



## June 2018

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Ken Johnson, Newsletter Editor



# CALENDAR

SIG = Special Interest Group



### This Week's Schedule

**June 9 - Saturday - 1:10-2:50 PM**

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

Location: Prescott Public Library; Founders Suite A & B

### First Hour: The Latest In Browsers

Competition among browsers is strong. The major browsers - Firefox, Chrome, and Edge - have all undergone significant updates, and new ones like Avant have come along. Others like Vivaldi and Opera have changed their emphasis. Is it time to start using multiple browsers for different tasks or situations? Would it be worth the effort to change the primary browser you are using? During the first hour of the General Meeting, Ray Carlson will review these updates and innovations considering how these changes have influenced the benefits and ratings of these browsers.

In addition, LibreOffice, the popular alternative to Microsoft Office, has updated to version 6.0. Ray will summarize key changes and use that Suite's PowerPoint program for this presentation in order to review the benefits of this major update.

**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

*Calendar Continued on Pg 2*

**Future Meetings-(cont'd.)**

**June 12 - Tuesday - 10:00-11:00 AM**

**Technology Help Hour - Leader: PCS Staff**

Location: Prescott Public Library Training Lab; Third Floor

Ask a technology question and get help from members of the Prescott Computer Society. Bring your own laptop or mobile device or use a library laptop. This is a weekly drop-in service and registration is not required.

**June 16 - Saturday - 1:10-2:50 PM**

[Special Topics SIG](#) Leader: JB Burke

Location: Prescott Public Library; Founders Suite A & B

Know what the whole Universe looks like? Is your Router hiding secrets? Would you like to take control of your online privacy? Did you know that Robots can read? Perhaps you'd like to search within 100,000 books for that elusive piece of insight you've always wanted. Or do you just want to know how to kill time (and maybe learn something new and interesting) on the web? If so, be sure to attend JB Burke's Special Topics SIG on June 16th. As always there will be plenty of fun stuff to break up the other fun stuff.

**June 19 - Tuesday - 10:00-11:00 AM**

**Technology Help Hour - Leader: PCS Staff**

Location: Prescott Public Library Training Lab; Third Floor

**June 23 - Saturday**

No PCS meeting is scheduled.

**June 26 - Tuesday - 10:00-11:00 AM**

**Technology Help Hour - Leader: PCS Staff**

Location: Prescott Public Library Training Lab; Third Floor

**June 30 - Saturday**

No PCS meeting is scheduled.

*Note that these dates are correct at time of publication but are subject to change.*



**Prescott Computer Society**  
**Current Officers & Board of Directors**

<b>Officers:</b>		<b>General Directors:</b>	
President	Ray Carlson	Joan Baum	Murray Smolens
Vice Pres	Phil Ball	John Carter	Dick Mason
Secretary	JB Burke	Ken Johnson	
Treasurer	Edi Taylor-Richards		

### Are your iPhone and Android photos really backing up to the cloud?

Tech tips and news from TechMoxie to you

Pam Holland, President and Instructor

[www.techmoxie.com](http://www.techmoxie.com)

We have long recommended that our clients make sure that photos on mobile devices are backing up to the cloud. That way if anything happens to your phone, your photos are safe. Most often, phones are set up this way, so it is infrequent for us to find a problem. But it is important to know that *most mobile devices are set up to back up only when connected to Wi-Fi and do not back up over data.*

Why is this significant? Those vacation pictures you take over the course of a week at the beach may not get backed up until you return home and your phone is again connected to your home's Wi-Fi. And now that unlimited data plans are much more common people are connecting their phones to WIFI less frequently – even while at home.

Here are some tips:

- If you are an iPhone user, know that your photos will *only* back up over Wi-Fi and while the phone is charging. Apple does not have an option to back up over data. So, try to connect your iPhone to Wi-Fi overnight if you are traveling.
- If you are an Android user, you have the option to back up over data as well as Wi-Fi. But this must be enabled in your Cloud settings.
- For iPhone users especially, consider using a second back up app that permits back up over data. We have started using Google Photos which offers unlimited photo storage if you are willing to store photos at “high resolution,” not “full” resolution. If you want full resolution, Google offers 15 gb free storage and additional storage for a fee. Google Photo settings can be adjusted to back up over data.
- No matter where you store your photos, check periodically to make sure they are truly being stored as you intend. Log into your iCloud account, for example, and see if your photos are indeed there.

Be careful when deleting photos! If you delete a

photo from your device, it will delete from the cloud and other devices. For example, if you delete from your iPhone, the photos will be deleted from other devices connected to the cloud like your laptop or iPad. [Ω](#)

### I Wuz Hacked

By Stu Gershon, Smartphone SIG Leader, Sun City Summerlin Computer Club, NV

December 2017 issue, Gigabyte Gazette

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One Sunday morning, I checked my email, like I do every morning. Nothing came through. I tried again, and it was the same. I called COX to see if any of their servers were having trouble or down. The line was busy. The line is never busy unless they are having trouble because they've always had fantastic customer service. I tried twice more during the day with the same results.

I finally got through to COX at about 6:30 that evening. They were not having any problems, and they couldn't help me because I have Gmail accounts and they would only intervene if they were COX accounts. I said to the technician, “What should I do?” He replied, “Call Google!” I said, “Who are you going to call at Google, they have no customer service!” He offered, “I have a number for Google support!”

He gave me the number and the first thing Monday morning I called 1-844-400-1570. I asked if they were “Google Support” and the gentleman said “Yes.” His name was Daniel. We discussed the problem and he said I'd have to let him into my computer, so he could check. REMEMBER - COX gave me this number. I had to give permission and put in a code number to let him into my computer. He looked around for a while, “scanned” my computer for viruses and malware and told me I had probably been “hacked.” I asked, “What do we do now?” Daniel said he'd fix

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it and said the charge would be \$299.99 including a one-year warranty on my computer. I figured it was worth it to get this problem fixed.

He continued to work on my computer, while I watched what he did, and we talked over the phone, throughout. He worked on my computer until 5:30 pm (from 9:30 am) and said he did what he could, the email was working with some “work-a-rounds,” but it was the end of his shift and he’d call me back at 10 am the next morning.

He asked to be paid, and since my computer was adequately working and he’d been working on it for 8 hours, already, I gave him my credit card and paid the \$299.99.

The next morning, at 10 am, he called back and worked on it until almost noon. He’s put ten hours into my computer, he had given me his name, and said he’d call back the following week to check if everything was alright. With Daniel’s “work-a-round,” my computer worked, fine.

On Tuesday, September 12th, he called back promptly at 10 am, said “hello” and asked how everything was working. I told him it was working fine, but by adding the “work-a-round” (a new email address getting the email from the old one), I was getting a lot of duplicate emails. He took another look, but this time he used a different software.

Since Gigabyte Gazette on 18 December 2017 we were still in communication over the phone, I asked “why?” and he replied, “My company has installed a new software in the past week.”

The guy had already worked on my computer for TWELVE HOURS and, remember, I CALLED HIM! He said, “Look, you’ve been hacked, so I’m going to refund your money because we didn’t do our job!”

He said, “Let me be sure.” Then my PC’s screen went BLACK! I asked, “Daniel, what’s going on?” He replied, “It’s the new software, don’t worry.” Coincidentally, my cell phone was right next to my computer. As the screen was black and I couldn’t see what he was doing, I received text messages on my cell phone, “PayPal Gift Card - \$100!” “PayPal Gift Card - \$50!” On and on. I asked Daniel, “What’s going on?”

He answered, “Nothing, I’m fixing your computer!” I answered, “Money is being taken from PayPal!” He replied “Don’t worry! It’s so we can give you your refund!”

I said, “Not from what I see! Goodbye!” and I pulled the plug! I immediately called PayPal, and stopped the \$450 in Gift Card charges! Then I called my Bank and put a freeze on all my credit cards. Remember, Equifax had been hacked the week before, so they were NO HELP!

Then I called Amazon, where I spend much of my money. They informed me they had “denied” a charge for a \$500 gift card (because I had never ordered something like that before, and they were trying to contact me to verify, but my computer and two phones were all in use – it’s called “profiling”.)

I called my friend, Chuck, at the Computer Club and he told me to bring my computer over (the Tuesday Repair SIG – Special Interest Group, had just started). I brought it over and when the guys started up my computer it required a password (which I had not made) to enter.

This is called RANSOMWARE – They lock up or scramble your computer and make you pay a fee to release your computer from their control! Chuck, and the other guys, took out the hard drive, did something to it to remove the password, and then I got my external hard drive and we restored the computer to BEFORE this incident began.

In the meantime, Daniel called five times and told me to buy three \$100 iTunes gift cards, and when I put in the pin numbers from the back of each card, the “hack-ware” would be uninstalled! He had already taken \$299.99 in payment for his services, tried to buy \$450 in PayPal gift cards, tried to purchase a \$500 gift card from Amazon, and now he wanted \$300 more? Nope! So now, two weeks later, I’ve restored my main computer, the email is working fine, I’m currently restoring my second laptop because I also allowed Daniel to check those email settings. I’ve changed all my credit cards and my passwords and I’m exhausted. I haven’t lost any of the “charges” yet, because they are all in “dispute,” and because PayPal, Amazon and my bank worked quickly, and I’m disputing the initial charge of \$299.99.

If that’s the price I must pay, “A lesson learned, is a lesson earned!” and maybe someone can benefit from this experience. REMEMBER – I called Daniel because my trusted Internet Provider GAVE ME THE PHONE NUMBER!

The only people SCSCC members should let into their computers are our Computer Club’s Repair SIG which meets every Tuesday from 1 to 4 pm in the Computer Club Classroom

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at the Pinnacle, and the only requirement is joining the Computer Club! They know what they are doing, and they live HERE!”

From Judy: This article leads into a great discussion with your group members on who they trust to work on their computers, and why. If a member doesn't have a trusted person, they might think about introducing themselves to another member's trusted person. I, personally, wouldn't get in touch with a members' friend or relative.

*(Editors Note: Judy is the person who sends these great articles to us from ACPUG)Ω*

### Looking Back to See Ahead

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

January 2018 issue, Drive Light

[www.uchug.org](http://www.uchug.org)

Another year goes into the record books, and we get a new, clean slate ahead. As we say good-bye to 2017 and prepare to start writing 2018 on our checks (hey, wait a minute; who writes checks these days, anyway?), we are confronted by this arbitrary boundary in time once again.

It is obvious the year and its length are derived from our Earth's orbit around the sun. But why set the boundary for a year in the winter? Wouldn't all those people in Times Square have a much better New Year's Eve in the spring, summer or even autumn? Our January 1 is not even tied to any astronomical event, like an equinox or solstice.

Ancient civilizations celebrated the new year at different times with respect to the seasons. Mesopotamians had their new year's rockin eve (no doubt with real stones) in the spring, around the vernal equinox. The autumnal equinox was when ancient Egyptians and Persians celebrated their new year. The ancient Greeks began their new year around December 20, the winter solstice.

So why do we believe the New Year starts on January 1st? It seems we can blame it on the Romans. Among the many things we still use that are carried over from the Roman Empire, including aqueducts, roads and a

numerical system that we use to count our Super Bowls, is the Julian calendar. That calendar begins with the month of January, named for the Roman god of doorways and beginnings, Janus; his feast begins the new year.

Janus is depicted as having two faces, one looking back in time and one looking forward into the future. Around this time of year there are often predictions made for the new year. I've written columns in the past for this month, trying to prognosticate on what is to come in the tech world, mostly with little success. Bill Gates was probably right when he said, "We always overestimate the change that will occur in the next two years and underestimate the change that will occur in the next ten." I keep thinking something monumental will happen in tech in the next few years, but it rarely does, yet in 2007 few people could have imagined the impact the iPhone, Facebook, Twitter, Airbnb, IBM's Watson and fracking would have on our lives today. Perhaps by viewing the world like Janus, and first looking back on the past year, can be a better picture of what is to come in 2018.

We all look at the world through unique eyes, with our perceptions filtered by our own personalities and experiences. I'm heavily involved in technology on a daily basis, being an electrical engineer presently designing digital communications equipment. I read quite a bit about the latest innovations, yet I would not consider myself an "early adopter." Part of this may be due to my age; I'm part of the tail end of the baby boomer demographic. I may have a lot more money for technology, but I don't necessarily buy into it (or some of the societal change that often go with it) as much as my millennial children. I also look more at anything I'm buying as a value proposition. Cutting-edge technology may be really nice, but it usually costs a lot more when it is the latest and greatest. I prefer to wait a bit until the costs are lower, the capabilities are more proven, and the pitfalls are uncovered. I also prefer the devices that emphasize capability over cachet; I don't need a fruit on my device solely for the sake of status.

For me, 2017 was a year of increased connectivity. I bought my first smartphone in June, after moving into the world of SMS text communication with a flip phone only the year before. I've accelerated my

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longtime interest in home automation, adding many more Smart Home tech items. I've taken advantage of faster internet connections to stream more content, and have found a greater need to use and improve my home Wi-Fi setup. I find I'm more often using more Android and Chrome OS devices, and fewer Windows devices for my connections.

Getting a smartphone is no doubt the biggest tech change in my life in the last year, and it has been an enabler for additional tech. I was the last in my family of four to get one, in spite of being the one that paid for them all (or, perhaps because I was the one paying for them all). When I was finally able to be happy with the value I was getting, my new Samsung Galaxy J3 Prime Android phone (a new but lower cost model) joined the iPhones and Google Nexus phone on the family phone plan in June. It is great to be able to get information from the internet (practically) wherever you are. I text a lot more than call, while purposely not using the phone much for email. I find I'm using my Magellan vehicle GPS a lot less now, and the Google maps app a lot more when driving. My phone's camera is pretty good but not fantastic; while most of the pictures on this year's family photo Christmas card were taken by phones (selfies), I'm not giving up on digital cameras. When my good digital camera broke this year, I found out how poor a substitute the phone was for all but basic photography, and so got a replacement camera. My 2017 eclipse photos with the digital camera were great, while the phone photos of the event were a bust.

Yet my adoption of the smartphone into my life is a cautious and measured change. Karl Marx may have felt that religion was the opiate of the masses, but he never got to see how people's behavior has changed as a result of constant connectedness and social media. I believe smartphones and Facebook are the new opiates of the masses, and I don't want to be among the addicted. Last night at Phil's BBQ, my wife again commented to me on how many people (and not just children) were paying more attention to their screens than their families at dinner. Driver's laps are not supposed to glow; far too many concentrate on their devices, rather than the road. I'll use my phone for navigation when driving, but will always pull over to read a text or answer a call.

I've fortunately never become obsessed with social media. While I can see how, when used in moderation, Facebook can be useful to keep in touch with family and friends, its overuse can be a problem. I don't have a Facebook account, but I've seen the excessive postings of others on my wife's account. They remind me of a favorite engineering "law." *The more time you spend reporting on what you are doing, the less time you have to do anything. Stability is achieved when you are spending all your time reporting on the nothing you are doing.* Just substitute posting for reporting, and you'll see where I'm going.

My wife does more watching on Facebook than posting, but still posts more than I think is necessary, especially when we are away on vacation. It is frustrating to return to work after a weekend trip with your wife, and not be able to tell anyone about your adventures, as your coworkers have already been told by their wives about the posts your wife made on Facebook while you were away (including photos).

We have also increased our Smart Home connectedness this year. We bought an Amazon Echo Dot voice-operated assistant device for our home in late 2016, and bought a second this spring for upstairs. We now have a few light controllers and a smart thermostat that are Alexa-compatible. I even bought a Google Home Mini during the Black Friday sale, so we could see what the competing device offers. The three networked, Wi-Fi security cameras I bought this year allowed us to watch over our home while away on vacation, and I've purchased a couple for outdoor security use as well. My new smartphone of course allows me to view the cameras, control the lights and adjust the heating while away (or just in the recliner).

One problem with all this connectedness is maintaining all the connections. I have always been suspicious of Wi-Fi as a secure means of networking, preferring wired Ethernet. With all these new IoT Wi-Fi devices, our poor little Wi-Fi access point has become inadequate. To get the range required to put these new cameras and other devices anywhere in the house I want, I've had to look at changing to a mesh Wi-Fi net-

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work. It seems that all this tech feeds on itself, creating more issues that require new technology for the solutions.

So, considering where I've been this last year, can I get any insight into where at least I'll be going with technology in the coming year? Probably more of the same, but at an increased level. I doubt self-driving cars will be available this year, but I won't be buying one if they are. They will be new and have insufficient value for their cost. Maybe in 5-10 years, though.

Will I buy a new iPhone? Not when I could have had six of the Samsung phones I bought for the cost of the replacement iPhone I bought for my wife this fall. Will I get rid of my Magellan car GPS? Maybe. Although it was useful on our eclipse trip to Nebraska (when Google Maps could not navigate due to the lack of a good cell connection in rural areas), it could probably be replaced by an app on my phone. Will I get rid of my digital camera? No, the phone camera is not good enough yet. Will I take more phone photos? Yes, it is way too convenient, and with me most of the time. Will I get Facebook or Twitter accounts? No, still not interested. Will I book an Uber or Lyft ride in 2018? Maybe, since I now have a smartphone. I've been part of a few group rides booked by others, and it seems convenient.

Since Windows 7 extended support ends in January 2019, I'll probably start worrying about what to do about our four Win7 computers later on this year. Perhaps Microsoft will extend security support. Perhaps I'll just take them off my network, like I've done with my XP machine. Perhaps I won't care, as I'm using Windows for fewer computer activities anyway. I'll be buying TurboTax to file my 2017 taxes, but my 2018 tax filing may be a lot simpler, though costlier. [Ω](#)

### To Win 10 or Not to Win 10: That was the question

By Art Gresham, Editor, Under the Computer Hood User Group, CA  
January 2018 issue, Drive Light  
[www.uchug.org](http://www.uchug.org)

This is a true story about how a recent upgrade to Windows 10 went on one computer.

The background of this upgrade is about a desktop computer at work. We had purchased three HP Prodesk 405 computers for our office staff. Over the next couple years, they each developed a recurring failure by unexpectedly scrambling the video making them useless. The only fix was to force-power off-restart. After which they would run days or weeks without a problem.

Ultimately all three users became aware that the problem was a common shared problem and brought it to my attention. We tried various 'fixes', looked online for help, reinstalled drivers. Nothing seemed to solve it. And there seemed to be no common activity that caused it like a browser, web page, running application. Gradually two of these were replaced by other, more friendly, units. One administrator began testing a Chromebook which has proven very satisfactory. Another seems to have gotten better (maybe some updates that changed?)

But as a result, I received one system (computer, monitor, keyboard) to dispose of. Being the cheap sort, I had not donated it to a recycler, thinking maybe I could yet find a way to salvage this otherwise very functional, newer than most of our computers, powerful box. Months passed.

Late in November I plugged it in and began experimenting - nothing to lose since it had been basically written off. Since it was a Windows 7 system I thought that perhaps an upgrade to Windows 10 might solve the problem, IF it is a software (drivers?) issue.

So, I began the process of an upgrade. Now note that my decision to start this upgrade began well after the July 2017 cutoff on when Microsoft had provided free upgrades. And purchase of a copy was out of the question. However some of the helpful sites that I subscribe (CNET) to had published an [article in November](#) documenting the fact that Microsoft had extended the offer under certain circumstances. Specifically, systems using [assistive technologies](#), (magnifying, large cursor, text to speech etc.) could still be updated. The cutoff for that program is 31 December 2017. Thought it would be worth a try, and at the very least, an educational experience.

So, I followed the instructions from CNET:

Here's how to get the upgrade at no charge:

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From a Windows 7 or 8.1 device, go to the web-page entitled "[Windows 10 free upgrade for customers who use assistive technologies](#)." Click on the Upgrade now button. Run the executable file to install the upgrade.

Now to back up and tell you more of the story. Our (school) network is shared by a lot of users. Sometimes the download time can be rather slow as lots of them (over 100 students, plus teachers and staff, plus Chromecast devices, Wi-Fi thermostats, wireless printers etc.) all compete for the space on the various routers, through the firewall, and out to the ISP. So, experience has taught me that a major download (such as the major updates to Windows 10 that have come out over the last year) can take many hours to succeed. I am patient, and this is not a priority so sure I can just let it run and work on other things. And it runs. Hours. And fails. Multiple attempts, each getting a little farther until it actually starts the upgrade process. Which then fails.

Because this (senior administrator's) computer had been protected by the HP Drive Encryption service the update process would not complete until that was removed. Google that for the solution. It was not easy, again involving multiple steps to Stop the service, shut off the service, unencrypt the drive (again.... hours), uninstall the service. Delete the program. This will not be a problem for most computers, but it was a complication that had to be solved outside of the Microsoft upgrade process.

And again, restart the upgrade. Which went back to the Download the Upgrade process..... Hours!. And when it finally started, it..... Failed! This time with a Windows error message window-10-upgrade-failed-error-c1900208. And again, Internet to the rescue. A search turned up the answer at an [infopackets.com answer](#)

This suggested a couple solutions, including downloading [the Windows 10 Media Creation Tool](#). Again, hours to download. Optionally it can be loaded to a thumb drive, or run direct from the hard drive. So, I start running it from the hard drive. Again hours. A couple more failed to run, restart, run again. Until at last a successful start and run of the Windows 10. By now it is a week later. And the Windows 10 upgrade, begun about 8:30 completed by 9:45. And it all looks good. Old files still in place, everything looks to be running. Now to let it run

a couple days to see if the video crashes. After over two years of frustration maybe I am on the road home to recovering this desktop computer. Only problem now is that no one really wants it. Everybody wants to have one of the new 15-inch Chrome-books.

Oh well. Something new learned. Something good accomplished. Next thing.....? Ω



**Thanks to our General, J.B. Burke for his advice for solving the problem that caused me to fail to print this Messenger in time for the General Meeting!**

**He told me that the latest Win 10 update could cause some damage to the printer drivers. I reinstalled the printer and all is well. Ken**