MC³ Newsletter
August 2019

VOLUME 36 NUMBER 7

The August meeting of the McHenry County Computer Club is **August 10, 2019 at Salvation Army Building 290 W. Crystal Lake Ave., in Crystal Lake, IL.**

NOTE: *Enter the building on the parking lot level under the awning.*

Meeting Agenda

- Introductions & Reports
- Q & A
- 3D Printing - Alan Schrader

Upcoming Demos - Subject to Change

October - Digital Photography Topix, Part 2

Please let a board member know if you have any ideas for upcoming demos.

APVUG - Virtual Technology Conference

August 17 - Register on Eventbrite

TRACK 1

1:00 PM ET

Driving with Google Map

Ron Brown, Program Director, Silvercom Computer & Technology Club, Arizona

2:00 PM ET

The Installation, Care and Feeding of a Mesh Router

Greg Skalka, President, Under the Computer Hood User Group

3:00 PM ET

Battle of the Browsers

Bill Crowe, 1st Vice President, Sarasota Technology Users Group

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McHenry County Computer Club
Established 1982
MC³

Our membership is $26.00 a year.

NOTE: This fee offsets the running of the club; membership benefits include help with computer problems. Please pay Lyle Giese, our treasurer, or the designated Board Member in his absence.

MC³ OFFICIALS

TRACK 2

1:00 PM ET

How I fired my cable company and still enjoy TV, Internet and a home phone

Stew Bottorf, Chromebook and Cut Cable SIG Leader, Tampa Bay Technology Center, Florida

2:00 PM ET

The most common issues that need repair from a PC/Mac repair shop perspective

Dan Douglas, President, Space Coast PCUG, Florida

3:00 PM ET

Going Paperless

Dr. Pierre Darmon, President, Westchester PCUG, New York

4:15 PM ET

Let's Talk Round Table discussion

Do you have a problem you need help with? Ask the question and you will receive an answer or two or three… Have you had some new presentations? Share them with the RT attendees. Plus, whatever the attendees want to discuss.

Q & A

Q How would I know if a key logger is on a machine?

A Malwarebytes or a good anti-virus program will detect them.

Q: Is MalwareBytes free?

A: You can install it as Premium, Paid or Free. When installing(all three are installed from the same installer), you can choose Premium, Paid or 14 day trial. After 14 days, you are given a choice between paying or continuing as a free version. The free version is on demand only, no real time protection.

Blocks and Bits - An Introduction to Blockchain - Joan Grace, Northeast Ohio PC Club

Blockchain is a distributed, decentralized, public ledger. (Investopedia) In simple terms, if you consider a standard database, it's like a pile of credit cards on the floor of a bank vault; with blockchain, it's as if each credit card were in a safe deposit box inside the bank vault. Blockchain is a growing list of records, called blocks, which are linked using cryptography. Each block contains a cryptographic hash of the previous block, a timestamp, and transaction data. By design, a blockchain is resistant to modification of the data. (Wikipedia)

Blockchain technology promises to transform finance the way the internet transformed communication. Blockchain is the technology that runs Bitcoin. There have been technologies similar to Blockchain, but none of them combined all the three features of Blockchain: Peer-to-peer Network, Cryptography, and Proof of Work. In addition, blockchain technology can be used in other applications as well; e.g., tracking votes, registering auto titles, managing medical records.

Bitcoin is a cryptocurrency, a form of electronic cash. It is a decentralized digital currency without a central bank or single administrator that can be sent from user to user on the peer-to-peer bitcoin network without the need for intermediaries. (Wikipedia) Bitcoin is world's first revolutionary cryptocurrency and a digital payment system. There are other cryptocurrencies as well.

Cryptocurrency is a digital or virtual currency that uses cryptography for security between individuals, and for anti-counterfeiting measures. This means users must reach a consensus about cryptocurrency's value and use it as an exchange medium. A defining feature of a cryptocurrency, and arguably its biggest allure, is its organic nature; it is not issued by any central authority, rendering it theoretically immune to government interference or manipulation.

Blockland: Cleveland is building a blockchain technology ecosystem; Blockland is a group of civic and business leaders working on making Cleveland a tech hub. The Blockland initiative exists to educate and promote real-world blockchain applications, while establishing and leading a blockchain ecosystem with support from private, public and philanthropic individuals and organizations to:

1. Educate - Provide for an emerging workforce and leaders in blockchain technology.
2. Lead - Demonstrate innovation and real-world application of technology in the Midwest.
3. Establish - Create a local ecosystem where partnerships leverage blockchain technology.
4. Promote - Blockchain has incredible potential to be inclusive in serving the greater good.

Part of the effort involves a proposed real estate deal that would create a space dedicated to housing start-ups and coders, nick-named the City Block.

Internet of Things Data Tracking - Jeff Wilkinson, Sun City Summerlin Computer Club

As I continue to delve into the ramifications of targeted marketing and how it might affect us in our everyday lives, I'm diverted to the Internet of Things (IoT). A little research on IoT and how data from seemingly innocuous devices could be collected and used, proved enlightening, with a tremendous amount being written on this subject.

How will this data flow through the various collection systems? Will data be captured in real time or transmitted in anonymous batches? How will it be used, and who will have access to the purportedly anonymous data sources? Devices supplying data could include fitness wearables, various accessories in cars, IoT equipped appliances, such as refrigerators, washers, dryers, health trackers, Smart TV's, security cameras and devices, web connected eyeglasses, and the list goes on.

IoT devices will outnumber the world's population this year for the first time.

A recent study indicated that over half of those surveyed would be willing to receive some ads.

This, of course, indicates that some form of data tracking is needed, not only of our computers and phones, but of the fitness monitors used to track our physical activity, the refrigerators monitoring our supply of milk, or the processor in our new car monitoring our driving!

Much of the data can be used for non-nefarious purposes, such as product improvement and fu-

ture product development. But will some of this data be used to extrapolate future drug health care needs, based on current fitness monitor feedback data? Will this data find its way into insurance actuarial tables? And, of course this data will be used for more fine grain targeted marketing. The management of this data has, in fact, spawned new companies who will monetize this valuable data. It will be another learning experience, as hopefully the public is able to decide what is acceptable and what is not.

On the plus side, IoT can help create Smart Homes and improve machine efficiency, such as heating and cooling devices. IoT can be used in wearables for security and identification, health monitoring and reporting, smart retail and inventory control, optimization of farming, and supply chain activities, to name a few.

Many positive things come out of the use of IoT data, such as Rolls Royce using this data, along with artificial intelligence (AI), to create business benefits to customers and improve their products. They have created “Data Innovation Cells” which use collected data to test new ideas to improve performance, maintenance cycles, and safety, and develop product improvements. It is certain that data from IoT connected devices will unlock efficiencies, spawn innovation, and lead to meaningful insights of all kinds!

So, the IoT is actually being used in numerous positive ways, and engineers are just beginning to see all the potential benefits. Of course, putting sensors and retrieving feedback from every process can result in an overabundance of data, which may or may not prove useful. While all of this can be viewed as an overwhelming invasion of privacy, it can also be looked at as an exciting step forward and a world full of new opportunities, with positive outcomes around every corner!

Is the CPU the PC Shopping Key? Paul Baecker, Sterling Heights Computer Club

With the pending demise of all Microsoft support on January14, 2020 for what is possibly their best operating system to date (Windows 7), many users will be shopping for a new PC as one of their solutions. Another solution could be to install Linux onto that Windows 7 PC as a ‘dual-boot’ configuration, so that the user can safely surf the web using the Linux boot option, but still maintain the Windows partition with needed Windows applications (just don’t go web surfing with it).

If a new PC is the choice, how to go about it? Well, I look at buying a new computer sort of like buying a new car (or SUV if we believe the trends). What is the first thing about a new vehicle that we think of? I’d say it’s the engine. You can select a 4-cyl or 6-cyl or hybrid or electric motor. But once you buy it, can you return to the dealer and switch it if you have second thoughts? Nope. I look at this akin to choosing a PC with a particular

CPU. Generally, you can’t switch the CPU (OK, you extreme tekkies, this column isn’t for you!) once you make your purchase. You can usually increase the RAM or switch from an HDD to an SSD, and such things that enhance the PC’s performance, but you’re stuck with the CPU performance that came with that sparkling new PC.

When you see 5 PCs on the store shelf, all with the same price, how to choose? How to select the ‘right’ PC, despite what the over-anxious salesperson might push you into buying? A little homework, that’s how. The www.passmark.com web site is your new pal. It compares relative performance among over 2700 CPUs from Intel and AMD. AMD is Intel’s primary PC CPU competitor, and a CPU brand certainly worth considering (the two manufacturers keep leapfrogging over each other

with new CPU technologies — Intel just advertises more, and you pay for that treat). The site also has other hardware benchmarking features (RAM, video cards, drives, much more), but we’ll stick to CPUs in this article.

To check the overall performance of a CPU on passmark.com (which is a FREE site), you do this:

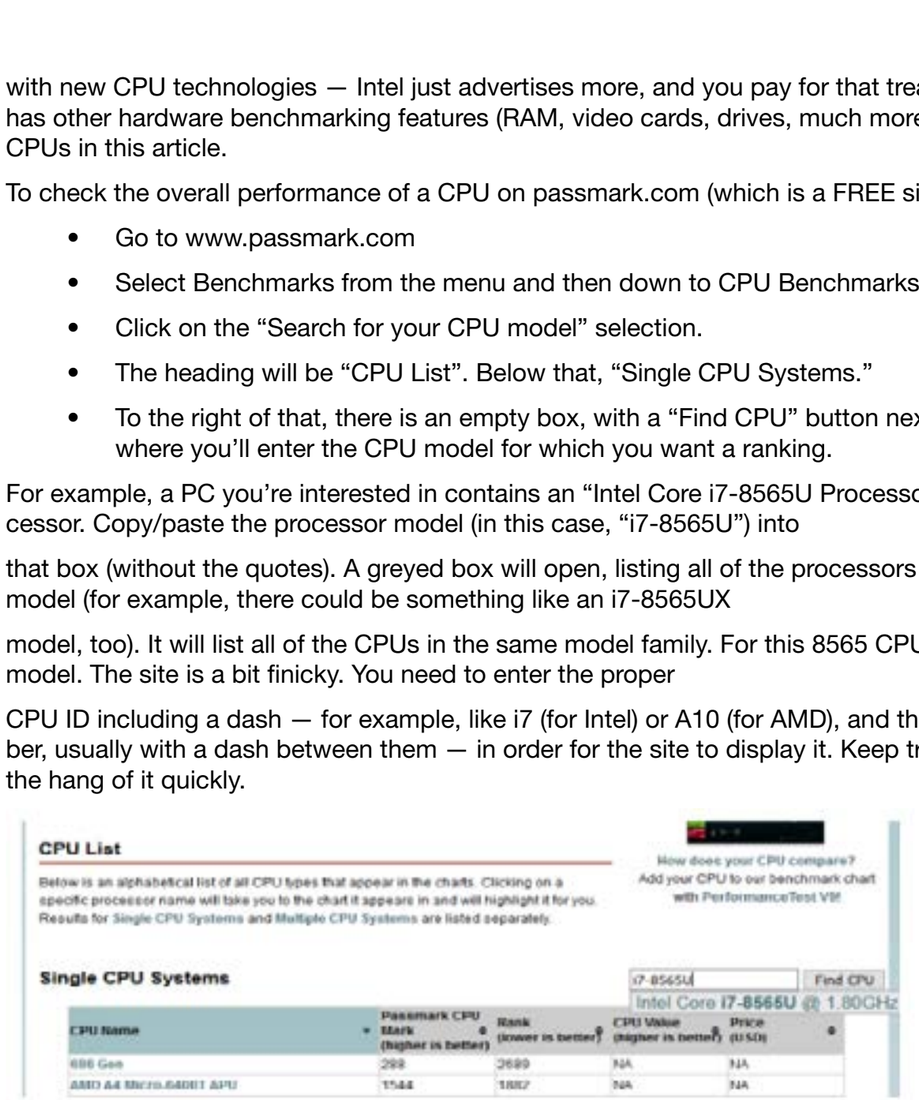
- Go to www.passmark.com
- Select Benchmarks from the menu and then down to CPU Benchmarks.
- Click on the “Search for your CPU model” selection.
- The heading will be “CPU List”. Below that, “Single CPU Systems.”
- To the right of that, there is an empty box, with a “Find CPU” button next to it. This is where you’ll enter the CPU model for which you want a ranking.

For example, a PC you’re interested in contains an “Intel Core i7-8565U Processor at 1.8GHz” processor. Copy/paste the processor model (in this case, “i7-8565U”) into

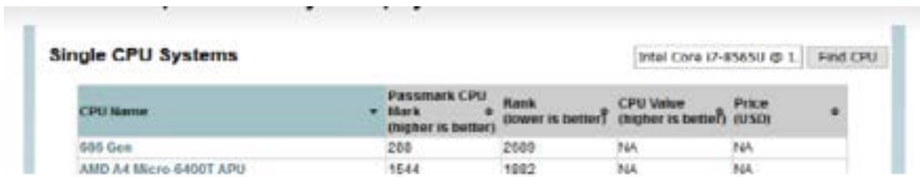
that box (without the quotes). A greyed box will open, listing all of the processors that pertain to that model (for example, there could be something like an i7-8565UX

model, too). It will list all of the CPUs in the same model family. For this 8565 CPU, there is only one model. The site is a bit finicky. You need to enter the proper

CPU ID including a dash — for example, like i7 (for Intel) or A10 (for AMD), and then the model number, usually with a dash between them — in order for the site to display it. Keep trying — you’ll get the hang of it quickly.



Click on the selection to get it entered in full in the box that was previously empty. It’ll look like this:



Then you can click on the Find CPU button, and you'll see the resulting ranking:

CPU Name	Passmark CPU Mark (higher is better)	Rank (lower is better)	CPU Value (higher is better)	Price (USD)
Intel Core i7-8550U @ 1.80GHz	8300	451	NA	NA
Intel Core i7-8559U @ 2.70GHz	12364	206	NA	NA
Intel Core i7-8565U @ 1.80GHz	9067	387	NA	NA
Intel Core i7-8850U @ 1.80GHz	8826	413	NA	NA

So, the CPU in this PC is ranked 387 for overall performance among about 2700 listed CPUs. Remember that "1" is the CPU with the highest overall performance (you

can click on "Rank" at the top of the listings to see everything in performance order — you can sort on any of the columns there). A ranking above 400 is pretty darned cool these days and will all-but-promise you a high-performing PC for many years to come.

This web site has many other features, but in my opinion, this CPU-performance ranking is the most useful to typical PC shoppers. The site can also compare up to three CPUs at a time. Clicking on any of the CPUs in the list will display windows with additional qualities — power consumption, number of cores, clock speeds, pricing (which changes day-to-day), and more.

So, when you visit a store (or a retail web site) and observe so many PCs available to your wallet, consider making notes of the various CPUs in PCs in your price range. Peruse their overall performance on this site.

Also consider upping your price range just a bit to get a much-higher-rated CPU, knowing that later you can alter those other PC components to enhance that PC (RAM,

drive, etc.). Then go shopping. Some stores offer a return period with a full refund (avoid stores with so called 'restocking fees'!!!), so that you can test drive your new digital toy at home, particularly useful since you really cannot put any PC to the test in a store.

Just ask about it.

Interesting Internet Finds - Steve Costello, SEFCUG

Find Free Images with CC Search

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

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

What You Need to Know About DuckDuckGo

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

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

Make Google Calendar More Useful with These Free Calendars

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

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

10 Useful Websites You Wish You Knew Earlier! 2019

It's that time again for this year's edition of Useful Websites that can help you in your daily life. These 10 websites you are in various categories that some of you might know about along with ones that you'll wish you knew about earlier.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vp89NpIIBvw

Tired of Robocalls? Stop Answering Your Phone

The robocall problem keeps getting worse. Nearly half of all calls come from automated systems, and that number is increasing. Tired of answering your phone and talking to robots, scammers, or scammer robots? Just stop answering. Click on the link below to find out more.

https://www.howtogeek.com/413873/tired-of-robocalls-stop-answering-your-phone/

"All I'm saying is we plug these into Excel, let it do its thing, and then we can all play until lunch!"