User Friendly

LACS
A Computer and Technology User Group

IN THIS ISSUE

LACS WEBSITE
https://www.lacspc.org

Watch your email for APCUG
workshops and
other upcoming events.

apcug

LACS IS A MEMBER OF APCUG
An International Association of Technology and Computer User Groups
www.apcug2.org
www.facebook.com/APCUG
www.X.com/apcug **(Twitter)**

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2025
GENERAL MEETING

Topic: Touring the Web - New
Speaker: J. B. Burke, APCUG Speakers Bureau and President of the Prescott Computer Society, Arizona
Meeting Time: 7:00 to 9:00 PM — via Zoom
Socializing and Questions & Answers: 6:30 PM

The World Wide Web ("the Web") is immense. Depending on where you look, there are, or were, more than a billion websites. But *only* 193,890,945 are currently active. One website estimates that Google had indexed 58 billion web pages by 2020. Some are interesting, informative, educational, entertaining, and even weird. J.B. looks for all of those. J.B. saves them whenever he finds a spare moment to create his "Touring the Web" programs. They include web pages, videos, images, and other tidbits that will, hopefully, keep you entertained for an hour or so. J.B.'s presentation changes every couple of months. We enjoyed his programs in November 2022 and May 2024. We will have our usual Q&A session. Since he teaches, he probably can answer many PC questions.

Meet Our Presenter

J.B. Burke graduated from the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1963. He moved to Silicon Valley in 1968 and worked in the tech sector for 36 years. In 2004, he retired and moved to Prescott, Arizona. He joined the Prescott Computer Society and became its president and speaker. He provides tech support for friends and teaches tech classes for retirees. He is a Tech Committee member of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Yavapai College.

TO JOIN THE LACS GENERAL MEETING
LACS members on the PC groups.IO list will receive the Zoom link to this meeting before or on **January 12**. Click on it to enter the meeting. Guests may ask for the link by emailing Leah Clark at   leahjc@sbcglobal.net
before or on **January 12.** See pages, 8, 9, 10, and 20 for help in using Zoom, or email Leah with questions. See more information about LACS at www.lacspc.org.

🌼 FROM YOUR PRESIDENT / EDITOR 🌼

LACS 2025 DUES

If you haven't already paid your 2025 dues, please do so during January 2025. If you don't, you may lose your LACS membership, and we don't want that to happen.

See page 19 for amounts and an application, and page 8 for alternate ways to pay. We value our members and don't want to lose a single one.

LACS BOARD OPENINGS

We still have openings for a board secretary and two director positions. We especially need a secretary to stay in compliance with our 501(c)(3) non-profit status. We can't keep LACS a viable organization without volunteers.

It is not that difficult, and we are ready to help you. Why not give it a try?

A Prosperous New Year for LACS and all it's members in 2025

Happy New Year Feliz Año Nuevo Bonne Année Frohes neues Jahr Gelukkig nieuwjaar Felice Anno Nuovo

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON REPORT
December 7, 2024

By **Leah Clark,** LACS President/Editor

Pictures by **Ruth Petrucha**, LACS Member

What a fantastic time we had with 24 attendees at the LACS 2024 Holiday Luncheon! We all came together at the Earth, Wind & Flour Italian Restaurant in Santa Monica to celebrate a successful year for LACS, enjoying friendship, delicious food, and beautiful guitar music by Gavin, LACS Treasurer.

Gavin

Stephanie

Penny   Jim

Mark and Marsha

Arthur and Virginia   Pricilla

Marcia

HAPPY HOLIDAYS
Los Angeles Computer Society

HOLLIDAY LUNCHEON

E. J.   Fred

Nice List
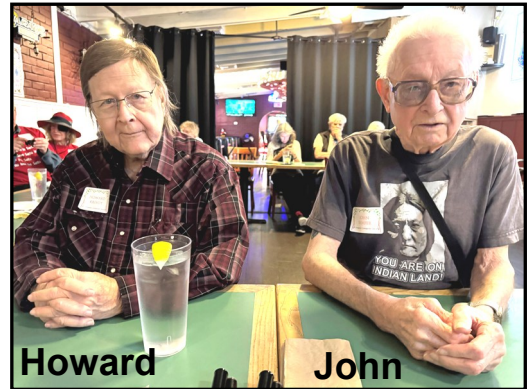All LACS Members
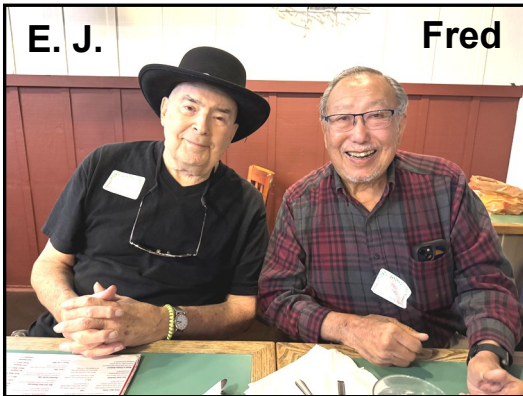
Howard   John
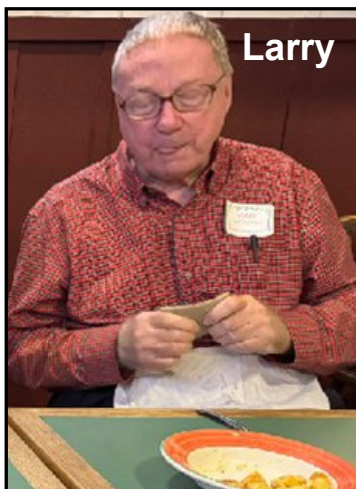
Newton and Roger

Paul and Lee

Paula and Annette

Happy Holidays for LACS Members, Their Families and Friends.
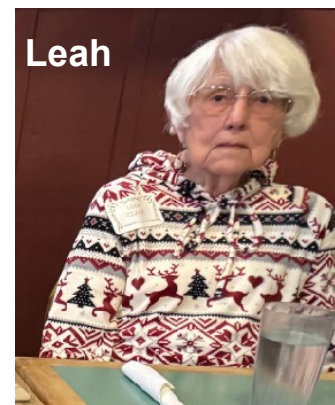
Fred and Ruth

Larry   Donna   Leah

USE YOUR ANDROID CELL PHONE CAMERA DURING ZOOM

By **Larry McDavid,** LACS Member and Groups .IO Manager

Most of us use a built-in laptop camera or a desktop web camera for Zoom. However, it is inconvenient to point that camera around the room when you want to show some object up close. We all now have cell phones with good cameras, so I looked for a way to use my cell phone camera optionally as a supplemental camera within a Zoom meeting. When you want to show something up close with the cell phone camera, you can change to that camera choice within Zoom, walk around the room to show what you want, and then switch back to the usual Zoom camera. This works during regular meeting discussions but not during your Share Screen.

This requires both your Zoom computer and your cell phone to be connected to your local WiFi network; most of us configure our cell phones to always connect to our home Wi-Fi when we have the cell phone at home so you likely already do this.

The method to use a cell phone camera differs between Android and iPhone cell phones. I will first discuss using Android cell phones, then Apple iPhones. Zoom can be installed on either Windows PC or Apple computers but the instruction differences are minor and should be self-evident.

USE ANDROID CELL PHONE CAMERA FOR ZOOM ON WINDOWS PC

Using an Android phone within Zoom requires installing a small app on both the cell phone and on the Windows computer. Those apps are free and, once installed, are easy to use. The app I found is **DroidCam** and instructions for getting the apps and using the system are explained here: https://droidcam.app/

Detail instructions are given here:

https://droidcam.app/windows/#Step1

In summary, you need to install the Android DroidCam app on your cell phone and you need to install the Windows DroidCam app on your computer. The cell phone DroidCam app is available on the Google Play Store and there is both a free (DroidCam Webcam Classic) and a $5 (DroidCamX HD Classic) version. The key difference is that the $5 app has continuous cell phone camera auto-focus, potentially higher camera resolution, and some editing options. The web address to get the free Windows DroidCam app is in the instructions shown in the links above.

After installing the two apps, to start using the cell phone camera for Zoom, do this:

1. Start the DroidCam cell phone app on your Android cell phone.

2. Start the DroidCam Windows app on your Windows computer; a Connect app screen will appear.

    2a. Click the check box to enable cell phone audio for use if chosen in Zoom.

    2b. Click START on the Connect app screen.

3. The first time you do this, you will need first to copy the IP address shown on the cell phone app screen to the IP field on the Windows DroidCam app screen. That address will be remembered for future use, so you need to do this only once while on the same local WiFi network.

4. When in the Zoom meeting and you want to use the cell phone camera, do this:

    4a. Click the up-arrow beside Video at the bottom of the Zoom toolbar.

    4b. Click "DroidCam Source" in the Zoom Video pop-up camera list.

5. That will display video from the phone camera within Zoom. Hold the cell phone in landscape mode. Please use a tripod or other means to stabilize the video image. If the image is upside down, rotate the cell phone. If the image is reversed, click the Mirror icon in the DroidCam computer app screen.

6. Android cell phones cannot be used during Zoom Screen Share, so meeting members may want to change View to Speaker rather than Gallery, so your video is seen full screen.

7. If you want to use the microphone in your cell phone while in Zoom, do this:

   7a. Click the up-arrow beside Audio in the bottom Zoom toolbar.

   7b. Click "Microphone (DroidCam virtual audio)" in the Zoom Audio pop-up list.

This may seem complex but after you've done it once, it will be easily done. If you anticipate using your cell phone within Zoom, load the two DroidCam apps early.

8. To return to the usual webcam for Zoom:

   8a. Click the up-arrow beside Video at the bottom of the Zoom toolbar.

   8b. Click the camera in the list that is your usual web camera.

   8c. Click the up-arrow beside Audio in the bottom Zoom toolbar.

   8d. Click the microphone in the list that is your usual Zoom microphone.

When done with Zoom, you may close both DroidCam applications. ❖

The next article explains using this Zoom camera approach for Apple iPhones.

USE APPLE IPHONE CAMERA FOR ZOOM IN WINDOWS PC
By **Larry McDavid,** LACS Member and Groups .IO Manager

Continuing the instructions for using a supplemental camera for Zoom that is already running with a built-in laptop camera or a webcam, this will describe using an Apple iPhone camera instead of an Android cell phone camera. This will allow you to optionally change from the original Zoom camera to your iPhone camera and carry that phone around to show details nearby that are not visible to the built-in camera.

This requires your Zoom computer and your cell phone to both be connected to your local Wi-Fi network. Most of us configure our cell phones to always connect to our home Wi-Fi when we have the cell phone at home, so you likely already do this.

Zoom already has a built-in facility for using an iPhone camera, so no additional phone app or computer app is needed. See the previous article's instructions to use an Android cell phone camera.

The Zoom feature for using an iPhone camera is located within the Zoom Share function. To change to your iPhone, do this:

1. Click the green "Share" button on the bottom Zoom toolbar. Do not begin Share.

   1a. Click the "Advanced" tab at the top of the Zoom Share screen.

   1b. Click "iPhone/iPad via AirPlay."

2. Click the blue "Share" button at the bottom of the Share screen.

You must configure your iPhone for use in Zoom; do this:

3. Start the iPhone Control Panel by swiping down from the top of the screen.

   2a. Tap the Screen Mirroring icon. It looks like two staggered monitor screens.

2b. Tap "Zoom" (this word is followed by the name of your computer).

Exit the iPhone Control Panel.

5. Start your iPhone camera app.

That will immediately change the Zoom camera from the laptop or webcam to your iPhone camera and you can carry your phone around to show details. The phone camera controls will work as usual.

I have not found a way to use the iPhone microphone audio while mirroring the iPhone camera. If you find a way please report it.

To stop using the iPhone camera, you can stop Share or change back to the usual Zoom camera by clicking the Video up-arrow and selecting the original Zoom camera. ❖

WHICH PEOPLE FINDER SITES ARE LEGIT?

By **Bob Rankin, Nov. 2024**
https://askbobrankin.com
As published in the Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Computer Application Society, Colorado Springs, CO December 2024

A good man is hard to find, or so the saying goes. I first offered tips for "Finding People Online" way back in 2006, and updated that article with "Free People Search Tools" in 2020. Now in 2024, I have to say it's getting harder to find free information about people and places. If you're looking for a name, address or phone number, I have some tips on websites you should avoid, and some that actually do what they say, for free. Here's the scoop.

Toll Booths on the Information Highway

The phrase "information wants to be free" dates back to a hackers conference in the 1980s. The idea was that people should be able to access online information freely, without roadblocks or toll booths. Information might want to be free, but more and more, the people who gather, compile, and present that information want to get paid. Almost every resource I included in those previous articles is now out of business or it costs money to get useful information.

But there are still some lookup services that are both truly free and useful. One example is voter registration records. In case you didn't know, the information you supply when you register to vote is public information, and about half of U.S. states make that information available to interested parties. Colorado's voter rolls, for example, are updated several times per year. Colorado's Arapahoe County publishes voter lists that include name, address, gender, county, political party affiliation, birth year, and active/inactive voter status.

Other States whose voter rolls are available include Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Michigan, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin. Search online for "Registered voters in (your state). "You'll probably find a source. You will almost certainly find some deceased persons listed in these voter records. That's bad for vote integrity, but possibly helpful for genealogy searchers.

If you're looking for information on a relative, or you're interested in genealogy, see my article ***Here's How: Genealogy Research Online***: https://askbobrankin.com/how_to_do_online_genealogy_research_your_family_tree.html

I've also found that online obituaries, typically printed in funeral home and local newspaper websites, can reveal information about people, their location, and their relatives. I've used some of these resources to trace my roots as far back as 1640, when an ancestor of my father came from Holland to a Dutch settlement on Manhattan Island. Does that qualify me as a "Native New Yorker"?

LACS INFORMATION

HOW TO JOIN LACS'S MAIL LIST

LACS has an active general email list: PC@LACS.Groups.IO which goes to all members on the list. Members will receive meeting notices and Zoom links via this list. You can also ask questions, offer suggestions, and help others.

New LACS members should receive an invitation to join our list with two weeks to accept. Other LACS members who want to join the list should send an email to Larry McDavid, our Groups.IO Coordinator. (See your roster for contact info.)
He will send you an invitation to join. If you have any problems or questions about joining, please contact Larry.

USING PAYPAL OR ZELLE

To pay LACS by Zelle, log into your bank with your username and password.

Select **Transfer Money > Send Money with Zelle.** Follow the instructions. The recipient is **Los Angeles Computer Society.** Select **Send by email**. The email address is: **lacomputersociety@gmail.com**.
The wording may be a little different on your bank's site.

Email questions to Gavin Faught. See our roster for contact info.

To pay LACS by PayPal, go to this link: www.paypal.com/paypalme/00001024 and then click on **Send**. Log in to your PayPal account or sign up for an account so that PayPal will know where to get the money to send. Follow the prompts. Enter the amount to pay, then click on **Add a note**. Say what the payment is for. If it is for dues, add any updated information: physical and email addresses, preferred phone number, and your dues type (regular, electronic , etc.) and if you don't want your contact information to be in our roster.

FIX YOUR PC FOR FREE?
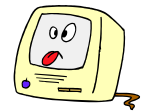
LACS member and presenter, **Jim McKnight**, has an open offer to LACS members to diagnose, repair, disinfect, or upgrade members' PC's for free. There are certain limitations to Jim's offer, so see the details by clicking the "Fix my PC for Free?" link at www.jimopi.net.

Non-members can wisely invest in a one-year **new regular** LACS membership ($40.00), and Jim will fix your PC problem, too. Contact Jim for specific considerations.

CHANGE CONTACT INFORMATION

Go to www.lacspc.org. Click on **Join LACS** in the bar under the picture. Under **Membership Update,** select **Click Here** to select either the DOC or PDF form. Fill it out; email it with your changes to Leah Clark. See the LACS roster or pages 9 or 10 of UF.
Or snail-mail it to
Los Angeles Computer Society
11664 National Blvd. #343
Los Angeles, CA 90064-3802.

ATTENDING A ZOOM MEETING

LACS members who are on our PC email list will receive a link, meeting ID, Passcode, and instructions to attend the LACS general meetings a few days before the meeting.
Please let Leah Clark know by the morning of the meeting if you don't have it or have a problem.

You can put an icon to the link on your desktop so it's handy at meeting time.
1. Right-click a blank spot on your desktop.
2. Select **New** from the drop-down menu.
3. Select **Shortcut**.
4. Type or copy and paste the link in the box that says "Type the location of the item."
5. Click **Next**.
6. Type a name for the shortcut.
7. Click **Finish**.

LACS CALENDAR

January

LACS Board Meeting, Monday, January 6
Time: 7:00 P.M. (Open from 6:30 P.M.)
Place: Wherever you are via Zoom

LACS General Meeting: Tuesday, January 14
Time: 7:00 P.M. (Open from 6:30 P.M.)

January 1: New Year's Day
January 6: LACS Board Meeting
January 14: LACS General Meeting
January 20: Martin Luther King Jr. Day
January 29: Chinese New Year

2025 - Year of the Snake

VISIT OTHER APCUG COMPUTER USER GROUPS AND SEE THEIR NEWSLETTERS

LACS heartily welcomes visitors from other user groups, and we are welcome to join other groups' meetings.

Go to www.APCUG2.org . Click on **Member Benefits**, then on **Groups Sharing Meetings** or on **Newsletters Online**.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

January 14: Touring the Web - J. B. Burke

February 11: The Wonders of Cell Phones - Bill James

Please watch your email and *User Friendly* for changes and updates.

ZOOM MEETINGS

Members on our PC email list will receive, via email, an invitation to join LACS Zoom general meetings. Click on the URL in the invitation before the meeting and follow the prompts.

If you have any questions or if you don't receive the link by the morning of the meeting day, contact Leah Clark at leahjc@sbcglobal.net

ZOOM RECORDINGS

LACS members and meeting guests will receive links to the recordings of Zoom meetings via email.

HYPERLINKS

Underlined text (blue in the color edition) in User Friendly usually means it's a hyperlink to a website. Click on the link in the online version to see the referenced place. You can also copy and paste it into your browser's search or address bar.

USER FRIENDLY BACK ISSUES AND INDEXES

To see back issues of *User Friendly,* go to http://www.lacspc.org/category/user-friendly/.

For indexes to past issues, go to https://www.lacspc.org/category/uf-index/

To find a specific article or topic, use the search box on the top right.

MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

LACS members volunteer to help other members solve hardware and software problems by telephone or during the hours listed below. Select the topic from the list and then contact a person whose number is listed next to it.

Find a helper's email address and phone number on your roster. If you don't have your roster, call 424-261-6251. Only members in good standing may receive a roster. We hope you find this LACS free service useful.

If you are experienced using a particular program or hardware, please volunteer to be a consultant. You don't have to be an expert. To volunteer for this list or to make corrections, please email Leah Clark at   leahjc@sbcglobal.net   or call her at 424-261-6251.

Android Smartphones - 5
Apple devices - 7
Anti-Malware and Backup - 4, 5
Dragon Naturally Speaking - 3
Genealogy - 5
Groups.IO - 9
Hardware - 4
Lotus Word Pro, Approach - 4

Mozilla Firefox - 7
MS Excel - 5, 7, 8
MS Word - 1, 3, 5, 8
MS Outlook - 1, 5
MS PowerPoint - 5, 7
MS Publisher - 2
PDF - 8

Photoshop Elements - 2
Quicken - 5, 8
Thunderbird - 4
Utilities - 4, 5
Windows - 4, 5
WordPerfect - 5
Zoom - 2, 6

Preferred Time for Phone Calls			
Number	Name	From	To
1	Beckman, Loling	10:00 AM	6:00 PM
2	Clark, Leah	7:00 AM	5:00 PM
3	Hershman, Irv	11:00 AM	11:00 PM
4	McKnight, Jim	8:00 AM	7:00 PM
5	Nordlinger, Stephanie	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
6	Presky, Mark	Any	Any
7	Van Berkom, Paula	9:00 AM	5:00 PM
8	Wilder, Joan	9:00 AM	9:00 PM
9	McDavid, Larry	Contact by email	

Note: Times are Pacific Times

OFFICERS, DIRECTORS AND LEADERS

TITLE	NAME	TERM
President	Leah Clark	2025
Vice President	Stephanie Nordlinger	2025
Secretary	**Open**	2025
Treasurer	Gavin Faught	2025
Director	Loling Beckman	2025
Director	Donna Benton	2025
Director	Mark Presky	2025
Director	Irv Hershman	2026
Director	**Open**	2026
Director	**Open**	2026
Director	Paula Van Berkom	2026
APCUG Representative	Leah Clark	
Corporate Counsel	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Database Manager	Loling Beckman	
Groups.IO Email Lists	Larry McDavid	
Newsletter Editor	Leah Clark	
Program Chair	Stephanie Nordlinger	
Publicity – Press	Mark Presky	
Publicity – Online Media	Open	
Quick Consultants	Leah Clark	
Webmaster	Paula Van Berkom	

Mailing Address: 11664 National Blvd., #343, Los Angeles, CA 90064-3802

Website: https://lacspc.org

Contact the President/Editor at 424-261-6251. Follow the prompts. This is a Google Voice number.

Please use your LACS roster for email addresses and phone numbers to contact any officer, board member or other member. If necessary, you may leave a message at the above number. **Only LACS members may receive a roster**.

Please note: The 2024 roster was in the middle pages of the May User Friendly. It was mailed to all LACS members, including those who usually receive only the electronic version. The roster will not be sent to anyone electronically. Be sure to keep it where you can find it when you need it.

THE MOST IMPORTANT ATTITUDE

How to make working with technology less problematic.

By **Leo A. Notenboom**
https://askleo.com/

There is one approach to life – one setting in your psyche – that affects your experience with technology much more than any lack of skill or knowledge.

Every so often, major online applications change their user interface. Sometimes, the changes are major, and other times, they are not, but either way, familiar software interface changes.

Whenever you read this article, such a change will be in progress somewhere.

I get frustrated when this type of change happens. But perhaps not for the reason you think.

All About Change

Embracing technological change rather than fighting it leads to a better experience. Complaints hinder problem-solving, while acceptance encourages curiosity and adaptability. Just as we quickly adapt to new or changed features in cars, we can adapt to tech change as well.

My "Genetic Disposition"

I am almost genetically predisposed to be annoyed with chronic complainers.

I try not to do that. I try to give everyone a fair shake, but honestly, when incoming questions contain 95% complaints and 5% questions, I have a tough time motivating myself to take it on.

I know, I picked the wrong industry. Except for politics, no other industry gets more vocal and active complaints than technology.

Particularly when things change.

I see it *every single day,* and it makes me sad and frustrated.

Why?

Because it doesn't have to be this way if folks approached technology — and, for that matter, life itself — a little differently.

Some People HATE Change.

I read somewhere that there are people who use push-button telephones only because rotary dial phones are no longer available. You may laugh, but it's more accurate than we might like to believe.

Some people hate change. I hear from these people often. And "hate," as ugly a word as it is, is sometimes not strong enough.

Being change-averse puts you at a serious disadvantage with technology.

Like it or not, Change Happens.

The world keeps changing, and it won't stop.

Period.

Things will change no matter how uncomfortable it may make you or how much you complain and rail against it. The only thing that will never, ever change is the fact that things keep changing.

Given that change is absolutely, totally, and completely unavoidable, you have *exactly* two choices:

1. Get angry and bitter and convince yourself that the change-makers are responsible for many of the assorted evils in the world.

2. Tolerate change. Accept it. Embrace it. Learn from it. Exploit it. See how it's made the world a much better place. Perhaps even enjoy it.

Now, given those two possibilities, which will lead to a happier, more positive experience

Which one will lead to a happier, more pleasant *you*?

Which will you choose? (And know this: *it is a choice*.)

Why Embrace Change?

Besides making you happier (and more pleasant to be around), there's a practical reason for embracing, or at least accepting, change.

In the over 20 years I've been doing this, it's become clear to me that given the same computer, situation, and problem, the person frustrated by the changes they see as being imposed upon them has a *much more difficult time* using technology and resolving problems. The only difference is the *attitude* they bring to the table.

Let me put it more clearly. If you insist on railing against change, *you will have a more difficult time* with the same issues than someone who accepts it.

People who use technology most effectively are those who not only accept change but even *look forward to it*. These are curious people. They are interested in learning what more technology can do for them and how they can best leverage the latest and greatest to make their lives more effective, efficient, and *fun*.

The more frustrated and resistant you are to the changes you face, *the harder you make it on yourself*. By choosing to be upset, you choose to make your experience more difficult.

We Readily Accept Change Elsewhere.

I find it puzzling that many who complain about changing technologies quietly accept major changes in their motor vehicle from year to year, model to model, and between brands.

Suppose the radio controls are completely different in your new car. Why aren't you as upset about that as you are about various user interface changes in an operating system update? One could argue that the controls on your radio present a much more significant safety issue as you fumble to change a station while you barrel down the freeway.

The radio is just one example. The changes we easily accept in motor vehicles and many other aspects of our lives are often much greater than what we find when we upgrade our software — yet there's little or no outrage in comparison.

Find where the new knobs are, change the station, and move on with your life.

Like you do in your car.

Change Isn't Made with Malicious Intent.

I often hear from folks convinced that whatever change they encounter is created *expressly* to anger them—or for some other dark conspiratorial intent.

Folks, pissing off your customers is just bad business.

And don't doubt for one second that this is all about business.

Hardware and software vendors are in a constant competitive battle, and *you don't* stay competitive by standing still. In fact, halting innovation and change is a fast track to failure.

Companies remain competitive by continually striving to make their product *better—* better than the previous version and better than the competition.

And that means making changes.

Newer Isn't Always Better.

You'll get no argument from me that frequently, the changes made in pursuit of improvement are anything but.

That doesn't mean that all change is bad. It simply means *that* change was bad.

The companies producing these products constantly research and test ways they believe will improve their product.

Sometimes, the idea turns out to be wrong. Sometimes, the execution of a good idea will fail.

And yet, for every change that fails, more changes — *significantly* more — improve the products we use every day and come to take for granted.

Change Isn't Just About You.

One of the common claims I get is, "Everyone hates this change."

I'm tempted to use stronger terms, but… no. Just… no.

Maybe many people you talk to do, and indeed, all the people who join you in the "complain about this product" discussion forum do, but that's hardly a representative sample of *everyone*. People who aren't experiencing a problem don't flock to the same places you do.

It's true that "You can't please everyone," and nowhere is that truer than with technological change.

Perhaps it was your turn not to be pleased.

Perhaps the testing performed on the product showed that most people *liked* the change you and your friends hate.

Once again, you get to choose your response: get angry and bitter, or accept that the change exists and decide how to move forward. And, yes, your response absolutely could involve a change of your own: choose a completely different product that better meets your needs and desires.

Which leads me to the point I want you to walk away with.

Do This

Change is inevitable, particularly for computers and technology.

So, what will you do when faced with an unexpected change, be it in your formerly favorite application or the operating system you've used for years? Make a choice. You may:

- Get grumpy, annoyed, and annoying.

- Decide it is a change you can live with (with variations ranging from loving it to working around it.)

- Decide it is a change you can't live with and walk away, by choosing a different solution.

Even if you choose the latter, you'll end up in a significantly better place if you do it out of a rational evaluation rather than an angry reaction.

Give change a chance. You don't need to accept every change, but if you can accept its inevitability, you'll have a much better time of it.

In fact, you might even have fun. ❖

Which People Finder Sites Are Legit?
(*Continued from page 7*)

For years, my favorite site for looking up names, addresses and phone numbers was **WhitePages:** https://www.whitepages.com/

 The site lets you search by name and city, and can do reverse searches to see who is associated with an address or phone number. Some lookups are still free, but more often than not, I get partial information, with a link to "View Full Report." To get past that roadblock, you have to pay $12, or sign up for a subscription that costs $6/month (for mobile & landline numbers, addresses, and reverse phone lookups), or $33/month (for mobile & landline numbers, addresses, criminal history, and public records).

Other people-finder sites operate similarly, providing teasers, incomplete hits on search criteria intended to get your hopes up that yes, it could be your long-lost brother, and then hit you up for money. Before you run off to 411.com or Switchboard.com, those are

also owned by WhitePages, and work the same way. Read the offers very carefully; nearly all contain "gotchas" that commit you to subscribing to an ongoing monthly charge on your credit/debit card. They all promise you can "cancel at any time" and even offer "100% satisfaction" guarantees. But I have not tested those assurances.

One people search site that DOES provide free lookups by name, phone or address is **FastPeopleSearch:**

https:www.fastpeoplesearch.com/

This site's public records data is updated regularly, and in addition to names, it includes landline, mobile, business and residential phone numbers, as well as information for addresses (past and present). In some cases, you can also find relatives and neighbors for people all across the USA. Enter a name (and optionally the city and state) and you'll get a list of possible hits with address and phone numbers.

You also can enter a phone number or address to find the person associated with it. FastPeopleSearch does offer paid Background Reports, which promise to dig up Arrest Records, Marriage & Divorce Records, Criminal Records Data, Property Records, Bankruptcies, Judgments, and Liens.

By the way, property records and court filings (for marriage, divorce and bankruptcy) are kept on file by local municipalities, and many of them are available online. Check with your town or county clerk to see if they are searchable.

Promises, Promises...

As I warned at the opening of this article, there is something sleazy about many of the people-finder sites I found in the course of researching this article. They make unnecessary noise about "connecting to federal, state, and local databases," "establishing a secure connection," "searching billions of records," and so on, while displaying graphics that indicate a search is in progress.

Spyfly: https://www.spyfly.com/

promises to help you "View information about yourself, friends, family, and associates that Google can't show you." After presenting you with the initial search results, which tell you very little, Spyfly hits you up for three dollars. It's only three bucks; let's get that report, shall we? Oh wait, the $3 fee is just for a 7-day trial, and you'll be on the hook for a $29.97/month subscription. How about **NO**?

BeenVerified: https:www.beenverified.com/ is another site that offers to help you "Search People & Public Records." They promise to "cross-check billions of data points and dozens of data sources" and "in a few minutes" you'll have access to all the public data they can find. But it's a game. You have to endure screen after screen and several wasted minutes viewing fake progress bars, spinning circles, and dubious testimonials before they hit you with the sales pitch. And it turns out you can't even pay to view a report, they want you to sign up for a Membership that costs $26.89/month. And you know how hard those things are to cancel. No THANKS.

Truthfinder, Intelius, Spokeo, PeopleLooker and PeopleFinders all lead you down the same road. Your search returns minimal information, followed by a pitch to pay for a report.

In closing, I'll mention one related free phone lookup service that I use regularly.

Phone Validator:

https://www.phonevalidator.com/

can tell you if a phone number is mobile, landline, toll-free or VOIP. It also shows the phone company associated with that number. You may find this useful when deciding if you should send a text message or make a voice call. ❖

WHAT'S "DEEP TECH," AND WHY ARE PEOPLE EXCITED FOR IT?

How-To Geek, December 15, 2024

https://www.howtogeek.com

Summary

- **Deep tech involves solving complex challenges, focusing on long-term development.**

- **Examples include quantum computing, space flight, AI, and robotics—all requiring significant time and effort.**

- **Despite high costs and long timelines, some investors value deep tech for its massive potential returns in the future.**

If you're interested in new technology and maybe even in how investing works, you will have heard the term **Deep Tech**. What kind of tech is it, and what makes it deep?

What's Deep Tech?

Deep tech is a catch-all term for startups working on technological solutions with long-term advantages or particularly tricky challenges. Think of anything that requires significant time and effort to solve using advanced science or engineering.

Where a lot, maybe even most, startups will be focused on products or services they can put together and market relatively quickly, deep tech focuses on the long term. When a deep tech startup sets out, chances are the founders are hoping to put something concrete together in a few years, not a few months.

Examples of Deep Tech

Deep tech is a somewhat vague term, so it's impossible to give you a list that boldly states what is and isn't deep tech, but I, myself, like to think of it as anything you could conceivably find in a science fiction story. If it's something that could be used daily on the *USS Enterprise*, it's probably deep tech.

Quantum computing would be a good example of deep tech as it directly challenges the status quo in its field and poses serious challenges for people developing it. Any company working on it is in it for the long haul, too, even though it's becoming more viable by the day, the road to getting here has been long, with some labs working on quantum computing for decades IBM is a good example: https://www.ibm.com/quantum/blog/quantum-five-years.

Another good example of deep tech would be space flight. Though we've been working on ways to get into the stratosphere and beyond for decades now, overall, it's been slow-going. In many ways, we're as far from actual space-faring as we've ever been, meaning we're going to need a lot more time, effort, and money to make companies like SpaceX achieve their goals. That said, with its thousands of tiny satellites roaming the skies, the Starlink project could be an example of successful deep tech.

A more tangible example in everyday life is things like artificial intelligence, robotics, or photovoltaics. Any of these could radically change the way we live our lives (with AI probably having the most impact right now), but to get where they need to be isn't something that can be done in a few months' time.

After all, though deep tech may not make money in the short term, it can potentially make a lot if any of it comes to fruition. Imagine getting in on the ground floor of Microsoft or Apple back in the day. You could have bought shares for next to nothing and be a millionaire today. This is what drives investment in deep tech: the promise of a better world and wealth beyond imagining.

As a result, deep tech has become the realm of the more adventurous sort of Venture Capital (VC) funds, firms that invest in startups and other nascent companies. By their nature, VCs like to roll the dice, investing a

chunk of money now, hoping that their gamble will pay off somewhere down the line.

Deep tech is an almost natural playing field for VC, with many firms even specializing in funding different kinds of deep tech. Here's one list: https://startupsavant.com/top-venture-capital-firms/deep-tech. They'll often spread their investments across several fields of deep tech, knowing that while many may fail, they only need a few to succeed to make the investment worth it.

Where Is Deep Tech Developed?

However, as interested as VCs may be in deep tech, the investment needed is often too large to be brought up by just one firm. As a result, most deep tech projects end up where most things that will take forever with an uncertain payoff do: in government and academic labs. Quantum computing was born in physics departments across the globe, while many applications in robotics and AI have also been developed in academic settings. As for space flight, most U.S. rocket technology was built by NASA and continues to be so, as https://tinyurl.com/2adu58c3 shows.

Of course, as academic or academic-adjacent institutions, not everybody fits in, and not every project is created with an actual use case in mind. Many members of these organizations will, at some point, leave and set up their own companies and develop some of these technologies commercially. Sometimes even in conjunction with their university.

Many deep tech startups are helmed by people with impressive academic titles after their name—there's a good chance a VC won't even look at your company if you don't.

Deep Tech and the Future

The result is that when you look at deep tech, you see a lot of different threads running through it. Academics, university administrators, enthusiasts, entrepreneurs, and financiers are all working together. Though they may occasionally be at loggerheads, not every-body's motivation is the same. After all, they are all working toward a similar goal.

Though it's costly and slow, there's no doubt that deep tech is where the future of humanity is being created. No matter what you think, the future of the human race and our planet is, chances are, deep tech is a huge part of it. ❖

Editor's note: From Chat GPT: Deep Tech refers to startups and companies that focus on developing cutting-edge technologies based on substantial scientific or engineering challenges. These technologies often require significant research and development and are typically characterized by their potential to impact society and industries profoundly. Deep Tech encompasses a wide range of fields, including artificial intelligence, biotechnology, quantum computing, advanced materials, robotics, and more. ❖

FIX YOUR SMART TV PROBLEMS WITHOUT BUYING A NEW TV

By **Steve Costello,** scostello@sefcug.com

Is your smart TV an older model? Is the smart TV operating system not getting updated or having problems? If you answered yes to these questions, check out this post before trashing it and buying a new one.

https://www.techhive.com/article/1382183/how-to-fix-your-smart-tv-problems.html ❖

WHAT IS WI-FI CALLING & HOW TO GET IT ON YOUR PHONE

by **Steve Costello**
scostello@sefcug.com

Wi-Fi calling is great. I don't know why some don't know about it, and it is free if available. Check out this post to learn about it and how to use it yourself.

https://www.techlicious.com/tip/how-to-get-wifi-calling-att-sprint-t-mobile-verizon/   ❖

FOR MANY HELPFUL TIPS AND TRICKS
Go to https://www.apcug2.org for all aspects of computing and operating systems.

SPECIAL OFFERS
Go to the APCUG website at https://apcug2.org/discounts-special-offers-for-user-groups/ for discounts and special offers for members of User Groups. Avast Anti-virus and Acronis True Image, and several book, media and training sites offer discounts including the two mentioned below.

- Members can save at the **Pearson Technology** websites: InformIT, Cisco Press, Pearson IT Certification, Que Publishing, Adobe Press, and Peachpit Press.
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- See books on digital imaging and photography, gaming, animation, film and video, post-production, audio, music technology, broadcast and theatre at Routledge | Focal Press today! They offer discounts to User Group members.

TECH LIFE UNITY
Formerly TechBoomers

https://www.techlifeunity.com

For learning how to use internet-based websites and applications for free.

LAUGHING OUT LOUD

"*He gets mad at me when I get into his wires. All I'm trying to do is organize them for him.*"

"*I've located over 300 phone chargers. From now on, we search for them instead of just being lazy and buying new ones.*"

Cartoons from
https://www.howtogeek.com

NOTICE
The columns, reviews and other expressions of opinion in *User Friendly* are the opinions of the writers and not necessarily those of the Los Angeles Computer Society. LACS became a California non-profit corporation on July 17, 1991. Its predecessor was the UCLA PC Users Group.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION and BENEFITS of MEMBERSHIP

Annual Membership Dues:

Regular New and Renewal,
   Printed Newsletter $ 40
   Electronic Newsletter   30
Family-Associate   12
Students   18
Contributor   50
Supporter   75
Benefactor   100
Gift Membership   20

A subscription to *User Friendly* is included with membership. **Associate members** use the same mailing as a regular member; they do not receive their own subscriptions to *User Friendly*, but may read it on the LACS website. **Students** must prove full-time status. A member may give a 1-year, 1-time gift to a non-member.

Monthly general meetings are via Zoom. In-person or hybrid meetings may take place in the future.

Members also enjoy these special benefits:

   — Monthly Newsletter *User Friendly*. We publish your article submissions or free classified ads to buy or sell your computer items.

   — Get FREE help by phone or email (See your roster) from knowledgeable members who are Quick Consultants listed in *User Friendly.*

   — Get help by email by using our group email list. Send your questions to
PC@LACS.Groups.IO

   — Receive important news and announcements via *User Friendly* and LACS's email list.

   — Free APCUG (International Association of Technology and Computer User Groups) **Webinars, virtual conferences, programs, and technical information.** Check *User Friendly* and your email to see what's offered.

   — Occasional **free software and computer books**, if you review them for *User Friendly*.

   — Annual Holiday Party

   — Social Interacting with others who have like interests in computers and technology.

   — Special Interest Groups (SIGs) on various topics may be created by members.

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All renewals are due in January. New members will pay the annual amount when they join.

First Class Mail

Los Angeles Computer Society

GENERAL MEETINGS ARE ON ZOOM.

Before each meeting, members and invited guests will receive an email with the URL link to the meeting. **Just click on the link**. If you haven't received it by the morning of the meeting, let Leah Clark know.

Please try to arrive at least a few minutes before the meeting start-time so you don't interrupt the meeting and any technical problems can be solved. If you need to take a break during a meeting, do not click on Leave or End. If you do, the meeting will be interrupted for you to re-enter.

You may turn off your video when you are gone.