



An International Association of Technology & Computer User Groups

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.

The *Monitor* is published monthly by members of RCSI. Articles by our members may be reprinted by other user groups or nonprofits, without special permission. A courtesy copy may be emailed to the author or Monitor editor.

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



**** *Because of COVID-19, all club meetings are held online.* ****

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May 11, 'Protopage'
presented by Mark Zinzow

June 8, Arpad Kovacs

July 13, Tony Dellelo

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**** *Because of COVID-19, all club meetings and the Linux sig are currently being held online.* ****

You, Your Router... and Eggs?

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

The old adage says “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket.” Yet most of us do exactly that with all of our expensive “smart” home electronics, and the consequences can be as calamitous as the old proverb implies. The latest cyber attacks are targeting home Internet routers. Here's my



“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 (WGMC) from Rochester, NY. Call 966-JAZZ (585-966-5299) or 800-790-0415

Sound Bytes is the longest running computer call-in show in the known universe.

We have stopped printing the Monitor newsletter and leaving hard copies at some area computer repair shops. Digital copies may be obtained from www.rcsi.org or my Pcloud storage at <https://tinyurl.com/tonydelrcsi> (***this link works in PDF version only***). Also includes presentation slides and articles too large for this newsletter.

Some Past Presentations:

- Flash Drives-Not Just for Storage
- Features, Mac OS X & Windows
- Tablets, the Programs and Uses
- Personal Finance Software
- Amazing Browser Tips
- Linux is Like Cars
- Drones and Their Many Uses
- Gifts and Gadgets for the Holidays
- Cut the Cord, Streaming Services
- Autonomous Cars and Robots
- Open Source and Free Software
- Protecting Your Identity
- Keeping Mobile Devices Secure
- 3D Printing, ENABLE project
- Internet Security and Privacy

advice on what you need to know to defend yourself against router attacks...

Yes, Virginia, You Have a Router.

I sometimes hear from people who claim they have no router. But unless you're on a super-slow dialup connection, you do. Some say they have just a modem they rent from their Internet Service Provider (ISP). For the record, the “modem” that Comcast and other ISPs talk about is the black box they overcharge you to rent. That box contains the router which controls traffic on your home network as well as the modem that handles communication with the Internet. So yes, this article is relevant to you, too.

The “basket” I mentioned in the intro is your home’s router, the device that acts as a gateway between the Internet and all the gadgets in your home that use it. When malware compromises your router, it’s as if a fox pried open your basket of precious eggs. Everything on your home network is compromised, too.

That is one reason to run anti-malware software on each computer attached to your home network even though the router may have a firewall or other security features designed to keep intruders and malware out. If the router’s protection fails, individual devices may save themselves. The performance hit imposed by such redundancy is negligible compared to the potential risk to computers that harbor irreplaceable data. An even greater reason not to rely on your router’s security is that it is almost nonexistent, in most cases.

The firmware of most consumer-grade routers is poorly written to begin with, is often left unpatched when vulnerabilities are discovered, and almost certainly will not be supported longer than two years after your particular router make/model was released. (How long have you had your router? How old was it when you got it?)

This disgraceful state of affairs is especially true for cheap, no-name routers. Brands that I consider trustworthy include TP-Link, Netgear, Linksys, ASUS, and D-Link. If you see a router advertised on Amazon, but it’s a brand you’ve never heard of, and yet somehow they’ve got thousands of glowing reviews, put down the mouse and back away slowly.

Consumer-grade routers are commodities differentiated only by price in the minds of most buyers, who do not grasp the technical mysteries of these boxes that “just sit there blinking.” Consequently, manufacturers shave their costs in every possible way. Software quality and support are sacrificed heavily.

Signs Your Router May Have Weak Security

You may have noticed that your router does not automatically update its software; that updates are never trumpeted via the trade press; that it is devilishly difficult to find current router software on manufacturers’ sites, and tricky to install it correctly if you do find the right update. Even basic documentation of the software that ships with a router is often terribly slim and reads as if was run twice through Google Translate. These are all signs that a router maker has skimmed on security software and support.

Another sign of weak security is that the only advice you get for improving security is, “Change the default admin password.” That is the

Special Interest Group

Linux Sig

We are back!

Linux Workshop,
**third Saturday of
each month, Noon-4PM**



NEW LOCATION:

Gates Public Library
902 Elmgrove Rd, 14624,
between Buffalo Road and
531 Expressway.

The room we use is on the second floor, SE corner, by the restrooms.

<https://www.meetup.com/Interlock-Rochester-Hackerspace/events/psggnqybcbxb/>

Because of coronavirus,

we meet online. A link will be sent by email.

Come and get your questions about Linux answered. 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.

Carl Schmidtman

Free, Virtual Technology Conferences, ONLINE
presented by APCUG

The 2021 schedule
Saturdays:
May 1,
August 21, November 6
from 1 – 4 pm, EST

For Conference Descriptions
& Registration Links, go to
apcug2.org/category/virtual-tech-conference

first thing you should do with a new router; if it is the last thing you can do, the router still may have no meaningful security.

“Disable remote administration” is another router security recommendation that should be implemented but does not hacker-proof your router. Remote administration allows you, your ISP, and possibly some hacker in Romania the ability to login to the router via the Internet. Hackers have known about “cross-site request forgery (CSRF)” tricks that get around this safeguard for many years, but some cheap routers still don’t close this hole.

Your ISP may not even allow you to disable remote router administration. After all, it makes their job a lot easier if they have to reconfigure your router. This is a case of “better to ask forgiveness than permission.” Disable remote administration if you can; address any objections from your ISP only if necessary. *You have the legal right to use your own equipment on your side of the ISP’s box as long as it doesn’t interfere with anyone else’s service, according to the FCC and well-settled case law.*

Protecting the IP addresses of the DNS servers that your router uses to look up Internet sites is another security essential that cheap routers neglect. These DNS server IP addresses are stored in the router’s memory. A badly secured router leaves it vulnerable to “DNS hijacking” in which requests for domain name lookups are misdirected to an attacker’s bogus DNS server, and what you see in your browser’s address bar may not be the site that you think it is.

If your home network’s security is worth \$100 to \$150 amortized over five years, then you should be willing to buy a better router, too. If you are paying for malware protection of individual devices on your home network, a competent router makes that investment more worthwhile; otherwise, you are sacrificing the redundancy that makes security as good as it can be. Check out the Asus RT-AC5300 router, Netgear’s Nighthawk AC1900 family, and models in the Linksys “Smart Wi-Fi” family of routers.

What You Can Do For Free

That said, here are some things you can do to configure better security on any router. I cannot provide detailed instructions for your specific router; but in most cases you’ll start by connecting to your router via this address: <http://192.168.1.1> and providing the admin username and password. If you need help logging into your router, or changing the settings once logged in, contact your ISP or look for instructions online.

Your first task is to change the administrator’s password; this one cannot be repeated often enough. Many routers ship with a default password, or no password at all, leaving them wide open to attack.

Disable remote administration: discussed above. The router should be accessible only via a physical Ethernet cable, or from a specific, fixed IP address of a device designated for the administration of the router (such as the owner’s PC or phone).

Change the router’s IP address. Hackers typically look for vulnerable routers at a factory-default IP address like 192.168.1.1; if that fails, the attack fails in all but the most sophisticated campaigns.

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Hour: Jan Rothfuss

Planning Meeting

Held on 1st Tuesday of each month
at 7 pm, at St. John's Meadows,
Briarwood building. ANY CLUB
MEMBER MAY ATTEND.

NOTE: Because of Covid-19, we
meet online.

Newsletter Printing

Limited copies will be printed and
available at some of the local
computer shops. *A few copies will
be available at our meetings.*

Club Mailing Address

Rochester Computer Society, Inc
PO Box 18516
Rochester, NY 14618

But there is no reason a router can't have another IP address, and your router's administration interface should allow you to make such a change.

For example, you could choose 192.168.0.100 as your router's IP address. Log in to the router's administrative interface in the usual way, via the default IP address. Navigate to the page that enables changes to the router's IP address and make your change. Save changes and reboot the router. Henceforth, enter the router's new IP address in your browser's address bar to access the router's admin interface.

Keep router firmware up to date. Automatic updating of router firmware should be as standard as automatic Windows Update on all routers; don't buy a new router without it. Newer models from Linksys and Netgear include automatic firmware updates as an option.

Changing the router's default password is the first, easy step towards router security you can count on. If you also perform any one of these reinforcements to your router's security, you will have thwarted a significant portion of other potential attacks. Implement all of these suggestions if you can.

###

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 Schmidtman, at
unixgeek@faultline.com.

APCUG, **Tech for Seniors**, 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 actual 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](#).

APCUG, **Virtual Technology Conference**
Saturday, May 1, starting at 1pm ET, <https://apcug2.org/>

Tidbits of probably useless information

Eating an apple is more effective than a coffee to stay awake. Coffee stimulates the senses and provides mental energy, but does not give the body energy, unlike the apple. Apples do not contain caffeine, but they do have about 13 grams of natural sugar (glucose). These natural sugars trigger blood flow, thereby making you feel awake, and because the vitamins and nutrients from the apple are released slowly throughout the body, apples are likely to make you feel more awake for a longer period of time than caffeine.

Honey never molds. Honey is one of the oldest sweeteners consumed by humans, with recorded use as far back as 5,500 BC. It was, like salt, used as a preservative. This sweet substance, produced from the nectar of flowers or honeydew, does not rot. Many people have heard of jars of honey being unearthed in ancient Egyptian tombs, still as good to eat as the day they were sealed. However, it must be kept airtight and contain less than 18% moisture.

Tomatoes were once considered poisonous. For a while, Europeans avoided eating anything from the nightshade family because they considered them deadly (this family includes potatoes, peppers and eggplants). This belief changed during a famine, when people were forced to eat these vegetables, and nothing happened. Can you imagine spaghetti sauce, salad or a pizza without tomatoes?

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

Why Linux?

By Jim Quinn, Vice President
Under the Computer Hood User Group

In 2008 we (my wife & I) decided to do the 5-year plan to retire in 2012. We calculated our retirement income and expenses (including taxes) to make sure we could live satisfactory on that amount.



This forced me to think about technology for us and our two daughters, and how to support them with hardware, software (Win 7), tech support, and what it would cost. I was always helping my daughters with problems fixing Windows 7 and computer hardware. So, I built 2 new computers for myself, specifications listed below, one was for Linux and one for Windows 7 (hardware to replace current Win 7 machine).

I also had to face the issue of software. A problem with propriety software is that updates to the Operating System (OS) and applications may prevent them from running on your current hardware. Also, propriety applications may no longer be supported by the OS (security updates) or abandoned.

Linux offers free software (the OS and the applications) with many choices of OS (distributions aka distros) and applications. That way, if either becomes unavailable or unsupported there are many alternatives available. Linux distros vary from the highly technical (you choose what is included and you compile your own) to ready to use distros (Linux Mint and many others, aka many flavors). You also have a choice of desktops; you can use a distro that looks like Windows, Mac, or any other desktop styles. The good thing about Linux is you have many choices of distros, desktops, and applications.

In 2010 I found Linux Mint 9 and started my quest to see if it would work for me and my daughters, as I'm the tech support for them. I finally settled on Mint 9 Maté as the replacement for Win 7 as it seemed to have all the software applications the daughters would need and hopefully would also meet my needs. The Linux Mint 9 Maté interface was easy to learn and I really liked the multiple workspaces.

Within about a year, the daughters' computers started having Win 7 problems and hardware issues.

I started looking around for replacement computers and ordered a refurbished computer to test out Mint 9. TigerDirect & Newegg seemed to have good prices for prior models, so I ordered one. The testing went great, so I added a second hard drive (for automated backups) and a USB drive backup for the daughters to use.

Since moving my daughters' computers to Linux, my support calls have gone to almost nil. Most of the questions are related to how to accomplish a task with the applications. Linux is a multiuser system.

My daughters and I have been using the long-term support (LTS) releases (around 5 years) of Linux Mint. The current release of Mint (LTS) is 20. The only time-consuming support with my daughters'

Jere's Tech Tips

By Jere Minich, Apcug Advisor,
Region 5 (AL, FL, GA, SC)

20 FREE WAYS TO DOWNLOAD ANY VIDEO FROM THE INTERNET –

Downloading videos off the Internet is surprisingly easy. Here are free ways to grab any video you want. Do you want to download videos from the Internet? If you see a video you like on Facebook, YouTube, Vimeo, or any of the other leading video sites, you might want to create a copy so you can keep it forever.

Thankfully, downloading videos off the Internet is surprisingly easy. And here are the best free ways to download any video off the Internet.

Go to this Make Use Of article and pick a method to download videos from the Internet.

<https://bit.ly/3oSjhmQ>

HOW TO CHANGE MICROPHONE VOLUME IN WINDOWS 10 –

If your microphone seems too quiet or loud on Windows 10, you can easily adjust the signal input level. Here's how to increase or decrease your microphone volume. Go to How-to Geek and change your mic. <https://bit.ly/3nnKpKa>

HOW TO OPEN CHROME'S INCOGNITO MODE WITH A KEYBOARD SHORTCUT –

If you ever need to do some private browsing in Google Chrome, it's easy to quickly open an Incognito window using a keyboard shortcut. In this special mode, your browsing history won't be stored on your local machine. Here's how to launch it. How-to Geek gives the details here.

<https://bit.ly/3nSoWtf>

computers is when I upgrade to a new release of the long-term support distro. This is due to both my daughters having multiple users. It requires backing up their home folders, creating users with the same ID, restoring their home folders, and changing back the ownership of their respective files because my backup is done with admin rights. I'm seriously considering creating an application to perform this automatically or finding a backup program that will do this.

SO WHY LINUX?

Windows 7 is no longer supported; this requires the possibility of purchasing a new computer as it wouldn't update my machine and definitely not my daughters' computers. This would also require purchasing new versions of the programs we need as they are not supported under Windows 7.

Now that Windows 10 is in full swing there have been many problems when installing updates. Also, Microsoft states this is the last version of Windows. It appears that most commercial programs are going to a monthly subscription or yearly subscription, which benefits them but not the user. For most of us, this means you cannot continue to use a program for years even if you do not need the updated features (lack of choice forced upgrades). Windows features updates are only supported for two years, so does that indicate that you'll need to update your computer, or are they preparing to implement a subscription service for Windows?

I'll step down from my soapbox now.

Each of my 2 new computers' specifications:

Corsair Case Black, 300R

Motherboard: ASUS P8Z77-V Deluxe

CPU: Intel i7-3770K

Memory: G.Skill, F3-1866C10D-16GSR – total 32GB

Asus DRW-24B1ST

Pioneer DVD BDR-207UBK

Western Digital, WD1003FZEX (2 each) for windows RAID 1 and 1 for Linux Computer

Reprinted from the November 2020 issue, Drive Light, www.uchug.org,
vicepresident@uchug.org.

Helpful Memory Bytes

By Jim Cerny, Help Desk Host
The Saratoga Users Group

Let's review and explore what we really need to know about basic computer storage (bits and bytes) and how it helps us get an idea of the data space needed to save and back up our stuff.

Suppose you landed on a planet and the aliens there only had one hand and only one finger on it (not ten fingers like we do). All they could

Scam Alerts

These are actual text messages sent to my cell phone, starting in December.

469-797-6665

Congrats! Your number has been selected to win a Playstation 5. Claim before 1159pm
tc22y.com/fMh9bwn...

949-500-9397

George, here is \$513 for being a cautious driver this year
ch28n.com/auYqll...

407-445-9641

George, you have a new notification from APPLE
su03n.me/u0qDIx3...

714-262-2850

FedEx Notification: Your parcel was picked up by the courier today, track your order here
tc13b.me/OLFoxtD2...

631-690-5168

Due to the pandemic, Netflix is giving everyone a free 1-year subscription to help you stay at home. Get yours here
bm13x.com/fvHDIRB...

631-690-6904

2 Viruses Detected – Please secure and clean your system right away!
Yf12I.com/H1fUrPB...

714-400-7796

DMV Sent You A New Notice. Read Now -
gq14o.com/UGg9zs...

619-860-7105

Hey babe, what are you doing now? Send me a pic! I sent you one too. Here is mine
xw03d.com/4Wi7rSk...

do is flash a single digit or none at all (hence, a zero or one). How high could they count? Could they do basic math?

All computers use the binary system (a single digit of 1 or 0) – that is, they store and work with data saved in memory as zeros and ones. But there is NO LIMIT to how high you can count – you just keep adding on more zeros and ones. For example, the digits we know in our numbering system such as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 15, 16, 31, 32, 33, etc. would be the following in binary = 1, 10, 11, 100, 101, 110, 111, 1000, 1111, 10000, 11111, 100000, 100001, etc. So, adding a new digit to the left doubles the size of the memory (or number). Believe it or not, math gets a lot simpler with only two digits. A single binary digit is called a BIT. Eight bits together form a BYTE of data. Eight bits allow for 256 different combinations, enough to cover not only our 26-character alphabet but special characters and more. Every keystroke on your keyboard enters one byte into memory!

I love the old science fiction movies – where the spacecraft command center was filled with gauges and dials! To read a value on a dial you had to look closely and see where the arrow was. It showed measurement on a scale of lines and it was up to you and your eyesight to see the amount or “reading.” But with binary digits, you don’t care about “how much” you only need to know if it is there or not there -- a one or a zero. To get more accuracy, you just add more binary digits. So, you will need a lot of them, but they are cheap and much easier for use in electronics.

One KILO-byte of memory is 1024 bytes, but when we start dealing with really large amounts of computer storage, we round it off and call it a thousand.

One MEGA-byte of data is one million bytes or one-thousand kilobytes. Those old 3.5-inch computer disks (remember them?) held about one and a half megabytes or about 220 pages of text. A CD-ROM (computer disk) could hold about 700 megabytes, that’s over 400 of those old floppy disks and about 90,000 pages of text. It is good to remember that photos, depending upon the number of pixels in them, can be from 10 or 20 kilobytes up to 2, 12, 24, or more megabytes each! So, is a picture worth a thousand words? You bet, and more!

One GIGA-byte is one trillion bytes or one-thousand megabytes. Now we are talking serious (and very inexpensive) memory! You can buy a small portable USB drive (called a “thumb” drive or “flash” drive) in various gigabyte sizes – I tend to like the 32 or 64-gigabyte size because it can easily hold all my photos and documents as my backup. Just one gigabyte can hold almost 700,000 pages of text. That’s a den full of books. One HD (high definition) movie can take 2 to 5 gigabytes of memory. Movies and videos are moving pictures, of course, several pictures (or “frames”) per second. Fortunately, the data used to store photos and movies are “compressed” or coded to take up much less space than you would expect.

One TERA-byte is one thousand gigabytes. For us normal people, this is a HUGE amount of memory! You can get a one-terabyte drive for about \$50. It can hold 300,000 photos or



Interesting Internet Finds

Steve Costello
scostello@sefcug.com

What Is Archive In Gmail And How To Archive And Unarchive Emails

<https://www.guidingtech.com/what-is-archive-in-gmail-how-to-archive-unarchive-emails/>

Do you know what archiving in Gmail is? If so, do you know why and how to use it? The answers to these questions are in this post.

How To Clear Cache On Android (And When You Should)

<https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/clear-cache-android/>

Do you use an Android? If the answer is yes, you need to read and follow what this post says.

Opting Out Of Amazon Sidewalk

<https://firewallsdontstopdragons.com/optiming-out-of-amazon-sidewalk/>

Have an Amazon Echo or Ring device? If so, read this post and learn how to opt-out of Amazon Sidewalk. I have opted-out for increased security reasons.

What Is A USB Security Key, And Should You Use One?

<https://www.reviewgeek.com/63448/what-is-a-usb-security-key-and-should-you-use-one/>

I read this post and think it is overkill for my needs. But, if you use your laptop for business, have a lot of confidential information on your laptop when you travel, this post explains how you can benefit from a USB security key and what the disadvantages are.

about 500 hours of movies. And, unlike my memory, it will never forget anything.

The next memory size up is the PETA-byte -- yup, one-thousand terabytes! And, no, they are not going to run out of prefixes. All just to store ones and zeros.

I use a nice little thumb drive I use to back up my memory, but I seem to forget where I put it!

From the July 2020 STUG Monitor, www.thestug.org,
jimcerny123@gmail.com.

Product Review

About Reading and Using Goodreads

By Steve Costello

Retired, former user group officer and newsletter editor, grandfather, blogger, creative writing prompt blog participant, and loves to read. *Computers, Technology, and User Groups Blog*: <http://ctublog.sefcug.com/>

Creative Writing and Book Review Blog: <http://sefcw.wordpress.com/scostello@sefcug.com>

A Little Background

I read or want to read and review, as well as getting recommendations for new books to read. I have been asked to put together an article about how I use Goodreads; so, the following will show you how I use it, and hopefully it can help you in these times of social distancing and isolation. I have been using Goodreads since the beginning of 2012. As of this writing, I have read almost 1500 books since I joined up.

Get Started

First, go to goodreads.com. You will come to a page where you can read about Goodreads, and sign up for your own account, which is free. Once you have signed up, set up your profile and account settings. In your profile the only required field is your First Name, the rest of the fields are optional, include as little or as much as you feel comfortable with, you can always go back and edit the profile later. In settings, you can set privacy preferences, who can view various items, send private messages, and more.

The Home Page

When you sign in, Goodreads will open to the Home page. The Home page contains information about what you are currently reading, if anything, an ad, a link to News & Interviews, the current year's Reading Challenge progress, a list of your current bookshelves, and more on the left-hand side, the right-hand side will show updates from your friends.

The My Books Page

The top section of the page has a search box where you can search for a book or author to add books to your shelves. On the left-hand side, is a

Penguin Platform

By “Free John” Kennedy, Apcug
Advisor, Regions 3 and 6/7

HOW TO DISABLE SUSPEND AND HIBERNATION MODES

IN LINUX – In this *TechMint* article, we take you through how to disable suspend and hibernation modes on a Linux system. But before we do that, let’s briefly have an overview of these two modes. To find out more jump to <https://bit.ly/3n7zTWx>

NOBODY OWNS LINUX, BUT YOU CAN PAY FOR IT – OR

NOT – There is nothing quite like the open source community to demonstrate the principles of freedom, democracy, and meritocracy – and the difficulties of bringing those principles to bear and keeping them pure when money is involved. Open source software is not just about having access to source code, but that is a kind of protection against tyranny if parts of the community, particularly corporate sponsors who cut the paychecks for a lot of the developers – either directly or indirectly – who create open source software, particularly the Linux kernel and the operating system that is stacked up around it in various distributions. Continue reading this article from *TheNextPlatform* at <https://bit.ly/3hzdZKG>

EXPLORE THE NIGHT SKY WITH THIS OPEN SOURCE

ASTRONOMY APP – Stargaze from your Linux desktop or Android device with Kstars as explained in this article from *OpenSource.com*.
<https://red.ht/3b9XK5k>

listing of your bookshelves with a count of the contents; reading activity links, add book links, and tools. The right-hand side contains columns of your recorded books, which can be sorted in many ways. The way I use these columns is to go to my want-to-read bookshelf or a specific bookshelf, and sort by date added to figure out my next read.

Browse Page

On this page, you will find links to Recommendations, Choice Awards, Giveaways, New Releases, Lists, Explore, and News & Interviews. I use Recommendations when I am looking to find a new author to read, and this is only occasionally as I have over 2,000 on my want-to-read shelf. I check the Giveaways link daily to see if there is something I would like to get for review. This is also a way to find a new author. The giveaways can be either print or Kindle versions, and you will receive an email if you win telling you how and when it will be received. The other link I use from this page is the New Releases. I use this at the beginning of each month and then place a hold at my local library site for new releases from authors I like to read.

Community Page

This page has links to Groups, Discussions, Quotes, Ask the Author, Trivia, Quizzes, Creative Writing, People, and Events. I don’t know much about these links, but some might be interested.

Conclusion

I hope that this gives you a good idea of what Goodreads is all about, and gets you to sign up and start recording what you are reading. If you want to get an idea of what I read check out my Goodreads at <https://www.goodreads.com/sefcccw>. If you have joined up, you can also follow me, add me as a friend, message me, and compare books at the same URL after signing in.

Also, I like to go back and read early books in a series if I like the author. Just check the author’s page to see if there is a listing of the books in a series, which will be in book number order, and then see if your library has a copy you can borrow, or find on Amazon, Google Play Books, thrift stores, yard sales, or anywhere else that might have them.

Happy reading!

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**** Jokes Stolen from
Everywhere ****

Elephant Jokes

Why was the elephant afraid to go
to the computer store?
Because they sold mice.

What did the elephant do when he
hurt his toe?
He called the tow truck.

What do you call an elephant that
laughs a lot?
*An *elaughant*.*

Why are elephants bad dancers?
They have two left feet.

What's an elephant called that
won't share its toys?
Elfish.

What sport will an elephant
always beat you at?
Squash!

Why couldn't the elephant ride
the bus to school?
*Its trunk wouldn't fit under the
seat.*

What album could an elephant
listen to all day long?
Tusk by Fleetwood Mac.

What's an elephant's favorite part
of a tree?
The trunk!

Why do elephants need trunks?
Because they don't have handbags.

Why do elephants have trunks?
*Because they would look funny with a
suitcase.*

******* BITS and PIECES in the NEWS *******

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.

**Research: Photovoltaics can make the world fossil-free
faster than expected**

by [Aarhus University](#), March 29, 2021

A team of researchers led by Aarhus University and including experts
from universities and knowledge institutions in the US, Europe, Japan
and Australia has published an article in the prestigious scientific
journal *Joule* confirming that the role of solar photovoltaic installations
in future green energy systems ought to be significantly upgraded.

Solar [photovoltaic](#) technology has undergone dramatic development
over the past 14 years causing the technology to be cheaper already
today than has otherwise been assumed in the models that the UN
Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) uses for its 2050
scenarios.

"And there is good reason to believe that this development will
continue. Intensive research is being conducted into photovoltaic
technology, its integration into [energy systems](#), as well as its synergy
with other industries. Furthermore, innovative technologies are on the
way that could further boost this development. Therefore, we're looking
at a future where energy from [solar cells](#) is even cheaper than today.
This fact doesn't harmonize with the models behind political decisions
about energy investments," says Assistant Professor Marta Victoria from
the Department of Mechanical and Production Engineering at Aarhus
University, who is the leading author of the article.

Finish exploring this article at [https://techxplore.com/news/2021-03-
photovoltaics-world-fossil-free-faster.html](https://techxplore.com/news/2021-03-photovoltaics-world-fossil-free-faster.html).

**Wireless Brain Computer Allows Paralyzed People to Type on
PCs with Their Minds, Wherever They Are**

Gerry Roberts

Brain Computer Interface That Sits on Top of Head

Conventional BCIs are linked to large transmitters using long cables,
but a team of researchers at Brown University in Providence, Rhode
Island, has removed the cords and replaced the cables with a small
transmitter that is placed on top of the person's head.

This redesigned BCI is merely two inches in diameter and linked to an
electrode array within the motor cortex of the user's brain through the
same port wired systems utilize.

In the trial, which researchers call BrainGate, two paralyzed men
with spinal injuries could type and click on the tablet by simply thinking
of the action. They completed the tasks with point-and-click accuracy
and typing speeds similar in wired systems.

Odds and Ends

The *Winston Privacy Filter* crushes the ads, trackers, and data theft that's strangling your home WiFi by [TNW Deals](#) — in [Offers](#)

TLDR: The Winston Privacy Filter cloaks all your home WiFi traffic, blocking ads, trackers and other data collection while encrypting all your web activity to make you virtually invisible online.

You might think most of your home WiFi bandwidth is eaten up by media consumption like streaming video, podcasts, or that 6-hour YouTube binge. It plays its part, but what's actually taking up almost half of your home Internet activity is junk you didn't ask for and, in most cases, really don't want.

Stuff like ads. And trackers. And cookies. And logging. And telemetry services. All this online stuff that website owners and marketers use to try and geo-target you and all your buying habits. They tax your device CPU, slow down the time it takes to render pages in your browser, and just create way more communication between your devices and the web than you need. In fact, you don't need almost any of it.

Winston can save you. It's the always-enthusiastic bouncer who stands guard over your entire home network, ready to lay the smack down on any and all ads, trackers, and other unnecessary data transfers that slow down your web connection and make users and their vital information vulnerable.

Check pricing at <https://thenextweb.com/offers/2021/04/07/the-winston-privacy-filter-crushes-the-ads-trackers-and-data-theft-thats-strangling-your-home-wifi/>.

The technology is akin to [Elon Musk's BCI called Neuralink](#), which is currently under development, which is a device that will be implanted in the patient's brain. However, unlike Neuralink, BrainGate is visible, and a concrete example of the innovation tested on humans. Neuralink has only been tested in pigs and monkeys.

The full article is at www.sciencetimes.com/articles/30472/20210403/brain-computer-interface-wireless-paralyzed-people.htm.

Creating clean transport fuels from waste

By Dr Mohsen Talei, Dr Dominic Davis, Professor Michael Brear, University of Melbourne, and Dr Davy Brouzet, Stanford University

By extracting biofuel from agricultural and urban waste, researchers hope to create a low-cost, zero emission transport fuel for the future. For all of its bountiful produce, like meat, fish and crops, agriculture also generates considerable waste.

Of main concern is methane (CH₄), a gas burped by cows and released by rotting vegetation and manure, because it has a much higher global warming potential than carbon dioxide (CO₂). That is, methane in the Earth's atmosphere absorbs much more radiation energy per tonne of gas than CO₂, and so is a significant contributor to global warming. Furthermore, oxidation of methane in the atmosphere leads to the formation of ozone which is another potent greenhouse gas.

Our research is looking at ways to flip this relationship, taking the methane produced from agricultural and urban waste and using it as a cost-effective fuel in the transport sector – a fuel known as bio-compressed natural gas (bio-CNG). Our initial analysis shows that bio-CNG, derived from wastes – with careful consideration of the [lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions](#) associated with its production, processing and use – can be financially viable in the Australian market.

Transport sector emissions

The transport sector currently accounts for approximately [20 percent](#) of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions. Absolute transport sector emissions have increased by more than 60 percent since 1990 due largely to Australia's reliance on cars. Australian road transport is currently dominated by vehicles that burn diesel and petrol.

Although electric vehicles have bright prospects, it is unlikely that their use alone can meet our emissions reduction objectives, given the wide range of vehicles that we use (including heavy-duty trucks that are hard to electrify), Australia's vast distances and our low population density.

Current alternative fuels such as compressed natural gas (CNG), ethanol and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) have all remained small players despite attractive aspects of each. Bio-CNG may therefore be an option, given its potentially very low and even negative lifecycle emissions.

Read the rest at <https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/creating-clean-transport-fuels-from-waste>.

First-ever lab model of human eye offers hope for macular degeneration patients

March 29, 2021

Rochester researchers say their breakthrough could lead to patient-specific treatments. Age-related macular degeneration (AMD), which leads to a loss of central vision, is the most frequent cause of blindness in adults 50 years of age or older, affecting an [estimated 196 million people worldwide](#). There is no cure, though treatment can slow the onset and preserve some vision.

Recently, however, researchers at the [University of Rochester](#) have made an important breakthrough in the quest for an AMD cure. Their first three-dimensional (3D) lab model mimics the part of the human retina affected in macular degeneration.

Their model combines stem cell-derived retinal tissue and vascular networks from human patients with bioengineered synthetic materials in a three-dimensional “matrix.” Notably, using patient-derived 3D retinal tissue allowed the researchers to investigate the underlying mechanisms involved in advanced neovascular macular degeneration, the [wet form](#) of macular degeneration, which is the more debilitating and blinding form of the disease.

The researchers have also demonstrated that wet-AMD-related changes in their human retina model could be targeted with drugs.

You can read the whole article at www.rochester.edu/newscenter/first-human-eye-lab-model-macular-degeneration-causes-472552/.

RCSI

No, we haven’t closed. Our usual meeting place has closed to outsiders, but **we are practicing social distancing online**. We have used Zoom and Jitsi for our planning and monthly meetings. The planning meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month, at 7:00 pm and are open to any member. A link will be emailed to members, before our next planning meeting. ANY CLUB MEMBER MAY ATTEND and voice their opinions about club operations.

Help’s Half Hour

Notes by Jan Rothfuss

Q: Chrome Box had to be replaced. Now works fine.

A: Bought it on Amazon and works pretty good. Uses his own pieces like mouse, keyboard and monitor.

Q: Is there a Zoom option to adjust the light intensity, etc?

A: There seems to be an adjustment for low light but it does not seem to make a difference.

Q: A member had been able to use Outlook email in the Firefox to search the mailbox for a given phrase, email address, etc. Usually the request will act as a filter and the display will include only those emails that match. This feature no longer works. Any ideas?

A: Jerry suggested using the following link to try to fix the issue:

<https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/outlook-search-not-working/>

Q: What is the story about the recent Windows 10 updates?

A: It is still good to keep up as sometimes other software requires the new update.

Online During Covid
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**