



WAUCtalk

WAUC Wisconsin All-computer Users Club

September 2015

MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

Volume 32 No. 9

Ubuntu Introduced, Described

September

17 Q&A SIG, Thur., 7:00 PM
Speedway Station, 60th & Layton Ave.

23 Investment Tracking SIG, 7:00 PM
Wendy's, 7707 W. Layton Ave.

24 Tablets Plus SIG, Thur., 7:00
Clement Manor, Rm 107,
9405 W. Howard

October

1 WAUC General Meeting, Thur., 7:00 PM
Jackson Park Lutheran Church
4535 W. Oklahoma Ave.
Topic: Bill Gierach: A Look Inside the Computer

1 Exec. Bd. Meeting, 6:15

8 Tutorial SIG: Thur., 7:00 PM
Speedway Station, 60th & Layton Ave.

12 WAUC Lunch, Mon., 1 PM, Old Country Buffet, 4902 S. 74th
RSVP: rgdurand@yahoo.com

13 Deadline for submitting articles for WAUCtalk

14 MacSIG, Wed. 6:30 PM
Clement Manor, Rm 107,
9405 W. Howard

15 Q&A SIG, Thur., 7:00 PM
Speedway Station, 60th & Layton Ave.

22 Tablets Plus SIG, Thur., 7:00
Clement Manor, Rm 107,
9405 W. Howard

28 Investment Tracking SIG, 7:00 PM
Wendy's, 7707 W. Layton Ave.

Future Presentations:

- November: Peter Lee on Running Windows on the Mac
- December: Holiday party

Last year my main laptop died. A member of another computer club I belong to generously gave me a (newer) laptop with Ubuntu 14.04LTS on it. I didn't get to play around with it much while I was without electricity for several months. But once I got to using it I got to work getting accustomed to its user interface and now I use it for my virtual machining.

Ubuntu is a distribution of Linux, so it has many of the features that UNIX aficionados love. It uses GNOME as its windows manager in graphical mode, and it presents a desktop called "Unity" to the user.

The Unity desktop is one of the main features of Ubuntu and somewhat controversial. I will try to describe it to you as best I can without screen shots. A first impression is that it is backward and contrary to Windows. There is a bar across the top and the button that passes for the start button (it looks like a gear) is at the extreme right. The time and/or date is displayed to the left of that, and various icons to the left.

One peculiarity is that the menu for the currently active program is in this bar and does not become visible until you mouse over to it. The close, minimize, maximize/restore buttons also become visible at the left of the menu, again opposite to Windows (and OS/2 for that matter). In other words, Unity is very Mac-like. Of course, if you really don't like this interface, you can always go into the settings and change it.

There is a dock of program icons called the Launcher along the left edge of the screen which you can launch applications from. The top-most icon is for something called the Dash, which contains a search engine that will search for an appropriate program. Two very important icons are Software Updater (which I've done twice) and the Ubuntu Software Center.

Raffle Items for October

•WAUC sweatshirt in choice of size and color

The available sweatshirts are:

Dark Blue in size Small

Gold in size Medium

Light Grey in size Medium

Red in size Large

•8 Gb USB Flash Drive

•O'Reilly computer book "iWork The Missing Manual"

•Certificate for free O'Reilly computer ebook download

•\$10 Milwaukee PC gift card

WAUC

WAUCtalk is a monthly publication of the Wisconsin All-computer Users Club. WAUC is a computer club dedicated to promoting and instructing the use of computers to WAUC members. Membership in WAUC is \$25 per year (\$12.50 if applying after June 1). WAUCtalk is emailed to all WAUC members.

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Three programs I have installed through the Ubuntu Software Center are VLC Media Player, VirtualBox (which I've spoken about) and Stellarium, a planetarium program. I've always had a place on my computers for planetarium software, from Sky Travel for the Commodore 64 to EZ Cosmos for DOS and Distant Suns for Windows 3.1. You know, come to think of it, Stellarium would make a very good presentation topic. Let me know if you would like to see this one as well.

And that concludes our first look at Ubuntu.

Gary Kohler
Vice-President WAUC

Board Discusses Raffle Prizes, Gavel

The WAUC Board of Officers met at 6:25 PM on September 3rd, before the September 2015 General Meeting. Present were Vice-President Gary Kohler, Treasurer Bill Gierach, and General Meeting Secretary Richard Durand. Everyone was reminded to sign the register and create a name tag. The deadline for submitting articles and reports to WAUCtalk will be September 8th.

The topics for this month's Tutorial SIG were decided at last month's SIG to be Trust Install and the popular browser, Firefox. There were no new ideas for other future topics but this will be asked at the upcoming General Meeting. Also, to be mentioned at the General Meeting will be WAUC's One-on-One Computer Examination Service, since last month's survey showed that a substantial number of members don't know about it. In terms of upcoming presentations for General Meetings, we have an online APCUG talk about the new Windows 10 for this evening, and for November, we have tentatively scheduled WAUC member Peter Lee to speak about running Windows on the Apple Mac. Bill explained that he can demonstrate how to put together a computer and show this to the members by connecting a video camera to the club projector. It was agreed that Bill's proposed demonstration will occur at the October General Meeting.

About this time, we were joined by former WAUC President and invited guest, Bruce Kosbab. The use of the WAUC gavel during the General Meeting was again discussed. It was pointed out that the sound of the gavel can be very disturbing to those who rely on hearing aids. In a little experimentation before the Board Meeting, a method seems to have been discovered for the use of the gavel without its normal harshness, and this will be tried at the General Meeting.

Another topic for discussion was the need to replenish the WAUC supply of raffle prizes. WAUC needs some more memory cards and/or USB flash drives and after some discussion, it was decided to start with as many as can be obtained for \$30.00, since prices vary depending on current sales and promotions. Bill Gierach reported that Jackson Park Lutheran Church has deposited this year's

donation check and the annual organizational fee to the State of Wis. Has been sent in. There is still a good amount in the WAUC Treasury. At this time Bruce turned over to Bill a key to the WAUC post office box which he still had. Gary took some time to review with us the schedule of the SIGs and events for the upcoming month.

Bill also reported that he has obtained some yellow paper for the printing of the new WAUC Brochure because the local computer stores still have old long out of date brochures. These were the items discussed at the WAUC Board Meeting for September, 2015.

Respectfully submitted by,

Richard Durand
WAUC General Meeting Secretary

Variety of Presentations Suggested, Tech Failure Affects Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM by WAUC Vice-President Gary Kohler. Former WAUC member and officer John Hirsh was present as a guest and was acknowledged and welcomed. The Treasury report followed with a beginning balance of \$1,724.36, August picnic expenses of \$193.80, creating an ending balance is \$1,530.56. The members were asked if they all received their issues of the WAUC Directory, WAUCtalk, and the WAUC Bulletin. Anyone who needs to have their contact information updated needs to contact one of the WAUC Board officers. Members were reminded that they can bring their computers to the Q & A SIG to have them examined for problems, the One-on-One Computer Service Member Benefit. Another available computer service resource is Doris Regner's nephew, Jim Schoenrock, one of the members of Brew City Geeks. Please check with Richard Durand for Jim's contact info.

Our upcoming presentations were announced. For October, Bill Gierach will show the inside of a typical computer, using a video camera with its image projected on the screen for all to see. For November, it is proposed that Peter Lee give a presentation about running Windows and Windows software on the Mac, and there was no objection. And of course, WAUC's annual holiday party will be held in December.

The WAUC SIGs were reviewed. The Mac SIG will meet on September 9th at Clement Manor. The Tutorial SIG will meet on September 10th at Speedway. At last month's SIG we played videos about Windows 10. The topics for this month will be Trust Install and Firefox, and we need suggestions for future topics for this SIG. The

WAUC Lunch will be held on September 14th at 1:00 PM at Old Country Buffet. The Q & A SIG will be held on September 17th at Speedway. Bring your questions. At last month's SIG we dealt with the "Hamburger Menu" symbol, video file types, and Gary tested his laptop with the club projector. After being off for the summer, the Investment SIG will be held next on September 23rd at the Wendy's on 77th and Layton. The Tablets Plus SIG will be held on September 24th at Clement Manor. Marcia Zientek described what happened at this SIG last month and informed the club that meals at Clement Manor are available for those who come early and have made a reservation. There is a variety of selections and they are quite good.

Gary spoke of possibly giving a presentation about a variety of alternative operating systems which he has installed in "virtual machines" on his computer, including Beos, Haiku, and Ubuntu. There was some interest expressed about Ubuntu, which is one of the distributions of Linux.

The CD of the month was described by Bill Gierach. One of the programs included on this month's CD is GnuCash, an alternative to Quicken. Marcia Zientek already has GnuCash and has problems with it. Bill Gierach recommended updating the program and trying it again.

There followed a discussion of various points of computer information and computer problems. Marcia Zientek asked about the Cloud Storage service, Dropbox. Tom Livermore answered that he found out that some of the bonus capacity offered by Dropbox is expiring. Stan Wroczynski

said he found out how to remove the rainbow splash screen in Windows 8.1 and will explain it to anyone who is interested. John Hirsh reported that a film about Steve Jobs of Apple starts tomorrow at the Downer Theater. Jim Hempel reported that there are some free computer classes available at the St. Francis public library, for which pre-registration is required. John Hirsh expressed an interest in seeing how the Python programming code is being taught to children. Gary replied that there is a site that has information about it called "Cheeseshop Python."

The available raffle prizes were announced and the members were reminded that there will be the usual after-meeting informal get together at Wendy's on 43rd and Lincoln. After the break we had the raffle drawings and then went into the online presentation from APCUG about the new MS operating system, Windows 10. Four members have upgraded to Windows 10 and it is of interest to almost everyone. Unfortunately, our Skype call to our APCUG presenter, Mr. Bill James, was not answered. This was tried several times without success. As an alternative, we found a

video file about Windows 10 by Mr. James on Youtube and we watched it together. It was recorded last February at the APCUG Virtual Technology Conference, long before Windows 10 was officially released. It used the beta version available at that time. After watching it for fifteen minutes or so, Bill Gierach noticed that the audio signal was delayed about three minutes off of the video images shown. As disappointing as this was, we continued watching the video anyway and got some exposure to what Windows 10 is all about. Gary observed that some of its features are from other operating systems released fifteen years ago. Overall, this online presentation was not a success and the value of Windows 10 remains to be seen. And that was it for the WAUC General Meeting of September 2015. The meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted by

Richard Durand
WAUC General Meeting Secretary

Where to Get Instructions for your new Device

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

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

- Apple manuals and user guides at <https://www.apple.com/support/iphone>
- Windows devices, search the Microsoft website
- Android devices, go straight to the manufacturer
 - For instance, if you just got a Samsung Galaxy S5, the manuals are at www.galaxys5manuals.com
- Smartphones, you can also check out the website of your service provider
 - For instance, Verizon has tons of information including videos on using the Galaxy S5 on their website at www.verizonwireless.com/support/galaxy-s-5

The Times They Are A-Chargin'

By Greg Skalka, President, Under the Computer Hood User Group, CA
February 2015 issue, Drive Light
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I just want to say one word to you. Batteries.

In the 1967 movie "The Graduate," Dustin Hoffman's character was advised that plastics would be the future hot field. Today, I think the hot field to go into may be batteries. Modern technology is dominated by mobile and cordless electronics, which need batteries to supply their power. Cameras, smart phones, tablets, laptops, quadcopters, cordless tools and electric cars all depend on batteries for their primary power source. We probably don't realize, until the batteries go dead, how many of the products we use every day depend on batteries to run. That television on your wall (try using it for any length of time without a remote control), noise-canceling headphones on your head, wireless mouse in your hand, electronic safe in your closet, electronic safety light on your bike and Fitbit on your wrist all need batteries to run. So many other products, like your alarm clock, electronic thermostat and sprinkler timer, require batteries for backing up settings and timekeeping. We are awash in battery-powered products. Keeping all these batteries charged or changed presents a big challenge. And like plastics, they have the potential for harming our environment if not handled and disposed of properly.

Before we mastered electricity, our devices had to be human, animal, water or combustion-powered. Batteries actually predate the electrical grid; Alessandro Volta invented the first true battery in 1800. Early electrical innovations like the telegraph and electric lights were initially powered by batteries. It wasn't until the early 1900's that widespread commercial electrical power generation and distribution displaced batteries in most uses for electricity. Now with our thirst for mobile electronic devices and need for better energy storage, batteries are making a big comeback.

Battery technology has changed and improved over the years. Volta's zinc-copper voltaic pile has spawned zinc-carbon and alkaline single-use battery technologies, as well as many rechargeable battery types. New materials have increased the energy density and battery lifetimes for rechargeables. Nickel-cadmium (NiCd), nickel-metal hydride (NiMH), lithium, lithium ion (Li-ion) and lithium ion polymer batteries have allowed our portable devices to shrink in size and increase in capabilities. Batteries now come in many shapes and sizes, from tiny watch batteries to huge electric car battery packs. The standard AAA, AA, C, D and 9V cells have been supplemented with a multitude of custom sizes to suit

new product applications, from large, high-capacity removable laptop batteries to super-thin, non-removable smart phone batteries.

Battery charging has become an important part of the life of every technology user. How long it takes dictates the time you and your cell phone must remain tethered to a wall outlet and determines when you may continue your electric car road trip. Higher capacity and the ability to swap batteries can help users, but eventually everyone must recharge. The most popular place in the airport terminal has become the seating next to the wall outlets. Unfortunately, every new electronic device adds another charging cable to your collection. The 5V USB socket has become the new charging standard for many devices. New upscale homes come with USB charging sockets built into the kitchen outlets; plug-in versions, like the Vivitar Home Charging Station, are also available.

No battery lasts forever. After many charge and discharge cycles, every rechargeable battery begins to lose its ability to hold a charge. Eventually it can hold so little energy that it is useless and must be replaced. For many products, battery replacement is very easy. Laptops and digital cameras have batteries that are easy to remove, and replacements are usually easy to find on the Internet. For other devices like tablets, smart phones and electric razors, changing the battery is much more difficult. Opening the device to get to the battery may be difficult and require special tools, and the battery is sometimes soldered in. Special knowledge is usually required to open the device without damaging it. Sometimes the product can continue to be operated by using it with a power cord (like my electric razor), or with an external battery (like my wife's iPhone with a Patriot Memory Fuel+ portable charger). Eventually it may get to the point where either the battery or the device must be replaced.

Fortunately, the Internet comes to the rescue again, not only to help locate a replacement battery, but also to provide the knowledge required to make the change. Lots of step by step instructions and how-to videos are available on YouTube and other sites to help disassemble almost any battery-powered device. Replacing the battery saves the consumer money, avoiding the purchase of a new product, while continued use of the device keeps it out of our landfills.

I recently had the batteries in two of my electronic devices go bad, requiring a change to continue using them. By doing some research on the web and spending around \$20 total on replacement batteries, I gave new life to these items while postponing having to spend the approximately \$120 in total to replace them.

An uninterruptible power supply, or UPS, is an almost essential accessory for a desktop computer. While a

laptop's data is protected by a charged battery should line power fail while running with the AC adapter, you can lose data and risk hard drive corruption if a blackout occurs when using a desktop computer. A UPS contains a battery which is charged off the wall output and allows the computer and anything else plugged into it to run for a time if the AC is interrupted. The UPS typically monitors the battery's health and emits a loud tone when the battery is failing.

My desktop computer's UPS recently sounded its battery's death-call, so I shut it down and plugged the computer into a power source so I could still run it while working on the UPS. I'd changed the battery before, and planned ahead by placing a label with the battery part number on the outside of the case. I found a replacement battery on Amazon for \$12; a new UPS of this capacity would cost \$40 to \$50. Once I'd received the new battery, I removed a couple screws on the back to release the cover and reveal the battery. The battery is connectorized, so changing it is easy, as long as you observe the polarity of the battery connections. Once it was reassembled, it worked as good as new.

My second battery change was a bit more difficult. My Braun Oral-B electric toothbrush had been having charging difficulties for quite some time. The internal battery had developed a memory from going through repeated short charge-discharge cycles, and no longer held much of a charge. Fully discharging it and recharging helped for a time, but it was finally getting to the point where it was essentially unusable. Since it charges inductively from its wall unit, there was no way to use it in a "corded" manner.

I searched the web and found www.fixit1stop.com had a repair video for my toothbrush. It showed how to disassemble the toothbrush and change the battery. This was considerably more involved than the UPS. The case had to be opened to expose the plastic frame containing the motor, circuit board, battery and inductive charging coil. The NiCd battery was soldered to the internal circuit board. Fortunately, I am an electrical engineer and have the skills and tools to perform the transplant. For those that don't, this web site not only sells replacement batteries (\$10 for my model's) but also provides a repair service (\$25 for mine). I couldn't find the correct battery anywhere else, so ordered it from this site. When it arrived, I performed the replacement per their web instructions and, after a night of charging, the toothbrush worked great.

Batteries contain hazardous materials and must be recycled or disposed of properly. In many places it may be illegal to send old batteries to the landfill. Once again the Internet can provide information on battery recycling in your area. It turns out rechargeable batteries are accepted for recycling for free at many Best Buy stores, including the ones near me. They have a bin just inside the entrance, where I was able to deposit my two old batteries. There were a lot of recycling options for rechargeable batteries in San Diego, but I didn't find any place that accepted single-use batteries without a fee.

Batteries will continue to be an important part of our technology. To save money and the environment, consider changing the batteries in your electronic devices when they fail, rather than toss out the whole thing, and be sure to dispose of the old batteries properly.

Windows 10 for PCs and Tablets Available on July 29

by Ira Wilsker

WEBSITES:

<http://blogs.windows.com/bloggingwindows/2015/02/10/how-cortana-comes-to-life-in-windows-10/>
<http://blogs.windows.com/bloggingwindows/2015/06/01/hello-world-windows-10-available-on-july-29/>
<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/windows-10-faq>
<http://www.cnet.com/news/minecraft-windows-10-edition-coming-july-29/>
<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/features>
<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/windows-10-upgrade>
<http://www.techradar.com/us/news/software/operating-systems/windows-10-release-date-price-news-and-features-1029245>
<http://blogs.windows.com/bloggingwindows/2015/07/02/windows-10-preparing-to-upgrade-one-billion-devices/>
<http://www.extremetech.com/computing/191279-why-is-it-called-windows-10-not-windows-9>
<http://www.pcworld.com/article/2690724/why-windows-10-isnt-named-9-windows-95-legacy-code.html>

Earlier this year, I wrote about some of the potential features that were being considered to be included in the upcoming release of Windows 10. The release version of Windows 10 is now complete, with Microsoft already producing packaged software for the retail channels, while PC manufacturers are already producing machines with Windows 10 factory installed, to go on sale on July 29. Some of the big box stores and online sellers are already taking "presale" orders for Windows 10 software (\$119 retail), and computers to be delivered

or otherwise made available on the official release date. In the coming few weeks, watch for the inevitable media blitz promoting Windows 10.

For almost all users of Windows 7 and Windows 8 (8.1), Microsoft will be offering a free upgrade to Windows 10; contrary to some independent blog posts, the free copy downloaded and installed under this limited time offer will remain free, without any future annual fees. At a recent computer club meeting I was asked about the strange new icon that suddenly appeared in the system tray on Windows computers; this small icon looks like a window frame, with four quadrants, turned left at about a 45 degree angle. Moving the cursor over the icon, it simply says "Get Windows 10". Clicking on the icon opens a small window, "How to get Windows 10 for free!" While some of those at the computer club meeting were suspicious about the offer, it is indeed legitimate, and is being made by Microsoft. The new Windows 10 release mentioned is a complete version, free for life (rather than the \$119 for a boxed retail version), that will be available for download on or after July 29. I would not try downloading Windows 10 in the first few days, as it is a very large 3 GB download, and Microsoft and its partner servers will be hammered by the users trying to get the new software. In some published reports, Microsoft is predicting that up to a billion copies of Windows 10 will be downloaded and installed starting on July 29. Some internet pundits are also warning of a possible internet slowdown starting in late July as the digital "pipes" become "clogged" (overloaded) when many millions of users try to download a 3 GB file.

The release version of Windows 10 has incorporated many of the suggestions made by Windows 8 users, who missed some of the familiarity and ease of use that was available in Windows 7, but not incorporated in Windows 8. Among the most requested features that has been included in Windows 10, that was missing in Windows 8, is the traditional "Start" menu, which will help Windows 7 users become immediately familiar with Windows 10. Windows 10 has been designed to boot quickly, and be more secure than previous versions of Windows. According to Microsoft, Windows 10 will incorporate its own antimalware security software; Microsoft stated that Windows 10 will include, "... Windows Defender for free anti-malware protection, and being the only platform with a commitment to deliver free ongoing security updates for the supported lifetime of the device."

Windows 10 was also designed to run on almost all computers capable of running Windows 7 and 8, without substantial hardware upgrades. According to an official Microsoft blog posting, "We designed Windows 10 to run our broadest device family ever, including Windows PCs, Windows tablets, Windows phones, Windows for the Internet of Things, Microsoft Surface Hub, Xbox One and Microsoft HoloLens—all working together to empower you to do

great things." Microsoft is obviously creating a seamless way for users to move between many different devices, using the same, familiar operating system.

Windows 10 will include the much discussed Cortana, which Microsoft describes as, "The world's first truly personal digital assistant helps you get things done. Cortana learns your preferences to provide relevant recommendations, fast access to information, and important reminders. Interaction is natural and easy via talking or typing. And the Cortana experience works not just on your PC, but can notify and help you on your smartphone too." The somewhat archaic Internet Explorer browser, which grew out of the old Mosaic browser, will be replaced by a leaner and more efficient new browser which Microsoft is calling "Edge". Edge will be integrated with Cortana, allowing users to more efficiently interact with the internet with voice, keyboard, or other forms of input.

As is now common on smart devices running Google's Android, and Apple's iOS, the new Windows 10 will have its own "app store" where both paid and free apps (what we "used" to call software) can be downloaded directly from a Windows store. Also at the Windows store will be a huge collection of games, TV shows, music files, movies, and other content to download. Android and iOS users may notice a similarity with the Google Play Store or iTunes, and the new Microsoft store, as they will all function in a similar manner.

One of the most popular digital games of all time, Minecraft, will be available for Windows 10 on the official release date of July 29. Since Microsoft purchased Mojang, the Swedish authors of Minecraft for a reported \$2.5 billion last year, and released builds of Minecraft for other Microsoft platforms and devices, it was inevitable that Microsoft would have a build of Minecraft optimized for Windows 10. Officially, the Windows 10 version of Minecraft released in a few weeks will be a "beta" or prerelease version of the popular game. Users of the current PC versions of Minecraft will get a free upgrade to the Windows 10 build, and others may purchase a full version of Minecraft for \$10, including free future updates.

One of the features touted by Microsoft with the new Windows 10 release is the ability to integrate Xbox gaming with the PC and tablets running Windows 10. Xbox Live and a new Xbox app will be incorporated in the new release, giving users access to the well established and popular Xbox Live gaming network.

Microsoft has announced a new Office suite, Office 2016, which has been specifically written "from the ground up" to run efficiently on any devices running Windows 10. The Office 2016 components Outlook (email program) and OneNote (digital note taking) will be included with Windows 10, while individual apps for Word, Excel, and PowerPoint will be available, presumably for sale, from the Windows

Store. Microsoft said that all Office 2016 components will seamlessly run across a variety of devices. Using touch screen devices, Office components such as Excel will be touch enabled, and can be created or updated without using a mouse or a keyboard.

An improved security feature intended to restrict unauthorized access to a device running Windows 10 is "Windows Hello", which will incorporate biometrics to verify authorized users. Windows Hello can use facial recognition, finger print scanning, and iris scanning to instantly verify users, instead of using the more traditional (and vulnerable) password method. Once a user is authenticated by the Windows Hello service, the user will be greeted by name, and with a graphical smile on the screen; while some beta users initially thought that this friendly response was cute, others found that it eventually became somewhat irritating.

Microsoft is also including a series of integral apps with Windows 10 to perform some of the users' most common tasks. These apps will handle photos, videos, maps, email, calendar, music, contacts, and other functions that smart phone users are already somewhat familiar with. Since Windows 10 will also be incorporating Microsoft's cloud storage service, OneDrive, content will also be securely stored in the cloud as well as on the device. Since Windows 10 is explicitly designed to run on multiple platforms, the appearance and functionality of these apps will be the same on all devices. Content created on any device will be securely stored in the cloud, and readily available on any other compatible device. Microsoft says, "You can start something on one device and continue it on another since your content is stored on and synched through OneDrive."

If you have the Windows 10 icon in your system tray, open it and sign up to reserve a free copy of Windows 10 when it becomes available. Even if you do not have that Windows icon that recently appeared, you may still be eligible for a free upgrade. Once the mad rush of those who will clog the internet by being among the first few million to

download and install Windows 10 is over, and the internet traffic jam subsides, I will be downloading and installing Windows 10 on my computers. Since "Murphy's Laws" are endemic on computers of all types, I strongly recommend making both an image backup and a critical data backup of your current setup before installing Windows 10. If for some reason you don't like Windows 10 after installing it, the image backup copy can be used to restore your earlier operating system. Backing up critical data files should always be done, "just in case".

While I have been generally satisfied with my Windows 7 installation, and found Windows 8 to be not quite as user friendly, I look forward to the upcoming release of Windows 10 and the free upgrade offer.

Just to satisfy the curiosity of my readers who may have noticed the jump from Windows 8 to Windows 10, whatever happened to Windows 9? The truth is that there was no Windows 9, and Microsoft purposely skipped the moniker "9". Some Microsoft pundits have alleged that the "9" was skipped to avoid confusion with those users still running the long obsolescent "legacy" Windows 95 and 98. Since "9" was skipped, "10" was the logical next version number; "Windows X" was considered, but there already was a Mac version "X". Microsoft has been inconsistent with version names anyway, having used dates (95, 98, 2000), names (Vista, Bob, Millennium), and simple numbers (3.1, 7, 8, 8.1). There has been no consistent naming or numbering convention, so the Microsoft leadership decided that "10" would simply describe a totally new operating system. Whatever it is called, I suggest that eligible users download and install the free upgrade, and try it. The new release combines the best features of Windows 7 and 8 (without 8's foibles), and adds a lot of new features and functionality, as well as seamless integration across multiple devices.

As the old cereal commercial said, "Try it ... you'll like it."

BitTorrent

By Dick Maybach, Member, Brookdale Computer Users' Group, NJ
January 2015 issue, BUG Bytes
www.bcug.com
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BitTorrent, <http://www.bittorrent.org/>, is a peer-to-peer file sharing protocol for transferring files over the Internet. The conventional way of transferring data is for one site to act as a file server, which stores the files and transmits them on demand. If many people want the file, this requires a high bandwidth connection to avoid long download times. In the BitTorrent scheme, the central site is called an *indexer*, and it functions as a file director rather than a

file server. (Actually, the situation is somewhat more complex. There are also sites called *trackers* that work with and assist indexers. Most people blur this distinction and use the term tracker for both indexers and trackers, and I'll do the same for the rest of this article.) When a user requests a file from a tracker, he or she receives a *Torrent Descriptor File* that contains a list of sites, called *seeders*, that currently are making the file available for transfer. On the user's computer a program called a *BitTorrent Client* uses information in the descriptor file to request pieces of the desired file from the seeders. Since each of the many seeders supply only a few pieces of the file, their upload volumes and rates are low. The descriptor file also contains a checksum for each piece of the file and the client uses these to ensure that the downloaded file has no errors. BitTorrent allows individuals to share files with many others without requiring the use of expensive facilities. By

Which of these topics are of interest to you? They are available from APCUG, and we may be able to fit your choice into the next issue. Email with your interest to ricejulia@hotmail.com.

- 7 Short Tips for Word Users, Nancy DeMarte
- Cloud Computing – An Ephemeral Concept, Phil Sorrentino
- Creating Your Own Template in Word 2013, Nancy DeMarte
- Drive for a Change – Installing a Laptop Hybrid Drive, Greg Skalka
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- Topaz Photography Collection, Part 1 Review, Mark Mattson
- To SSD or Not to SSD? – That is the question, Phil Sorrentino (solid state drive)
- Top 10 Reasons to Upgrade to Windows 10, Sandy

spreading the distribution task among many servers, BitTorrent reduces traffic congestion on the Internet thus speeds up data rates for everyone, including those that aren't using peer-to-peer sharing. Peer-to-peer file sharing is so widely used that by some estimates it accounts for half or more of all Internet traffic. As of January 2012, there were 150 million active BitTorrent Users.

Some people use peer-to-peer file sharing to distribute illegal material. **Don't do this.** Media corporations have convinced some courts to make examples of individuals who illegally obtain copyrighted work, and the resulting fines have been truly punitive. The same corporations actively monitor Internet peer-to-peer sharing activity. The risks far outweighs the rewards of watching a movie or

listing to music that you don't think is worth paying for. In addition, the sites that distribute such material are dishonest and won't hesitate to infect your computer with malware.

I use BitTorrent to download Linux distributions, which are often occupy several Gbytes. When a new distribution is first released, the official sites are often overloaded, and this of course is when I'm most interested in obtaining it. Many sites anticipate this, and make it convenient to use BitTorrent as an alternate to a direct download.

Editor's Note: If you are interested in using BitTorrent, please contact Julia Rice for the rest of this article on installing the program.

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Tidbits from Terry Harvey

Microsoft says so far, more than 75 million people have upgraded to Windows 10.

Windows 10 has far surpassed the number of people using Mac's OS X 10.10 Yosemite, which only accounts for 4.76% of users on the Internet. If you add all Mac users they total just under 8% of users.

Linux users total about 1.63% of computer users who access the Internet.

Approximately 13% if Internet users are still using Windows XP.



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