



Our Club

RCSI is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) group open for membership to anyone interested in computers and new technology. Established in 1981, 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 July and 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. Yes, you may bring the problem computer with you.*

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

The club would like to have you as a member, and your subscription will help to keep us going. 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 Rochester Computer Society, Inc. a computer/tech club open to everyone



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**Dec 12, 'AI, Where We Are and What's Ahead',
presented by Arpad Kovacs**

**Jan 9, 2024, 'Potluck Video Night', members
bring a 5 to 10 minute video to show**

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Club and Regional News

How to Outsmart Criminals and Protect Yourself from Fraud this Winter Holiday Shopping Season

Brandpoint: By Martha Weaver
Retail Gift Card Association Fraud Committee Chair

It's unfortunate, but criminals are smart and getting more sophisticated every day. With so much technology and artificial intelligence (AI) readily available, they constantly find cunning ways to prey on honest, hard-working people. Criminals use different scams to steal money in clever ways, and many use methods that involve debit and credit cards, bank accounts and gift cards.

People love gift cards, which have been the top requested gift in the U.S. for nearly two decades according to the National Retail Federation. And this holiday shopping season, gift cards will be a go-to for millions of people with positive intentions. But just like



“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,

www.jazz901.org

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

We have stopped printing the Monitor newsletter.

Digital copies can be emailed or obtained from www.rcsi.org or my Pcloud storage at <https://tinyurl.com/tonydel-rcsi> (this link works in PDF version only). Also includes presentation slides, past newsletters dating back to 1996 and articles too large for this newsletter.

Some Past Presentations:

- Autonomous Cars and Robots
- Open Source and Free Software
- Protecting Your Identity
- 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
- 3D Printing, ENABLE project
- Features, Mac OS X & Windows
- The New Space Race, 2021
- Tech of South America
- Internet Security and Privacy
- AI and Digital Assistants
- Emerging Technologies
- My Favorite Android Apps

everyday people love giving, receiving and using gift cards, unfortunately so do criminals.

I am a fraud expert with the Retail Gift Card Association (RGCA), a nonprofit trade organization that represents the gift card industry. We have more than 100 of the world's top brands on our roster, and our mission is to promote positive gift card experiences among shoppers - which includes working with law enforcement to go after criminals and providing shoppers like you with tools that help you spot and avoid fraud, protect yourself and report the crimes.

Here are our top gift card safety tips:

- * Gift cards can only be used at the company on the card. If you get asked to send money or pay for another service with a gift card, STOP and contact law enforcement, even if the fraudster tells you not to talk to anyone or a loved one is in trouble. No real government agency or business will ever reach out and ask you to pay them with gift cards - and you can't pay taxes or bail money with gift cards.
- * Check gift card packaging at the store and make sure the gift card hasn't been tampered with. Look for things like ripped or torn packaging or missing scratch-off material over the top of the PIN number. If something doesn't look right, pick another card and show the questionable card to a store associate.
- * When you buy a gift card, keep your activation receipt as proof of your purchase. This will help make sure that, even if a criminal does get ahold of your card or card information, you can get your money back.
- * Only buy gift cards from trusted sources. If you're offered a deal that's too good to be true, like a big discount on a gift card, it's likely a scam or you're getting a fraudulent card.
- * Store your gift cards securely and don't share gift card numbers or PINs with people you don't know.

If you think you have been scammed or see fraud happening, contact your local law enforcement or the FTC at ftc.gov/complaint or via this toll-free number: 1-877-FTC-HELP. You can also report IRS impersonation scams to the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration, visit their website or call 800-366-4484.

You can learn more about the gift card industry at www.thergca.org.

Some additional sites to check out:

www.consumercredit.com/blog/gift-card-safety-what-you-should-know/, or <https://consumer.ftc.gov/articles/avoiding-and-reporting-gift-card-scams>.

End of Article

APCUG, An International
Association of Technology and
Computer User Groups

<https://apcug2.org/>

Saturday Safaris

Exploring Technology in Depth
Saturdays:
12 pm – 2 pm EST

<https://apcug2.org/saturday-safaris/>

Tech for Seniors

[https://
www.techforsenior.com](https://www.techforsenior.com)

hosted by Ron Brown
and Hewie Poplock
Every Monday from 9-10 AM PT,
(12-1 PM ET)

Broadcast with Zoom
The meeting ID is **526-610-331**
(there is no password) and you'll
be placed in a waiting room and
then admitted.

#

APCUG Website Help

Windows & Android Tips:

By Judy Taylour

[https://apcug2.org/
jerestips/](https://apcug2.org/jerestips/)

Apple Tech Tips:

[https://apcug2.org/50-best-
mac-tips-tricks-timesavers/](https://apcug2.org/50-best-mac-tips-tricks-timesavers/)

Penguin Platform (Linux):

[https://apcug2.org/
penguin-platform/](https://apcug2.org/penguin-platform/)

Chromebook Tips And Tricks:

[https://apcug2.org/
chromebook-tips-and-
tricks/](https://apcug2.org/chromebook-tips-and-tricks/)

Like or Subscribe - What do they do?

Jim Cerny, 1st VP, Education Chair

Forums Coordinator, Sarasota Technology Users Group

[My super thanks to Hewie Poplock, 2nd VP & Yahoo Forum
Coordinator, for helping me with this article.]

You're browsing the internet, maybe viewing some videos, and you always seem to see the words "Like" or "Subscribe" on your screen. Have you wondered what they do?

As a basic overview, let's take YouTube as an example of a video app (and many others) offering these options. You are happily enjoying some videos, and on almost every screen or video, they will ask you to "Like" and/or "Subscribe" by clicking your mouse on that word on the screen.

If you click on "Like," you will be, in a way, thanking the creator of that video, and the owner will get a "like" point that will tell them how many viewers liked it. The creator can use the total numbers for their own use or share with a possible "sponsor" who may pay the creator to advertise on their videos. Clicking on "Like" does not share anything from you or your computer; clicking is safe. "Liking" a video on YouTube is a way for viewers to show their support and appreciation for the content created by the YouTube creator. It sends a positive signal to YouTube's algorithm, which can help increase the video's visibility to other potential viewers. As more viewers like a video, YouTube's algorithm may rank the video higher in search results, recommendations, and other platform areas.

If you click on "Subscribe," you are telling the creator that you want to be notified when they create more videos. If and when they are, you will be notified of the new video, and, in the case of YouTube, their channel will be put in your "Subscriptions" area. In this case, they do know how to communicate with you through that app, so in a way, they have your computer's address. When you subscribe to a YouTube channel, you become a follower of that channel and receive updates whenever new videos are uploaded. Here are some things that happen when you subscribe to a YouTube channel:

You get notified about new videos: Once you subscribe to a channel, you will receive notifications in your YouTube app or home page whenever the creator uploads a new video. This way, you don't have to keep checking the channel for new content.

You can access subscribed channels easily: By subscribing to a channel, you can quickly find it in your subscription feed or the "Subscriptions" tab on your homepage. This allows you to keep up with your favorite channels.

You support the creator: Subscribing to a channel shows the creator that you appreciate their content and want to see more. It can encourage them to continue making videos and improve their content.

You can interact with the community: When you subscribe to a channel, you become part of the creator's community of fans.

RCSI Board Members

President:

Mark S. Lawson . . 544-5377
msslawson51@peoplepc.com

Treasurer:

Jerry Seward
jerry@jerryseward.com

Members-At-Large:

Bob Avery 385-4491
Webmaster
webmaster@rcsi.org, 9/24

Jan Rothfuss 347-6020
Membership & Help's Half Hour
jan_rothfuss@hotmail.com, 9/23

Tony Dellelo 734-6149
Programs & Monitor editor
tonydel@techie.com, 9/25

Got Questions?:

Windows: Arpad Kovacs
podcomputer@gmail.com

Linux & some Mac:
Carl Schmidtman
unixgeek@faultline.com

Planning Meeting

Held on 1st Tuesday of each month at 7 pm, * * ONLINE * *. We will be using [Jitsi Meet](#). ANY CLUB MEMBER MAY ATTEND.

Monitor Newsletter

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. Limited copies (probably in black and white) will be printed and available at our meetings.

Club Mailing Address

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

You can engage with other viewers by commenting on videos and participating in discussions, which can be a fun and rewarding experience.

You may also see a bell symbol or icon that will notify you with an audible tone when a new video is available in your subscription list. You may turn off this tone option if you wish.

You can customize these notifications based on your preferences and the app you are using.

You can "Unsubscribe" or "delete" your subscriptions by clicking on the "unsubscribe"

menu option in the app. On YouTube, go to your subscriptions, and to the right of each one are three dots in a vertical line – click on those dots to open the menu and click on "unsubscribe."

It does not appear that clicking "like" or "subscribe" would lead to a problem for you or your computer. The video creator does not know who likes or dislikes a video, but they are notified of your user name if you subscribe. They are not notified when you unsubscribe.

So go ahead and enjoy whatever you like to view, and click "Like" or "Subscribe" if you want to encourage the creator of such videos.

Reprinted from the newsletter of <https://thestug.org/>,
jimcerny123@gmail.com.

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

How Do I Love Thee - Let Me Count the Wyze

By Greg Skalka, President
Under the Computer Hood User Group

I grew up waking early each day. I never developed a habit of sleeping in, but I almost always got up at the same time each weekend or weekday. For nearly 40 years, I've been working full-time to support myself and my family, and I almost always have gone to work early in the day. For my present job, I wake before 4:30 AM and leave the house by 5:30 AM. This means that no matter the time of year, I'm getting ready for work and leaving before sunrise.

I'm very sensitive to light and sound when trying to sleep. To fall asleep and stay asleep, I must have darkness and quiet. I can sleep with uncorrelated sounds like white noise (I like having our Amazon Alexa play surf or thunderstorm sounds), but I can't sleep with a TV or radio on. On the other hand, my wife often falls asleep in the evening in her office chair at home with the lights on and the TV blaring. While I may imagine the flash of a nuclear bomb would not wake her, I try to be sensitive to my wife and keep sound and light from her as I get ready in the morning (she is almost always asleep when I leave).

My concern for her in this regard has always been an issue, as I have had a few near misses over the years for falls as I would stumble down the stairs in the dark. She wants the bedroom door left open for ventilation, so I can't turn on the lights over the stairs. I've tried

Tidbits of probably useless information

The Earth's oceans have an [average depth of 12,100 feet](#), and because there is [rarely any significant light](#) beyond 600 feet, everything below that point is dark. Seeing as water makes up most of the planet, this means that most of Earth exists in absolute darkness all the time.

Not to take anything away from the [Grand Canyon](#), but the Zhemchug Canyon, located in the Bering Sea, has a vertical relief of [8,520 feet](#), making it almost 2,500 feet deeper than the [river valley](#).

The biggest ocean waves are not the ones that you can see from the shoreline. As physical oceanographer **Kim Martini** told *Deep Sea News*, [the largest waves](#) that occur in the ocean are called *internal waves*, which take place between two fluids with two different densities. As these internal waves travel, for thousands of miles, they can grow to be 650 feet tall.

In the deepest parts of the ocean, the water temperature may only be two degrees to four degrees Celsius, with the exception of water coming out of [hydrothermal vents](#) in the seafloor. The water released from these vents can be up to 400 degrees Celsius (750 degrees Fahrenheit). It's the intense pressure at these depths, the same pressure that would crush you, that keeps the water from boiling.

carrying a small flashlight, but sometimes it would get misplaced, and I would be forced to descend without illumination. As I have gotten older, the risks to me from a fall have become greater.

Over the last few years, I have improved the situation by using smart home devices. For example, I programmed two Wemo smart lights to turn on each workday morning before I was scheduled to come out of the bedroom. One was in a bedroom at the far end of the hall, which provided just enough light to see the top part of the stairs. Another was in the living room at the bottom of the stairs. Both were far enough from the bedroom door that the bedroom stayed dark inside. In addition, the lights were programmed to turn off when I left for work, so little electricity was wasted.

This system worked pretty well but was not perfect. If my waking schedule varied a little, I could have the lights on unnecessarily or wait until the timer turned them on to go downstairs. In the winter, I would keep the far bedroom door closed to prevent having to heat it; if I forgot to open it when I went to bed, I'd wake to no light near the top of the stairs. Localized "path" lighting for the stairs would be optimal but challenging to install.

A few months ago, a visitor at one of our group's general meetings on Zoom told us about Wyze Night Lights (www.wyze.com). These small rechargeable stick-on lights use motion and light sensors to light your way at night. They can be linked so that one morning can trigger multiple ones (up to 10) to come on and light your path, and they go off after motion is no longer detected. They sounded like they would be perfect for my stairs.

I did not have time to try them, but our editor, who had a similar need, bought some and gave them high praise. So, after further discussions about them at our last meeting, I finally ordered a pack of three (model WLPNL) from Amazon (\$26.99 at the time; they are \$25.99 with Prime delivery today).

I was surprised by the small package when I received the shipment. Each light is only 3.25" x 2" x 3/8" thick. I charged all three before installing by connecting to the USB-C connector (charger and cable not included; fortunately, I had them) until the small status LED went out. A small slide switch on each side can be set to Off, On, and Auto (under motion detection control).



The most challenging part of using the Wyze lights was mounting them. Each light comes with a 1.25" square thin metal plate; the Wyze light contains a magnet that sticks it to the plate. Each also comes with an "easy pull tape," which should work like the Command strips for removable hooks. The installation recommendation for the lights is between 1.6 and 3.9 feet above the floor, probably for the best motion detection performance. So first, I selected locations on the outer wall of the stairway, with one at the top, one at the bottom, and one in the middle (where the stairs turned a corner). After that, I decided to go right to a permanent installation, putting them up with the easy pull tape. I initially had trouble getting the plastic covers from the easy pull film, but I could use it to mount the metal squares

Windows & Android Tips Judy Taylour

GOOGLE JUST MADE LIFE MUCH EASIER FOR WINDOWS 11 USERS WITH ANDROID PHONES –

Windows 11 (and 10) users can now easily share files between their Android devices and Windows PC, thanks to Google's Nearby Share app which has been officially released for Microsoft's desktop operating systems. Read more at [Google just made life much easier for Windows 11 users with Android phones | TechRadar](#)

4 WAYS TO DELETE A DRIVE PARTITION ON WINDOWS – Your Windows computer provides several options for deleting unwanted drive partitions, whether you are looking to consolidate space, restructure data allocation, or simply start over. However, before you do that, make sure to backup or move any important data on the partition, as the process removes all the data on the drive. Read more at [4 Ways to Delete a Drive Partition on Windows \(makeuseof.com\)](#)

THE NEW OUTLOOK FOR WINDOWS HAS ARRIVED – Microsoft has been working on a completely new Outlook email app for Windows for over a year, intended to replace the Windows 10-era Mail and Calendar applications, and eventually the classic Windows Outlook client. Now, the new Outlook app is officially available for everyone, and is starting to roll out as pre-installed with Windows 11. Read more at <https://www.howtogeek.com/the-new-outlook-for-windows-has-arrived/>

where I wanted them. However, when I put on the lights, they tended to rotate from level to around 45 degrees.

I called our editor, who suggested putting blue painter's tape over the metal plates. He had not used the easy stick tape; instead, he installed the plates with tape over them, so they could be easily relocated. I tried putting tape over my plates, and the additional friction did help keep the lights from being as prone to rotating. I set all three lights to Auto, and they all started blinking. After 30 seconds, the blinking stopped, and all the lights were linked. I tried them out after dark, and they worked well.

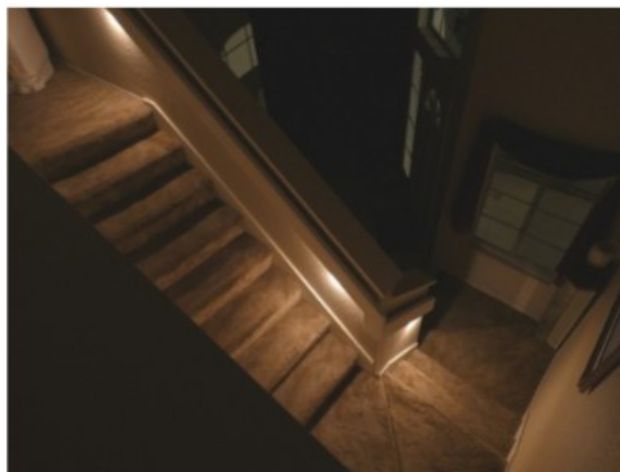
At this point, my wife saw my installation and did not like it. She thought the lights were too visible and unsightly. She said they would only be acceptable if they were moved to the opposite wall and just below the handrail, where they were partially hidden. That is when I found the easy stick tape was easy to stick but not easy to remove.

I tried pulling the removal tab as instructed, but the tab and tape snapped off, leaving about 1/3 of the tape remaining. This happened with all three lights. I used a thin metal ruler to pry the metal squares off the wall carefully.

I successfully removed two without wall damage, but on the middle one, it pulled some of the paint off the wall (now I'm in trouble). The easy stick tape was still sticky enough to put the squares up in their new, authorized locations, though I put blue painter's tape over them for good measure. That's when I discovered why my lights had been rotating on the plates. It appears the metal plates were slightly convex (bulging out in the middle) when I first installed them, so there was only one contact point on the plate for the light to touch, allowing it to rotate around the point in the back where the magnet was located.

In my efforts to pry the plates off the wall from my first installation, I bent the plates so they were now more concave towards the light (the edges were bent out). This provided more contact points between the light and the plate and prevented the rotation I had seen previously.

I have been using the Wyze lights in the mornings and evenings for a week, and they work great. They provide plenty of light, and the linking and motion detection features work well. However, in their present locations, slightly under the stair handrail, they may be more shaded from daylight and possibly run more time each day, thus using more battery power. I have yet to charge the lights again; their website indicates they could go for a month on a charge.



Now I have disabled the programming on some of my smart lights, as the Wyze lights provide all the light I need on demand. Now if I fall

Scams

Warning signs of unemployment scams

Someone may be trying to commit an unemployment scam against you if you did not apply for unemployment benefits, but you received:

- A notice from your state's unemployment office
- A notice from your former employer about an unemployment benefits application that you did not apply for
- Form 1099-G that shows you got unemployment benefit payments you were not expecting and never received. The 1099-G you receive may be sent to you from a state where you have never been employed.
- A direct deposit from your state's unemployment office that you did not expect to receive
- A call from someone claiming to be from your state unemployment office saying money was deposited into your account by mistake

If you did apply for unemployment benefits, you may be affected by an unemployment scam if:

- The application you filled out online was not really your state's official unemployment insurance website

Read more at <https://www.usa.gov/unemployment-scams>.

down the stairs, it will be my clumsy fault, not because I can't see the stairs.

I'm now looking at other locations that could benefit from Wyze Night Lights, but I'll get authorization from my wife before any additional installations.

From the newsletter of <https://uchug.org/>, president@uchug.org.

Got Questions?

Send an email to either person below and they will get back to you. The questions can be related to the OS (Operating System) or hardware related issues. Please give them time for a response, as they do this service on a volunteer basis. Thank you.

Windows OS: Arpad Kovacs, podcomputer@gmail.com

Linux & some Mac: Carl Schmidtman, unixgeek@faultline.com

Apple Will Back a Nationwide Right-to-Repair Law

By [Arol Wright](#)

Now it just needs to actually make its devices repairable.

If there's one company that used to embody the concept of being against self-repairs, it's probably Apple. The company was notoriously hostile against third-party repairs, especially in recent years. But it's also looking to tone down its rhetoric and look better for self-repair enthusiasts, especially against increasingly more pressing legislation. Now, Apple will be backing the US government's intentions to make right-to-repair the law of the land.

After California's right-to-repair law passed [with Apple's backing](#), the company announced that it would also back a nationwide bill. Brian Naumann, Apple's vice president for service and operation management, said that "we intend to honor California's new repair provisions across the United States," confirming that Apple's compliance with California's law will extend nationwide, with the company making parts, tools, and documentation available to whoever needs them. He also added that "Apple also believes that consumers and businesses would benefit from a national law that balances repairability with product integrity, usability, and physical safety."

While there is currently no nationwide right-to-repair law gaining traction in either the Senate or the House of Representatives, the White House has started to push for it and recognize right-to-repair as a consumer issue. Lots of states are following California's lead and have passed right-to-repair laws of their own, while others are debating similar bills, so it's just a matter of getting Congress to pick up the issue now to make right-to-repair nationwide once and for all.

However, while Apple is backing this, the commitment also needs to come in hand with a commitment to make its devices actually more repairable. While you can technically get parts for your iPhone and fix

Virtual Tours

Austin, Texas, USA

A simple slideshow of 360° photos taken from around what appears to be a very pleasant and liveable city.

[Go on Virtual Tour of Austin, Texas](#)

Bahamas

This free virtual tour seems a bit limited to begin with, but once you start clicking around, the number of things to click on increases and the tour improves. The beauty of the Bahamas certainly helps to make this an enjoyable experience.

[Go on Virtual Tour of the Bahamas](#)

British Virgin Islands

A simple list of webcam, some just still photos taken on a schedule, others a live video. The views are splendid.

[Go on Virtual Tour of British Virgin Islands](#)

Faroe Islands

The Faroese tourism board have taken a very unique approach to their free virtual tour. A member of their team straps a live streaming camera to their head and guests are encouraged to 'control' them using a virtual game controller. You can even make them run and jump. It's a daft idea, but it works!

[Go on Virtual Tour of the Faroe Islands](#)

it yourself, any parts you buy actually need to be validated with Apple through its internal systems, making the process more complicated and closing the door to things such as repairs using second-hand parts (since it needs to check whether you actually bought the part rather than just verifying it). It's something that [iFixit has complained about](#), and so have other users.

We're definitely glad to see Apple turn the ship here, but there's a lot that needs to improve.

Source: [Reuters](#) via [Ars Technica](#)

This article was found on <https://www.howtogeek.com/apple-will-back-a-nationwide-right-to-repair-law/>.

Seven MORE Free Software Recommendations

By Bob Rankin
a Translator for the Technology Impaired
offering Free Tech Support

Recently, I recommended seven of my favorite free software tools, and many of you chimed in with suggestions of your own. But as I mentioned, I wasn't done; here are seven more must-have software freebies...

The Best Free Software - Part Two

Last week, I posted my list of [Seven Free Software Downloads](#), covering the areas of web browsing, text processing, security, graphics and troubleshooting. I promised another batch of seven, and here they are. Check out these free tools for photo and audio editing, online storage, PDF manipulation, system maintenance, and more....

[You may not be familiar with VLC Media Player](#), but it's one of the most popular programs on Earth, having passed the 3.5 billion downloads mark early this year. If you like to play music, videos, CDs or DVDs on your computer or mobile device, and you're frustrated with the limitations of iTunes or Windows Media Player, here comes VLC Media Player to the rescue! This free software is available for Windows, Mac OS X, Linux, Apple/iOS, Android, and Chrome OS.

[Audacity is an open source, cross-platform audio file editing program](#). It's available for Windows, Mac, Linux, and other operating systems. Audacity manages to pack in many features while keeping the user interface uncluttered; it even supports 32-bit floating-point audio. It works with compressed and uncompressed file formats, including AIFF, WAV, OGG, and MP3. Audacity is great for converting one audio format to another, creating your own ringtones, recording phone calls, and is also helpful in [Converting Vinyl Records to CD](#).

[Pixlr claims to be "the most popular online photo editor" in the world](#). Both casual and professional users will find the tools they need to accomplish the most common photo and image editing operations. The simple but powerful interface offers crop, resize, rotate, autofix, sharpen, red eye removal, color effects, image

Interesting Internet Finds

by Steve Costello
scostello@sefcug.com

Should UPS Be Plugged Into Surge Protector?

<https://www.thewindowsclub.com/should-ups-be-plugged-into-surge-protector>

<https://www.howtogeek.com/825921/should-you-plug-a-ups-into-a-surge-protector/>

I have no opinion one way or the other on this issue. However, these posts make points for both sides, so I am putting them out there for you to read and decide.

How To Make Sure Your VPN Is Working and Protecting Your Privacy

<https://helpdeskgeek.com/how-to/how-to-make-sure-your-vpn-is-working-and-protecting-your-privacy/>

Do you use a VPN? If yes, do you know how to ensure it works correctly? Check out this post to learn how to check your VPN for various issues.

Alexa Device Is Unresponsive: 6 Fixes

<https://www.groovypost.com/howto/alexa-device-is-unresponsive-fixes/>

Is your Alexa device unresponsive? If so, try these fixes before deciding to junk it and replace it with a new one.

overlays, borders and text annotation. You can open an image from your hard drive, from Facebook or Google, and after editing, save images to your hard drive or Dropbox. Because it's cloud-based, Pixlr runs on any computer with a web browser and an internet connection, and there mobile versions for iPhone, iPad and Android devices. There are templates for popular tasks such as creating a collage, flyer, poster, invitation, Facebook cover, or Instagram post.

New to Pixlr are stock images (enter a keyword such as dogs, cars, flowers) and the AI Generator, which will use artificial intelligence software to create a dazzling image based on a description you provide.

If you're interested in checking out other online photo tools, see my article [Check Out These Free Online Photo Editors](#) for a handful of others, each with unique capabilities.

Dropbox is an online storage service that acts like an extra hard drive in the cloud. The free download is a client that adds a Dropbox folder to your desktop. Whatever you put into that folder is synced with your online Dropbox account and any other devices that share it. All data is transferred over SSL connections and encrypted with 256-bit AES encryption. A free Dropbox Basic account gives you 2GB of cloud storage. Photos, documents, and media files can be shared with family, friends, co-workers, or the general public. Files and folders on Dropbox can be password protected, or there is a "public" folder that anyone can browse.

Foxit Reader is a fast, lightweight alternative to Adobe PDF Reader. It allows you to open, view, and print PDF files; add annotations; fill in forms; and share information with social networks. It uses as little as 64 MB of RAM, making it suitable for portable devices. Foxit Software also offers a variety of tools to convert PDF to and from Word, PowerPoint, Excel, or JPG.

PDFfill is a handy tool if you ever need to split, merge, reorder, delete, rotate, crop, redact, or annotate PDF pages. It can fill fields, digitally sign, encrypt or decrypt PDF files, convert images to PDF, and convert PDF to image formats. PDFfill does not add watermarks and is free for personal or commercial use. It's a great alternative to the expensive commercial Adobe Acrobat software.

Speccy from Piriform is the place to start if you need to know what's "under the hood" of your PC. It gives you detailed info on every piece of hardware in your PC, including but not limited to CPU, Motherboard, RAM, Graphics Cards, Hard Disks, Optical Drives, and Audio support. Speccy also reads temperature sensors built into motherboards and hard drives, giving you a means to check for overheating problems that may be damaging your components or limiting performance.

Don't forget to check out [Seven Free Software Downloads - Part One](#). And of course, feel free to leave a comment about any of these, or other great free software programs you would recommend.

From the website of <https://askbobrankin.com>.

**** Jokes & Quotes Stolen
from Everywhere ****

Terribly bad puns

What did the grape say when it got crushed? Nothing, it just let out a little wine.

To the guy who invented zero, thanks for nothing.

So what if I don't know what apocalypse means? It's not the end of the world.

Did you hear about the restaurant on the moon? I heard the food was good but it had no atmosphere.

I lost my mood ring and I don't know how to feel about it.

Yesterday, I accidentally swallowed some food coloring. The doctor says I'm okay, but I feel like I've dyed a little inside.

I don't trust stairs because they're always up to something.

Can February March? No, but April May.

A man sued an airline company after it lost his luggage. Sadly, he lost his case.

Never discuss infinity with a mathematician, they can go on about it forever.

Smaller babies may be delivered by stork but the heavier ones need a crane.

Two windmills are standing in a wind farm. One asks, "What's your favorite kind of music?" The other says, "I'm a big metal fan."

I was wondering why the ball was getting bigger. Then it hit me.

I want to be cremated as it is my last hope for a smoking hot body.

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 PDF or web versions of this newsletter.

Study Shows That Smoking 'Stops' Cancer-Fighting Proteins, Causing Cancer and Making it Harder to Treat

by [Ontario Institute for Cancer Research](#), November 3, 2023

Scientists at the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research (OICR) have uncovered one way tobacco smoking causes cancer and makes it harder to treat by undermining the body's anti-cancer safeguards.

Their new study, [published in Science Advances](#), links [tobacco smoking](#) to harmful changes in DNA called 'stop-gain mutations' that tell the body to stop making certain proteins before they are fully formed.



Credit: Pixabay/CCo Public Domain

They found that these stop-gain mutations were especially prevalent in genes known as 'tumor-suppressors,' which make proteins that would normally prevent [abnormal cells](#) from growing.

"Our study showed that [smoking](#) is associated with changes to DNA that disrupt the formation of tumor suppressors," says Nina Adler, a University of Toronto Ph.D. student who led the study during her postgraduate research in Dr. Jüri Reimand's lab at OICR. "Without them, abnormal cells are allowed to keep growing unchecked by the cell's defenses and cancer can develop more easily."

Adler, Reimand and colleagues used powerful computational tools to analyze DNA from more than 12,000 tumor samples across 18 different types of cancer. Their analysis showed a strong link between stop-gain mutations in [lung cancer](#) and the telltale 'footprint' that smoking leaves in DNA.

The researchers then looked at whether how much someone smoked had an impact. Sure enough, their analysis showed that more smoking led to more of these harmful mutations, which can ultimately make cancer more complex and harder to treat.

Read the whole article at <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-11-cancer-fighting-proteins-cancer-harder.html>.

Odds and Ends

[Charco Neurotech](#), a medtech company based in the United Kingdom, has developed CUE1, a non-invasive wearable that is intended to assist those with Parkinson's disease to manage their motor symptoms. The device is typically affixed to the sternum, and provides vibratory action in a focused region of the body.



The technology is based on the observation of a doctor in the early 1800s, who noticed that their patients' motor symptoms were significantly reduced when they traveled to their appointments over bumpy roads in a horse and carriage.

The technology also uses cueing to assist patients who might be prone to 'freezing' to increase their mobility. As a drug-free, non-invasive treatment option, the technology has plenty of attractive features for patients who might be willing to try it, and it is currently available in the UK, with plans for expansion soon.

Read the rest and watch a video about how this device works at

<https://www.medgadget.com/2023/11/a-wearable-to-manage-parkinsons-motor-symptoms-interview-with-lucy-jung-ceo-at-charco-neurotech.html> .

Scientists Build Working Particle Accelerator the Size of a Coin

It's 54 million times smaller than the Large Hadron Collider.

By [Ryan Whitwam](#) October 27, 2023



Credit: FAU / Laser Physics

The Large Hadron Collider (LHC) continues to amaze and delight scientists as it [teases apart](#) the most intricate natural phenomena in the universe. It's just so big, though. Researchers have successfully activated a tiny particle accelerator that's not even pocket-sized—it could get lost in your pocket. The nanophotonic electron accelerator (NEA) is the size of a small coin, but it could have a big impact.

The nanophotonic electron accelerator is a microchip just a few millimeters across, designed by scientists at Germany's Friedrich–Alexander University of Erlangen–Nuremberg (FAU). Inside is an even more minuscule vacuum tube, inside which are thousands of microscopic pillars. The chip is designed to accelerate electrons, which are negatively charged, by firing short laser pulses at the pillars. This technology was proposed in 2015, but this is the first time one has been tested.

Reported on <https://www.extremetech.com/science/scientists-build-working-particle-accelerator-the-size-of-a-coin>.

In a Jedi-like Feat, Rats can Move a Digital Object Using Just Their Brain

By [Laura Sanders](#), November 2, 2023

A new study hints at how brains can imagine places that they're not physically in. By activating certain nerve cells in their brains, rats can imagine being somewhere else.

Like tiny, hairy Yodas raising X-wings from a swamp, rats can lift digital cubes and drop them near a target. But these rats aren't using the Force. Instead, they are using their imagination. This [telekinetic trick](#), described in the Nov. 3 *Science*, provides hints about how brains imagine new scenarios and remember past ones.

“This is fantastic research,” says Mayank Mehta, a neurophysicist at UCLA. “It opens up a lot of exciting possibilities.” A deeper scientific understanding of the brain area involved in the feat could, for instance, help researchers diagnose and treat memory disorders, he says.

Neuroscientist Albert Lee and his colleagues study how brains can go back in time by revisiting memories and jump ahead to imagine future scenarios. Those processes, sometimes called “mental time travel,” are “part of what makes our inner mental lives quite rich and interesting,” says Lee, who did the new study while at Howard Hughes Medical Institute’s Janelia Research Campus in Ashburn, Va.

I found this at <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/jedi-rats-move-digital-object-using-brain>.

This Smart Ring Claims to be the Lightest Ever - and the First With Haptic Navigation

It's slim, light, and craves human touch.

November 15, 2023

French startup Circular claims to have created the world’s thinnest and lightest smart ring — as well as the first-ever to use haptic navigation.

The wearable, named the Circular Ring Slim, became available on pre-order today. Weighing just 2 grams and measuring a mere 2.2 mm in thickness, the device packs big features into a tiny frame.

To analyse the user’s health, the ring assesses seven biometrics and 142 derived markers. These markers are captured by a suite of sensors.

In the Circular Slim Ring, the PPG combines three different LED light wavelengths — green, red, and infrared — to capture numerous health vitals. These range from heart and respiratory rates to blood oxygen levels.

Finish the article at <https://thenextweb.com/news/circular-ring-slim-thinnest-lightest-smart-ring>.



Club and Regional News

We had an October presentation by Bob Gosticha ‘Cybersecurity From A to Z – 2023’. He is promoting FREE Grass Root Presentations to home users, PC User Groups, Schools and, Groups of Technology Users via Zoom – FreeConferenceCall – etc.

He can be contacted at bob3160@gmail.com

He has a YouTube video site: <https://youtube.com/@bob3160>

If you are interested in any of his online activities, you’ll find them here: <https://bit.ly/BobGInternet>

Got Questions?

Send an email to either person below and they will get back to you. The questions can be related to the OS (Operating System) or hardware related issues. Please give them time for a response, as they do this service on a volunteer basis. Thank you.

Windows OS: Arpad Kovacs, podcomputer@gmail.com

Linux & some Mac: Carl Schmidtman, unixgeek@faultline.com

Our 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 **SECOND** building on the left – **Chestnut Court**.
Our meeting place can change. Please check our website before each meeting. **www.rcsi.org**