



THE COMPUTER CONNECTION

SAUK COMPUTER USER GROUP

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MAY 12, 2018 MINUTES: SCUG CLUB MEETING

President Art Benedick opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

The question and answer portion of our meeting included many interesting subjects.

Such as: where to look for files once they are downloaded. Reed wanted to know how to set Office 16 back to the default setting. Another problem was how to get rid of pop ups that came from G Mail from your screen. It was suggested to use a pop up blocker. These are just of the few of many questions brought up. If you have questions be sure to come and get the answers you need

The minutes of the meeting were approved as published in the newsletter, and Joe Fornero gave a treasurer report and this was also approved.

Old business was covered quickly. We were reminded that Piper, the therapy dog we sponsor, will be paying us a visit at the June 9th meeting

New business began with a report of our new microphone system. It will include 2 hand held, 2 lapel models and 2 over the ear type. Joe Fornero was able to find them for use at a cost of less than \$200. A discussion of what to do with

the current system will be held at a later date.

Glenda reported that all cabins for the current trip to the Panama Canal are sold out. More details on the trip to Spain next year later.

Programs for future meeting will include: June 9 a video program from An International Association of Technology & Computer Users Group (APCUG). July 14, our summer picnic, with food by the Pizza Ranch. Hope to see you all at one or both of these meetings Neil gave us another useful program on Ripping music from CD's and transferring it to a flash drive to be used in the USB port of your car radio. This allows you to pick and choose your music and to store more on these drives. It was a very informative and the how-to was very good and easy to follow. We offer a special thank you to him for this and all his efforts for our club. Our board will meet at Wendy's on Wednesday May 12 at the usual 6 p.m. time. Our next general meeting will be June 9 at 1 p.m. Drawing was held for prizes and the business meeting adjourned.

*Respectfully submitted by
Gloria Schneider for
Darla Stigall,*

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**BOARD MEETING MINUTES FOR
MAY 16, 2018**

Drawing for June

The regular June drawing will include an Amazon Fire, a choice of 2 different \$25 gift certificates and a 256gb flash drive.

Humor from the Net

You can retire to Phoenix, Arizona where

1. You are willing to park three blocks away from your house because you found shade.
2. You've experienced condensation on your butt from the hot water in the toilet bowl.
3. You can drive for four hours in one direction and never leave town
4. You have over 100 recipes for Mexican food.
5. You know that "dry heat" is comparable to what hits you in the face when you open your oven door at 500 degrees.
6. The four seasons are: tolerable, hot, really hot, and ARE YOU KIDDING ME?

OR
You can retire to Nebraska or Kansas where...

1. You never meet any celebrities, but the mayor knows your name.
2. Your idea of a traffic jam is three cars waiting to pass a tractor.
3. You have had to switch from "heat" to "A/C" on the same day.
4. You end sentences with a preposition; "Where's my coat at?"

The May 16, 2018 board meeting was held at Wendy's in Sterling beginning at 6:00 PM. Officers attending were President Art Bendick, Vice President Neal Shipley, Treasurer Joe Fornero and Secretary Darla Stigall. Board members present were Cheryl Johnson, Gloria Schneider, Howard Payson, Terry McLennan and trip coordinator Glenda McLennan.

Treasurers report was given. No old business. Piper the therapy dog the club sponsors will visit the June meeting. The program for the June meeting will be a video from APCUG. July will be the annual picnic catered by Pizza Ranch, with Fried chicken, pizza, potatoes and dessert pizza. September program will be done by

Howard, October the club will fill boxes for Christmas Child and a power point by Terry. November in temporarily open and December is the Christmas buffet.

Glenda reported the Panama Canal is full. Terry is finished with classes and will help people by appointment only. The club received their new microphones system which include: 2 hand held, 2 lapel and 2 over the ear type.

The officers would like members to give their input for future programs.

Respectfully submitted
by,
Darla Stigall club
secretary

Back to Basics: E-mail Basic Review

By Jim Cerney

I am going to assume you already have an email address and are enjoying sending and receiving emails. But perhaps you are not aware of the fun and helpful options available in all email applications. Hopefully something in this article will push your curiosity button and encourage you to “ask google” for more information. Although each email provider (app or program) may look different on your device (and even the SAME provider can look quite different on a Windows computer than on an iPad, etc.) all are capable of doing the following:

Entering people in your “TO:” box – If you just start typing the name of someone, your email will search your “contact list” or “address book” to find a match and list what it finds. Just click on the name you want. Be sure to keep your contact list of email addresses current. It is easy to click on a name which may have an OLD email address. If no name matches, you have to enter the email address yourself. Why not add that person to your contact list for next time?

Learn to use “group” email addresses. You can use your contact list to create a “group” email such as for a club or family group. This means you only have to enter the group name, and ALL the email addresses in that group will be placed in the “TO:” box for you. This is a great time saver. Of course, you need to keep the group current. It is easy to learn how to “add” or “delete” people from a group.

Clean out your “inbox” by deleting old emails or keeping only the emails you want by moving them to a folder. Your “inbox”, “deleted emails”, “drafts”, etc., are all folders or places – you can add your own folders to this list and move the emails you want to keep to them. I have a folder for STUG emails and for another club I belong to. This keeps the emails in my inbox to a minimum.

Learn to SEARCH for emails in any or all folders. You can search and find words in the subject line or in the emails themselves. You can search for all emails to or from a specific address too. This is helpful if you forget where you put an email.

Emails you delete will go to the “deleted emails” folder and they need to be deleted again from that folder to be deleted forever. Check to see if your email has an automatic delete setting for this folder. I have my email set to delete emails older than 90 days from my “deleted emails” folder. Do NOT keep thousands of emails! (Yes, there are people who like to keep everything, they call them “hoarders” and they have their own television show!).

Sharing photos using email is easy. You just “attach” the photo (or ANY file) to your email before you send it. Yes, you can attach more than one, but don’t go crazy and attach too many, usually three or four is plenty. Photos take a lot more time to send than text.

Learn to access your email on another device. This is very helpful when you are traveling or need to use another computer to get to your email. You should always be able to access your email by going to your email internet webpage and entering your email account and password there. I highly recommend that you try this to be sure you can do it when you need to.

All emails provide many tools and options to help you. Most of them are easy to use, too. Please “ask Google” or use YouTube and watch a short video about your email and the possibilities it provides. There is always more to learn, and I hope this information will be helpful for you to find and use the tools you need for better emailing!

*By Jim Cerny, Forum Leader,
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December 2017 issue, Sarasota
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Nothing Bad Ever Happens

By Greg Skalka

Nothing bad ever happens to me

Nothing bad ever happens to me

Why should I care?

(Lyrics by Danny Elfman, from the 1983 Oingo Boingo song *Nothing Bad Ever Happens*)

As far as technology goes, I've been pretty lucky. I've had very few things fail in the nearly 40 years I've been playing with computers and other tech devices. Sure, there are a few things here and there that break now and then, but overall, the technology that I've bought over the years has been very reliable. It seems nothing really bad ever happens to my tech.

I took note of this reliability in my tech stuff when I realized recently that I do have a lot of old devices around, many that I still use (or at least can still use). I can't name too many items I've seen fail over the years, and certainly can't think of any that have been catastrophic failures. Sure, I've bought a few items that were DOA (dead on arrival), but

I don't count those, as I was able to return them under warranty. If an expensive tech purchase had failed not long after the warranty expired, then that might be a disaster, but I don't recall that ever happening to me. I do remember buying a netbook (remember those small laptops, kind of a precursor to a Chromebook?) in 2009 and found the display had problems from the first time I turned it on. I just sent it right back to Amazon and received another one that worked fine for many years (or at least as well as these underpowered laptops ever

did), and probably still works to this day.

I say that the netbook probably still works to this day because I must admit, that although I do still have it, I have not tried to use it in many years. That is often one thing that technology items have going for them in trying to last - we often lose interest in them well before they would have failed. The netbook was running up to 2014, as my hard drive backup records show the last backup for that computer was on 4/21/14, right after the last update that was available for Windows XP. I'm pretty sure I've not used it since then, as I've bought many newer and more capable computers to replace it.

In spite of how well current devices may be made, my good luck with technology probably does not come as inevitable or by chance. I try to take good care of my equipment, as not only does it often constitute a significant financial investment, it also represents an important resource to me, that I don't want to be without due to failures.

I try to use care with all my tech items but am particularly insistent on maintenance and preventative measures on those items I find most critical in my daily life. I take great care in handling my portable electronics, more so than I often see from other users. My laptops and Chromebook are always transported in a padded case; I

have my smart phone completely surrounded by screen protection and a shock-resistant case. I keep the air vents clean and the fans running on my computers. I do a reasonable job of keeping my computer data backed up (I have not so far lost anything of significance). Surge protectors and UPS (uninterruptable power supply) units protect my most critical and expensive tech devices.

I perform my own auto maintenance and repairs, both to save money and make sure it is done right. This does mean I do have to learn how, but this knowledge provides additional benefits when having to diagnose problems on the road. Not everything may be perfect with some of my cars, but they get me where I need to go. I didn't bother fixing the back-up sensors on my wife's car when it got older, as I felt it was not worth the cost and effort. At some point she got a new car, and I inherited the old one, which at 226k miles and 13 years old is still my daily ride.

There are a few minor tech items that I would not count in the failed column as they really never performed up to expectations from the start. I wanted to experiment with network security cameras a few years ago and bought some cheap ones (\$25). These never really worked well for me; they were difficult to set up and to keep connected to my home network. I finally gave them to

my son and bought a more reputable and expensive brand, which have worked well.

I fear there are some tech devices that may be designed by the manufacturer to be disposable. Apple products may be designed that way, but are too expensive to be disposed frequently, so I avoid them. I often try to fix our broken home appliances, but my wife's track record with floor cleaning devices is not too good. It seems we need a new small vacuum or steam mop every few years, and these don't seem to be repairable, though at least the ones she picks are not that expensive.

Here is a bit of a run-down of my tech reliability over time by category; see how it compares to your own.

Computers - I don't know how many computing devices I've had since that Timex Sinclair 1000 I bought in 1982; it could be in the 20's. I've had several PC-XT clones, many tower cases running everything from DOS through every version of Windows up to 10 (but I've never had Microsoft Bob) and six laptops. I am actually writing this on my oldest running computer, a tower case with a Pentium 4 processor and Windows XP (and not connected to my home network). It has been running almost continuously since 2005, with no failures that I recall.

When we had kids at home, we had four desktop PCs running in our house. Now the two of us that remain regularly run three

desktops, two laptops and a Chromebook. Over all this time I've never had a motherboard fail, don't recall ever having a memory module fail, and only had a couple of hard drive failures. I can't remember when the last hard drive failure happened; it has been so long ago. None of my running drives are that old, however; I've upgraded the drives in our two laptops twice in the last six years (once to larger drives, and again to hybrid drives). I bought a few spare PATA hard drives as spares when SATA became more prevalent; now that XP computer is my only one that can use them. I don't recall ever having a computer power supply fail; that spare I bought ten or more years ago 'just in case' is now probably obsolete. Surprisingly, I've never had a fan fail.

Computer Accessories - I have bought a bunch of external USB hard drives for backup and data storage over the years and have never had one fail. I did have some regularly-used small encrypted USB hard drives that did fail after many years; the cable connector to the drive wore out and became unreliable. By that time, however, larger sized drives were needed anyway. USB Flash drives are supposed to wear out, as each memory location is rated for a limited number of writes. Even with Flash drives that I tend to use a lot, I've never seen any evidence of failure, as I again tend to keep moving up to larger sized devices anyway. I have had a couple of wireless mice fail, but they are inexpensive. Keyboards seem to be unbreakable.

Network Products - I did have one router failure about ten years ago, but I had a cheap spare on hand to use temporarily until I bought a good replacement. Now it is sitting unpowered, as I'm using the router built into my AT&T Universe modem. I think I had an Ethernet switch fail many years ago. Most of my switches now are fairly new, as I've been trading them up to 8-port and/or Gigabit. I've had four network hard drives, but their size generally becomes insignificant over time and I then shut them off, rather than see them fail. I did have a 120G network drive fail, and I may have a 500G that had issues recently (I have not yet had time to diagnose it). No data has been lost, however, as I back these up too.

Mobile Phones - I've had my current Samsung Android smart phone for less than a year - so far, so good. My previous phone was a Samsung slide 'feature' phone that could text but not access the internet. When its camera failed, it was probably a blessing, as it got me to finally graduate to a smart phone; it worked otherwise. My phone before that was a dumb flip phone which worked fine, but I abandoned it when I switched to being on my wife's cell plan.

Cameras - I have owned many digital cameras over the years, from a 2 Megapixel Olympus in 2001 to my 18 MP Panasonic today. In almost all cases, I got

Nothing Bad... (cont.)

a new one because image resolution went up and camera prices went down, not because my old one broke. I did have one major fail that was all my fault. I dropped my old Panasonic 16 MP camera at the Long Beach Grand Prix two years ago and cracked the rear display screen. I soldiered on with it, using the viewfinder display, until the flash also failed, and my wife gave me the new one for my birthday last year.

Overall, my tech success has been pretty positive. I've been careful in picking devices to buy, and I've tried to take care of them as best I could. I have been rewarded by years of reliable use with very few failures. I don't look at my positive results as a reason to abandon my practices of care and backups, but rather a justification for them. I hear enough of others having grief with tech failures to know that things can and do break. I've seen others casually handling or flipping their phones (no wonder their screens have cracks), not shutting down computers correctly and disconnecting devices by yanking on the cables. No wonder it seems (at least relatively speaking) that nothing bad ever happens to me.

*By Greg Skalka, President, Under the Computer Hood User Group, CA
March 2018 issue, Drive Light
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Power Strip Versus Surge Protector—Which Do You Need?

By Tim Elder

These two devices are quite similar in appearance, but they are definitely not the same. If what you need is an extension cord with multiple outlets, a power strip will work fine because it acts as an extension of the wall outlet but does not add any protection capabilities. It will have multiple outlets, probably an on-off switch, which can

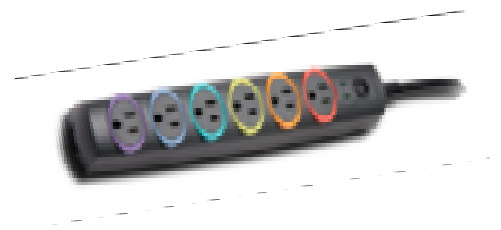
disconnect all outlets at once, and maybe a circuit breaker or fuse. But if you are connecting to a computer, TV, home theater, or other electronics, a power strip will NOT be fine, because it cannot protect your expensive electronics from power line surges; for this you need a surge protector, sometimes called a surge suppressor or surge diverter.

An electrical surge is an intense very short duration voltage spike.

A surge protector does its “magic” by means of built-in electronic components which quickly cut the power when an electrical surge comes through the mains (this is a

British term which works well for the electrical distribution grid—the system bringing electrical power into the building) or from electric motors within the house which can

reflect surges back through the wiring. In order to work properly, a surge protector must be connected to a grounded outlet. A surge protector will cost more than a similar-appearing power strip.



The difference in capabilities of the two devices will be found on the packaging, and on

the back of the device if the packaging has already been removed. Power strips and surge protectors will often be placed near each other on the store shelves; so, make sure you read the readin' to make sure you get what you need. A surge protector is generally, clearly labeled as such, but its capabilities can vary considerably.

Surge protectors are rated by the amount of electrical energy they can absorb, either all at once or bit-by-bit; this will certainly be advertised on the packaging. Suggested specifications to look for, which can be misleading if you are not paying attention, include: 2000 joules where more is better; and, sometimes listed, response time which is usually in nanoseconds, shorter is better.



How do you know how much of this protection is left? The number of joules is like a reservoir, but you can't tell how much has been used already. Thus, a surge protector should be replaced, say, after 5 years; after this it can serve as a power strip. Since our memories are fickle, put a self-adhesive note on it saying when it was installed. A surge protector will likely have a pilot light to tell you when the connected items are protected from line surges. If

this light goes out or changes color, the surge protector has given its life to protect whatever was connected. It will have to be replaced. But this pilot light is not foolproof, meaning that it can give false assurance.

When purchasing a surge protector, be sure to get more outlets than you think you need and remember that transformer plugs can block adjacent outlets. Also remember that a surge can come in over phone or cable wires; look for connections for these if your setup uses them.

Many surge protectors also have USB charging ports. Labeling should also include a United Laboratories seal. When I was checking the stores, the price varied from \$10 to \$60 depending on the number of outlets, the number of USB charging ports, and the joule capacity which ranged from 500 to 4350. The selection at Staples was much better than at Walmart.

As with the protection pilot light, a surge protector is not foolproof, and you probably do not want to gamble with Mother Nature. If an electrical storm is approaching, you should shut down the computer, then turn off the surge protector switch or

unplug it. Anytime the power goes off suddenly for any reason, your first move should be to turn off the surge protector switch to stop the risk of a surge when the power comes back on.

If you want even more protection than a surge protector offers, consider a UPS

(Uninterruptible Power Supply.) These offer a battery backup which provides a few minutes to properly save files and shut down the computer. They can also smooth any bumps in the incoming electrical supply; this capability is called AVR, Automatic Voltage Regulation. A surge protector can be purchased to protect the whole house from external surges, but these must be installed at the service entrance with the supply disconnected. An electrician is recommended.

By Tim Elder, Treasurer, Canton Alliance Massillon User Group, OH

*February 2018 issue, The Memory Map
www.camug.com
treasurer (at) camug.com*

There will be a Question & Answer Session starting at 1 PM. Bring any questions you have about your computer or problems you may be having. It will be conducted by:
Art Bendick & Neal Shipley

* * * * *
* The next meeting of the Sauk *
* Computer User Group will be *
* June 9, 2018 *
* Question & Answer : 1 PM *
* Business Meeting : 2 PM *
* Presentation: 2:30 PM *
* Place: **Whiteside Senior Center** *
* **1207 West 9th Street** *
* **Sterling, Illinois 61081** *
* * * * *

**MAY PRESENTATION WILL BE:
AN INTERESTING VIDEO PRESENTATION FROM AN
APCUG VIRTUAL CONFERENCE**