WAUCTALK

Wisconsin All-computer Users Club
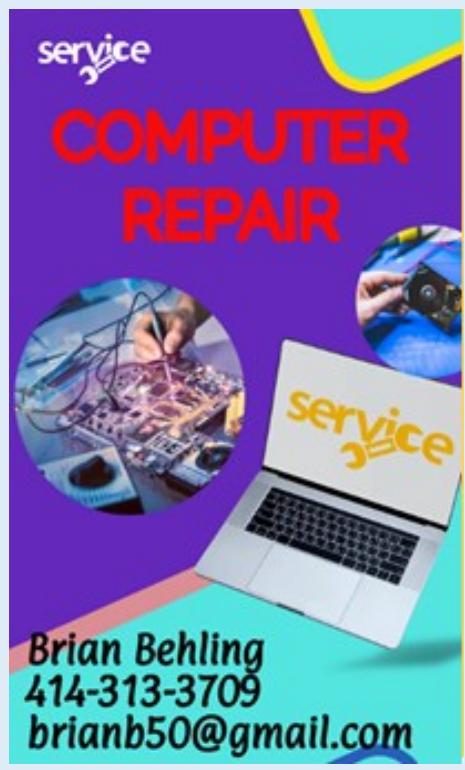
VOLUME 44 Issue #1   January 2026

Randy Ray Presents Genealogy
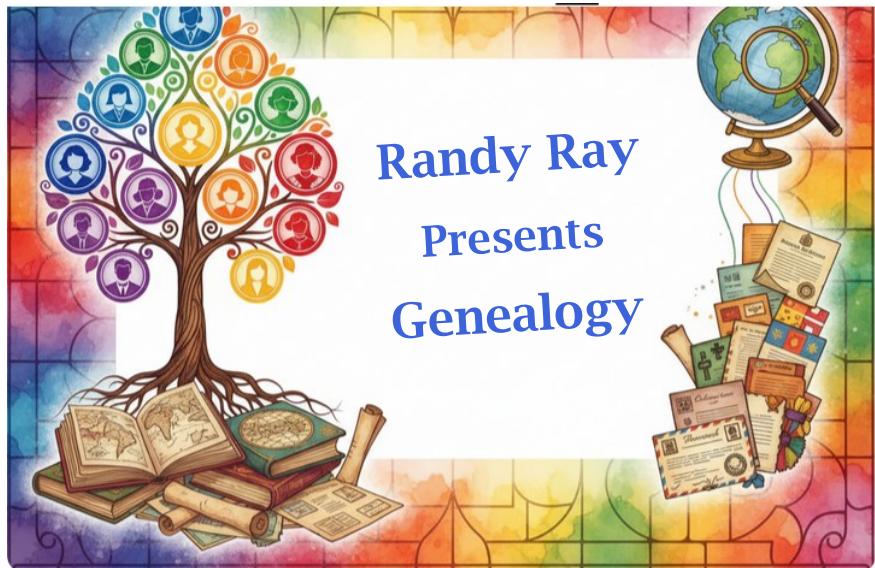
Jackson Park Lutheran Church

February 5th	General Meeting
February 12th	Tutorial SIG
February 19th	Q & A SIG
February 24th	WAUC Lunch*
February 25th	Investment SIG
February 26th	Smartphone SIG

ALL SIGS ARE HELD ON ZOOM

https://tinyurl.com/yc4scw5d

*Meyer's Restaurant

4260 S. 76th Street

Greenfield, WI

UPCOMING PRESENTATIONS

March—Bill James presents All About the Computers in Your New Car

April—J.J. Johnson presents The Safety of the Neighborhood

May—WAUC Picnic

June—Chris Taylor presents Windows Performanc Tune-up

July—Bill James presents Smart TVs and Digital Photo Frames

August—Hewie Poplock presents AI for Seniors

September—John Kennedy presents Bitwarden Password Management

October—Judy Taylour presents Digital Couponing and Amazon Rufus

November—

December—WAUC Christmas Party

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear WAUC Members,
HAPPY NEW YEAR 2026!
Well, most everyone rejoined for 2026. That
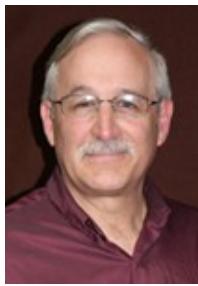
means the club must be doing some things correctly. I hope so, as we try hard to create great presentations, news, SIGs and answer all of your computers, tablets, and phones.
You make up the club. Without you we have nothing. Would anyone like to give a presentation during the year? We need more ideas for presentations.

Wanted to share that I bought a new computer in December that arrived the day before Christmas. Now I know how to move everything from the old computer to the new computer, but this time I bought a program on sale that is PCmover Business 11!! It is very good. It moved all of the data, and almost all programs to the new computer along with the passwords. I had very little work to get the new "Dell, 16" Intel 7 with 10 cores, 1 Terabyte SSD, touchscreen and 32 G of RAM". This thing is lightning fast! I use Pinnacle Studio for recording old VHS tapes and CDs to digital means and store them for future. With my older PC, when that was running, I could hardly do anything else, but with the new Laptop, it runs in the background and I have NO slowing down of the machine. This is outstanding.

Did you have anything you would like to share with the Club?

Thanks for helping run the club. Thanks for answering questions from others. Thanks for being here with us!!

Have the BEST Holiday Season ever!!

Don Skarda - **A PROUD member of WAUC!!!**
YOUR President, Wisconsin All-computer Users Club (WAUC) (I serve to help you)
Thank YOU for being a member of this club!! We appreciate you!!
Our club is built on the Mission of "Members helping Members!

DECEMBER 2025 Q & A SIG

Those attending included Richard Durand, Jim Hempel, J.J. Johnson, Kathy Mueller, Louise Bozek, Margaret Cortez, Brian Behling, Julia Rice, Louise Dahms, and Betty Robinson.

The meeting started with brief discussion of the technical issues I had in the previous SIG which caused freezing and bandwidth problems during that SIG. As I learned afterwards, these issues were caused by a MS Win update taking place at that time on my desktop PC.

This Q and A meeting was also troubled with technical issues when Don began experiencing video quality and bandwidth problems. We discussed these technical issues with Zoom for a while and also some new features like picture-in-picture functionality and multi-speaker view.

Jim mentioned attending a Senior Planet meeting about Google Workspace the previous day and receiving a follow-up email. This email provided a link so that it could be viewed again if I wanted to do that. I was having some technical issues with accessing the Senior Planet class recording. I asked J.J. for some help with it and very soon we had the access issues solved. This led to a discussion of other Senior Planet offering in their Tech Tip and Video series. Then we took a Senior Planet quiz about Travel and watched one of their videos on QR codes. Both of these activities can be viewed at https://seniorplanet.org/quizzes/#travel and at https://seniorplanet.org/videos/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=10324389352&gbraid=0AAAAADh-P8Ss4mt2eiYPPKVEUZwOEd-DuX&gclid=Cj0KCQiA9OnJBhD-ARIsAPV51xOURCocwh-LK9FjbK4vlS67bfYlEHco14VN-V7Cg3Zv552L2I7n_vMaAscxEALw_wcB#qr-codes

The online travel quiz, covered topics such as price comparison, popular travel websites, and scams to avoid when booking accommodations. The QR video focused on demonstrating how to use QR codes, particularly for medical IDs and hospital records. They also explored how to enable QR code scanning on different types of smartphones, with Jim demonstrating the process on an Android device.

J.J. talked about QR codes and their uses, while Louise Bozek warned about potential risks when using them, citing a Super Bowl commercial scam. The discussion highlighted the importance of being cautious when interacting with QR codes and ensuring they lead to safe and legitimate websites.

Richard had a question about a notification he received from Zoom. It stated they are no longer supporting 32-bit systems after December 15th, which surprised others as they were unaware anyone still used 32-bit machines. It was explained that this is a very old computer system and many programs no longer support it. We suggested updating the computer and using the 64-bit version of Zoom.

The discussion moved to AI and J.J. mentioned a humorous AI-generated video featuring pizza-themed jokes, which he had created using Sono for music and AI for text-to-video, text-to-voice, and text-to-graphics.

I asked if anyone had seen or heard of the largest all glass Christmas trees. No one had and they wanted to know more. So, we shared information about the World's Largest Glass Christmas Tree located in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin at the Yerkes Observatory. This tree is rebuilt annually using melted recycled glass, with community members participating in its creation. The tree changes color each year and is part of a larger holiday celebration featuring live music and artisan markets. To see how this glass tree is created, check out this video and be amazed! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sa802G86uDI

Louise B asked about pictures that she received in a text message and wanted to know about their storage requirements. Pictures and videos sent in texts do take up significant storage space on your phone as they are

saved in your Messages app's database. And if you download them, they are also stored in your Photos or Gallery app potentially doubling up. While text messages themselves are small, photos and especially videos add up quickly, making the Messages app a major storage hog over time. You can go into the individual conversations in your Messages app and manually delete large photos/videos from the conversation details by tapping and holding them to save space. If you do not want any copies of it on your phone, also check and delete it from Photos or Gallery.
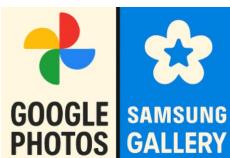
As I explained, remember that pictures saved in the phone's gallery remain even after deleting from the text message. While pictures in cloud-based services like an internet-based email, do not count against phone storage, including Outlook, Gmail or Facebook Messenger. These programs store the information and pictures in their respective cloud storage, in your accounts.

Then we got into communications between Apple and Android phones. Kathy and I have both noticed communication issues. We talked about the different messaging protocols, SMS, MMS, RCS and iMessage. but couldn't fully explain despite improvements in recent years. Kathy raised a question about inconsistent photo messaging between Apple and Samsung devices, which we discussed.

After the meeting, I came across this action that could improve cross platform communications. Try either of the following; if IMessages is toggled to ON, go further down to SMS and ensure it is also toggled ON. This will help ensure that if a message can't be delivered by IMessage it should be delivered by SMS. Another option to test is to Toggle IMessage to OFF, and ensure both SMS and MMS are toggled ON. Finally, the file size of what is being sent can be an issue.

We went on to take a look at a Malwarebytes article about the Chrome browser. Google has released an update for its Chrome browser that includes 13 security fixes, four of which are classified as high severity. They suggested that anyone using it make sure the version is 143.0.7499.40/.41 for Windows and

macOS, or later. It should update automatically, but you can easily check it. To update manually, click the More menu (three dots) in Chrome, then go to Settings > About Chrome. If an update is available, Chrome will start downloading it. Restart Chrome to complete the update, and you'll be protected against these vulnerabilities.

We discussed the rise in package-related scam text messages, also known as "smishing," and shared tips on identifying and avoiding such scams. Do not click on suspicious links and contact the post office directly if unsure about a package.

The group also briefly compared Sam's Club and Costco, noting differences in product offerings and pricing. We discussed their experiences with Costco and Sam's Club memberships, with Betty and J.J. noting they use both stores for different products. More details can be found at https://www.rd.com/article/costco-vs-sams-club/?_cmp=readuprdus&utm_source=email&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=&utm_audience=&_mid=819344&ehid=77C1A64A1523D98AABC671CEF21835CFCAC89C1F&_PermHash=f3622f8ea002a41135d0a88d83f392c01258fdf3f8028f633337c4aaf9a5e448&tohMagStatus=NONE

Then we discussed experiences with Temu, a popular on-line shopping site. Members gave mixed reviews. J.J. used it as a supplier of custom engraved items and shared positive experiences. Others discussed quality of products and the challenges of tariffs and unexpected brokerage fees on imported goods, with J.J. noting he hadn't encountered such fees recently. The conversation concluded with Louise Dahms inquiring about podcasts, leading to a discussion about various podcast platforms and apps, with Brian sharing his experience using Beyond Pod.

Jim demonstrated how to use Spotify and Amazon Music apps to listen to music, podcasts, and audiobooks

for free. He showed how to search for content, save it to playlists, and download files to the phone's storage. Some podcasts want you to listen live, while some provide a means to download it and listen to later or without access to internet.

Louise Bozek inquired about where downloaded files are stored on the phone. If the site allows the content to be downloaded it will be accessible in your phones file manager. Jim explained how to access them through the "My Files" app on a Samsung phone. The group discussed the availability of free podcasts and audiobooks, with Jim suggesting Louise explore Amazon's offerings further. Podcasts, perhaps a topic for further discussion?

Jim Hempel

DECEMBER 2026 SMARTPHONE SIG

Those attending included Jim Hempel, Terry Harvey, Don Skarda, J.J. Johnson, Kathy Mueller, Rita Bruce, Richard Durand, Bill James, Margaret Cortez, Brian Behling, and Louise Bozek.

The first question was, "Has anyone heard RoadRunner is discontinuing their email addresses?" Yes, Roadrunner email is effectively going away or being phased out by Spectrum, its owner; you can no longer sign up for new accounts, existing users face potential issues and disruptions, and Spectrum is shifting away from providing email, so it's strongly recommended to migrate to a different provider like Gmail, Yahoo, or Outlook soon.

Bill said he had an SBCGlobal email address, but even though he changed internet service providers, his SBCGlobal still works and he uses it regularly. When we researched that topic we found it's tied to your AT&T account and can be discontinued if you cancel that service. It still works (for now) because SBCGlobal was absorbed by AT&T, and they now run the email service through Yahoo Mail. They often provide continued free access to these legacy email accounts for users who might have had them for a long time, but keeping that email address for your primary address is risky and you're on borrowed time. The recommendation is to create a new Gmail or Outlook.com email address and backup your old emails and contacts to your computer.

Kathy asked whether the "eye" icon that lets you view a password—when it appears on some password entry fields—can be added where it isn't available. No, at least not in a useful or safe way. The "eye" icon is built into the website or app itself, not something a user can add. It's controlled by the programmer or the company that designed the sign-in page.

Richard asked whether there is a way to silence unknown callers on Android without blocking them, similar to call filtering on iPhones. Yes, to silence unknown callers on an Android phone, OPEN THE PHONE APP, TAP THE THREE DOTS, CHOOSE SETTINGS, TAP SPAM AND CALL SCREEN, TURN ON SILENCE UNKNOWN CALLERS. Calls will now go to voicemail, but aren't blocked. The other option would be to turn on DO NOT DISTURB (found in the QUICK SETTINGS), ALLOW CALLS FROM: CONTACTS ONLY, or REPEAT CALLERS (CALLS TWICE IN 15 MINUTES). Then unknown callers are silenced, but can still leave a voicemail.

Kindle assigns a separate email address to every device registered to your account. To locate that email address, open your KINDLE app. Make sure you're on the HOME PAGE of the Kindle app. Depending on

your model, you will see a hamburger menu (three stacked horizontal lines). Tap it, then SETTINGS, then look for the line that reads: SEND-TO-KINDLE EMAIL ADDRESS.

Rita was curious to know if anyone uses Bixby. Bixby is Samsung's AI-powered virtual assistant, similar to [Siri](#) or [Google Assistant](#), designed to help users control their Samsung devices (phones, TVs, appliances) and apps using voice commands, text, or touch, offering deep integration and personalized routines to automate tasks and get things done more easily. It excels at device-specific functions like changing settings, opening apps in sequence, taking notes, and even identifying objects with the camera (Bixby Vision). It responds to "Hi Bixby" to execute commands like "Open" or "Take a picture". Bixby Vision uses the camera to identify landmarks, text, objects, or products. Bixby Routines automates multi-step tasks like turning on Do Not Disturb and playing music when you arrive at work based on triggers. Bixby Home is a personalized feed of information and app suggestions. Bixby is a good DEVICE assistant if you want to control your device. Bill informs us that as of mid-December 2025, you may no longer use Facebook Messenger desktop apps, you now must be on the Facebook website or Messenger.com. You access chats directly within the main Facebook site or the dedicated Messenger website. The Facebook Messenger app on your phone still works as usual.

Don asked if anyone knew anything about Google Substack. "Google Substack" isn't a thing; rather, Substack is a popular independent platform where writers and creators publish newsletters, blogs, podcasts, and videos, monetizing content through free or paid subscriptions, functioning as a self-contained publishing and community hub, while Google is a separate entity that indexes these sites. It allows creators to bypass traditional media gatekeepers, build direct relationships with audiences, and earn income, taking a percentage of paid subscriptions as revenue.

While a deal has been struck for an American consortium to buy TikTok's U.S. operations, it's too early to definitively say it's "safe**,"** as key details are still un-

clear and security experts have lingering concerns about data handling, algorithm transparency, and potential loopholes, even with Oracle storing U.S. data and a new U.S.-based entity overseeing things; users should continue practicing digital safety, but the fundamental privacy questions aren't fully resolved, especially with the transfer to a new platform looming. Be cautious and stay informed. Monitor updates on the new ownership and platform details as the deal closes sometime in January 2026.

PODCASTS

Bill was interested to know what others used to listen to podcasts:

Spotify has a massive library, integrated music, good discovery, and cross-platforms. However, it can feel cluttered with music and contains many ads in the free tier.

Apple Podcasts have a huge variety and is easy to use. Discovery can be hit-or-miss.

Pocket Casts has a nice clean interface, strong cross-platform support, video podcast support, and "Smart Speed" which cuts silence. Some of the advanced features may require payment although the core is great.

AntennaPod is completely free, open-source, no ads, and customizable. It has fewer advanced features than paid apps and is for Android only.

YouTube Music is great for video podcasts but isn't as dedicated for audio-only listening

Castbox is very popular on Android, has good selection and community features. The free version has ads.

Jim likes to throw in a mix of technology and brought us up to speed about "The Barnacle". "The Barnacle" is a real parking enforcement device, a yellow clamp that suctions to a car's windshield to block vision for unpaid tickets, acting as an alternative to towing or traditional boots,

allowing drivers to pay online for a release code and avoiding the panic of a missing car. Tampering triggers an alarm, alerting enforcement. This innovative tech, used by cities like Charleston and NYPD, uses strong suction cups (around 750-1000 pounds of force), has alarms, and GPS, aiming for efficiency and reduced property damage, though it's faced debate over fairness and potential misuse by private lots. It's faster than towing, less expensive, and less stressful than a missing car.

We went to the site MerryChristmas.gov, a fun website of the "12 Days of Gov Design History" which highlighted

moments of design, innovation, and public work initiated by the federal government that helped shape the nation. It was a small holiday reminder of what America can build together. It also tracked Santa.

From YouTube

A raw photo is an uncompressed, unprocessed file containing all the data captured directly from a digital camera's sensor, acting as a "digital negative" for maximum editing flexibility. Unlike JPEGs, which discard data to save space, raw files preserve immense detail, allowing photographers extensive control over white balance, exposure, and color during post-processing, though they are much larger and require special software to view and edit. That means that RAW images aren't really "better", in fact they themselves are much worse pictures than a processed JPEG. They just allow you the freedom of doing those processing steps yourself (and adjusting the parameters to your liking) to get an even better end result - assuming you and your software are more capable than your camera.

Terry L Harvey

Managing email for your own domain doesn't have to cost anything. Several reputable providers offer completely free email forwarding so you can receive mail at you@yourdomain.com and read it in Gmail.

This guide highlights three services that are genuinely free and work especially well with Gmail.

Cloudflare Email Routing

Cloudflare Email Routing is the easiest option if your domain already uses Cloudflare. It creates custom email addresses and forwards them to Gmail without any extra tools.

Why it works well with Gmail

Cloudflare automatically creates the DNS records you need. It supports unlimited forwarding addresses. Gmail accepts Cloudflare-forwarded mail without special configuration. It works smoothly with Gmail's "Send mail as" feature.

How to set it up

1. Log in to Cloudflare and select your domain.

2. Open the Email section and enable Email Routing.

3. Create a rule such as: contact@yourdomain.com → yourgmail@gmail.com

4. Cloudflare adds the required DNS records automatically.

5. Verify your Gmail address when prompted.

In Gmail, add your domain address under "Send mail as."

ImprovMX

ImprovMX is simple, fast, and ideal for personal domains. Its free plan includes multiple aliases and reliable forwarding.

Why it works well with Gmail

It forwards mail quickly and consistently. It provides free SMTP credentials for Gmail's "Send mail as." It requires only basic DNS changes.

How to set it up

1. Create an account at ImprovMX.

2. Add your domain to the dashboard.

3. Add the MX and TXT records ImprovMX provides.

4. Create a forwarding rule to your Gmail address.

In Gmail, add your domain address under "Send mail as" and use the SMTP settings from ImprovMX.

SimpleLogin

SimpleLogin is different from traditional forwarding. It creates email aliases that protect your real Gmail address. When someone emails an alias, SimpleLogin forwards it to Gmail. When you reply, the recipient sees the alias.

Why it works well with Gmail

Gmail receives forwarded alias mail normally. Replies from Gmail automatically go out through the alias. It is excellent for privacy and spam control.

How to set it up

1. Create an account at SimpleLogin.

2. Create an alias and link it to your Gmail address.

3. Use the alias anywhere you want privacy.

When you reply in Gmail, SimpleLogin rewrites the address so the recipient sees the alias.

Choosing the Best Option

Use Cloudflare Email Routing if your domain is already on Cloudflare. Use ImprovMX if you want the simplest forwarding setup with SMTP support. Use SimpleLogin if privacy and spam protection are your top priorities.

All three services are completely free and work well with Gmail for personal or small-business use.

DECEMBER 2025 LEADERSHIP MEETING

Those in attendance: Don Skarda, Jim Hempel, Bob Banerian, Richard Durand, and Jan Mlagan.

The meeting started with talk about members who have not yet paid their dues for the upcoming year. Some of those surprised the group because they are currently members in good standing. There was also talk about how some members are still not getting email from the club. If you or someone you know has trouble connecting, please let Don know so that this problem can be rectified.

J. J. Johnson has been using AI to make a podcast and a slide show of our newsletter. He sent the two versions to Don so he could see other ideas for the club. We listened to it later in the meeting and it was fabulous!

The Christmas party sign up sheet was updated to make the donations more financially equivalent. Also, the donation, if not bringing food is changed for next year. The new donation amounts will be $15 per member, and $20 per member's spouse or guest.

Please remember to reply if you plan on attending either of our annual parties, even if you are giving a monetary donation.

Suzanne Holcomb will be resigning her position as Hostess as of the end of the year. Suzanne has done a fabulous job and will be greatly missed. Tom and Judy Janczak have graciously offered to take over the position. Thank you for stepping up and helping out our club.

The question was brought up about having one-on-one sessions on the 5th Thursdays. It was suggested to discontinue this because of poor turn out. Jim also said that several of the local Senior centers are offering these classes at a low cost, with the incentive of owning the refurbished laptop after they complete the classes.

Jan Mlagan

Making the Move to Windows 11:

A Reassuring Guide for Seniors

If you're a senior computer user still running Windows 10, you may have heard that Microsoft will stop supporting it on **October 14, 2025**. That means no more security updates or technical support after that date. The thought of switching to Windows 11 might seem intimidating—but rest assured, the transition is easier and friendlier than you may think.

The first thing most people notice in Windows 11 is how clean and uncluttered it looks. The Start

button and taskbar icons are centered at the bottom, making them easy to find. However, you can move them back to the left side if you prefer the classic layout from Windows 10. The desktop and file explorer still work in the same basic way, so your favorite folders, documents, and pictures remain easy to access.

Many of the changes in Windows 11 are designed to make everyday computing smoother and less confusing. The settings menu, for example, is simpler and easier to read. Common tasks like checking Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, and volume controls are now grouped in a single place for convenience.

Security is one of the biggest reasons to upgrade. Windows 11 includes stronger protection against online threats such as viruses, scams, and malware. It uses advanced encryption and modern hardware features to keep your information safe. Even if you mainly browse the web, email friends, or play simple games, having an up-to-date system helps protect your privacy and peace of mind.

Microsoft built Windows 11 to work better with today's hardware and internet use. That means it runs more smoothly, starts faster, and stays secure longer. Once Windows 10 support ends, staying on the older version could eventually expose you to risks that newer systems can easily block.

Windows 11 also improves accessibility, which is great news for seniors. You can easily enlarge text, increase contrast, or use voice typing to dictate notes and emails. The new layout offers rounded corners, softer colors, and a calm look that's easier on the eyes.

If you use a laptop or touchscreen, you'll notice how touch-friendly Windows 11 is. Icons are more spaced out, and the built-in help features are more visible. Microsoft's "Tips" app provides short, clear lessons to help you learn new features at your own pace.

Many members worry they'll lose their photos, documents, or favorite programs during an upgrade. Fortunately, Windows 11 keeps your personal files safe. The setup process can transfer your data automatically, and most programs you already use will continue to work. It's always smart to back up your files before upgrading—but the process is now much more reliable than in past versions.

You don't have to face the change by yourself. Members of WAUC are here for you and can also share their own experiences and tips.

Switching to Windows 11 isn't about keeping up with technology—it's about staying safe while using your computer. You'll find computing is simpler, not harder. WE'RE HERE FOR YOU!

Terry L Harvey

December 2025 Lunch

WAUC: Wisconsin All-computer Users Club, WAUC was established to provide an educational forum for people interested in learning about computers and related devices. WAUC provides educational programs and publications for its members, as well as providing social and charitable opportunities for the membership. While WAUC is a private club and doesn't share any member information outside the club, we encourage members to interact with other members and to facilitate this we publish a membership directory, an email, and promote via a public Facebook group where we often add pictures of group events and our public website.

WAUCtalk is a publication of the Wisconsin All-computer Users Club. WAUC is a computer club dedicated to promoting and instructing the use of computers by WAUC members. WAUCtalk is emailed to all WAUC membership. Free advertising is available to all WAUC members. We are not responsible for omissions or errors.

WAUC Application for Membership / Renewal

Name _____

Address _____

*email*_____

*City*_____ *State*_____*Zip*_____

*What do you want to do with your computer?*_____

To join WAUC, please send a completed form along with a check for $30 ($15 after July 1st) to cover dues from January 1st through December 31st, 2026.

WAUC

% Bob Banerian

P.O. Box 340883

Milwaukee, WI 53234-0883

First Class

TECH MADE SIMPLE—FOR EVERY GENERATION