

PATACS/OPCUG

3rd Saturday, September 21
Osher Lifelong Learning Institute,
4210 Roberts Rd., Fairfax, VA 22032-1028

Meeting 1:00 PM



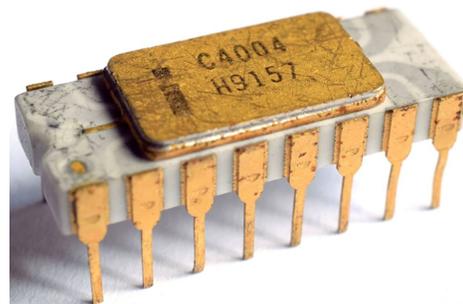
**History of Computers:
 How We Got Here; Part 1**
 By Lorrin Garson

The technology of our modern computers goes back to the early 19th century with most of the advancements occurring in our lifetime. You will learn how weaving, mathematics, the telephone and cryptology played important roles and how the basic laws of chemistry and physics apply. Contributors to the development of computers include mathematical geniuses and hippies, aristocrats and the poverty stricken, men and women, party animals and withdrawn neurotics. No one person or group invented the computer. Our computers are the creation of many interesting people and several disparate technologies.

THE FIRST TRANSISTOR AS IT WAS PATENTED BY THREE NOBEL PRIZE-WINNING BELL LABORATORIES SCIENTISTS



For a period of 30 years at the American Chemical Society, Lorrin was involved with the development of methods to acquire and disseminate chemical information electronically including database development, traditional online systems, optical media, World Wide Web, etc. During this period, and after retirement in 2004, he worked on several types of computers (AMOS, Unix, Microsoft Windows, Apple macOS) and programmed in several languages. He holds a B.A. in chemistry from the University of California at Riverside, and an M.S. and Ph.D. in chemistry from the University of Maine.



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TURNING SMARTPHONE VOICEMAILS INTO AUDIO FILES

Android/Verizon and
iPhone/AT&T methods

Part 1 of a 2-part article series
by John Krout, PATACS member

Why might you want to obtain an audio file of a voicemail?

There are many possible reasons. Maybe those first voicemails from say a child or grandchild are cute. Maybe somebody recorded something especially hilarious. You could edit the message and make it a ringtone for your phone. You could even make an audio CD of the most entertaining voicemails.

Not that I would wish a lawsuit or criminal case on anyone, but sometimes a voicemail can be useful evidence.

I saved voicemails that are examples of phishing, for educational purposes. My son wanted to archive voicemails recorded by his late mother, for sentimental reasons; he saved them for more than six years.

In my son's case, he found two different ways to do that

THE FIRST METHOD First, he attached his phone's headphone socket via an audio cable to his computer's microphone input socket. He played all the saved voicemails on the phone, and used Audacity on the computer to record the analog audio coming from the phone into the microphone socket on the computer. The computer recorded all the played voicemails as one long audio file. Then he laboriously clipped out and saved the individual voicemails of interest to him, using Audacity.

That's the hard way, and very time consuming. If you have two hours of voicemails, then it takes two hours to record them using this method. If

you really care only for say 10% of the voicemails, then this method is a long investment of time for a relatively short benefit, what engineers sometimes call a poor signal to noise ratio.

VERIZON WIRELESS QUICK SAVE METHOD Later, while talking to Verizon customer support, my son found out how to use the Voicemail app on his Android phone to save each *desired* voicemail as a separate audio file on the phone. Aha, that is a much more time-efficient approach: transferring a file takes much less time than the playback duration for the same voicemail.

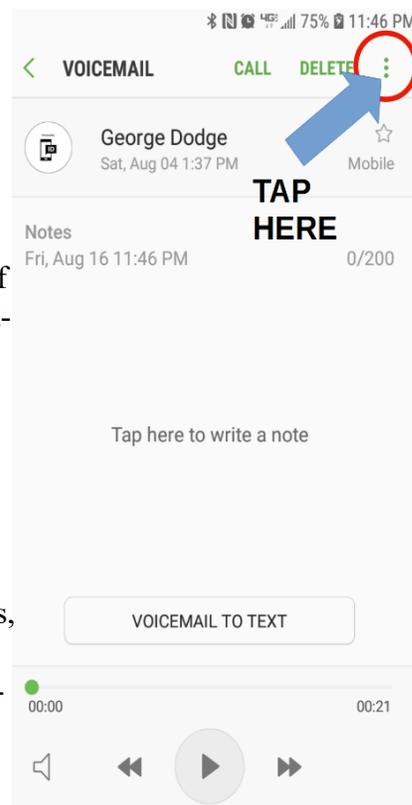
HOW TO SAVE ONE VOICEMAIL AT A TIME INTO A FILE So from him I learned that the default voicemail app on Verizon Android phones can save voicemails as audio files on the phone. Voicemails are sound files stores on Verizon servers. I suspect this method may actually copy the server file to the phone.

Here's how you can do it.

In the Voicemail app, when one individual voicemail is selected for playback, a menu appears at the top of the screen, including CALL, DELETE, and three dots in a vertical line, as shown in **Illustration 1 at right**.

Tap the three dots, and a drop-down menu appears, including the word SAVE, as shown in **Illustration 2 on next page**.

Illustration 1



Continued Page 3

In that drop-down menu, tap the word Save and an informational window appears, as shown in **Illustration 3**.

The information in that window is important: it tells you where to find the audio recording file on your phone.

Tap OK to continue. Tap CANCEL to stop.

In my case, that storage location is Internal Storage/ VisualVoiceMail.

The window also emphasizes that there is an important consequence of this Save activity in the Voicemail app. Saving a voicemail also *removes that voicemail from the Verizon server*.

The result is that the saved voicemail no longer appears in your Voicemail app's list of voicemails.

Once you do that, there is no obvious way to reverse the process.

Before doing that, be certain that you want to live with the consequences.

Illustration 2

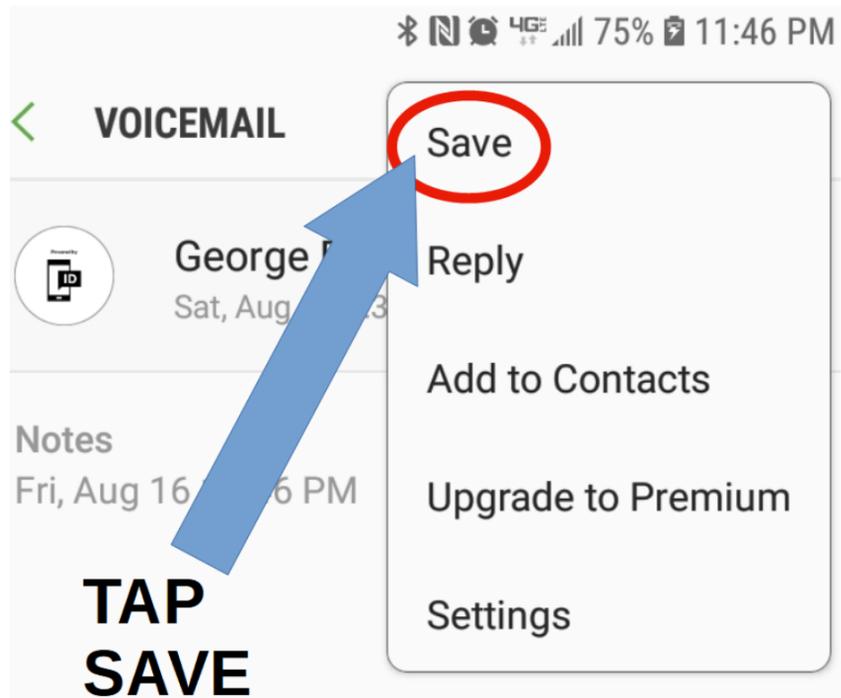
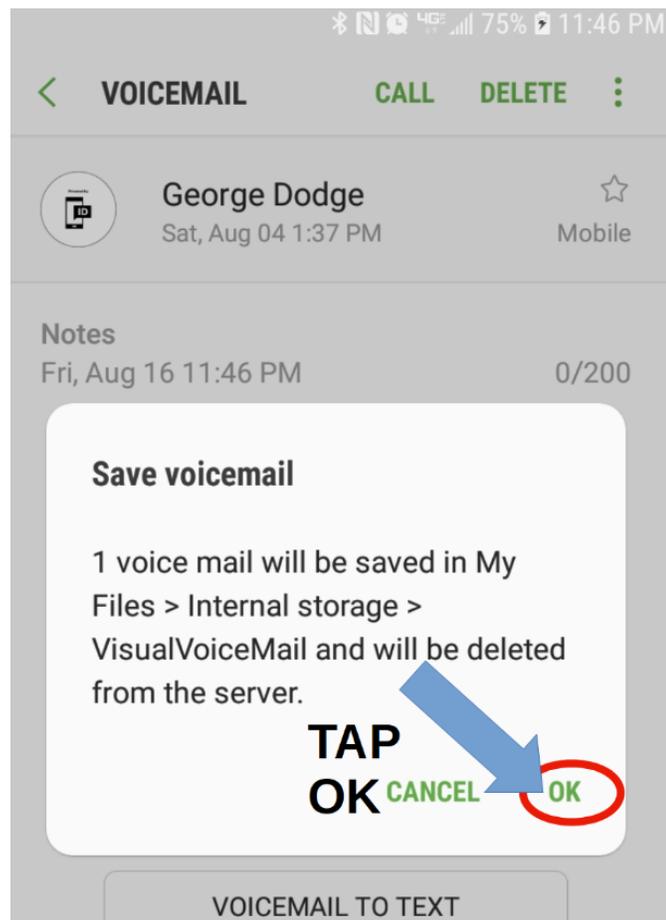


Illustration 3



Continued Page 4

AMR: WHAT FILE FORMAT IS THAT?

I used a Samsung app called My Files to verify that each audio file was contained in the Visual-Voicemail folder. The My Files app is very similar to File Explorer or Windows Explorer on Windows computers. The My Files app is available for Android phones on the Google Play store, and is published by Samsung.

I saved three voicemails, and found that all were stored with the filename extension .amr. See **Illustration 4**.

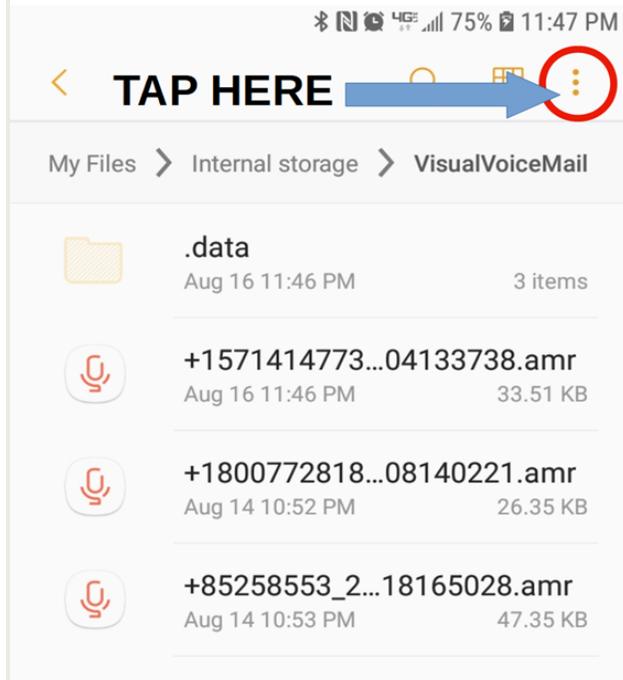
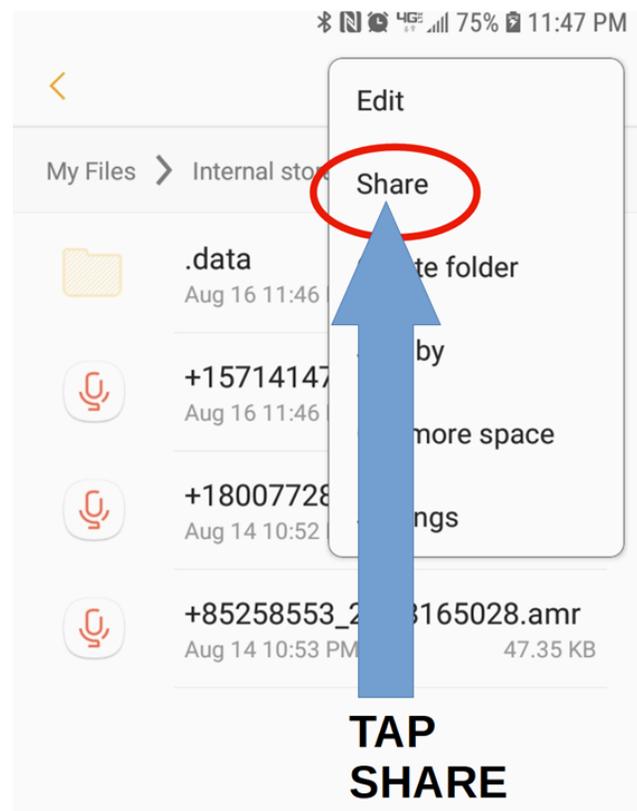
Note that each file description displayed by My Files includes the file size, and the size is quite small. That AMR extension was not familiar, so of course I looked it up.

AMR is an Adaptive Multi-Rate ACELP Codec file. The first three words simply mean that the bit rate varies, depending on the rate of change in the sounds recorded. The word Codec is a contraction of Encoding/Decoding, a technical phrase for the transformation between a file and audio or video presentation.

To put it mildly, AMR is not one of the most widely used and familiar audio file formats. Many movies on DVD or blu ray are recorded using a similar approach. The basic idea for movies is to minimize the bit rate when the image on the screen is not changing rapidly.

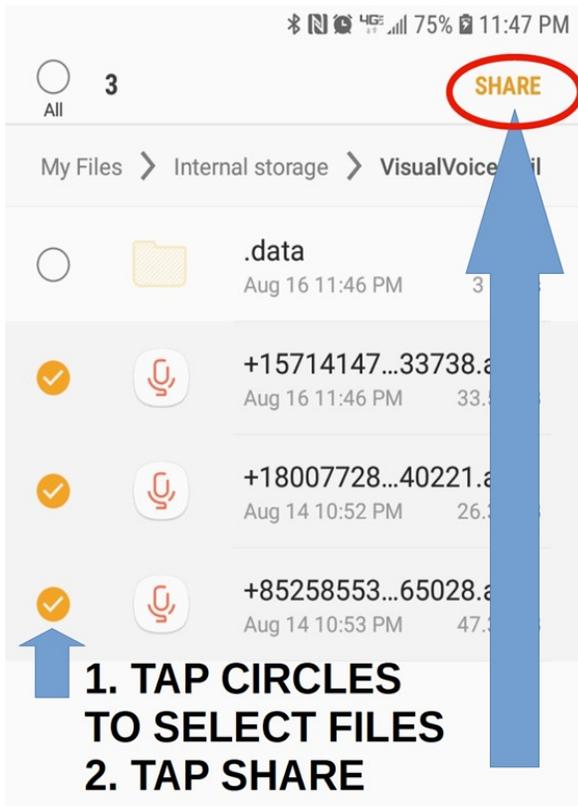
PLAYING AMR AUDIO FILES ON YOUR ANDROID PHONE The Google Play Music app will play AMR files. If you have downloaded other audio apps, some of those may play AMR files also. VLC, a general media player, is one example.

SENDING AMR FILES TO YOUR COMPUTER In the My Files app, in the upper right corner, a vertical line of 3 dots appears, indicating a dropdown menu is available. **Tap the three dots**, and the dropdown menu appears, as shown in **Illustration 5 on right**. In the drop-down menu, **tap the word Share**. This gives you a convenient way to transfer *one or more* AMR files to your computer.

Illustration 4**Illustration 5**

Continued Page 5

Illustration 6



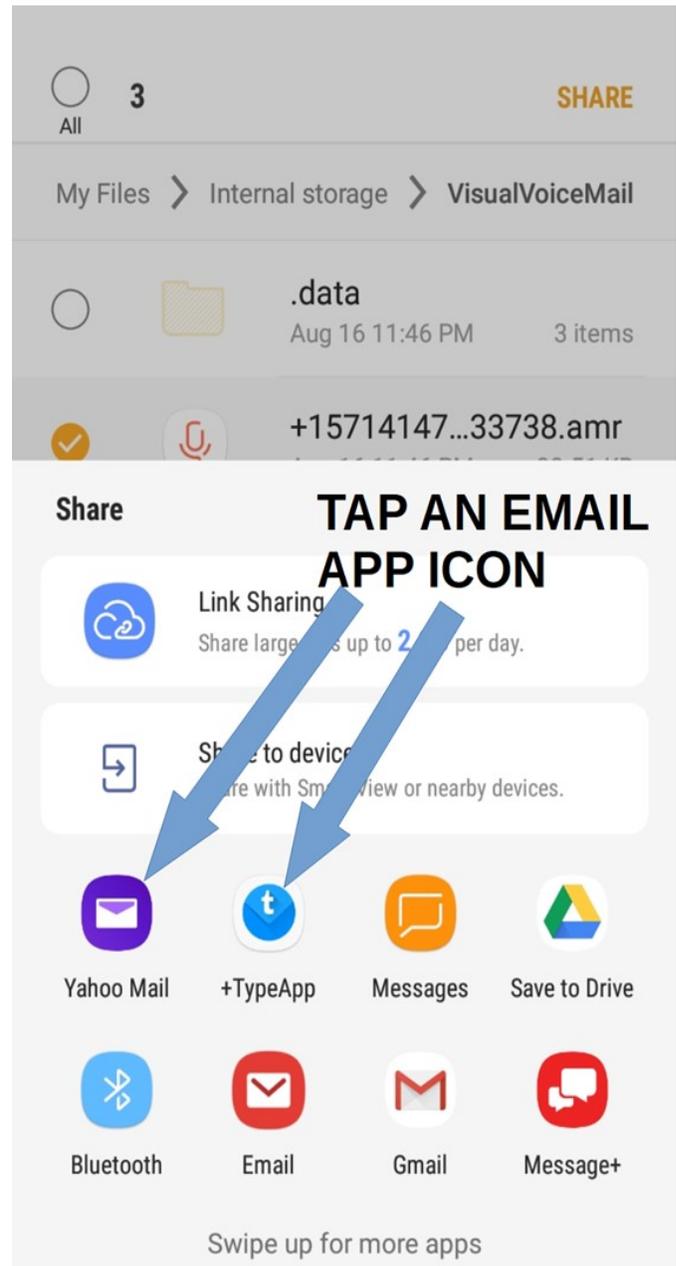
As shown in **Illustration 6** above, a round Selection button appears to the left of each file name.

You can tap mutiple Selection buttons if desired, because the indivudal files are not nearlyly big enough to cause any email server to block them. In this case, I selected both files.

Then **tap the word Share** in the upper right corner of the screen.A Share window appears, as show in **Illustration 7**. In my case, both of my email apps, TypeApp and Yahoo Mail, are listed. Your menu will differ depending on which email apps you have on your Android phone.

Tap an email app, and the email compoisiton window opens. I tapped Yahoo mail, and the composition window for thap app opened as shown in **Illustration 8 on the following page**.

Illustration 7



Continued Page 6

In my case, both of my email apps, TypeApp and Yahoo Mail, are listed.

Your menu will differ depending on which email apps you have on your Android phone.

Tap an email app, and the email composition window opens. I tapped Yahoo mail, and the composition window for that app opened as shown in **Illustration 8 on right**.

The attachments appear at the bottom. The total number of attachments is circled, so you can confirm that all the files you expect are in fact attached.

In the case of this particular composition window, it is also possible to scroll the attachments left to right so you can see all of them.

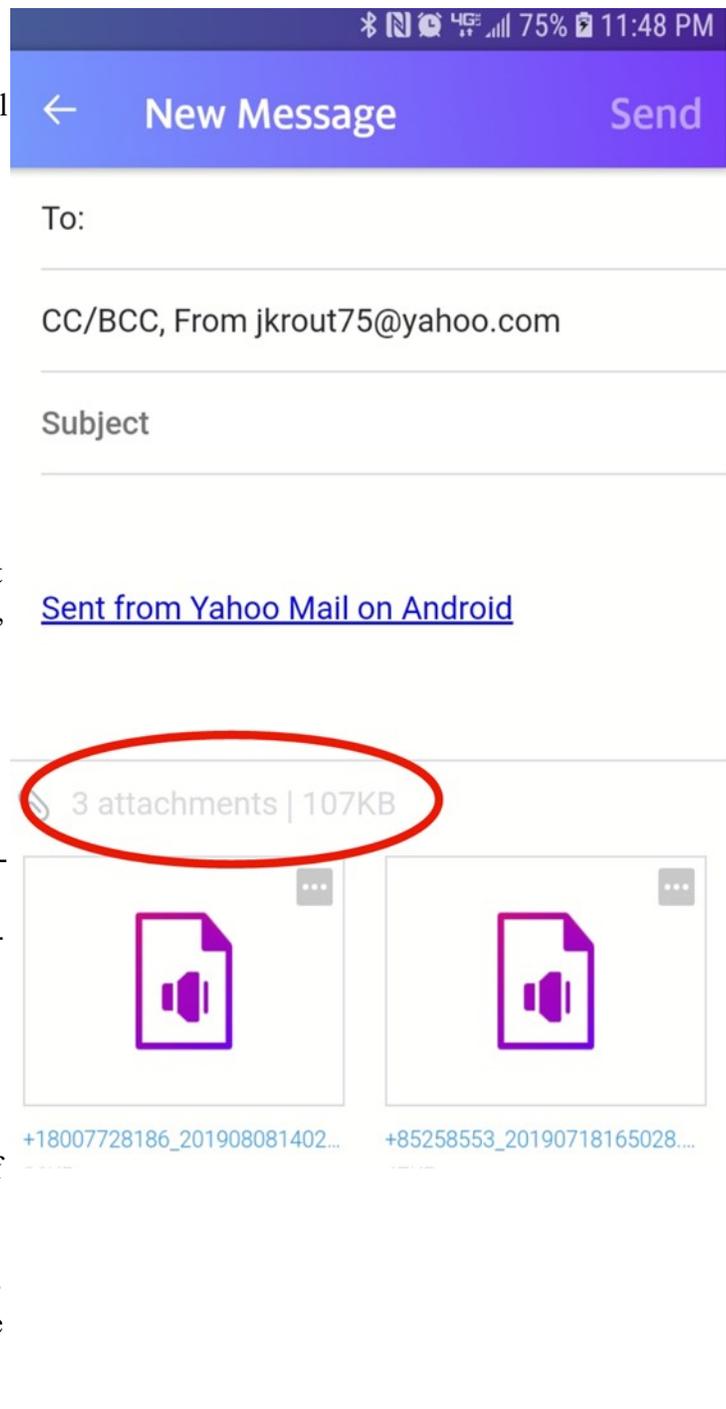
Simply fill in your email address, a description in the subject line, and then tap the Send button. And those files go to your email address.

This ends Part 1. In Part 2, you will learn about the method I found on my corporate iPhone 6S, for which AT&T is the carrier.

Also you will learn about converting the recording to other more widely used file types.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: John Krout is a former president of the Washington Area Computer User Group (WAC), a predecessor of the Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society (PATACS). Among his many presentations for PATACS meetings was a demo of creating custom ringtones for smart phones. He also writes frequently for PATACS Posts. For most of his career, he was a software developer using C and C++ for creation and maintenance of major federal government systems. Currently he works as a documentation writer for the Thales Group, a major maker of automated fingerprint identification hardware, supporting the use of that hardware in a computer system of a major government agency.

Illustration 8



Security – June 2019

By David Shulman, Director, Weekly Update co-editor, intergroup liaison, and a co-organizer of WPCUG's Meetup, Westchester PCUG, NY
Westchester PC News
www.wpcug.orgintergroupliaison (at)
wpcug.org

Malwarebytes, the protection software you can run alongside your antivirus, has reported that personal attacks are down this year. Cause for celebration? NO! "The Malwarebytes Labs Cybercrime Tactics and Techniques Q1 2019" report found businesses at the butt end of a bad joke. In just one year, threats aimed at corporate targets have increased with Trojans, such as Emotet, and ransomware in particular revving up in the first quarter. Included in the report is analysis of sharp declines in consumer cryptomining and other threats, further cementing the shift away from individual targets and toward businesses, with SMBs suffering because of lack of resources.

"Consumers might breathe a sigh of relief seeing that malware targeting them has dropped by nearly 40 percent, but that would be short-sighted," said Adam Kujawa, director of Malwarebytes Labs. "Consumer data is more easily available in bulk from business targets, who saw a staggering 235 percent increase in detections year-over-year.

Cybercriminals are using increasingly clever means of attack to get even more value from targets through the use of sophisticated Trojans, adware, and ransomware." Read more here: <https://press.malwarebytes.com/2019/04/25/malwarebytes-q1-cybercrime-report-emotet-and-ransomware-attacks-renew-focus-on-enterprise-trojan-detections-grow-200-percent/> <http://bit.ly/2wprohB>

Delivery scam—revived from a decade ago and more clever now. Watch out for this one! A delivery service calls you to verify that your address is correct because they have a delivery for you. Then a delivery truck pulls up and the uniformed driver carries a basket of goodies to your door. He says that he knows you got a verifying call and has your package. As you are reaching for this, he says that he must verify that it's you because it contains alcohol (or some such) and asks that you produce a credit card that can be scanned so he is protected from an accusation that he delivered to a friend of his—"but don't worry, it's only for verification." If



you scan your card, hundreds of dollars will be charged to your card before you can blink.

Order confirmations in your inbox—Have you received an email confirming a purchase you didn't make? Is there a link at the bottom labeled "Report a Problem!" or "Payment Resolution"? Don't click anywhere in this email. Just delete it.

Affinity offers--These are offerings that pander to an interest of yours: knitting, car racing, airplanes, travel, food, diet, boating, whatever. How do they know so much about you? Over the last few years, so many companies, so many credit companies, so many special interest venues, etc., have been penetrated that a surprising amount of detail is known about you. As time goes on, and your life becomes more connected, and more data is aggregated, and less restriction is placed on this collection, your life is literally becoming an open book.

HOW DO YOU PROTECT YOURSELF (ASIDE FROM MOVING TO MARS)?—My suggestion is this: everything you get by email has a sender's email address. Examine it by either hovering over it with your cursor or clicking on it to reveal it. If it has no relation to the content, it is spam. Now what happens if the address might be legit? Contact the company directly. Don't use a link in the email, but get a good link online, or a telephone number.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO? Protect your privacy! Use a private window for browsing, use a VPN, use a disposable credit card number (yes, they exist from some credit card issuers), use an email address that is disposable (Yahoo and Gmail have them) for a particular purchase that forwards to your main email. Don't freely supply your email to every site you visit. Use a junk email account for that. Yes, YOU can have a junk email address for your own use.

PLEASE—CHANGE YOUR PASSWORDS AND MAKE THEM LONG AND UNIQUE. Remember that all your precious online and electronically stored "stuff"—your pictures, important papers, memories—all of it—can disappear FOREVER if you do not have a good, verifiable, disconnected BACKUP.

Software Literacy Begins With Learning To Code

By Dick Maybach,
Brookdale Computer Users Group, NJ
BCUG Bytes www.bcug.com
[n2nd \(at\) att.net](mailto:n2nd@att.net)

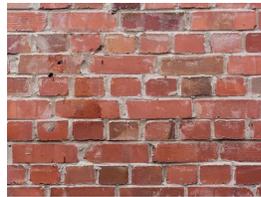
If you're reading this, you probably work with computers almost every day, and you probably also find yourself repeating some tasks many times, not because you enjoy them but because they have to be done. Often, you could reduce the tedium by writing a simple program.

For example, I belong to a club that uses its website to manage registrations for its activities, and we wanted to make available to the members a list of those registered for each event.

The registration feature can download its data in the form of an Excel spreadsheet, but it includes data that we didn't want to make available on our site. It's of course possible to use Excel commands to extract and organize the information, but we often have several changes each day. Here's what has to be done.

- Download the spreadsheet.
- Extract the first names (from column 4) and the last names (from column 5).
- Create a list with the format (last name, first name).
- Sort the list and format it with one item per line.
- Add HTML code so that it displays properly on a Web page.
- Paste the result onto our site.
- I wrote a 13-line Python program that reduced the steps to these.
- Download the spreadsheet to my PC.
- Call the program with the spreadsheet file as an argument, which performs the above steps and places the result on my PC clipboard.
- Open the website and paste.

The program makes keeping the rosters updated much easier and with a greatly reduced chance of error. I chose Python for this task, because it has extensions to read and write to applications such as Excel, and Word, download data from websites, schedule tasks, and send e-mail, see <https://docs.python.org/3/py-modindex.html>. That there are hundreds of applications is not an unmixed blessing, as many are evolving rapidly and keeping up can be challenging. You'll be making some Internet searches to find the current information. There are many tutorial books and articles on Python, for example see <https://www.python.org/>. For me, Automate the Boring Stuff with Python, by Al Sweigart, provided a good introduction to writing programs that access and manipulate data in office applications. However, Python Crash Course by Eric Matthes is a better introduction to the language with applications in computer games, data plotting, and Web page design.



As brick-and-mortar bookstores close and reduce their inventories, it becomes more difficult to find good programming books. If I can't find what I need locally, I make an Internet search on, for example, "Python Tutorial Books," and I usually find some good guidance on purchases and free books I can download. I've found computer-language reviews in magazines less helpful, as their space is too limited for adequate coverage in computer games, data plotting, and Web page design.

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That Python was a good choice for me at this time, of course says nothing about what language might be best for you. Learning one takes time and effort, and you want to take some care in your choice from the scores of those available. Some factors that might influence you are these:

- What operating systems and hardware support it?
- What are the costs of a development environment (editor, compiler, debugger, etc.)? Are tutorials, references, and application articles available?
- Is there an active user community?
- Is it currently under active development?

You may find better information in a group or publication interested in your application than one concerned with computers in general.

For example, if you want to work with smart phone software, you might look to an Android interest group. I favor open-source approaches, as they reduce the costs.

Things may not work out, and that's OK. I once spent several weeks learning the Forth programming language, and my conclusion was, "I never want to do that again." I don't regret the effort, as learning is always worthwhile.

If we never learn, we just repeat our daily lives, and there is a big difference between 12 years of experience and one year of experience repeated 12 times.

WYSIWYG WEB WATCH (www)

By Paul Baecker, Editor, Sterling Heights Computer Club MI

webwatch(at) sterlingheightscomputerclub.org

www.shcc.org

This column attempts to locate sites containing valuable, amusing, and free content, with no overbearing pressure to purchase anything.

WWW2 Why do some web site addresses start with WWW2?

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/sites-with-www2>



Find wood imperfections with mineral spirits (2-min. video).

[https://](https://www.todayshomeowner.com/video/find-wood-imperfections-with-mineral-spirits/)

www.todayshomeowner.com/video/find-wood-imperfections-with-mineral-spirits/

Raspberry Pi kits: 10 options for beginners as well as experienced makers.

<https://www.pcworld.com/article/3244253/best-raspberry-pi-kits.html>



INSTALL How to install and use Microsoft Office on Linux (with a license key, of course).

<https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/install-use-microsoft-office-linux/>



Still using your kid's birthday as your universal password? You're heading toward trouble. Here's a review of password manager software choices.

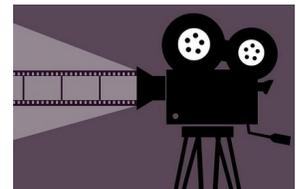
<https://www.pcmag.com/roundup/300318/the-best-password-managers>

<https://www.pcmag.com/roundup/300318/the-best-password-managers>

Kodi was described in an April 2019 newsletter article. Here is a list of 10 legal Kodi add-ons for free movies.

[https://](https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/best-legal-kodi-add-ons-free-movies/)

www.makeuseof.com/tag/best-legal-kodi-add-ons-free-movies/



A list of 'best' WordPress hosting providers recommended by the author.

<https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/best-wordpress-hosting-providers/>

WordPress

VPN

Backstabbing, disinformation, and bad journalism: The state of the VPN industry.

In the Internet era, everyone needs a VPN — just be cautious with your choosing.

<https://www.pcmag.com/commentary/368081/backstabbing-disinformation-and-bad-journalism-the-state>

They don't always get away with it. Some spammers have been caught and punished. Here is a run-down of cybercriminals who have done (or are doing) hard time for their misdeeds.

https://askbobrankin.com/spammers_and_scammers_in_the_slammer.html

Don't erase, overwrite: How to avoid being that person who resells or recycles a drive with data still on it. <https://www.pcworld.com/article/3390742/dont-erase-overwrite-how-to-avoid-being-that-person-who-resells-a-drive-with-data-on-it.html>



Rock Pi 4B : M.2 & USB 3.0 SBC — Unpacking and using a more powerful Raspberry Pi alternative. (22-min. video)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4p9EpjA0ZM&list=PL2m2YvnrOYxJQXzFWX5fC1tTfi7COIpAY)

[v=C4p9EpjA0ZM&list=PL2m2YvnrOYxJQXzFWX5fC1tTfi7COIpAY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4p9EpjA0ZM&list=PL2m2YvnrOYxJQXzFWX5fC1tTfi7COIpAY)

“The ultimate guide to your PC: Everything you wanted to know — and more.” Near the top of this article is a link to download the entire guide to your PC as a .pdf file — go get it!!

https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/download_your_pc_inside_and_out_part_1/

20 awesome uses for a Raspberry Pi. <https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/different-uses-raspberry-pi/>
Getting started with a Raspberry Pi 3 (hardware assembly and software installation and use). (15-min. video) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=juHoJYX86Dg>

President's Corner Who Wants to Be Average?

By Greg Skalka, President, Under the Computer Hood Users Group, CA
July 2019 issue, Drive Light www.uchug.org president (at) uchug.org

A newspaper article on June 6 caught my attention: Mobile Devices Used More Than TV. This premise did not surprise me much, considering how often I see people holding or manipulating their phones while driving. Still, since I'm interested in tech trends in general, I had to read it. While it was informative, it left me feeling that I am not at all an average American adult, and based on the information presented, I don't think I want to be.

The main point of the article was that according to a research firm, American adult use of mobile devices (smart phones, feature phones and tablets) will exceed the time they spend watching TV for the first time this year. The firm, eMarketer, predicted that time spent this year on mobile devices would exceed that of watching TV by 8 minutes per day. Mobile use was cited as a growing trend, as eMarketer claimed that American adults spent 9 minutes more in watching TV than on mobile devices last year, and two hours more than on mobile five years ago.

As I mentioned, this does not surprise me at all. While I do have a smart phone (which I've now had just over two years) and do find it a useful and in some instances an indispensable tool, I do feel the use of mobile phones by some people, and people in general, has become excessive. In some cases, it is way overboard, almost like an addiction. Perhaps my interest in technology and my relative detachment from mobile devices has made me more sensitive to those situations where people around me have become “mobile-excessive”.

My wife has motion sensitivity issues and prefers to drive when we are in the car together, so I get frequent opportunities to carefully observe those operating motor vehicles around us. In spite of laws prohibiting their use while driving, it is amazing how often I see drivers blatantly holding their phones or driving with one hand in their laps while constantly looking down there (at hopefully a phone). It is especially telling at night when a glow can be seen coming from the driver's crotch.

Any public venue can be an opportunity to see unrestrained mobile device use. At the ball game, the fair, the movies or a concert, there will always be a large percentage of the people you see doing something with their phones. And not just casually, but often to the exclusion what is going on around

Continued Page 11

them. Do people really buy tickets to a baseball game, and then spend the evening in the stands on Facebook? The most absurd scene, which I have seen several times, is the family out to dinner in a restaurant, and every family member is devoting all their attention to their own mobile device (and probably not texting each other). Thus it is not at all out of line to think that mobile device use is way up, as compared to TV use.

What was a bit shocking to me was the total number of hours cited in the article for daily use. eMarketer claimed that this year the average American adult would spend 3 hours and 43 minutes on a mobile device, and an additional 3 hours and 35 minutes watching TV, PER DAY. That's 7 hours and 18 minutes per day that an average American adult spends playing with a phone or tablet and watching TV. eMarketer predicts that in 2021, average TV usage will be down to 3 hours and 22 minutes, while mobile will be up to 3 hours and 54 minutes (remarkably down in total by 2 minutes). The article stated further that the mobile times did not include any voice call time. How does the average American adult manage to function in life while spending over seven hours a day on these devices?

To back up these crazy numbers, Nielsen, the data and measurement company (Nielsen TV ratings) provided similar numbers in the article. They listed four hours and 14 minutes of TV and 3 hours and 14 minutes of mobile device use by the average American adult in the third quarter of 2018. What is the average person doing on their smart phone for over three hours each day?

The article fortunately shed a bit of light on this, as eMarketer said they found that 30% of the mobile device time was spent on audio-related apps (radio, music, podcasts), 24% was on social networking and 19% was on video apps. It did not say what the remaining 26% was (again, not voice calls).

Keep in mind that these numbers are averages, so while there are some that use less, others amazingly will use more. In thinking about my own usage, I feel there must be someone in this country cursed with most of their day in front of these screens, as they must make up for my way below average usage. I estimate I only watch one hour of TV a day on average, and maybe spend 30 minutes a day on my phone. I am no doubt an outlier, as I don't go on the internet much on my phone. I find the screen

is just too small for most web use. I choose to not receive emails on my phone for the same reason. I do text and use mapping apps. I'm not sure if having Google Maps running on my phone for the 20 minutes each way of my workday commute constitutes 40 minutes of mobile device use per day or not. I guess that if eMarketer counts time listening to music on a phone, then perhaps my daily mobile usage is more like an hour.

It is also possible that the TV viewing numbers are inflated by the way people use it as well. When I watch television, I give it my full attention, so my numbers are low, but I've seen from my wife that my way is not the only way. She tends to have the TV on as background sound. Even when "watching", she is doing it while performing other activities (on the computer, cooking dinner, etc.). I'm pretty sure she has the TV on for more than four hours per day, but I can't be sure she watches it the whole time.

Even if that 7 hours plus of TV and mobile device use can be discounted somewhat by not having a person's full attention on the device, this total does leave off another tech device, the computer. By this, I mean a desktop or laptop, any computing device with a real keyboard (including Chromebooks). I would guess I spend an average 4.8 hours on a computer per day (6 hours per workday and maybe 2 hours each weekend day). If this is "average", then that poor average American adult spends about half the hours in a day, and 3/4 of their waking hours, with their face in front of a screen.

All of these devices be they mobile or fixed, computer or TV, are useful and beneficial when used in moderation. Misuse and overuse of anything can become a disorder and an addiction. Technology addiction is a real disorder, characterized by obsessive use of tech devices despite negative consequences. Too much video gaming, too much Facebook, too much internet can be an indicator of technology addiction. When I come home after a workday spent predominantly on a computer, the last thing I typically want is to have another screen in front of me. We should all prefer to watch a nice sunset, rather than sunset videos.

We should want to go home

Continued Page 12

and play with our pooch, not watch puppy videos. We should all have more real face time with others, without screens and tech in between.

Forty years ago, when our group was started, people gathered together to ask questions and exchange information. Maybe there were a few Heath H-89 addicts, but they would have been the exception. Today the average tech user would rather perform a Google search for answers than ever ask a real person for help. I'll admit that the internet has way more information than any person or even a group, but it can be nice to just talk to someone. Talking to Alexa does not count.

Kretchmar's Korner Windows 10 April May 2019 Update

**By David Kretchmar, Computer Technician, Sun City Summerlin Computer Club, NV
July 2019 issue, Gigabyte Gazette www.scscc.club/ tomburt89134 (at) cox.net**

In June 2019 it started attempting to install itself on many users' computers, including maybe yours. This update is both promising and problematic.

Computers and other Windows devices should get a notification to download Windows 10 version 1903. When you are ready you hit the download button for Windows 10 1903 update download and install it on your device.

Now the individual user has more control over windows 10 feature updates. This is a great change from Microsoft.

Do I need this update? It is a good idea, for the increased virus protection if nothing else. Tom Burt discussed many of the new features of this update in his Tom's Tech-Notes article in the April 2019 Gigabyte Gazette, if you have any questions.

Microsoft hoped this major update, really an upgraded operating system, could be rolled out without the issues that have been encountered in the past. Sadly, Microsoft has failed to accomplish this. I have not experienced or seen any reports of the latest update trashing any computers, so at least that is a good thing.



What version of Windows 10 am I running?

Click on Start, Settings, System, and then scroll down and open About. Toward the bottom of the page you will see information about your operating system. In the snip I made of my system I can see I am running Windows 10 Pro Version 1903, which is OS build 18362.175.

This update has been delayed for many users because the update has failed to install on their systems. Microsoft says this was caused by external and even some internal USB devices, and a few other issues. Microsoft felt it fixed this issue and the update is now again being rolled out, however they did not completely correct the problem.

What is the problem? If you are not running Version 1903, the May 2019 update, there are issues that are preventing this update from installing. You can see if there is a problem by clicking on Start, System, Update & Security.

Is there a fix? The issue I have seen when this update fails occurs when an external USB device is attached to the system. I verified that a USB device was the issue on my laptop because I had downloaded the update to my USB thumb drive and then connected the USB device to my laptop and copied the installation files to my Windows Desktop. I ran the upgrade's setup.exe from my desktop and I got an error message that the installation failed.



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I noticed I had forgotten to remove my USB drive from that computer (duh) before attempting to install the update. When I removed my USB thumb drive, the update installed flawlessly.

If you don't want to remove all of the USB devices from your system, a work around is to simply take your computer off-line. One way to do this is to go into Device Manager and disable the network adapter (either wired or wireless). The update should then install without problems.

Interesting Internet Finds

By Steve Costello

scostello (at) sefcug.com

While 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 May 2019.

Find Free Images with CC Search

<https://lifehacker.com/find-free-images-with-cc-search-1834442069>

Even though I no longer edit a newsletter, I am still looking for images I can use for free on my blogs. This post explains what is available from CC Search and how to filter to get the most relevant results.

How Much RAM Does a Chromebook Really Need?

<https://www.howtogeek.com/413556/how-much-ram-does-a-chromebook-really-need/>

My granddaughter just graduated from High School and is planning to start college in the fall. She has been using a Chromebook at school since 6th grade. She is going for the college orientation in a few weeks and will find out what she will need there. If it is a new Chromebook, this post provides information to get her a new Chromebook at the best level and pricing. It is worth checking out even if you are only getting a Chromebook for yourself.

What You Need to Know About DuckDuckGo

<https://www.groovypost.com/howto/what-you-need-to-know-about-duckduckgo/>

This post is one of the most informative I have seen regarding the DuckDuckGo search engine. I have been using DuckDuckGo exclusively, even on my Androids as the default search engine. Check this out and then make DuckDuckGo your default search engine. Check this out and then make DuckDuckGo your default search engine too.

Make Google Calendar More Useful with These Free Calendars

<https://www.maketecheasier.com/make-google-calendar-useful-with-free-calendars/>

If you use Google Calendar as I do, it is nice to add some free calendars to make it more useful. I added the weather calendar to mine after reading this post.

"Is there any way to charge a phone faster?"

<https://langa.com/index.php/2019/05/07/is-there-any-way-to-charge-a-phone-faster/>

Just about everyone I know has a smartphone these days. I am sure if you do, you want to know how to charge it the fastest way. If that is the case for you, read this post.

Is an Up-to-Date Browser Secure on an Out-of-Date OS?

<https://askleo.com/is-an-up-to-date-browser-secure-on-an-out-of-date-os/>

I know that just as with XP there are going to be some who will not move off of Windows 7 even after it no longer receives updates. Leo Notenboom addresses some of the issues that will come up.

How to Add Dropbox To Your Chromebook
<https://www.simplehelp.net/2019/05/13/how-to-add-dropbox-to-your-chromebook/>

I know there are a lot of Chromebook users out there now. If you are one and would like to use Dropbox, check out this post to learn how to add it to your Chromebook.

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Thoughts from a Clicker

By Tiny Ruisch, Member,
Cajun Clickers Computer Club, LA
Cajun Clickers Computer News-
www.clickiers.org tsa70785 (at) gmail.com

Ever since I learned how, I've always been an avid reader. My parents didn't have a television until I was about ten years old. That never bothered me. The library always had a lot of entertainment. In later life, when I was in the Navy, I seldom watched the ship's movie. I was busy finishing reading one more chapter before lights out. These days, I still read about 20 magazines each month. I am usually reading four or five books at a time. I've got my bedside book, bathroom book, digital book and an audio book for my morning walk.

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I could not even estimate how many thousands of dollars I've spent buying reading material of one form or another. In the past three or four years, my reading has all become either digital or audio. I haven't been in a bookstore or looked at a magazine display rack in at least two years. For me, it's all been for the better. In this article, I'm going to tell you how you can do the same.

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8	9	10	11 7-9 pm Online Zoom Meeting	12	13	14
15	16 7-9 pm Board Meeting Arlington	17	18	19	20	21 12:30-3:30 Fairfax General Meeting
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