



News Journal

June

Join us

June 14, 2014

Grayslake Public
Library from
12:00 to 3:00pm
for a discussion
with a
Microsoft
Technician

July 12, 2014

Annual Picnic
At
Fred & Liz Barnett

August 9, 2014

Phil Bock
Windows 8.1.1

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Members Helping Members

Volume 31 Issue 3

What You Need to Know about QR Codes

By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS,
www.compukiss.com, [sandy \(at\) compukiss.com](mailto:sandy@compukiss.com)

If you've seen QR or Quick Response Codes, but don't know what they mean, this article will explain it all for you. QR codes are becoming more and more prevalent and offer additional information on many of the things you read and see. QR codes can be found in many current magazines and newspapers.

QR codes: They are small squares filled with black square dots arranged in a grid pattern on a white background. If you look

carefully at a QR code, you will see that each one is unique in the placement of the small black and white squares. While this doesn't mean anything to the eye of the beholder, the placement of the dots defines the additional data that is embedded in the code. The QR code on the left will lead you to The website of The Pilot, a newspaper I write for. The one on the right will lead you to the home page on my Compu-KISS website.

Although most QR codes are black and white, they can also

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The Tip Corner

By Bill Sheff, Novice SIG Coordinator, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, PA December 2013 issue, The LVCG Journal www.lvcg.org [nsheff \(at\) aol.com](mailto:nsheff(at)aol.com)

How Often Should I Shut Down My Computer?

This question comes up quite often. Unfortunately there's no easy answer. Are you concerned about your electric bill? How important is it to have immediate access to your computer? What about your own personal preference? Electrici-

ty Costs vary based upon how many watts of power your computer uses as well as what the local utility charges per kwh. Some say it costs roughly \$25 per month, however I do not think it actually runs that high. But if conservation and economics are important to you shut it down each night. Wear and Tear does play a part, however today's hard drives usually stop spinning when idle and fans

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(since 1983)

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News Journal

The LCACE News Journal is published eleven times annually. Members are encouraged to submit contributions which will be acknowledged in this newsletter.

Send articles to editor@lcace.org

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Logo designed on an Atari Stacy Laptop in 1989 by Dwight Johnson Jr.

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

**LCACE
c/o Group Ambassador**

["J.J." Johnson](#)

Membership

LCACE membership is open to all individuals and families interested in personal computing. Annual dues are \$20.00 per individual/family. Applications for membership may be obtained at the monthly meeting, by request on the club hotline, and are now available on our web site at <http://www.lcace.org>.

Meetings

LCACE meetings are usually held on Saturdays at the Grayslake Area Public Library, 100 Library Lane, Grayslake, Illinois. The meeting room opens at noon and the formal meeting begins at 12:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public. Bring a friend!

Newsletter Submissions

Club members are welcome to submit classified ads, reviews, tips and other articles for publication, to our newsletter editor in Microsoft Word format (.doc). **Publication deadline is the 20th of the month for all ads and articles.** Please do not use tabs or special formatting.

Newsletter Advertising

Ad rates per issue: Full page - \$25, Half page - \$15, Quarter page - \$10, Business Card - \$5. Discounts are available on advance purchase of multiple issues. Please send camera-ready copy and payment to the club address by the 15th of the month preceding publication. For more information on ad pricing, please call our Hotline. Ads are **FREE** to all paid members.

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contain stars, squares, and other color and/or black and white images.



QR codes are now linking paper content like newspapers and magazines to digital content. To understand QR codes, you can think of them as paper-based hyperlinks that work like bar codes. To access the digital content, you need a QR reader which you can easily download to your smart phone or tablet. Most of these are free. They use the camera in your phone to read the QR code and take you to the digital content.

You can find a QR code on a newspaper or magazine article, a business card, or a menu. Actually QR codes can be printed on just about anything. I've even seen them printed on T-shirts. Of course, they can also be used digitally. For example a QR code could be displayed on a web page to transfer information directly to a cell phone. A QR code can even be added to a Tweet.

To access the information in a QR code, after you download a free QR reader, you simply start the app and hold your mobile phone or tablet about 4" to 6" with the camera squarely above the QR code. When you get it positioned properly, your phone will take the picture and display the additional information on your device. You don't have to press any buttons or the screen, everything is done automatically.

QR codes can give you many different types of additional information. If you see one on an advertisement, it will probably lead you to more information about the product. A QR code on a business card can lead you to more information about that person or company. QR codes can lead you to things like coupons, movie trailers, phone numbers, or directions. I find them invaluable when on a recipe because they allow me to view the recipe on a tablet and use it immediately in the kitchen.

Several companies have developed further enhancements for QR codes allowing them to be hidden in a picture. They embed imperceptible digital information in pictures or behind text, creating an invisible hyperlink to online content. They can even embed a QR code in an audio file.

Digimarc is a company in the forefront of the QR world. I use the free Digimarc app because it works with their own "hidden" codes as well as regular QR codes and barcodes. It is available for both Android and Apple.

When a QR code is hidden, there will usually be a note to that effect or a small logo on or near the picture to indicate that it is, in fact, a QR code. Even though you don't see the code, you can hold your phone or tablet over the picture to activate the code.

QR codes are very popular in Japan and are becoming more and more popular here as people find new uses for them. I imagine that sometime soon all smart phones and tablets will come with a QR code reader so you won't have to download one.

If you are interested in creating a QR code for your T-shirt, business card, or website, the easiest way to do it is to use a third-party QR code generator. I created the two QR codes shown in this article using a website called Kaywa at <http://qrcode.kaywa.com> <http://grcode.kaywa.com>. Of course, Kaywa has professional options that you have to pay for, but creating a few simple QR codes is completely free



L.C.A.C.E. Club Historian

History Report, 4/5/14 and 5/10/14 Meetings

By Les Larkin
LesLarkin@AIM.com



The April meeting featured our 31st Anniversary celebration, and the election of officers for our 32nd year. Also, Robin handed out many Certificates of Appreciation for many of the members who make our club such an outstanding group. Of course, it

was Robin who brought out the best efforts in all of us by her tireless work as President for 6 great years. Thank you, Robin.

Thanks also, to Donna Kalinoski and her helpers for conducting the election. Our new officers grace the cover of the May issue of this publication.

The May meeting was ably conducted by Liz Barnett, our new President. After the business portion and refreshment break, we were treated to a very informative webinar (seminar via the web) by Gene Barlow of User Group Relations. The webinar featured Acronis True Image 2014, as well as other Acronis products. He also provided much useful advice regarding the management of data on our computers, including the wisdom of dividing our hard drives into 2 or more partitions.

Bobby Jacobs operated the Skype connection, and J.J. Johnson handled Acronis sales. Thanks to both of you for making the program a success.

Hope to see you June 14 at our next club meeting.

Les

So you want to write a review for the News Journal?



Follow the guidelines below and you won't have any trouble writing a great review.

Facts to always include in your review.

1. What category is your produce in? (graphic, utility, etc.)
2. Product name and version
3. Produce cost, rebates, special offers, etc.
4. Company/manufacture's name.
5. Company URL, phone, or contact information.
6. Special system and hardware requirements.
7. Use simple terms to tell about what you like.
8. Use simple terms to tell about what you don't like.
9. What is your overall recommendation? Should other buy and use the produce or not?

Suggestion for interesting review and articles.

1. Program installations are not interesting, unless they are unique—for instance, it took eight hours to install, you needed a doctorate degree, or a rabbit's foot and special incantations. Write, instead, about what happened after the installation.
2. Write for other users. Ask yourself, "What would my friends be interested in knowing about the product and my experience?"
3. Use personal pronouns, such as you and I, not "one" or "a person."
4. If you have a scanner, send a JPEG or GIF of the product (from the box, manu-

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al cover, etc.) with your review or article. Or, you might find a product image you could send on the manufacturer's web site or Google images..

5. After the review or article, please include a couple of sentences about yourself: the type of work you do, how long you've been in the club, why you joined a computer group, and anything you think is interesting about yourself. It could be that you just bought a new computer, or you built your first computer, or you just started using a computer, or you just moved to Lake County, etc. (If you have a photo of yourself, it would be great if you would include it. We can use it alongside your review. Members like to see who is doing the review!)

Still have questions? Write editor@lcace.org



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don't work as hard in sleep mode. Many Processes continue to run which has the potential to cause memory losses. The bottom line? When I researched this tip the suggestion was to shut your computer off when not in use. However, I very seldom shut my computer off. I put it into sleep mode before I go to sleep. So I guess this tip was not too helpful for most of you. But just be aware there are many different opinions out there, so no matter what you do, some will agree and others won't.

Laptop Abilities

Here are a few items you might want to consider when searching out your next laptop. By this time we know that Windows 8 is here and alive and well. But if you still prefer the Windows 7 look Classic Shell and Pokki are two apps that will give you that comfortable Win7 look. And speaking of apps you can get an app that turns your laptop camera into a surveillance system that will automatically start recording when someone enters the room, or even set it up so you can turn on your camera from a remote location and view a live feed. You can also download a face recognition app, which uses the

camera to scan your face during startup to ensure that it's really you who is logging on to your machine. But, while this is more fun than punching in a password, it's a little less secure. Holding a photograph of you in front of the computer would work. There are other apps that can turn your laptop into an easy-to-use photo booth. Look for one that lets you accessorize portraits with digital costumes, add thought-bubbles, and even alter the color to make the photos look old-fashioned. These apps and software are usually not pre-installed, so until you download them, your camera will be less functional. Many of the laptops, and all the tablets utilize a touch screen. There are finger and hand-swiping commands to be learned. Different brands can have different movements, so look them up to learn how to switch between programs and windows, shrink and zoom in, drag-and-drop, and more. Lenovo's 10-point multi-touch displays offer a wide-range of intuitive gestures that use up to all ten of your fingers. And, if you have Windows 8, you can use Customized Flicks to create your own touch screen commands. Look for a laptop that has as a minimum an HDMI port, USB drives, headphone output, microphone input, and a DC-in. An SD card reader slot would be useful also, however USB connections could do. If your plans also include an external USB3 device you want your new laptop to come with a USB 3.0 port. Data transfer is up to ten times faster with a USB3. And you may want to see if there is a firewire port so you can hook up digital cameras. But whatever they have, take



a few minutes to familiarize yourself with all its capabilities. You might have noticed I did not comment whether it should be a Mac or PC.

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Today both contain almost all the programs you need. The cost of a Mac and associated programs are usually more expensive than the PC. This is because there are a lot more PCs out there which make it cheaper per unit. Most young people prefer the Mac, but that is because of the great marketing job done by providing Macs in the schools. If your laptop is also going to be used in business, it should be compatible with the equipment at the office.

CTRL + ALT +DELETE

Occasionally a program gets stuck. It stops working and will not close no matter what you do. The answer is CTRL + ALT +DELETE. This opens a window with a few options: Lock, Switch User, Log Off, Change Password and Start Task Manager. The Task Manager will show all programs that are in use. Sometimes you can see that a program is not functioning if it says 'not running', however it might show that the program you are having trouble with is still running. This can be true or not. It could be hung up in a memory loop, or really just taking a very long time to respond. In any event you can just highlight the program you are having trouble with and click on End Task, and the program will be shut down.

Using the Task Manager means you do not have to shut down the computer in an incorrect manner.

CryptoPrevent (4.2.4)

There is a bad program going around called Cryptolocker which locks up your files and you can only unlock them by paying money. CryptoPrevent is a tiny utility to lock down any Windows OS (XP, Vista, 7, 8, and 8.1) to prevent infection by the Cryptolocker malware or 'ransomware', which encrypts personal files and then offers decryption for a paid ransom. Additionally, due to the way that CryptoPrevent works, it actually protects against a wide variety of malware, not just Cryptolocker! You can get it here: <http://www.foolishit.com/vb6-projects/cryptoprevent/> This tip was provided to me by one of my readers. Thanks.

Has Your Browser Been Hacked

Many of you have noticed that without warning a new toolbar appears in your browser.

Or when you click on a site you get misdirected to another site touting some product. Since there is no such thing as a free lunch, and many legitimate companies are allowing this to happen what can we do to minimize this unwanted intrusion. Some times this comes from a cookie or temp file that ended up on your computer due to a casual click in a site. More often than not it appears when you are installing an update from a legitimate program. In more simple times when an update is downloaded all we had to do is install it normally. We never thought of clicking on the custom update button. But that is what we have to do. If we click on the normal update button, bundled with the update are all the Advertising, Loading toolbars, Redirection, and other marketing tools. Sometimes the boxes to add toolbars are shown in the opening screen, but more and more they appear within the custom install and there we are able to decline to add those pesky toolbars. So what you have to do is read everything you upload. The advertising media is big money and doesn't seem to be going away soon. Fortunately, most of these marketing bullies can be uninstalled or deleted quite simply. So if you see some new icons show up in your browser, try to figure out what they are. Depending on your browser, there should be a section on "addons". Visit that and see if some strange toolbars are installed there. And go to the Programs and Features in the Control Panel to uninstall.

Just remember: it is all about money.

Nice to know

In Windows 8.1, you can shut down your PC by right-clicking the Start button to display the Quick Access menu, then select Shut Down or Sign Out > Shut Down. This is a much easier and a lot quicker way to shut down in Windows 8.1



Phil Bock

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Here are 5 important identity protection tips:

- 1. Don't share your personal information:** Before providing your personal information, ask why it's needed and try to limit the amount.
- 2. Strengthen your passwords:** Change your passwords every few months. Make them longer (8-12 characters) and combine numbers, symbols, and upper and lower case letters.
- 3. Watch your credit score:** Check your credit report for anything that looks unusual and watch for changes in your score.
- 4. Be aware of scams:** Identity thieves are smart. They'll try to get your personal information by skimming your credit card during check out, fake phishing emails, websites, contest texts or phone calls.
- 5. Shop smart:** Online shopping provides many conveniences, but be sure to look for a security seal (lock symbol) and "https:" in the URL when it comes time to enter any personal information.



Amazon will pay our club a small advertising fee if the shopper comes from our website and makes a purchase

Dear family and friends

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts is now an Amazon.com affiliate.

Amazon sells books, technology, just about anything you can name. If you plan to shop at Amazon.com, please visit our website www.lcace.org and click on the Amazon link at the top.

Thank you



Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

Do you have computer questions or need help with your computer?



Visit Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts' help desk for one on one help

Open to all

**11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
Grayslake Area Public Library
Rooms A-C**



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