



July 2015

Visit our website at www.pcs4me.com

Ken Johnson, Newsletter Editor

CALENDAR

SIG = Special Interest Group

This Week's Schedule

July 11 - Saturday - 1:00-3:00 PM

[General Meeting](#) - Leader: Ray Carlson

Location: Prescott Public Library

First Hour: Online banking

Cynthia Hathaway from Wells Fargo will discuss online banking options and security regarding desktop and mobile devices.

Then Ryan Scissons of [Populaceit](#) will talk on the topic of "Introduction to PC Hardware and how Software Interacts with it."

Second Hour: Phil Ball will present Tips and Tricks with insights into various topics that assist with regular computer activity.

In addition to the presentations, the following are typical events which take place at our General meetings:

1) We hold an informal Flea Market in which you are encouraged to bring in your excess computer equipment or software and make them available for others to enjoy at no charge. Please deposit give-away items on the table in the back marked "Free Stuff." Any items left here at the end of the meeting are subject to disposal.

2) If you have items that are just too good to give away, you may set up a separate table and hold your own sale.

3) We conduct a raffle of gift cards at the end of the meeting, so make sure to get a pair of tickets from whoever is in charge and place one on the item you'd like to win.

4) We will also accept your used ink and toner cartridges for recycling. They are turned in to Think4Inc for credits which PCS uses to purchase office supplies from them.

Future Meetings

July 18 - Saturday

There will be no PCS meeting today.

July 25 - Saturday

There will be no PCS meeting today.

*Note that these dates are correct at time of publication but are subject to change.
Up to date information can be found on our website, www.pcs4me.com*

*Unless otherwise noted, our meetings are usually held in the
Founder's Suite at the Prescott Public Library.*

Prescott Computer Society
Officers & Board of Directors
2013-2014

Officers:

President Ray Carlson
Vice Pres Phil Ball
Secretary JB Burke
Treasurer Edi Taylor-Richards

General Directors:

Joan Baum Murray Smolens
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Recycle your old computer.

A volunteer organization in the Prescott area refurbishes old computer equipment and gives systems away to disadvantaged youths and seniors. The volunteers wipe your old hard drive clean, reformat the hard drive, and install a fresh version of Windows. No trace of your data is left on the refurbished systems.

Over the past several years, more than 600 computer systems have been given away through this program in the Tri-Cities area.

If you have computer equipment you can no longer use, please Call Jim Perry, 458-5058, or perryjeb@gmail.com and he will pick it up from your home. If you prefer to wipe your hard disk before you give the system away, he will provide a program for you to use.

President's Corner

Five Things the Tech Industry Won't Tell You

By Greg Skalka, President, Under the Computer Hood User Group, CA

February 2015 issue, Drive Light

www.uchug.org

In a nod to the Wall Street Journal Sunday's imaginative, interesting and informative "10 Things . . . (xxx) Won't Tell You" columns, I offer my half-sized version. The tech industry's annual new product celebration, CES (Consumer Electronic Show), occurred in January. I've never attended, but I enjoy reading about the latest tech items presented each year.

Each year brings a new batch of innovative products that get the favorable buzz. Sometimes items at the show succeed in the marketplace, while others never make it to prime time.

1. 'The latest is not necessarily the greatest.'

The main purpose of a lot of new products is often not to help the customer but to make money for the tech companies. Occasionally this results in products that despite a big marketing effort are not well received by consumers. It may be due to a company going in the wrong direction, hastily putting out a shoddy product or attempting to pass off a few changes (some perhaps not really wanted by consumers) as a new product.

Windows 8 is an example of a desire to sell something that the customer really does not want. Microsoft seems to get it right in terms of operating systems only about every other attempt. They were very successful with Windows 98, but then disappointed with the release of Windows Me (Millennium Edition). They captured almost all the market with the popular Windows XP OS, but then followed it up with poorly-received Vista.

After correcting their mistakes in well-received Windows 7, their successor, Windows 8, went in a direction most computer users did not want to go. Since Microsoft has decided that they must skip the number nine, all we can do is hope Windows 10 is an improvement when it is released this year, as our time with Windows 7 is limited (mainstream support ended on Jan. 13; extended support, which includes free security updates, will end in five years).

Unfortunately, Microsoft continues to irritate me with their new versions of Office. It is a very powerful application but most users only scratch the surface of its capabilities. I use it daily for work, but never to its fullest potential. Yet they continue to add additional obscure features and greatly change the familiar user interface to let them somehow justify selling a new version every other year or so. Now they want to sell it by subscription, so users can become just a revenue stream.

And let's not get me started on Microsoft Bob.

2. 'Your old stuff probably still works just fine for what you need.'

Some consumers are enamored with the latest thing and must upgrade whenever possible. It seems to me that these are the customers Apple is often targeting with their new smart phones and tablets. Tech companies would like their customers to think like some car buyers used to (and some maybe still do), and trade up to their latest product every year or two. In most cases, the product the consumer already has meets most if not all of their present real needs. Just as with automobiles, "trading in" for a new smart phone, laptop, camera or office suite too often can cost a lot with little increase in benefits.

A number of PC users hung on to Windows XP a lot longer than Microsoft would have liked. Though the poor reputations of Vista and Windows 8 contributed, a lot of XP users resisted switching because XP met their needs. Businesses were particularly reluctant to switch. I am presently using three XP computers at my work, a small telecom equipment design firm. I also still have a couple of XP computers at home (I wrote this column on one), though I'm definitely phasing them out because of security concerns.

A lot of technology costs a lot when initially introduced, but drops in price once it is more widely adopted and production volumes increase. Staying off the cutting edge can save money but still provide a good user experience.

3. 'This new stuff may seem great, but it is still a long way from reality.'

Highly innovative new products can capture the imagination, but most successful new products are the result of iterative development. These iterations can require years to finally come up with an implementation that is cost-effective for consumers.

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I was excited about Google Glass when I first heard about it a few years ago. I'd hoped by now it would have had greater availability and a lower price, but instead Google has just announced that it is halting production of this model. I am encouraged that Microsoft is working on the HoloLens device, but I expect I'll be waiting a while longer to personally experience this type of device. With luck Google will continue development of Glass as well; I'd hate to see it become the Segway of computing devices.

It also seems to be taking a long time to get autonomous cars into the hands of consumers. The Google Self-Driving Car project has been in existence for a number of years, having logged nearly 700,000 autonomous miles. A new prototype without human controls will begin testing this year. A number of major auto manufacturers are also at work on autonomous cars. Google believes that it will be able to offer a self-driving car to the public between 2017 and 2019. The legal issues may take as long to work out as the technical ones, however. Meanwhile, we may get there piecemeal as car-makers offer features like self-parking (for parallel parking) and auto braking now.

4. 'New technology may provide benefits, but there are usually unintended consequences.'

Almost every new technology introduced has resulted in job losses somewhere in the economy. The automobile put a huge dent in buggy sales. Streaming video wiped out most of the jobs involved in video disc rental. Computers and robotics greatly reduced factory employment. Digital cameras decimated the photographic film industry and computers and tablets have reduced the need for photo prints.

These technologies have of course created new jobs of different types, but this forces great change on the industries and employees. Email and social media have greatly reduced the number of letters delivered by the Postal Service, so it has had to recast itself as a deliverer of Amazon packages. Unskilled labor is being pushed out as almost all workers, from the burger flipper to the airline pilot, must deal with video displays and electronic controls on the job. The Internet has revolutionized communications, education, shop-

Smart phones and social media have greatly changed our culture and our society. We get our news, find our jobs and pick our mates using the Internet. Crime has followed the technology path to our money; it is not in the banks, but in our personal information. Identity theft, phishing, cyber terrorism, sexting and laws against texting while driving are all unintended consequences of our new technology.

Our technology may have had a hand in changing our planet's climate and it may ultimately provide us with a remedy, but some initial tech solutions have provided mixed results. Nuclear power has the promise of carbon-free energy, but radioactive leaks have resulted in disasters. Wind power seems to be a clean renewable source of energy but the large rotating blades may also cause excessive bird kills. The new Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System in the Mohave Desert may be scorching thousands of birds each year with its concentrated reflected light.

How will new tech advances change our economy and our society in the future? We can guess that widespread use of autonomous cars might make our highways safer, increase productivity by reclaiming lost commute time and wipe out the taxi industry. What other unanticipated effects will it have on us? Police body cameras and other public video surveillance may reduce misconduct, but how will they affect privacy? Will virtual reality technology wipe out the travel industry? Will increased use of online communications and telepresence devices leave us virtually connected but physically isolated in our homes? Will biotech advances turn us into a long-lived, genetically engineered species? Will our computers and autonomous vehicles achieve artificial intelligence? We can never fully predict the future.

5. 'Playing the Luddite is pointless, as technology is transforming our society as we speak.'

The Luddites were 19th century English workers who rebelled against technology by smashing the new machines that were taking their jobs. They were not successful in stopping progress and it is likely modern opposition to technology would be ineffective on the whole. Cell phone networks are being spread through almost every developing country and satellite-based Internet and Wi-Fi installations are increasing, so soon no one will be able to escape technology's reach. Our culture and

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our relationships are being changed by our technology. We may not be able to put the genie back in the bottle, even if we wanted to.

How to Stream TV

By Sandy Berger, CompuKiss

Sandy (at) compukiss.com

www.compukiss.com

There is no doubt that the world of television content and the way we get that content is changing. Many people are "cutting the cord" by turning their backs on cable and satellite TV. These folks are turning to streaming TV shows and movies. For those of you who are not yet familiar with "streaming", here's a quick tutorial on how to stream and what you need.

Streaming is named for a technique for transmitting data over the Internet so that it can be processed as a steady and continuous stream. This differs from downloading content in which the entire chunk of data must be downloaded before it can be processed. Most users do not have enough bandwidth to download an entire movie or TV show, so streaming is a great technique. During streaming the content is constantly being processed so you can watch the show while it is being processed with no interruption.

Streaming allows you to watch television shows and movies without having a cable or satellite subscription. You can use streaming to augment a basic cable or satellite TV subscription or to eliminate cable or satellite subscriptions completely making it a valuable tool for TV watching.

Also, Netflix and Amazon are now producing their own programming, much of which, like House of Cards, has become very popular. With streaming you can also watch a wide variety of movies and the past episodes of many different TV shows.

Even if you are not technically inclined, you will find that streaming is quite simple to setup. Here's what you need.

First -- a HDTV with a HDMI port. While older analog TVs can also be set up to stream, having an HDMI port makes it much easier. All HDTVs, which include most newer TVs have these ports. To find them look at the back of the TV, they are usually labeled HDMI.

Second -- You need a good broadband Internet connect-

ion. This is how the data (movies) will get to your television. The faster the better and you might want to upgrade your Internet, but you may not have to. Try it with the connection you have right now. You might be pleasantly surprised.

Third -- you need a streaming media device. Some newer TVs and most Blu-ray players can access the Internet. If you have one of these you can use it as your media streaming device.

If you don't have one of these, you will need to purchase a new device. The good news is that these devices are small and inexpensive. These devices include Chromecast, Roku, and Amazon Fire TV and Fire Stick. They range in price from \$30 to \$100. I have tried them all and they all work quite well. If you already belong to Amazon Prime, an Amazon Fire might be the best choice. To get the best selection of content, Roku is the best. In any case, the main difference in price is often whether the device comes with a remote control or not. If it doesn't come with a remote, like the Chromecast, you will have to use a tablet or mobile phone to control it. If that doesn't appeal to you, opt for one with a remote.

Fourth -- you will need a wireless router. Although some devices can hook up directly to your wired Internet router, in most cases your television is not in the same room as the Internet connection making it necessary to have a wireless router to transmit the data wirelessly to your television. If you already have wireless in your home for a tablet or phone, you are all set.

When you get your streaming media device home, you simply plug it into the TV. Set the TV to the proper input like HDMI 1 or HDMI 2, then follow the set up instructions that will appear on the screen. All are easy to follow. The only thing you will need is to know the password for your wireless network if it is password protected.

After the setup you will see your choices of things to watch. Some of these will be free, some will have extra costs. For instance Netflix and Hulu both have a ton of content, but each charges about \$10 a month. Fortunately both have free trials which you can use.

Watching streaming media on your TV is not as simple as watching cable TV. There are little inconveniences. Every time you want to switch to your streaming device, you have to change the input on your television. Also there is

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no simple guide as the one you get with cable or satellite TV. You often have to search for what you want to watch. The Amazon Fire TV (not the Fire Stick) makes this easier because its remote has a voice search which works quite well. Just speak the name of a movie, actor, or director and it will find the movie you want. This, however, only works for Amazon Prime movies and shows. Also, if you have more than one subscription, you have to remember which movies are on which service....Now was "Orange is the New Black" on Netflix, Hulu, or Amazon?

Yet, the inconveniences are minor and there are advantages. For instance, after I started streaming I was able to watch the entire series of Downton Abbey on Amazon and House of Cards on Netflix at my convenience. How wonderful to watch a few episodes a week until I got caught up!

If you haven't yet tried streaming, be sure to check it out. You may find a new way of watching television that can save you money and give you new options.

Where to Get Instructions for your new Device

By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS

www.compukiss.com

sberger (at) compukiss.com

If you are ready to learn a little more about your cell phone or tablet to make the most of your investment, you may find it difficult to find the instructions you need. This is especially true because none of the today's devices come with any sort of instruction manual. That means that you have to find your own way of getting the information you need.

The best way to do that is to visit the manufacturer's website and find the support area.

Apple manuals and user guides at <https://www.apple.com/support/iphone>

- Windows devices, search the Microsoft website
- Android devices, go straight to the manufacturer

For instance, if you just got a Samsung Galaxy S5, the manuals are at www.galaxys5manuals.com

o Smartphones, you can also check out the website of your service provider

For instance, Verizon has tons of information including videos on using the Galaxy S5 on their website at www.verizonwireless.com/support/galaxy-s-5

Interesting Internet Finds - April

Steve Costello, Boca Raton Computer Society

editor@brcs.org

<http://ctublog.sefcug.com/>

In the course of going through the more than 300 RSS feeds, I often run across things that I think might be of interest to other user group members.

The following are some items I found interesting during the month of March 2015.

-Ninite is a Safe Place to get Windows Software

For those not familiar with Ninite, check out this post for more information.

<http://www.ghacks.net/2015/03/30/ninite-is-a-safe-place-to-get-windows-software/>

-Do you get annoyed by Netflix auto playing the next episode of a series? This post from HowToGeek, tells you how to turn the feature off, and turn it back on later if you want it.

How to Stop Netflix from Autoplaying the Next Episode.

<http://www.howtogeek.com/210324/how-to-stop-netflix-from-autoplaying-the-next-episode/>

-How I Tackled My Chrome Extension Clutter Without Losing My Mind.

If you use Google Chrome a lot, you probably have a lot of extensions. You also probably have a lot of them you don't need anymore, or that you don't need to have the buttons showing for all the time. This post from Guiding Tech shows you how to get things under control.

<http://www.guidingtech.com/39501/manage-chrome-extensions/>

Many Online Articles Written by Bots not Humans.

After reading this post you will double think taking something posted online is coming from a human mind. Most times I can spot articles written by bots, but even if I can't I don't just accept what is written without further research.

<http://www.theinternetpatrol.com/many-online-articles-written-by-bots-not-humans/>