Our Club

RCSI is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) group open for membership to anyone interested in computers and related technology. Our aim is to provide an exchange of information between users of digital devices. We are not in any way affiliated with any computer manufacturer or software company, and *we do not sell your data or email address*.

Program Meetings

No admission fee for non-members. *Everyone is welcome!* Second Tuesday of every month, except August, from 6:30pm – 8:30pm.

Help's Half Hour (Q & A) 6:30pm – 7:00pm. *Members and Guests are welcome to attend and bring their computer related questions with them to get answered*.

7:00 – 7:15, Club Business

7:15 – 8:30+, Main Presentation

Come and join in the fun and enjoy a snack! **You are welcome to bring a guest**.

Become a Member

Go to our website, www.rcsi.org, and download a printed form for use by the Post Office mail, **or** enter your info online and pay with a credit card or PayPal, **or** attend a meeting.

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The Rochester Computer Society, Inc.
a computer/tech club open to everyone

M NIT R

* * We are back and meeting in person again * *

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July 13, 'Tech of South America', and 'Micro Plastics in Our Environment' presented byTony Dellelo

August 10, 'My Favorite Android Apps' presented by Bill James, via Zoom

Save the Date, Annual Picnic, September 14 more details next month

In This Issue

How Do I Remove a Virus from My Browser?

By David Kretchmar, Computer Technician
Sun City Summerlin Computer Club

Our computer operating systems have become more secure, so developers of malware have turned their attention to a more vulnerable target, our web browsers. Chrome, Edge, Firefox, Safari, and Opera are the browsers most of us use to connect to the Internet. All of these browsers can be infected by a redirect virus, despite their built-in security. Redirect viruses, also known as hijackers, can make your online life very difficult.

In this article, I'm going to describe the process of acquiring, identifying, and removing an infection from your browser. I'm going to focus on Google Chrome; the techniques are similar, yet slightly unique for each browser. Most users should be able to use the described procedures on their own systems, with small variations depending on the browser and underlying operating system (Windows, Apple, or some flavor of UNIX/Linux).

Redirect viruses can come from several sources.

Extensions

Hijackers can sometimes be "Trojan Horsed" in with browser extensions; extensions are small programs for a browser that serve the desired purpose, such as weather, price comparison, coupons, or productivity tools. If you install these extensions, you could unknowingly grant them the ability to influence your browser settings or change your preferences such as your home page

or your default search provider. Extensions are usually the first place to examine if you suspect you might have an infection.

Spam emails

On at least a weekly basis I receive an email telling me that my account at Amazon, Facebook. eBay, PayPal, etc. have been frozen due to suspicious activity. The email contains a link to click on to resolve the problem. In reality, if I clicked on the link provided, my problems would be just starting. If you receive an email informing you of a problem with, for instance, your Amazon account, access your Amazon account the way you would normally if you think there might be a problem.

Social Media

Links from your Facebook or Twitter feed could also be rerouted in phishing, redirects, or browser hijacking. Facebook is notorious for allowing questionable items to appear in your feed. Some bad links might be posted by unsuspecting Facebook friends who find it easier to copy and paste or just click Share than to vet an item. And no, Costco is not going to send you a $50 voucher if you just take this survey revealing all sorts of personal information.

Free software downloads from unreliable sites.

Hijackers can get added along with free software downloads. Often web sites will offer a desirable program but try to trick the user into downloading malware. Always look at the address bar to make sure you are downloading software from the legitimate provider's site. Without realizing it, you could lose control of your browser by clicking on the wrong link on the wrong website.

Do I have a browser virus?

A browser virus on a PC or Mac is a browser hijacker that targets your browser. This type of malware is used to generate web traffic and collect information. How do you find out if your browser has a virus? Here are the main symptoms:

- Your homepage redirects to a website different from what you expect.
- Unwanted extensions appearing in your browser (you might see icons at the top right side of your browser).
- Ads show up more often than they should, usually in unexpected places.
- Pop-ups and banners that advertise fake updates or software regularly appear.
- The link you click in search results redirects to dubious or possibly malicious websites.
- Your browser performance decreases dramatically no matter where you go on the Internet.

A virus can also ask you to update a program such as Adobe Flash Player or download any other tool (program) that would help you fix the problem it is creating. These warnings don't always mean that you have issues with the browser but should be suspect. If you notice any of these signs, your computer browser is possibly infected with a virus.

Potential risks of a browser virus

As a browser hijacker, a pop-up virus is categorized as a potentially unwanted program (PUP). Once the malicious program attacks your computer, it starts modifying browser settings. For instance, it changes the default search engine and homepage, without asking for your permission. The most serious problem created by having this virus is the ultimate invasion of your privacy; secretly harvesting as much of your personal information as possible to engage in identity theft. Some browser viruses are all about collecting personal details (IP address, location, searches, etc.) and sharing them with third parties. This may cause serious problems related to privacy and data security.

How to get rid of the browser virus
Delete unrecognized extensions
1. Go into your browser settings (in Chrome it is the three perpendicular dots at the upper right side of the browser).
2. Click on the Extensions tab.
3. Look for any extensions that shouldn't be there. If you find anything, select it and hit the Uninstall button to remove it.

Check your homepage and search engine settings
These settings appear in the settings area of your browser. In Chrome go into the browser settings and click on Settings. Make sure your homepage and default search engine are correct.

Additional things to check
1. Go to the Applications or Applications and Features folder and find any suspicious software. It may be disguised as the desired

application, so search for anything you don't remember downloading. Also, note the install date to identify possible problems and look at the last program you downloaded before noticed problems.

2. Check your Downloads folder for items recently downloaded from the Internet for clues about the possible problematic vector that has introduced the malware into your browser.
3. Once you detect the malware, drag it to Trash and empty it, or delete it and then remove it from your Recycle Bin.

Get rid of every trace of malware

After the above steps, download and perform a Malwarebytes scan as well as a full scan with your installed virus protection to make sure no harmful PUPs are left on your system.

Conclusions and Recommendations

To avoid getting browser viruses, pay attention to the websites you visit, files you download, and apps you install. Avoid using third-party software downloaders and installers - they usually include PUPs. Never ignore the warnings if your browser alerts you that a website is not secure.

Still, it's always better to prevent the problem than to try to deal with it. Browse wisely!

From the www.scscc.club, dkretch@gmail.com.

President's Corner

Do You Trust Your Technology?

by Greg Skalka, President
Under the Computer Hood User Group

Our world runs on technology, yet many of our most contentious disagreements involve whether certain technologies can be trusted, or whether society can be trusted to use them correctly. Is climate change real and man-made? Is nuclear power dangerous? Are electronic voting machines accurate? Are vaccines safe? Does cell phone use cause cancer? Is it time to put on a tinfoil hat?

A strict application of the scientific method should be able to answer our questions and reveal the truth, but only if we all trust science. Unfortunately, with humans involved, there are biases, conflicts of interest, and preferences for one outcome over another. Another problem is that humans are imperfect, and so everything we make and do is also imperfect. Nothing we create is all good; there are always downsides to everything. Often the detrimental aspects of some new thing are not fully realized until much later. Asbestos seemed like a useful fireproofing technology until its toxicity became apparent. When the good aspects outweigh the bad (in some subjective determination), the tech is beneficial. Things are usually not black and white, however, so it is left to individuals and to society to judge their worth.

How we weigh the advantages and costs can be based on reputable information, but it can also come from rumors, false narratives, and

Tidbits of probably useless information

It is difficult to define what constitutes a language as opposed to a dialect or complete variation. There is no single criterion for how much knowledge is sufficient to be counted as a second-language speaker. For example, English has about 400 million native speakers but, depending on the criterion chosen, can be said to have as many as 2 billion speakers.

The top 10 languages spoken in the world (includes primary and second language speakers): English (1.39 Billion), Chinese-Mandarin (1.12B), Hindi (600 Million), Spanish (543M), Arabic (274M), Bengali (268M), French (267M), Portuguese (258M), Russian (258M), and Urdu (230M).

The United Nations is an international organization that came into existence in 1945. The purpose of the United Nations is to keep peace in the world. The most important countries that took part in its emergence are France, the Republic of China, the Soviet Union, the UK, and the USA along with 46 other countries. The headquarters of the United Nations is in New York City. Major offices of the UN are in Nairobi, Kenya, Geneva, Switzerland, and Austria.

Six official languages are used at UN meetings and for official documents. They are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. All documents are interpreted and translated into each of these languages before they are published.

speculation. Good things can get bad reputations (like vaccines), while bad things can get marketed as desirable (like tobacco products).

At the individual level, we all have choices to make concerning which technologies we trust and which we do not; which are worth the cost, and which should be avoided. Everyone approaches this differently, bringing our standards, biases, concerns, and experiences. Usually, the benefits are apparent, but the downsides of a particular technology are often hidden and difficult to confirm. They usually involve aspects of safety and security, and it is very difficult to prove something is completely free of risk. The risks are generally to our personal and financial data. Can we get hacked? Can we get tracked? Is someone able to steal from us, or just accumulate more information about us than we'd like? Differences of opinion on these risks can lead to things that are popular with many being shunned by some.

There are lots of examples of mainstream technologies that are not trusted by some nominally rational people. I have some relatives that don't feel safe flying and now only travel by car, bus, or train (though they had traveled by plane in the past). I feel from its safety record that flying is generally safe enough, but have never questioned them on why they hold this view. John Madden, the former football coach, and sportscaster is reportedly afraid of flying and used a bus to travel to games. Some attribute his fear to a Cal Poly football team plane crash in 1960. I am not aware of any specific incident that would be the cause of my relatives' concern; they obviously must have a point of view different from mine on this.

I didn't think much about these differences in points of view until the start of the pandemic last year when I found some good friends who refused to use Zoom. I had set up a personal Zoom account in 2015 to use for some purpose related to UCHUG but never used it much. That changed greatly in March 2020, when we were forced to hold our board meeting virtually on Zoom. Since then, with the help of APCUG, we have been able to use their paid Zoom accounts to hold all our board and general meetings. There are some members we have not seen during this time, but we don't know why. I am aware of security concerns about Zoom but have researched them, and now have used it so much that I feel it can be trusted.

Before the pandemic, I met for lunch periodically with a group of longtime friends that I worked with at one time or another. After we could no longer meet in person due to COVID, I set up Zoom virtual lunch meetings so that we could stay in touch. Many in this group participated, but some would not; they were concerned about the security issues and "just didn't do Zoom." This is unfortunate as I would like to see more of them. I periodically remind them that they could join our Zoom lunches, but I'm always rebuffed. I'm starting to feel like I'm trying to talk them into using heroin. I don't think they are paranoid, as there are other things that these friends do that I find too risky.

There are a few popular things that I don't trust at this point. One is social networks. While I do have an account on LinkedIn (for job search and career purposes), I've never had a Facebook or Twitter account. I don't have any interest in them, and since I do have security and privacy concerns about participating in these sites, I just don't. There are no doubt some things I miss out on by avoiding social networks. My church

Penguin Platform
By "Free John" Kennedy, Apcug
Advisor, Regions 3 and 6/7

HOW TO INSTALL DEEPIN DESKTOP ENVIRONMENT ON UBUNTU 20.10 OR 20.04 / LINUX MINT 20.X – This *Linux Uprising* article explains how to install the Deepin Desktop Environment on Ubuntu 20.04 or 20.10, and Linux distributions based on these Ubuntu versions, like Linux Mint 20.x. You'll also find instructions for how to remove it in case you no longer want to use it.
https://bit.ly/3hAZ9TT

HOW TO ENABLE TIMESTAMP IN LINUX PING COMMAND OUTPUT – Ping is the most widely used command on Linux and Unix servers for network troubleshooting. With the ping command we generally check connectivity to remote system either via its ip address or dns name. There can be some situations where we want to capture time in each ping reply. In this *Linux Buzz* article, You will see a demonstration on how to enable timestamp in ping command output.
https://bit.ly/3hBMAaN

6 BEST NOTE-TAKING APPS FOR LINUX – How do you choose the best tools for your productivity, when there are so many options to choose from? It's like being trapped in the candy store of life! Today, you'll be taken through a list of the best note-taking apps for Linux in 2020 in this article from Linux Stans.

has a private social network that would probably provide useful information, but my feelings about Facebook have kept me from investigating it further.

Some people don't trust online banking and bill payment. I once felt that way. While I do still have security concerns, the overwhelming convenience of these services has won me over. I take every precaution I can to keep my online financial activities secure, and so feel my use is safe enough. I sure wouldn't want to go back to banking in person or by phone or having to mail paper checks in for payments. The postal system seems less secure than it used to, so mail theft of my paper statements now seems a greater risk than an online breach.

I also have reservations about password managers. I have less distrust in them now but originally feared that if they were not secure and could be hacked, all your passwords would then be vulnerable. I developed my own process for managing passwords and prefer it, but would recommend a password manager to others at this point

Voice-operated assistants (or smart speakers) can be very useful, but there are certainly privacy concerns to consider in their use. While I have several Amazon Alexa devices, I don't trust them fully. I realize I am trading some loss of privacy for their convenience. It is the same with Amazon in general, and with Google. I love Google Maps but have concerns about all the location data I am providing when I use it. It is always a risk/reward evaluation for each service; there are some Google services I don't feel are worth the risk, and so don't use them.

A smart or connected home can be a concern for some. I have a lot of smart home devices that I feel are fairly benign, like smart lights, thermostats, and cameras. While I agree it would be handy, I'm not trusting enough to consider a smart lock for my home just yet. I was once very concerned about home Wi-Fi and kept it disabled when not using it directly. As I found reasons to use it more and hardened my home network with more secure equipment and practices, I became more trusting. Still, the majority of my home computers and the ones I use for my most sensitive computing are on my wired network.

Antivirus is something I've become less trusting of. After research and consideration, I'm now in agreement with those that believe that any external security program opens holes in the operating system and thus increases risk. I'm now using the security built into Windows 10, rather than an external antivirus program (and saving money). I am much more suspicious of security and "cleaning" programs now, as some exhibit malware-like behaviors.

And then there is Windows itself. Some don't trust Microsoft and prefer alternatives like Linux or Apple's products. I don't trust Microsoft on everything, but since I must live in a Windows world at work, I find it easiest to stick with the adversary I know best. Linux seems like a lot more work, and since I don't trust Apple any more than Microsoft, why should I pay a lot more for a computer I'm still concerned about?

No matter what technology you consider, there is probably some way it can be misused, subverted, or hacked. Each of us must consider the benefits against the risks when personally using any tech product or service. Those considerations must be made with the best, most accurate, and unbiased information available. We can't depend on the tech vendors or the government to protect us from harm; we must be our

Scam Alerts

These are actual text messages sent to my cell phone.

352-366-3426
Michelle – Installment Money For You – malvigis.blogsPOT.fr...COM - Nathaly

702-664-9821
Your required: Stimulus Check of $1,435.97 may be pending to be sent to you fj09d.com/G5VIsL….

607-337-8227
Apple is giving away 50 brand new iPad Pro and you've been chosen to get one! Confirm your information here right away! Eh24f.com/dvCVCqt….

641-500-9077
DMV Announcement: Congrats on keeping your record clean. Claim $350 from us as your reward df14b.com/ziSrjwmN….

213-479-2827
USPS: Hello, George. This is our 2nd delivery attempt to your home. Please contact us to set your delivery preference. Xi38g.com/y1JJZ2v….

657-757-0518
Good day George, we sent you an email regarding your Amazon Rewards. Here is what you can buy with it: zn12j.com/jaVoKG8….

Keep your eyes wide open for a new Purolator scam. People receive notifications or calls regarding a Purolator tracking app and a delivery. One of the numbers that scammers use is (514) 244-0509, while the rest are coming from the 438 area code. The tricksters claim to be Purolator offices and inform text recipients that they've received a package – and obviously need to claim it.

defenders. Perhaps the best we can hope for with our tech is not trust, but a truce.

Reprinted from the www.uchug.org, president@uchug.org.

LINUX SIG

You guessed it. The library is closed, so Carl sent out a link last April to try an online meeting, using Jitsi. You might not get the total hands on approach, but you can ask questions and share screens during the meeting. The Linux Workshop will take place the **third Saturday of each month**, from Noon-4PM. No, you can't bring your machine in, but you can describe your problem and Carl and the other Linux gurus will try and help you. This is a video conference, so dress appropriately.

If you are not on the Linux emailing list, you can request a link to the workshop by contacting Carl Schmidtmann, at
unixgeek@faultline.com.

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* * * * * SOFTWARE and HARDWARE * * * * *

How Soon Will Your Landline Be Obsolete?

By Bob Rankin, www.askbobrankin.com
a Translator for the Technology Impaired

Less than two percent of U.S. adults have only a landline without cellphone service. Millions of consumers are 'cutting the cord' of landline phone service and switching to cellular or VoIP (Internet calling) services. If you're one of the holdouts, you may be forced to give up your beloved copper-based phone line in the next few years. Here is why landlines are doomed, and a look at some alternatives you should be considering…

Landline Alternatives May Soon Be The Only Alternatives

Just fifteen years ago, 93% of U.S. households had a landline. As of late 2020, only 36.7% of Americans still have a landline phone, and in most states, the number of landline-only households is around 3%. Among adults 25-34 years old, about 80% are living in wireless-only households. This graph from Statista shows the trend from 2004 onward. But that's only part of the story. I can't even estimate the number of cable customers who have given up their traditional landlines in favor of VoIP (Internet calling) service.

Many have done so without even realizing it. If you're using phone service that's bundled with cable TV and Internet service, you're using VoIP even if it's delivered via a hardwired cable modem. Many cable customers take the "triple play" only because it's the cheapest option, and continue to use their traditional landlines. In the near future, we may not have that ability. Certainly, there must be many households that have both cellular and VoIP service; but the point is that both have made serious dents in landline subscriber numbers, and the trend lines are clearly pointing upwards.

AT&T, Verizon, and other telephone companies desperately want to ditch the POTS (Plain Old Telephone System) and move everyone to either cellular or VoIP services. The copper wire network that first came into widespread use in the late 19th century is ancient and deteriorating.

Interesting Internet Finds

Steve Costello
scostello@sefcug.com

PSA: Gmail Has Your Old Chat Logs From Google Talk (And Hangouts)
https://www.howtogeek.com/71140
4/psa-gmail-has-your-old-chat-logs-from-google-talk-and-hangouts/
Did you use Google Talk and or Hangouts? If so, your logs are still stored in your Google account and taking up space. Check out this post to learn how to access and delete them.

Megapixels Explained – Cyn Mackley
https://cynmackley.com/2021/02/01/megapixels-explained/
Do you wonder what megapixels are? Cyn Mackley provides an informative explanation of megapixels that is not too technical.

How To Set Up Voicemail On Google Voice
https://www.online-tech-tips.com/google-softwaretips/how-to-set-up-voicemail-on-google-voice/
This post explains how to set up voicemail on Google Voice. If you don't have Google Voice yet, it also explains how to get started with Google Voice. (I have been using Google Voice for years.)

https://www.askwoody.com/newsletter/free-edition-what-linux-is-and-why-it-has-persisted/
This article is from the free edition of the AskWoody newsletter. The article provides information about what Linux is and why it is still around and used. (Note: I subscribe to the paid edition, which contains mostly Windows-related articles.)

Telcos don't want to spend money maintaining a network that customers are abandoning in ever-increasing numbers. So the telcos are trying to end landline service.

The FCC and the States are inclined to go along. In 2017, twenty state legislatures in the USA voted to give AT&T permission to end landline service, and focus more on improving wireless and internet-based phone networks. Under that agreement, AT&T would be able to terminate landline service for customers in some of those states, with just 60 days notice.

AskBobRankin.com

In the UK, British Telecom has set a deadline of 2025 to fully migrate customers away from landline service. But as of now, the US-based telcos seem to have softened their stance. Over the past 10 years there has been a lot of chatter that landlines would be phased out by 2018, then 2020. But there hasn't actually been widespread pressure on customers who cling to their beloved handsets with tangled cords.

I read in one online forum that an AT&T rep told one customer they are no longer planning on phasing out landlines in the near future, and will not discourage people from ordering landlines. That may be because the FCC released a ruling in November 2017 addressing the retirement of landline copper lines. It instructed carriers that seek to discontinue legacy services to ensure their new services are accessible, compatible, and usable for persons with disabilities. In addition, fire and security alarms, medical devices, emergency systems, fax machines, and point-of-sale terminals all use the copper-based landline network, and switching all those legacy systems to wireless is not a trivial exercise.

Despite the obvious advantage of portability, mobile phones have their drawbacks. Call quality on landlines is superior to cellular in most cases. There's a reason why "Can you hear me now?" became an advertising catchphrase. And when was the last time you had trouble getting a dialtone or a dropped call on your landline? Landline phones are also orders of magnitude cheaper than mobile phones, and they don't break when you drop them on a tile floor.

Nonetheless, the writing is on the wall, and if I may quote Bob Dylan, there is a slow train coming 'round the bend'. Traditional landlines WILL be unavailable in many parts of the USA within a few years. Fortunately, there are plenty of landline alternatives.

Some Landline Alternatives to Consider
If you're looking for mobile phone service, I wrote about Consumer Cellular in my September 2020 article, Do You Love Your Phone Company? Consumer Cellular has built their business by offering low rates, with a no-contract business model, and is especially popular with seniors. See also my review of one low-cost and innovative cellular service provider: Ting, and my tips on how to Stop Wasting Money on Your Cell Phone Bill.

Around the World

In 2021, more children will be on the move than ever before in history.

Last year more than [80 million people around the world were forced to flee their homes](#), around half of whom are under the age of 18. Violence and conflict are the main reasons people flee. Families risk everything, undertaking long and dangerous journeys in the hope of finding safety and stability. By far the most affected group are children, who are often separated from their parents, lose access to education and healthcare, and become victims of early marriage and child labor.

Climate Change

The weather on our planet is becoming more extreme, with direct impacts on the poorest and most vulnerable children. Parents struggle to feed their children when rains are late or non-existent. On the other end of this scale are deadly floods and landslides that destroy crops and communities and become a breeding ground for disease. Increasingly, severe droughts and floods drive rural families to new towns, cities, and countries which can trigger tension and conflict with host communities.

[Vonage](#): a pioneer of residential VoIP, Vonage provides a "Vonage adapter" - actually, a router optimized for VoIP - that plugs into your broadband modem. Then you plug a traditional phone (or cordless phone base station) into the Vonage adapter. The Vonage adapter requires its own power supply from an AC outlet. Right now, the service is $9.99/month for the first 6 months; and $26.99 per month thereafter.
[Ooma Telo](#): provides an adapter, like Vonage, into which any regular phone can be plugged. Ooma's pricing model is virtually the opposite of Vonage's. The Ooma adapter costs $99.99 while the basic service is free. So after the initial investment, you pay almost nothing on a monthly basis. (You'll still pay about $3.50 per month in taxes and fees to the government.) Ooma even encrypts your calls while their data travels over the Internet.
[magicJack](#): is an unassuming little dongle about the size of two USB drives side by side. One end sports a USB connector; the other has jacks for Ethernet and telephone cables (RJ-45 and RJ-11, respectively). You can use a supplied Ethernet cable to connect the magicJack directly to a cable or DSL modem, or plug the USB connector into an available port on an Internet connected PC. If you buy one magicJack for $39.99, you get one free year of home phone service. After that, you pay just $39 per year, or $99 for three years.
[Google Voice](#) offers Internet calling as well. With a Google Voice account, you get a free phone number, free voicemail, even automatic transcription of voicemail messages to text. Your free Google Voice phone number can ring on your computer, or you can forward it to another mobile or landline phone. Phone calls via Google Voice are totally free for calls to any kind of phone in the U.S. or Canada. Other international calls can be made for modest fees.

With each of these options, your existing home phone number can be transferred (or "ported") to the new service, so people can continue to reach you on the same number.

What About Emergencies?

Some security systems still rely on landlines to contact emergency services. But modern ones use cellular connectivity. And even if you have VoIP phone service, you can still make 911 calls. When you register with Vonage or another VoIP provider, you must register your residential address with the company, which is used when a 911 call is made.

Power issues are another concern. When the electricity fails, landlines typically continue to operate, as long as the lines (and your home) are not damaged by a storm. Most residential VoIP providers offer some sort of battery backup, but it's limited to about 8 hours. In a severe or extended emergency where both landline and VoIP are unavailable, a cell phone that you can charge in your car is a must, and may be your only option.

Do you still have a landline (and a hopelessly tangled 25-foot cord)? What's your plan when the telephone man comes along to pull the plug on your landline service?

Reprinted from the Bob Rankin website, https://askbobrankin.com/how_soon_will_your_landline_be_obsolete.htm.

* * Jokes Stolen from Everywhere * *

I'll never forget my dad's face when I gave him his 50th birthday card, tears in his eyes, as he said to me, "One would have done."

Plateaus are the highest form of flattery.

A priest, a minister, and a rabbit walk into a blood bank. The rabbit says, "I believe that I am a type o."

My dad used to always say, "You should fight fire with fire!" Which is probably why he got thrown out of the fire department.

What did they give the guy that invented the door knocker?
A No-bell prize.

A friend of mine is an agnostic, dyslexic insomniac. He stays up all night long wondering if there's a dog.

Two fish swim into a concrete wall. One turns to the other and says, "Dam."

What does a thesaurus eat for breakfast? A synonym roll.

Did you hear about the kidnapping in the park? They woke him up.

What do you call an explosive monkey? Baboom!

You can't explain a pun to a kleptomaniac. They take things, literally.

I *would've* kept off the grass, but I don't understand sign language.

"Ambassador" Interpreter

By George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society

If you travel outside the United States, this is a product you need. It allows you to speak and understand 20 languages and 42 dialects. It has an over-the-ear headphone but can also be used through an app or text. It can even be broadcast live in a conference environment!

What is especially useful for this product is that it can be used for fluid ongoing conversations, unlike other translation apps and handheld devices which are best for short, occasional conversations.

There are three modes in which it can be used:

- Listen mode provides seamless personal translation in the selected language within 8 feet or so and automatically translates to the user in their native language. It also provides the translation as text with an accompanying app.
- Lecture mode broadcasts the words of the speaker wearing the device to people in a lecture or conference setting and streams audio translations to their smartphone, which can be played over their speaker or paired to any audio system.
- Converse mode allows users to engage in two-way conversation while each is wearing an Ambassador device. This method can be used with up to four people.

The languages include English, Spanish, French, German, Italian, Arabic, Greek, Russian, Hindi, Turkish, Polish, Mandarin, Japanese, Korean, Cantonese, Hebrew, Vietnamese and Dutch. It is the perfect accessory for international travel and when communicating with friends and family members that have different levels of language fluency.

It comes with two Ambassador units, a charging cable, a carrying bag, and a User Manual.

"Ambassador" Interpreter by Waverly Labs, www.waverlylabs.com, Price $199.

From the www.aztcs.org, actuary110@yahoo.com.

Odds and Ends

Ikea's Cheap $12 Sensor Warns You When Air Quality Gets Bad [Andrew Liszewski](#)

If you live in a crowded urban center, all you really have to do is peek outside in the morning to confirm how polluted the air you're breathing is. But even if you don't live in a perpetual cloud of smog, that doesn't necessarily mean the air you're breathing is clean, which is why this [$12 air quality sensor](#) from Ikea might not be a bad idea.

The Vindriktning—one of Ikea's more challenging pronunciations—is designed to sit in a high traffic area of your home so it has a better chance to sample what everyone is regularly breathing. It's specifically looking for what's known as PM2.5 particles, which can come from sources including automobile exhaust, power plants, fireplaces, airplanes, forest fires, and even volcanoes which are less regional, but more capable of spewing pollutants around the world.

PM2.5 particles are especially problematic because they're microscopic and can not only stay aloft longer, increasing the risk of them being inhaled, they're also small enough to slip past the body's natural defenses and easily make their way into the lungs and circulatory systems. Exposure to PM2.5 particles has been linked to everything from increased risks of heart and lung disease, to exasperating respiratory conditions like asthma or bronchitis. The more you can avoid them, the better.

Editor's Note: To continue reading the following articles, you may copy the long URL at the end of the article and enter it into a web browser **or** click on the URL in the web version of this newsletter.

China's Mars Rover Sends Back First Images

By [Ryan Whitwam](#) on May 20, 2021

Things are changing on Mars, a world once dominated by robots from the United States. Now, Mars is home to an international cadre of robotic explorers with the arrival of China's Zhurong rover. The mission touched down over the weekend, and Zhurong has just [beamed back the first images](#) from atop its landing platform. Soon, operators on Earth will set Zhurong loose on the red planet.

The Zhurong rover launched on July 23, 2020, just a few days before NASA's Perseverance rover. That wasn't a coincidence — both NASA and the China National Space Administration (CNSA) timed their launches to reach Mars when it was closest to Earth. Perseverance landed back in February, which is also when the Tianwen-1 orbiter arrived. However, the CNSA didn't land the rover until May 14th.

The newly received images show the six-wheeled rover still sitting on its landing platform. The images showed operators that all the lander's systems worked correctly. The ramp is already extended, ready for the robot to descend to the surface. The robot's solar panels and antenna were also confirmed to have deployed correctly.

China is only the second nation after the US to successfully land a robot on the Martian surface and keep it operating for an extended period. The European Union has attempted two rover landings, most recently in 2016, in the first phase of its ExoMars collaboration with Russia's Roscosmos. Unfortunately, the Schiaparelli lander crashed into the surface instead of landing softly, but the Trace Gas Orbiter from the same mission is still alive and well. ExoMars will try again in 2023 with a new Roscosmos lander named Kazachok and the Rosalind Franklin rover.

Read the rest, with pictures, at [www.extremetech.com/extreme/322983-chinas-mars-rover-sends-back-first-images](#).

TikTok just gave itself permission to collect biometric data on US users, including 'faceprints and voiceprints'

[Sarah Perez@sarahintampa](#) / •June 3, 2021

A change to [TikTok's U.S. privacy policy](#) on Wednesday introduced a new section that says the social video app *"may collect biometric identifiers and biometric information"* from its users' content. This includes things like *"faceprints and voiceprints,"* the policy explained. Reached for comment, TikTok could not confirm what product developments necessitated the addition of biometric data to its list of

disclosures about the information it automatically collects from users, but said it would ask for consent in the case such data collection practices begin.

    The biometric data collection details were introduced in the newly added section, "Image and Audio Information," found under the heading of "Information we collect automatically" in the policy.

    This is the part of TikTok's Privacy Policy that lists the types of data the app gathers from users, which was already fairly extensive.

    The first part of the new section explains that TikTok may collect information about the images and audio that are in users' content, *"such as identifying the objects and scenery that appear, the existence and location within an image of face and body features and attributes, the nature of the audio, and the text of the words spoken in your User Content."*

    While that may sound creepy, other social networks do object recognition on images you upload to power accessibility features (like describing what's in an Instagram photo, for example), as well as for ad targeting purposes. Identifying where a person and the scenery is can help with AR effects, while converting spoken words to text helps with features like TikTok's automatic captions. The policy also notes this part of the data collection is for enabling *"special video effects, for content moderation, for demographic classification, for content and ad recommendations, and for other non-personally-identifying operations,"* it says.
The more concerning part of the new section references a plan to collect biometric data.

It states:
    Read the whole article at https://techcrunch.com/2021/06/03/tiktok-just-gave-itself-permission-to-collect-biometric-data-on-u-s-users-including-faceprints-and-voiceprints/.

* * * * * CLUB and REGIONAL NEWS * * * * *

RCSI

    The planning meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month, at 7:00 pm and are open to any member. We use Jitsi, and a link will be emailed to members before our next planning meeting. ANY CLUB MEMBER MAY ATTEND and voice their opinions about club operations.

    Yes, we are planning a picnic this September (not our usual August). We will have more details next month.

    APCUG, **Tech for Seniors**, hosted by Ron Brown and Hewie Poplock, via Zoom, is a weekly event on Monday mornings. The session begins at 11:30 a.m. EST for a half-hour of "social time" and at noon, the one hour meeting begins and is locked so no one can interrupt the speakers.
    The meeting ID is **526-610-331** (there is no password) and you'll be placed in a waiting room and then admitted.
    Here is a link to previous episodes: (132) Ronald Brown – YouTube.

Our Usual Meeting Place
St John's Meadows at Johnsarbor Drive, is on the left, past Clinton Avenue, when going West on Elmwood Avenue. The opening in the white fence is Johnsarbor Drive. At the 'T', turn right. The meeting is in the first building on the left – **Briarwood**.
Our meeting place can change. Please check our website before each meeting. **www.rcsi.org**

SUNNKING FREE residential e-recycling event:
Xerox Corp, Orchard Street and Panama Road, Webster, NY 14580
August 28, 2021, 8:30 am – 12:00 pm. Limit of 4 CRT TVs or monitors.
Ticket is REQUIRED for entry,
www.sunnking.com/events/webster-08-28-21
Registration closes at 4 p.m. the day prior OR when event is fully booked. In-Kind Sponsor: Senator Pamela Helming and Assemblyman Brian Manktelow