

NEWS JOURNAL

“Members Helping Members”

February 2024

(since 1983)

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Adobe Firefly

Open up your art creativity with AI and have fun!

By Jasmine Blue D’Katz

Over the past several months, I’ve been experimenting with several AI art generating programs, and Adobe Photoshop has incorporated AI into its features, offering powerful tools for both creative exploration and workflow efficiency. And with the recent release of Adobe Firefly, AI allows you to create images with just a few strokes of your imagination, offering new ways to ideate, create, and communicate while significantly improving creative work using generative AI.

Adobe Firefly is a free, experimental web app powered by generative AI that helps you explore creative possibilities and streamline your workflow. It acts as a creative playground where you can experiment with different ideas and bring them to life quickly and easily. Here’s a breakdown of what it is, what it’s for, and how you can use it:

What is it?

- A standalone web app available at <https://www.adobe.com/products/firefly.html>
- Offers new ways to ideate, create, and communicate using generative AI.
- **Features include:**

Firefly

4 Amazing Powers of Adobe’s AI Image Creation Tool



- ◆ **Image generation:** Create unique images based on text prompts, styles, and emotions.
- ◆ **Text effects:** Apply artistic text styles and effects to any text.
- ◆ **Color palettes:** Generate custom color palettes based on keywords or images.
- ◆ **Mood boards:** Build mood boards by searching for and adding images based on themes or keywords.

What is it for?

- Brainstorming and generating ideas for creative projects.
- Quickly creating mockups and prototypes.
- Adding unique and artistic touches to your designs.

Exploring different creative directions without starting from scratch.

*"Members Helping
Members"
(since 1983)*

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News Journal

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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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L.C.A.C.E. PRESIDENTIAL THOUGHTS



Volunteering for Club Office and Club Committees: Why It Matters

Volunteering provides opportunities to develop skills and make new friends. But did you know that volunteering can also benefit your academic and professional development? If you would like to see L.C.A.C.E. thrive and be successful, you should consider volunteering for club office or a club committee.

Club office refers to the positions of leadership and responsibility within a club, such as president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. Club committees are smaller groups of members who work on specific tasks such as special interest groups (SIGs) and to further club goals such as fundraising and social events.

Volunteering for club offices and committees is not only rewarding, but also easy and flexible. You can choose the levels of commitment and involvement that suit your schedule and interests. You can also explore different roles and responsibilities within the club and switch or rotate as needed. You can collaborate with other club members and leaders to create a positive and supportive club culture and environment.

If you are ready to take your club experience to the next level, consider running for club office or volunteering for club committees. You will not only help your club succeed, but also yourself. Volunteering for a committee or running for club office is a win-win situation for everyone.

The next L.C.A.C.E. election cycle starts at our February meeting. During the February and March meetings, nominations are accepted. You may nominate yourself or another club member. (You may also refuse a nomination!) During the April meeting, candidates will be voted upon.

Mike McEnery

President L.C.A.C.E.

The Russians are Coming

By David Kretchmar

Hardware Technician, Kretchmar's Korner

Sun City Summerlin Computer Club

<https://www.scscc.club>

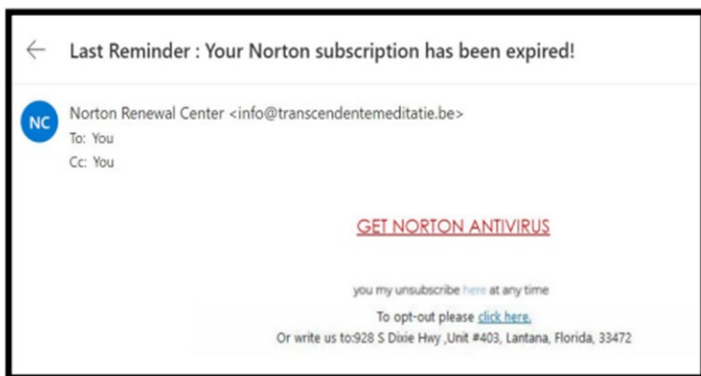
dkretch@gmail.com



As Russia's invasion of Ukraine grinds on, it becomes increasingly likely that Russia will intensify cyberattacks on perceived enemies, especially the United States. As a result, at least one major federal agency is no longer allowing employees to use any USB devices on their government computers. The ability to read/write optical media, CDs, and DVDs, has been completely cut off.

Ironically, the federal government is addressing the least likely avenue a cyber attacker is likely to use to install malware on their systems. The threat is most likely to manifest via an email containing a link to a site that will download a virus to an unsuspecting user's computer. The U.S. government does attach a warning to each email received outside the government domain. These warnings are unnecessary on your home computer, not because the threat is not real, but because ALL of the emails you receive come from outside of your system. And it is almost certain this is the vector hackers will try to use to infect your system. Based on experience, I can safely predict that an infected email arriving in your Inbox will appear to be either from a trusted friend or a business entity with which you might have had some business.

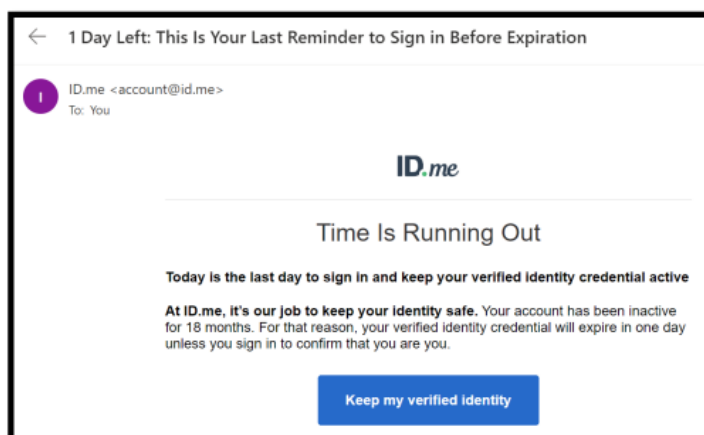
Here is an example of an email I received recently:



For at least 20 years, I have not run Norton Antivirus on any computer I have owned; this email was obviously a fake and most likely attempt to compromise my system.

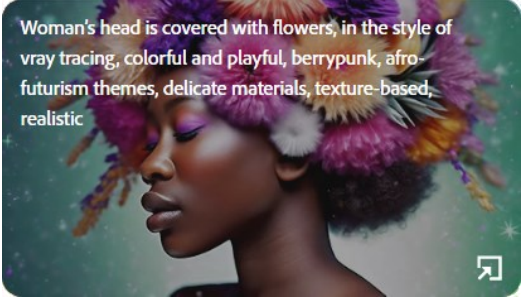
An obvious clue is the sending address: "info@transcendentmediate.be." In addition to the not-very-professional sounding name, the sender is obviously based out of Belgium (.be is the internet country code top-level domain (ccTLD) for Belgium.) I happen to know that Norton is based in Mountain View, California. Another term for the activity represented by this type of email is phishing. Phishing is still the world's most common cyber threat. It is estimated three billion fraudulent emails are sent out every day in an attempt to compromise sensitive information. In 2022, according to CyberTalk.org, 30% of phishing email recipients clicked on the malicious link.

Here is another example, also from my Inbox:



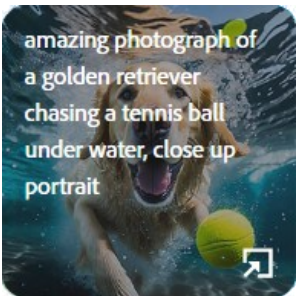
This was easy for me to spot since I do not use ID.me. However, this was a more sophisticated attempt since the ID.me sending address was spoofed. I could see this was not the actual sending address by hovering my mouse cursor over the address, NOT CLICKING.

You are most likely to be fooled by an email that appears to be sent from a trusted friend, as I was several years ago. My friend's computer had been compromised, and the virus perpetuated itself by invading my friend's contact list and sending infected emails to all his contacts. Be aware that the risk you will be exposed to malware infection is higher than it has ever been before. If you have any doubts about clicking on a link in any email message, don't do it.

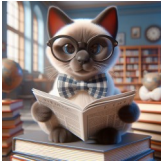


How can I use it?

- Simply head over to <https://www.adobe.com/products/firefly.html> and sign up for free.
- Start by exploring the different features and experimenting with the controls.
- For image generation, provide a text prompt describing the image you want, choose a style, and let Firefly do its magic.
- For text effects, type your text and apply different styles and effects to see what works best.
- You can also create mood boards by searching for images based on keywords or themes and adding them to your board.
- Examples are at right.



Omron BP7900



A Comprehensive Review

By Jasmine Blue D’Katz

<https://omronhealthcare.com/>

Most of us are at that stage in our lives where monitoring our health is important. Before our doctor’s appointments the nurse takes our blood pressure and heart rate. Sometimes we are asked if we monitor our vitals at home. To do this, we must have a home blood pressure machine, and a device to give us an EKG reading. I have purchased devices to allow me to do both. Omron blood pressure monitors have been stable in my home for years, and recently I added the Kardia Mobile to monitor my EKG.

Like every device I purchase, I registered that



product with the company, which put me on their mailing list for updates and new products. So recently I was informed of a new blood pressure/EKG monitor. With this new monitor, I am now able to take both blood pressure and EKG with one device. Although, I will keep the Kardia Mobile credit card device in my wallet.

The Omron BP7900 is a digital blood pressure monitoring device designed to provide accurate readings and user-friendly features for at-home blood pressure management. With its advanced technology and user-centric design, the BP7900 stands out as a reliable tool for monitoring my blood pressure levels regularly.

Design and Build Quality: The BP7900 boasts a sleek and compact design, making it easy to handle and store. Its build quality reflects durability, ensuring long-term usability without

compromising accuracy. The device's intuitive interface and large display enhance user experience, particularly for individuals with limited dexterity or visual impairments.

Accuracy and Performance: Omron's reputation for precision in blood pressure monitoring is upheld by the BP7900. Equipped with advanced algorithms and sensor technology, it delivers consistently accurate readings, aiding users in tracking their blood pressure trends over time. The device's ability to detect irregular heartbeats adds an extra layer of health monitoring, alerting me to potential cardiac issues.

Ease of Use: One of the standout features of the BP7900 is its user-friendly design. The device's one-touch operation simplifies the blood pressure measurement process, ensuring hassle-free readings for users of all ages. The adjusta-

ble cuff accommodates various arm sizes, promoting comfort and accuracy during measurements. Additionally, the device stores multiple readings, allowing me to track my blood pressure history and share data with healthcare professionals conveniently.

Connectivity and Compatibility: The BP7900 offers seamless connectivity options, enabling me to synchronize my blood pressure data with compatible smartphones or tablets via Bluetooth. This feature facilitates effortless data management and analysis through dedicated mobile apps, empowering me to monitor my health proactively and share vital information with their healthcare providers.

Battery Life and Sustainability: Powered by batteries or an AC adapter, the BP7900 ensures uninterrupted usage, whether at home or on the go. Its energy-efficient design promotes sustainability, reducing environmental impact

(Continued from page 6)

through optimized power consumption. The device's low-battery indicator prompts timely replacements, preventing disruptions in blood pressure monitoring routines.

Price and Value: While the BP7900 may be priced slightly higher compared to basic blood pressure monitors, its superior accuracy, user-friendly features, and reliability justify the investment for individuals prioritizing their health and well-being. The device's long-term value lies in its ability to empower me with actionable insights into my cardiovascular health, potentially preventing adverse health events through timely intervention and monitoring.

Conclusion: In summary, the Omron BP7900 stands as a commendable choice for individuals seeking a reliable and user-friendly blood pressure monitoring solution. Its combination of accuracy, performance, and connectivity features makes it a valuable tool for proactive health management. With the BP7900, users can embark on a journey toward better cardiovascular health with confidence and convenience, supported by cutting-edge technology and trusted brand reliability.

Technology Trivia for Senior Citizens

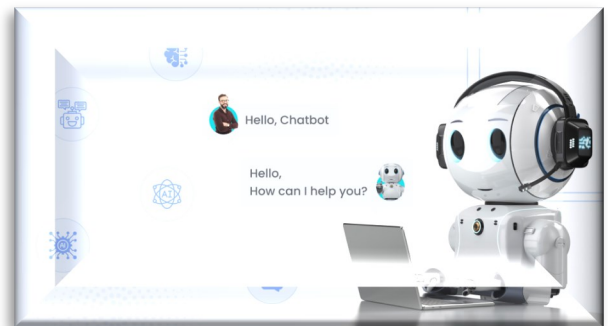
"What term is commonly used to describe the process of enlarging text on a computer or smartphone screen to make it more readable for those with vision impairments?"

"Which popular video calling platform became widely used for virtual meetings and staying connected with family and friends during the COVID-19 pandemic?"

"What do we call the practice of using a password, fingerprint, or face recognition to secure and unlock electronic devices like smartphones or tablets?"

"Which device, often used for reading digital books, is known for its e-ink (E Ink) display that closely resembles the appearance of paper?"

"What is the name of the virtual assistant developed by Apple that responds to voice commands and can perform various tasks on iPhones and other Apple devices?"



Use a chatbot to find the answers

“Will you help to make today more pleasant for someone, or more miserable? If the former, your day, too will be more pleasant; If the latter, it, too, will be miserable.”

-JOHN W. VOGLE



February: Show n' Tell

March: Robocalls & Cable Options

April: Elections & Birthday

May: AI—Chatbots and Image Generators

June: Accessibility

July: Summer Picnic

iMemories



Preserving Memories for the Digital Age By Randy D.

In today's digital age, capturing memories is easier than ever. With smartphones and digital cameras constantly at our fingertips, we can document every moment, big and small. But what happens to all those photos and videos after we take them? If you're like most people, they languish on your hard drive, forgotten and inaccessible. This is where iMemories comes in.

iMemories is a company that specializes in preserving and digitizing physical media, such as photos, videos, and film reels. They offer a variety of services, from simple photo scanning to complex video conversion and editing. In this review, we'll take a closer look at iMemories' services, pricing, and overall customer experience to help you decide if it's the right solution for your needs.

Services Offered

iMemories offers a wide range of services to digitize and preserve your memories. Here are some of the most popular:

- **Photo scanning:** iMemories can scan your photos, negatives, and slides into high-resolution digital files. They offer a variety of scanning options, including standard scans, high-resolution scans, and archival scans.
- **Video conversion:** iMemories can convert your VHS tapes, camcorder tapes, and other analog video formats into digital files. They can also edit your videos, add music and titles, and create DVDs or Blu-rays.
- **Film reel conversion:** iMemories can convert your old 8mm and Super 8 films into digital

files. They can also clean and repair your films before converting them.

- **Photo restoration:** iMemories can restore your damaged or faded photos, making them look like new again.
- **Memory books and scrapbooks:** iMemories can help you create custom memory books and scrapbooks using your photos and videos.

Pricing

iMemories' pricing varies depending on the services you choose and the amount of media you have. They offer a variety of packages to fit different budgets. You can get a free quote by entering the type and quantity of media you have on their website.

Customer Experience

iMemories has a reputation for excellent customer service. They offer a variety of ways to contact them, including phone (800-845-7985), email, and live chat. They also have a helpful FAQ section on their website:

<https://www.imemories.com>

Pros and Cons

Pros:

- Wide range of services
- High-quality results
- Excellent customer service
- Convenient online ordering

Cons:

- Can be expensive
- Turnaround time can be slow
- Not all services are available in all countries

Go from this...

To this!



Overall

iMemories is a great option for anyone who wants to preserve their precious memories. They offer a wide range of services, and their quality is excellent. However, it can be expensive, and the turnaround time can be slow. If you're on a budget or need your memories digitized quickly, you may want to consider other options.

Here are some additional things to keep in mind before using iMemories:

- Get quotes from other companies before making a decision.*
- Make sure you understand the turnaround time for each service.
- Back up your original media before sending it to iMemories.
- Ask about iMemories' insurance policy in case your media is lost or damaged.

*Also check your local library for some free services for simple projects.

May Presentation



AI TEXT TO IMAGE GENERATION

Simplify your life with these smartphone apps

Visit play.google.com or open your iTunes application and search within the App Store to download these.

App name	How it works
Flashlight	Turns your screen into a flashlight
Google Maps	Provides maps and directions using GPS
Dragon Dictation*	Lets you send texts and emails without typing
GasBuddy	Finds cheap fuel in your area
FaceTime*	Allows video chats with friends and family
Triplt	Organizes flights, hotel reservations, and more
Laser Level	Helps hang pictures straight
Lose It	Lets you create and follow a diet plan
RedLaser	Compares prices by scanning bar codes while you shop
The Weather Channel	Keeps up with local weather
iPharmacy Drug Guide & Pill ID	Identifies your pills and finds lowest drug prices
Tip Calculator	Computes your tip and splits the bill among friends



*iPhone only

Members Helping Members

Just think you could have submitted a paragraph or two that would help your fellow Members



YouTube

Ctrl+ click white arrow to go to our YouTube site



Join a Meeting

February 10, 2024
March 9, 2024



Computer Services

**Desktops,
Laptops,
All-in-Ones
and more**



During our October Zoom meeting the following two computer services were mentioned.

White Box Computers

They say they are the place for all your computer repairs & upgrades at nearly half the prices of the competition.

<https://whiteboxcomputers.org>

847-833-9324

ZYTEK Services

Has been around for over 30 years and offers the best in fast, friendly, high-quality, fair price computer service solutions

847-336-2259



Dave



Member's Area



BUSINESS CARDS

Hotline




Phone: (847) 623-3815



Pegasus
OPEN AIR PHOTOBOOTH

847.372.8186
pegasusphotos.smugmug.com

Members



JIM JACOBS TRIO
Jazz Standards
THURSDAYS 6:00-9:00 PM



Deerfield Italian Kitchen

CONTACT JIM AT 847.372.0656 OR JIMJACOBSMUSIC@GMAIL.COM

Take a good look, you just might see yourself.




LCACE Photo Albums



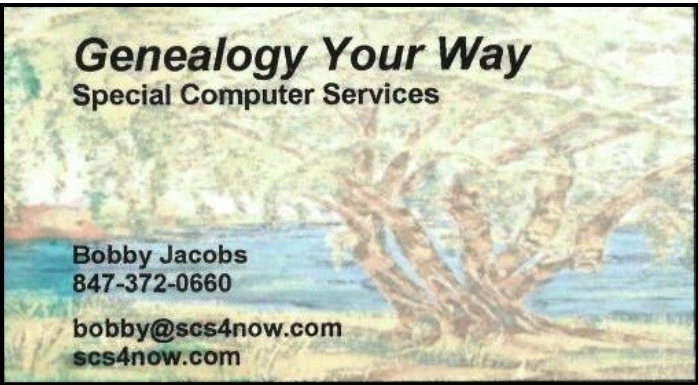
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