobe Flash Player

Because of the security risks of Flash Player, you may want to frequently check for updates. I suggest a weekly check. Also, this is one piece of software you may want to set for automatic updates. For Windows-based computers, search Google for "how to check for updates for flash player win" and pick the appropriate version of the operating system. Windows 10 users may find http://bit.ly/1rTGV50 of value. For those using Mac computers, do the following: System Preferences ➔ Flash Player ➔ Updates ➔ Check Now ➔ follow directions presented.

See http://bit.ly/1OHNv8F for a good description of Flash Player.

An AI Rembrandt Painting
A deep-learning algorithm, coupled with a 3D printer, has produced a new "Rembrandt" painting that is remarkably like something the Dutch master would produce.

The computer-based painting is based on computer analysis of 346 known Rembrandt paintings. The "painting" was created with a 3D printer using special paint-based UV ink with 13 layers of ink—148 million pixels. See http://bit.ly/1TjIhgb for an explanation. See https://www.nextrembrandt.com for a video describing the project.

Aging Mac Pro
It's hard to believe that the Mac Pro is aging, but it was introduced in 2013 and now it is competing with Windows desk top machines from Lenovo, Dell and HP that are superior. The Mac Pro is for the professional computing market where users often require very substantial compute power and often demand the latest and greatest. See http://bit.ly/1rTIS1d.

Amazon Top Provider of Cloud Services
Most of us think of Amazon as the online store that seemingly sells everything imaginable. However, it is by far the largest provider of Cloud services having ten times the computing capacity than the next 14 largest Cloud companies combined. Amazon's Cloud is generally used by large corporations, but individuals can also use their services. Amazon Prime Members ($99/year) can store an unlimited number of photos, videos and files at no extra cost. Not a Prime Member? You can rent 5 GB of storage for $11.99/year or unlimited storage for $59.99/year. See pricing at https://www.amazon.com/clouddrive/home. Also see http://for.tn/1TjKqs1 and http://bit.ly/1qtD4tP.

From the July 2016 issue, PATACS Posts, www.patacs.org, newslettercolumnist@patacs.org.

Open Source Software of the Month

By Geof Goodrum
Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society

Data Crow – v4.1. http://www.datacrow.net/. Free GNU General Public License and executables for Microsoft® Windows®, Apple® OS X® and GNU/Linux® by Robert Jan van der Waals. Data Crow is a free, open source media cataloger and organizer, a multi-purpose tool that helps you to manage a huge amount of data in a single place. It is powered by an intuitive, customizable user interface and has an impressive amount of features (see below). Although, the program comes with a few, standard modules that allows you to organize your movies, books, contacts,

containers, images, media, music albums, software, users, there is no limit regarding the amount of modules. Advanced users can create their own module such as the one listed on official homepage for "stamps": there is a documentation available for those who wish to create their own module. The software is written in Java programming language. Features include:

- cross-platform including portable version
- completely customizable software
- excellent cataloger/organizer for movies, audio, software, books, photos, stamps etc.
- documentation for creation/export of new modules
- loan administration feature
- retrieve online info from well-known services such as IMDB, Amazon, MusicBrainz and others
- import data from popular multimedia formats: AVI, XVID, MP3, DIVX, MP4, OGG, PNG, JPG, and others
- advanced reporting available in PDF and HTML
- support for multiple languages such as English, Spanish, German, French, Italian and Dutch
- clean app: no adware, spyware, bundles or anything like that

[Screenshots at http://datacrow.net/#screenshots]

Kernel Source – v4.5.2. http://www.kernel.org/. Free GNU General Public License source code for all platforms by the Linux community.

PhotoFilmStrip – v2.1.0. http://www.photofilmstrip.org/1-1-Home.html. Free GNU General Public License source code and executables for Microsoft® Windows®, Apple® OS X® and GNU/Linux® by Jens Göpfert. PhotoFilmStrip creates movies out of your pictures in just 3 steps. First select your photos, customize the motion path and render the video. There are several output possibilities for VCD, SVCD, DVD up to FULL-HD.

The effect of the slideshow is known as "Ken Burns." Comments of the pictures are generated into a subtitle file. Furthermore an audio file can be specified to setup the background music for the slide show.
In contrast to other projects, PhotoFilmStrip has the capability to render the slideshow in Full-HD (1920x1080) resolution.

[Screenshots at http://www.photofilmstrip.org/3-1-Media.html]

Warzone 2100 – v3.1.5. https://wz2100.net/. Free GNU General Public License source code and executables for Microsoft® Windows®, Apple® OS X® and GNU/Linux® by Per I Mathisen, Christian Ohm, buginator, vexed, and cypr. In Warzone 2100, you command the forces of The Project in a battle to rebuild the world after mankind has almost been destroyed by nuclear missiles.
The game offers campaign, multi-player, and single-player skirmish modes. An extensive tech tree with over 400 different technologies, combined with the unit design system, allows for a wide variety of possible units and tactics. Warzone 2100 was originally developed as a commercial game by Pumpkin Studios and published in 1999, and was released as open source by them in 2004, for the community to continue working on it.

[Screenshots at https://a.fsdn.com/con/app/proj/warzone2100/screenshots/219750.jpg]
    From the June 2016 Issue, PATACS Posts, www.patacs.org, linux@patacs.org.

Wearable Technology: Fitbit fitbit.com

Quad-Cities Computer Society Meeting Review
Presented by Judi McDowell, QCS President
Reviewed by Joe Durham, Editor, Quad-Cities Computer Society, IA

Fitbit Charge HR

At a recent meeting, Judi McDowell, QCS president, shared her knowledge and experience with wearable technology. The pace of technological change is fast and these devices are now the "in" thing for groups of all ages. She focused on the Fitbit devices as she has a Fitbit Charge which is one of the newer models in the Fitbit line of devices.

She asked for a show of hands among the audience for those who currently use this technology. There were 6 hands: 3 had a Fitbit Charge, one had a Fitbit Alta, one had a Fitbit Flex, and one had a Garmin device. This indicates that the desire to use these new gadgets is growing day by day, even among our QCS members.

Judi gave us an historical overview of how these devices emerged on the scene. Like all technological revolutions the fitness tracking device has its origins in many diverse needs and slowly the growth of technological change brought it all together.

Amazingly, it has its origin in the creation of the lie detector in 1921. A lie detector measures electronically your pulse, blood pressure, and there are seniors on your skin to measure changes there.

Segue to 1961 in Japan. A professor wanted the means to track walking for health. He developed the pedometer, I am sure we have all seen these mechanical aids from time to time.

Now move to 1971 and car technology. The development of air bags brought forth the creation of the accelerometer which measures change in direction, an obvious requirement for air bag to deploy at the right moment in the event of a crash.

Now switch to 1974 and game technology was needed for the all of the new gaming controls, to help us enjoy and become a part of the experience. These advances help everyone navigate through Zelda, Donkey Kong and the rest.

1982 brought forth development from another direction; sports training. Devices appeared that monitored the athlete's heart rate.

In 1999 stationary bikes with monitoring and visual feedback were popular.

GPS technology came to the masses in the year 2000 when it was released for public use. Now there was an earth wide means of tracking movement.

A 3D accelerometer was developed in 2003 which allowed technicians to measure movement in all three directions: up, down, left and right, forward and backwards.

Take the mixture of all of these changes from 1921 to 2003, and a company was able put all of these functions into a small wearable size in 2008, Fitbit

The new models of Fitbit now monitor your heart rate, and sleep. All these functions designed to motivate us to a more healthy lifestyle with the means to monitor our goals in the device and online. James Park and Eric Freidmen were the creators of Fitbit. It is so popular that there are competitors in the marketplace from Apple, Android and Garmin.

In 2015 Fitbit was encouraged to issue an IPO and it is now worth around $3.7 billion. And Park is now #29 on the list of those 40 or under in wealth.

As a means of improving her lifestyle, Judi purchased a Fitbit Charge. She choose this model because it monitors steps, heart rate and has the time on it. When you purchase one, it recommends that you attach it two fingers above your wrist bone. It also has caller ID when configured with compatible mobile devices.

It comes with a USB charger, a dongle that you place in your computer through which you upload data to your Fitbit page online so that you can records your activity. She said that the battery life states 7 – 10 days, but it is not that long in her use of it, but that was not a big issue.

The Fitbit charge also monitors your sleep. Current health advice strongly recommends that we get enough sleep in this fast paced world and the Fitbit aids you in that accounting. Judi did wonders what it records when one falls asleep in the chair from time to time.

Judi then brought her Fitbit account online, this is displayed in what is called the Dashboard. This is the genius

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of the device, as you dongle the Fitbit periodically it uploads all of your data and helps you visually to see your progress and goals.

The Fitbit Charge will also track your movements as you exercise. One day she walked around a large building at her place many times and you could see her track recorded online as a series of circles in transit.

She did mention a couple of operating quirks. For example, when she was shopping in Walmart and her hands were on the shopping cart the lack of movement of her hands meant that the Fitbit charge was not tracking her steps. Apparently the Fitbit needs see change in your arm movement to record steps. For situations such as these you can tell Fitbit that you are walking a predetermined amount of time and it will account for steps accordingly.

The Fitbit Charge also tracks your movements on stairs. Judi's explanation of her resent stair movement was interesting. She arrived early before the QCS meeting and decided to walk about record and demonstrate the device. Nearby is Viele Park in Moline. There is a descending terraced set of steps. Going down was easy, but coming back was a bit of challenge. This walk was a good choice for exercise.

Her Fitbit Dashboard account of that travel indicated that her heart rate reached 153 beats per minute and that she was credited with going up 17 flights of stairs on her return back to the Butterworth Education center. By the time she entered the building her Fitbit Charge buzzed which meant that she reached her goal of over 10,000 steps for the day.

The online interface calculates calories burned. You can also input your food intake to see what you have taken in and the balanced burned for the day. Additionally you have the option of downloading your data to a spreadsheet so that you can monitor and analyze your progress.

If you purchase a premium subscription to the Fitbit service, a personal trainer will devise an exercise plan just for you. Judi mentioned that Fitbit Blog online is a good and enjoyable source for information and comment while using the devices.

You may have seen reports that Fitbit is being sued by some athletes for inaccurate results. With any measuring device of this type it is more noteworthy that you have the same device giving you data each day, it a base from which can accurately monitor your progress even though it may not tell you to the inch what your travel has been.

Judi concluded her remarks by observing that media forecasts see a 35% growth each year in personal tracking devices of this type for the next five years. It is certain that we all wish to improve our health status in life and devices of this nature will help move us along towards that goal. The QCS would like to thank Judi for her fine presentation and look into this new and emerging tech field.

From the May 2016 issue, Qbits, [www.qcs.org,](www.qcs.org) [julee89@gmail.com,](mailto:julee89@gmail.com) [joseph85_us@yahoo.com.](mailto:joseph85_us@yahoo.com)

Rochester Computer Society

Helps Half Hour Notes   by Jan Rothfuss
November 8, 2016
St. John's Meadows

Q: One participant has written a book and would like to sell it online. Is   there someone who could help set up the page?
A: It was suggested that she try wix.xom or reddot.net. She is still   interested in having someone help her.

November's Presentation of 'Gifts & Gadgets and Black Friday Predictions' by Arpad Kovacs was very well received. The following two links probably won't help you much this year, http://slickdeals.net/ (has a Black Friday section), and www.bfads.net (up to date physical ad scanner).

Sally Springett, 1936 – 2016. Our long-time newsletter editor will be greatly missed by many. She was active with the Penfield Players, (I went to several plays) Brighton Memorial Library, and, of course, the Rochester Computer Club. She was an avid reader with a keen interest in current affairs (helped out at voting centers), literature and the arts, as well as active in the science fiction community. I regret that I never got the chance to publicly acknowledge Sally's contribution to the club's newsletter. I was waiting for her to re-join us at a meeting. A couple of months ago, I was checking out other newsletters across the country, looking for

additional articles or authors that I might be able to use. I was quite surprised to find that many newsletters were simple one or two page notes about their meetings. Few, including some major cities, were lacking in real computer related content. Sally did a great job and even found 'Mister Modem'. I always enjoyed his column. My hat is off to you Sally; thanks for a great newsletter.