



THE COMPUTER CONNECTION

SAUK COMPUTER USER GROUP

DECEMBER 2021

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NUMBER TWELVE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

WORD TIPS: SPELLING ERRORS...	2
COMPLETE ROBOCALL DETERRENCE	3-6
BACK TO BASICS: QUIZ ON FILE EXTENSIONS	7

The Whiteside County Senior Board has approved our meeting at the Senior Center for our Christmas party and going forth. We will be having Candlelight Chicken George, sweet potato fries & onion rings; salads from Arthur's and pies from Sterling Farmer's market. Please don't bring any food that you prepare, there will be plenty. You will have to sign a Covid questionnaire and masks will be required except when you are at the table eating. Entrance only at back door #4 our regular entrance. (Addition info on page 2)

Joe Fornero

**November
SCUG BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
DATE 11/17/2021**

Meeting was called to order by: Neal

Attending the meeting were: Glenda MacLennan, Cheryl Johnson, Neal Shipley, Joe Schmitt, Janice Maves, Lorraine Armstrong, Joe Fornero, Tom Rich, and Liz Harden (new member)

Treasurer's report was presented by: Joe F.

Discussion Highlights:

Computers being sold by the club are \$30 with additional RAM memory \$30 for a total of \$60.

There are still one laptop and some desktops available.

There is a one-time offer to club members to join the WCSC senior center for \$5 for 2022. Amount can be added to 2022 club dues.

A new director for the

senior center has been hired and will start in January.

The club Christmas Party will be held at the senior center at noon on 12/11/21. The Computer club will then continue to meet at the senior center in 2022.

A list of charities for club donations for 2022 was compiled and approved by the board.

Links to last month's SCUG meetings security presentation were received from Bob Gostischa. Neal will email copies to club members.

Future Programs:

Proposed next meeting to be a Sterling Police detective covering various security issues.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted by:
Tom Rich for secretary
Nancy Rich

Club Information

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An International
Association of Technology
& Computer User Groups

Word Tips

By Allen Wyatt

The Next Drawing

Spelling Errors Resulting from Erroneous Spaces

There are times when Sandy is typing, and she mistakenly types a space in the middle of a word. For instance, she might type "qui ver", and Word's spelling checker will helpfully mark the incomplete word as wrong. This doesn't happen all the time, however. If Sandy types something like "t o" (when she meant to type "to"), Word doesn't catch this as a spelling error. Sandy wonders if there is a way she can configure spell check to catch this type of error. The short answer is that you cannot; spell check doesn't consider single letters (such as "t" and "o") to be spelling errors.

There is something you can try, however—AutoCorrect. If you analyze your typing and find that you often insert the extra space in two-letter words such as "to," then you can set up an AutoCorrect entry to replace "t o" with "to". In creating an AutoCorrect entry of this type, you need to be careful of how you put the entries together. You should make sure that you always want to replace the sequence with something else. Of course, using the AutoCorrect entries for a while will disclose any potential replacement problems. One you will particularly want to watch out for is the letter "i" followed by another character. For instance, if you routinely mistype "in" as "i n" (with the space between the two letters), an AutoCorrect entry may seem in order. However,

We will resume the drawings at our Christmas meeting, beside the game prizes all members will receive a purple drawing ticket for a chance at 2-\$25 gift cards from local restaurants.

if you type "i n", as soon as you type the space then AutoCorrect capitalizes the "I" and when you type the "n" your new AutoCorrect entry will convert "I n" to "In". The upshot is you will never be able to have an AutoCorrected lowercase "in"; it will always end up as "In."

by Allen Wyatt
(last updated August 28, 2021)

Complete Robocall Deterrence

By John Krout

A two-step approach: prevent the ring and convince the robocaller that your line is disconnected.

Part 1 of a 3-part article series

INTRODUCTION

Robocalls are a pervasive problem. The Washington Post reported in April 2019 that the estimated US volume of robocalls in March 2019 was 5.2 billion. That's a billion with a B. Divide 5.2 billion by 31 days, then 24 hours, and then 3,600 seconds. So, the number of robocalls **per second** was about 2,000.

Refusing to answer your smartphone is not enough. Robocaller systems are smarter than that; the systems won't stop calling. And the robocalls often jam your voicemail inbox.

The best deterrence is based on a **thorough understanding of what automated robocall systems do**. Then, we can use robocall system behaviors against the robocaller systems.

First, robocaller systems change their Caller IDs constantly. Often, when placing 1,000 calls, a robocaller system can use as many as 1,000 different Caller IDs. Since most robocall deterrence apps and systems maintain a database of robocall Caller IDs, called a **Blacklist**, such databases always fall behind the robocaller Caller IDs. Second, robocaller systems often are based overseas, making it impossible for the US government to establish criminal jurisdiction. Third, robocaller systems keep a list of phone numbers known to have answered their robocalls in the past, even calls "answered" by a voicemail greeting. The robocall systems continue to call those phone numbers ad nauseum.

SPOOFING

First, robocall systems use a phone network behavior called **spoofing** to hide their real Caller IDs. That phone network behavior introduced many decades ago had and still has a valuable purpose for large phone sub-systems such as companies, hospitals, and the like.

Spoofing allows a caller to change the Caller ID shown to you when the customer calls you. The idea was to show the organization's main number, often the receptionist, even if the call was placed from technical support or Accounts Payable. This is appropriate for a large organization calling you back so that you can see a consistent and familiar Caller ID rather than one of the dozens or hundreds of phone lines used by the organization. That Caller ID replacement is done inside the phone network, based on commands sent by the caller system.

The bad news is that the **phone network never imposed any security or restraints on Caller ID replacement**.

The key thing to know is that automated robocaller systems often use spoofing to change their Caller IDs and with impunity. Often robocall systems use a spoofed Caller ID, including your area code and even your exchange (the three digits after the area code), to appear to be a call originating locally. The systems might even show a caller ID for a live local phone number. The systems seldom use the same ten-digit number twice to dodge Blacklist enforcement.

WHITELIST: AN ALTERNATIVE TO BLACKLIST

In the area of robocall deterrence based on Caller ID, the most powerful strategy for you is **Whitelist**, meaning configuring your phone to accept incoming calls only from the numbers in your phone's Contacts.

I have used that method on my phone since roughly September 2019. **Paul Brandus, a Marketwatch.com columnist**, had asked his readers to send in their own personal fixes for robocalls. Brandus published the most interesting reader responses in September 2019.

Brandus did not publish details of Whitelist configuration but did provide enough info to figure out the details on my own.

WHITELIST BEHAVIOR OUTLINE

The Settings feature you need to find in any iPhone or Android phone is called **Do Not Disturb**. The Settings app may allow you to type in a search term to find the place in the Settings app where you can access the feature. Use Settings search to find Do Not Disturb.

Here's the basic purpose of Do Not Disturb: don't ring the phone. It is not the same as Airplane mode, which disconnects your phone from the cell tower network; when Do Not Disturb is on, the phone stays connected to the cell tower network. You can place calls and read and write emails and text messages while using Do Not Disturb with Whitelist configuration.

And, very importantly, you can configure an **exception** to Do Not Disturb. The exception I have chosen are calls from my Contacts list. That turns this configuration into a Whitelist behavior. Calls from my Contacts will ring my phone. Other calls will not.

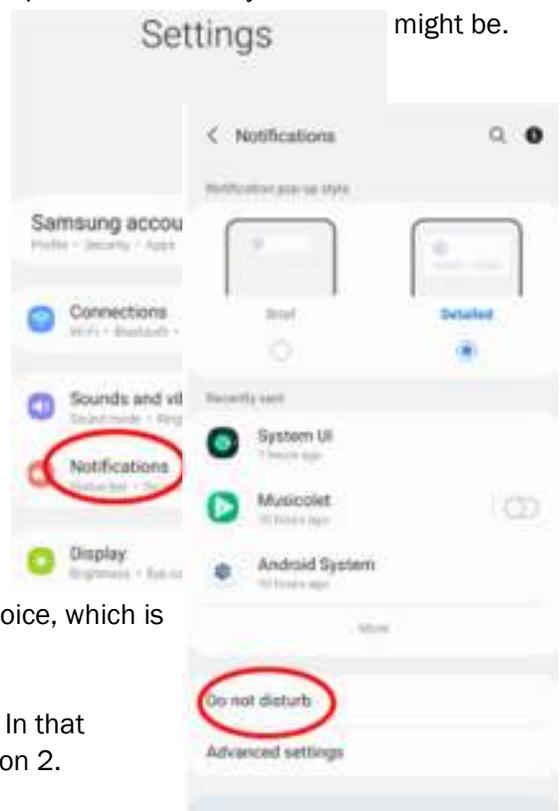
Once in a while, I have to turn off Do Not Disturb, for instance, if I expect a call from my state's COVID vaccine management office. Of course, I have no idea what that number might be.

So, yet another feature of Do Not Disturb becomes very valuable. It is possible to configure the phone to **resume Do Not Disturb on a schedule automatically**. For example, I have my phone set to continue Do Not Disturb at 10 PM local time. That way, *I do not have to remember to re-enable Do Not Disturb* after the expected call comes in. Unfortunately, the scheduling system requires you to specify a time range when Do Not Disturb will be in effect.

The complete Android Whitelist configuration steps are captured from my Samsung Galaxy S10 running Android 11 OS. Before Android 11 was available, I was able to do the same setup using Android 10, although the step details differed in some minor ways.

STEP 1. Open the Settings app. See **Illustration 1** for the **main screen** of the Settings app. In that screen, tap the **Notifications** choice, which is circled in Illustration 1.

STEP2. The **Notifications screen** opens, as shown in **Illustration 2**. In that screen, find the **Do Not Disturb** choice, which is circled in Illustration 2.



STEP 3. The **Do Not Disturb** screen opens, as shown in the illustration. On that screen, tap the phrase **Add Schedule**, which is circled



in **Illustration 3**. On that screen, tap the phrase **Add Schedule**, which is circled

STEP 4. The **Schedule** screen opens, as shown in the illustration. In that screen, make sure all seven days of the week are

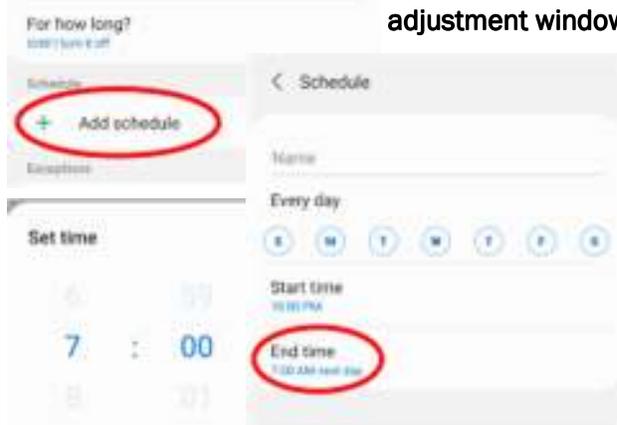


Illustration 4. In that screen, make sure all seven days of the week are

STEP 5. Then tap the **End Time**, which opens a **time** adjustment window, as shown in the illustration. Change that to 9:59 PM the day. Each of the three parts (hour, minute, and AM/PM) can be adjusted by swiping up and down.

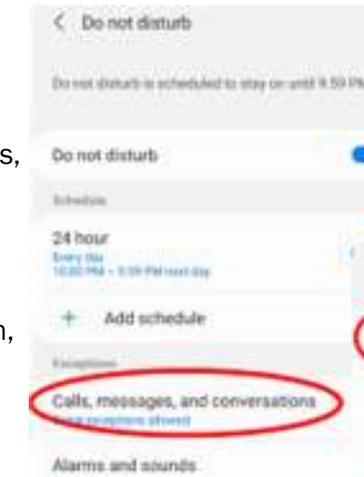
adjustment window, as shown in the illustration. Change that to 9:59 PM the day. Each of the three parts (hour, minute, and AM/PM) can be adjusted by swiping up and down.

At the lower right corner of the window, tap the **Done** button. The window closes.

STEP 6. In the **Schedule** screen, in the **Name** field above the weekday list, type a name such as **24 hours**.

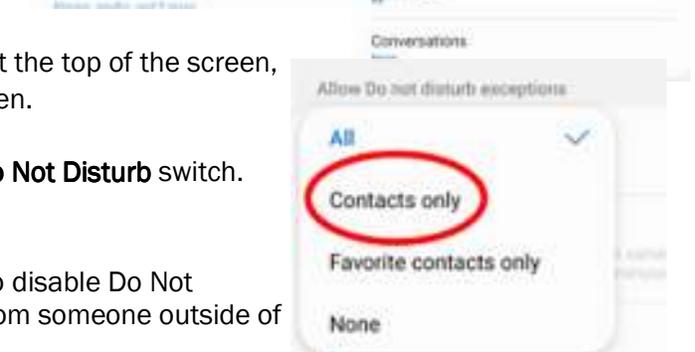
STEP 7. At the bottom of the **Schedule** screen, tap the **Save** button (not shown). The **Schedule** screen closes, and the **Do Not Disturb** screen reappears. The schedule name and hours now appear under the **Schedule** heading on the screen.

STEP 8. In the **Do Not Disturb** screen, tap **Calls, Messages, and Conversations** under the **Exceptions** heading, which is circled in **Illustration 6**. That tap opens the **Calls, messages, and conversations screen**, as shown in **Illustration 7**.



Calls, messages, and conversations screen, as shown in **Illustration 7**.

STEP 9. In the **Calls, messages, and conversations** screen, tap the word **Calls**, which is circled in **Illustration 7**. A menu appears, as shown in **Illustration 8**.



screen, tap the word **Calls**, which is circled in **Illustration 7**. A menu appears, as shown in **Illustration 8**.

STEP 10. In the menu, tap the **Contacts Only** choice. The menu closes, and the phrase **Contacts only** appears below the word **Calls**. At the top of the screen, tap the left arrow to return to the **Do Not Disturb** screen.

STEP 11. In the **Do Not Disturb** Screen, tap the **Hide Notifications** heading. The **Hide notifications** screen appears. Turn off all of the switches on that screen. At the top of the screen, tap the left arrow to return to the **Do Not Disturb** screen.

STEP 12. In the **Do Not Disturb** screen, turn on the **Do Not Disturb** switch. You can see that switch in **Illustration 3**.

Note: that same **Do Not Disturb** switch can be used to disable **Do Not Disturb** when you expect a legitimate incoming call from someone outside of

your Contacts list. Due to the automatic schedule, you won't have to turn on Do Not Disturb manually; the phone will do it for you.

That's it. Your Android phone is configured for Whitelist behavior. Exit the Settings app.

IPHONE DO NOT DISTURB

I identified similar Whitelist settings on my corporate iPhone 6s. Due to corporate policy issues, I was unable to apply and test the iPhone Whitelist settings. The basics are very similar to Android: in Settings, find Do Not Disturb. Set a schedule, set an exception for Contacts, and turn off Hide Notifications.

NEXT UP

In part 2 of this article series, you will learn how to convince robocaller systems that your phone number is not in service, so they won't call you again, and how to assemble a combination of your voice and other sounds in a voicemail greeting for that purpose.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: John Krout has been writing about creative uses of personal computers since the early 1980s, and more recently, about creative uses of smartphones. He finished a long career as a software engineer with 14 years as a technical writer for a federal contractor. He lives in Arlington, Virginia, with his son, many computers and cameras, and too many cats.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR NOTES: Due to the large number of screen captures used as illustrations in this article, your author has carefully overlapped the illustrations to save space while ensuring that the important user interface features discussed in the article are visible. Please consider using the same overlapping illustration arrangement in your newsletter to save space.

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14-E
1-L, 2-L, 3-K, 4-L, 5-C, 6-J, 7-B, 8-L, 9-A, 10-D, 11-H, 12-G, 13-F,

Back to Basics: Quiz on File Extensions

All Windows computers can work with many different types of files. Some files contain text, some photos, others videos. To help computers – and us humans too – every file has, as part of the file name, an “extension” of three or four letters at the end of the file name that identifies what kind of file it is. On Windows, if you open the “File Explorer” app, you will get a window that allows you to see all the files on your computer. If you “hover” your mouse over a file name, it will show you the kind of file it is – a text file, Word document, spreadsheet, etc. If you go to the “View” menu option on File Explorer, there is a little box you can check to turn on “File name extensions” so you will always see them. Since you cannot play a video file in a Word document or listen to an audio file using the Paint app, it is helpful to understand what a file extension means and what apps can work with them. Of course, you can always “Ask Google” about any file extension and get help that way too. But just for fun, how many of the following file types do you know? Can you match them up correctly? (HINT: The answer letter “L” is matched to three different file types.)

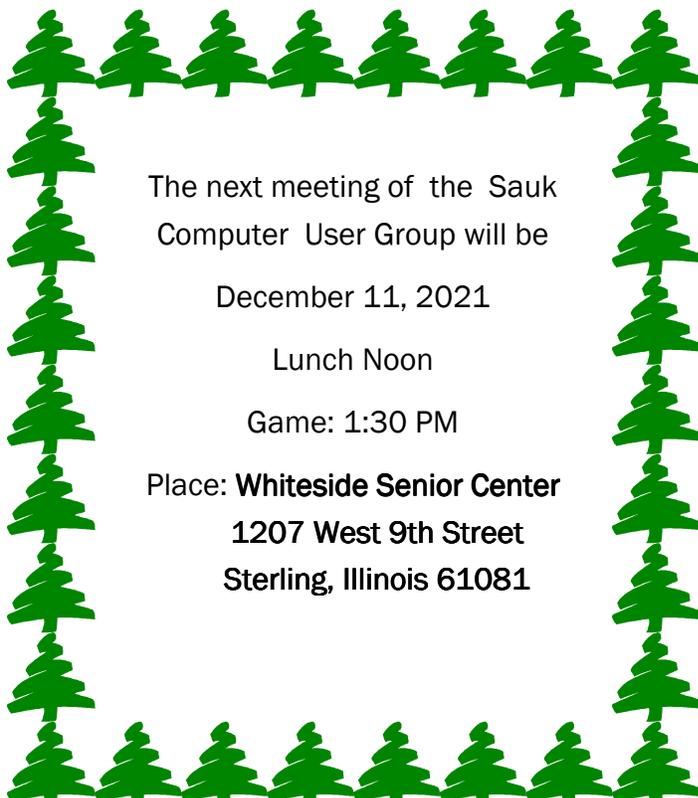
File Type Extension	Match Letter	File Description
1. bmp		A. Slide show created by the PowerPoint app of MS Office
2. doc and docx		B. Universal file of a document that can be easily opened and read
3. exe		C. An audio or music file that is compressed
4. jpg		D. File of text used by the Wordpad free Windows app
5. mp3		E. This file has been compressed to save space
6. mpg and mpeg		F. A spreadsheet file created by Excel of Microsoft Office
7. pdf		G. A simple text file with little or no formatting of the text
8. png		H. This is a font that is of the popular TrueType family of fonts
9. pps		I. Microsoft Word document
10. rtf		J. Popular video file type for movies viewed on the internet
11. ttf		K. A program or app file that can be run on the computer
12. txt		L. One of 3 image files on this list that is used by the Paint app
13. xls		
14. zip		

Need a hint or some help? The Paint app comes free with Windows and can work with or open several different image file types. Microsoft Word can open several different text file types too. Text formatting allows additional enhancements to text such as underline, bold, color, etc.

How was that? Helpful or more confusing? Well, here are the – ANSWERS
(Do not peek until you are ready! Answers on previous page.)

*Jim Cerny, Help Desk Host
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There will be a No Question &
Answer at the December
Meeting



The next meeting of the Sauk
Computer User Group will be

December 11, 2021

Lunch Noon

Game: 1:30 PM

Place: **Whiteside Senior Center**

1207 West 9th Street

Sterling, Illinois 61081

December Will Be Our Annual Christmas Party Starting at Noon.

Followed by Games and Prizes by Santa Joe.

All food will be provided by club.