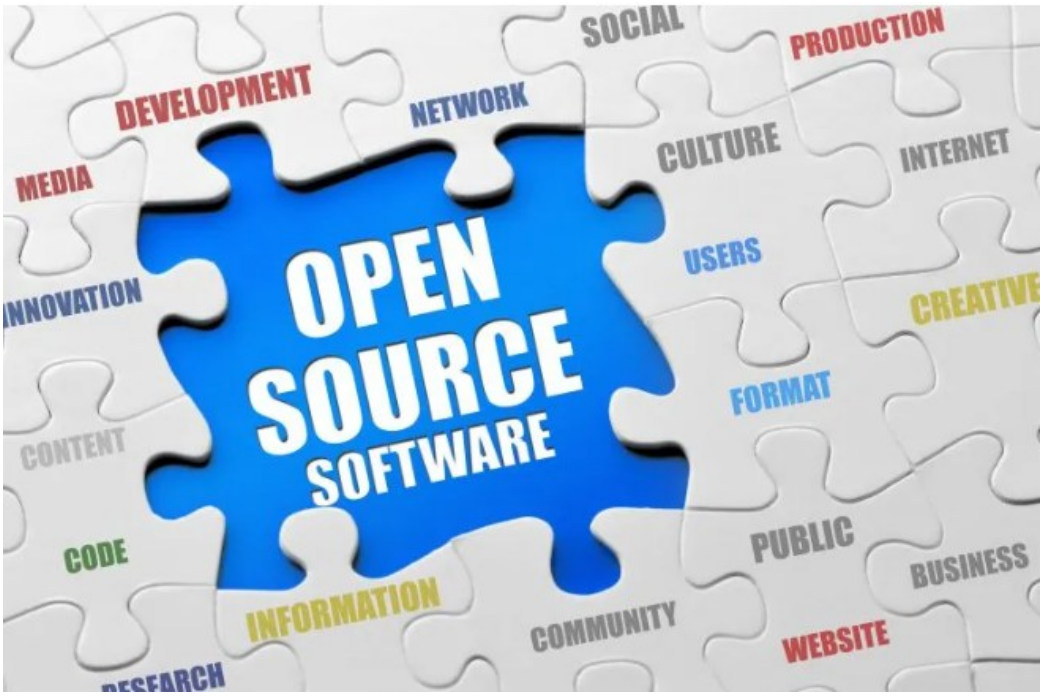
Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

NEWS JOURNAL

"Members Helping Members"

(since 1983)

November 2024 Volume 41, Issue 07



Cost efficiency, free to use, modify, and distribute

By M.H. Members

(This article relates to the November L.C.A.C.E. Program.)

Open-source software (OSS) offers several significant advantages over proprietary software. Here are the key benefits:

Cost Savings: Open-source software is typically free to use, modify, and distribute, resulting in substantial cost savings for individuals and organizations. This eliminates the need for expensive licensing fees associated with proprietary software, allowing resources to be allocated elsewhere.

Flexibility and Customization: OSS allows users to modify the source code to meet specific needs, providing a level of flexibility that proprietary software often lacks. This adaptability is particularly beneficial for organizations needing tailored solutions to fit unique workflows or requirements.

Community Collaboration: The development of open-source software is often driven by a community of volunteers and enthusiasts. This collaborative approach not only leads to faster bug fixes and feature enhancements but also fosters innovation as diverse perspectives contribute to the software's evolution.

Transparency and Security: Open-source software operates under a model of transparency, where the source code is accessible for review. This openness allows for continuous security audits by the community, making it easier to identify and address vulnerabilities quickly. The "many eyes" principle suggests that more people reviewing the code increases the likelihood of detecting security flaws.

Innovation: OSS encourages innovation by allowing developers to build upon existing projects rather than starting from scratch. This can lead to rapid advancements in technology and functionality, keeping pace with the fast-moving digital landscape.

Independence from Vendors: Using open-source software frees users from vendor lock-in, enabling them to switch service providers or modify the software as needed without being tied to a single vendor's ecosystem. This independence can lead to greater control over technology choices and reduced risk of sudden price hikes or service changes.

In summary: Open-source software provides **cost-effectiveness**, **flexibility**, **community support**, **enhanced security through transparency**, **fostering innovation**, and **vendor independence**, making it an attractive option for many users and organizations.

- See also Wikipedia's extensive article on Open Source Software. That page was last edited on 3 November 2024, at 21:17 (UTC).

"Members Helping Members"
(since 1983)

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Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

c/o Group Ambassador

"J.J." Johnson

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 Permission is granted to reproduce any or all parts of this newsletter in other User Group publications, provided that credit is given to LCACE and the individual author(s). Logo designed on an Atari Stacy Laptop in 1989 by Dwight Johnson Jr.

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 open to the public and usually held on the second Saturdays at the Grayslake Heritage Center, 164 Hawley St., Grayslake, IL 60030. (Excepting July and December.) At 11:30 the meeting room opens, with a free Help Desk from 11:30-12 noon. At 12:00 the business meeting begins .

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.

NOTICE

*LCACE **WILL NOT** CONDONE or knowingly participate in copyright infringement of any kind.* The *LCACE News Journal* is published by and for LCACE members. Opinions expressed herein are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of LCACE, the membership, the board of directors, and/or our advertisers.

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November Program

"Free Software & Open-Source Software"

Lester Larkins—L.C.A.C.E. Programs Director

What chain of restaurants opened its doors as "Chicken on the Run"

- KFC
- Taco Bell
- Chick-fil-A
- Popeyes

Diane's Thoughts

Greetings! We are at the start of the holiday season. In a few days, on Veterans Day we remember those who have served in our armed forces. Without their service we wouldn't have the same freedoms as we do today. Many of the L.C.A.C.E. members have served. It's a special day to remember them.

Also, for our Holiday Season. It's now planning time for our December Holiday Luncheon. The Holiday party will take place on Saturday, December 14, at 12 noon, at State Bank of the Lakes in Grayslake.

Judy and Eric Rehberger are our hospitality co-chairs. They will be sending out emails soliciting help in planning the party, i.e. activities, meals, room setup, and then room take down afterward. There will also be sign-up sheets available at November's meeting. Or, you may contact Judy and Eric at hospitality@lcace.org

The Thanksgiving holiday brings families together. Enjoy this special time of the year, spending it with family and friends. In my family we have a pre-Thanksgiving dinner on a date when all of our family can be together.

Last month our L.C.A.C.E. meeting was about cybersecurity. It was very informative about the tactics cyber thieves' use on their victims. Recently a friend of David's and mine was hacked. The hack started when he had problems renting a movie from Amazon Prime. He was given a spoofed number to contact a 'help desk'. Then he received calls from numbers that were spoofed to appear that federal agents were calling. They threatened to imprison him for prostitution and being a drug runner. He was warned not to contact anyone about this. The fear overwhelmed him and prevented rational thought. Eventually our friend gave in to the threats and sent some gift cards and a picture of his driver's license. The badgering went on for about 6 hours before he talked to someone who made him realize he was being conned. Knowing our friend, this is the last person you would have expected to fall for the con. His warning to us was to let someone else that you trust know if you receive any threats from alleged law enforcement agents that lead to requests for gift cards like what he had.

With the holidays fast approaching, many of us will be spending more time on our computers doing online ordering or searches. Be careful when clicking on links, opening emails, and answering unknown phone calls. It may just be a hacker trying to get funds out of you!

Happy Thanksgiving!

Diane Carlson

L.C.A.C.E. President

GetHuman

By Perplexity AI

GetHuman.com is a website that aims to help customers bypass automated phone systems and connect directly with a live customer service representative. Based on the reviews, it seems to have a mixed reputation, with some users finding it extremely helpful and others experiencing frustrations.

Pros

- Provides step-by-step instructions on how to navigate a company's phone system to reach a human agent quickly.
- Can save significant time and frustration for customers trying to resolve issues with companies.
- Some users report successfully getting their issues resolved after using GetHuman's guidance.
- The service is free to use.

Cons

- Inconsistent results, with some users reporting that GetHuman's instructions did not work or that they were unable to connect with an agent.
- Concerns about privacy and the amount of personal information required by GetHuman.
- Allegations of misleading or deceptive practices, such as prompting users to pay for assistance after initially claiming to be free.
- Poor customer support from GetHuman itself, with users unable to reach staff for assistance.

Overall Assessment

GetHuman.com has a rating of 3.3 stars out of 5 on Sitejabber and 2.5 stars out of 5 on PissedConsumer, indicating mixed reviews. While some users praise the service for saving them time and hassles, others have had negative experiences, citing ineffective instructions, privacy concerns, and deceptive practices. The website appears to be legitimate, with a high level of traffic and security measures in place. However, the lack of transparency regarding ownership and the ineffective complaint resolution process (0% resolution rate) raise some red flags. Ultimately, GetHuman.com may be a useful tool for some customers, but its inconsistent performance and questionable practices mean users should approach it with caution and manage their expectations accordingly.

Hewie's Views & Reviews

Hewie Poplock is a tech enthusiast and presenter. He is the Vice President of the Sarasota Technology Users Group and Chair of the Central Florida Computer Society Windows Special Interest Group. He frequently gives presentations on various tech topics, including Windows 10, SD cards, and streaming services. He is known for his clear and concise explanations, as well as his engaging presentation style.

Hewie's Views & Reviews

Hewie Poplock YouTube Videos

Cheap and Private Phone Service

Looking for a VERY economical home phone service that can reject ALL robocalls? Check out **magicJack**! I have been using my **magicJack** for about 10 years. It is currently wired to two desk phones, but I've had it connected to three phones in the past. The average fixed cost is about $3.30/month for the service. However, you need an internet service for it to connect to the outside world. (MagicJack uses Voice Over Internet Technology - VoIP technolgy)

The device is very small, and has 3 connections: USB power, Ethernet cable, and phone cable. There are no buttons or switches. A power supply with USB output (not shown) is included.

Cost

The device currently costs about $49.99, which includes one year of service. Service renewal is $43 for 1 year ($3.58/mo.), or $109 for 3 years ($3.04/mo.). Calls to anywhere in the U.S. and Canada are no extra charge, as are calls to any **magicJack** in the world.

Robocalls

To block ALL robocalls, select Automated Call Screening under the Call Features tab. It's a simple on/off switch on that web page. Anyone who calls you is asked to press a random 1 digit number from 0 to 9. To date, no calling robot has figured out how to press one of those numbers. Let's hope that continues.

magicJack on-the-go

The magicApp is a no-extra-charge feature that lets you send and receive calls from anywhere you can get an internet connection. There is a magicApp for Apple and Android. You can only use one magicApp per magicJack phone number.

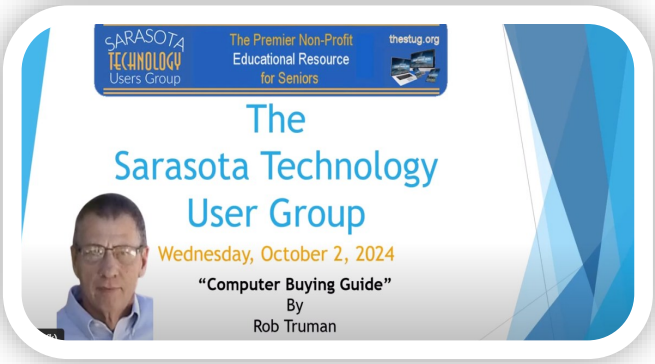
Here is their website: https://magicJack.com

How long will I keep my computer?

"The length of computer ownership varies significantly. While the average ownership period is surprisingly short at just 18 months, this statistic is heavily influenced by early adopters and executives who regularly upgrade to the latest technology.

Speaking from personal experience, I kept my first computer for nearly 10 years and my second for 7 years. This longer ownership period is more typical for users who focus on functionality rather than having cutting-edge specifications.

For most users who primarily need their computer for standard tasks, you can expect to keep your computer for 3-7 years, depending on your needs and how well you maintain it. There's often no need to upgrade simply because newer models are available if your current machine meets your requirements."



CLICK HERE

Bitcoin

Digital Currency No Banks of Government

By M.H. Members

(That article is in response to a member's question.)

Bitcoin is a decentralized digital currency that operates on a peer-to-peer network without the need for intermediaries like banks or governments. Created in 2009 by an anonymous person or group using the pseudonym Satoshi Nakamoto, Bitcoin has become the most well-known and largest cryptocurrency in the world.

How Bitcoin Works

Bitcoin transactions are recorded on a public ledger called the blockchain, which uses cryptography to secure and verify transactions. Users can send and receive bitcoins through digital wallets, which store the private keys needed to access and transfer funds.

Pros of Bitcoin

Accessibility and Liquidity: Bitcoin is easily accessible and can be used to purchase goods and services from a growing list of places that accept it. It can be bought, sold, and exchanged on cryptocurrency exchanges with relative ease.

User Security: While not completely anonymous, Bitcoin uses numerical codes to identify users, providing a level of privacy. The blockchain technology ensures transaction security through mathematical guarantees.

Decentralization: Bitcoin operates independently of central authorities, making it resistant to government control or manipulation.

Potential Returns: Bitcoin's price volatility can provide opportunities for significant returns on investment.

Cons of Bitcoin

Volatility: The price of Bitcoin can fluctuate dramatically, making it a risky investment. This volatility is due to factors such as its relative newness and limited supply.
Lack of Regulation: The decentralized nature of Bitcoin means there's no government protection or regulation, which can make it susceptible to scams and fraud.

Energy Consumption: Bitcoin mining, the process by which new bitcoins are created and transactions are verified, requires significant computational power and energy.

Limited Use: Despite growing acceptance, Bitcoin is not yet widely used for everyday transactions.

How to Use Bitcoin

1. Get a Bitcoin Wallet: This can be a software wallet on your computer or smartphone, or hardware wallet for added security.
2. Buy Bitcoin: Purchase Bitcoin from a cryptocurrency exchange using traditional currency.

3. Make Transactions: Use your wallet to send or receive Bitcoin for purchases or transfers.

4. Store Securely: For long-term holding, consider using a cold storage wallet, which keeps your Bitcoin offline and away from potential online threats.

5. Stay Informed: Keep up with Bitcoin news and market trends to make informed decisions for buying, selling, or holding.

In conclusion, Bitcoin represents a revolutionary approach to currency and financial transactions. While it offers potential benefits in terms of accessibility, security, and independence from central authorities, it also comes with significant risks due to its volatility and lack of regulation. As with any investment, it's crucial to thoroughly research and understand Bitcoin before getting involved.

GRAYSLAKE AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY
Where Ideas Take Shape

On this page is a bookmark from the

Grayslake Public Library, with an offer of free technical services.

We (The *News Journal* Staff and the L.C.A.C.E. Board Members) have noticed that some local libraries are offering free services that are very handy for people who have technical interests. And also handy for persons who wish to know about any number of things.

Some Information about some services will appear in later issues of the *News Journal*.

THE HUB
Dream | Learn | Create

Such as… Cook Memorial Library has equipment to convert vinyl records and videos into DVDs.

Please speak out at meetings if you are hunting for something special.

But please be patient! We're not making hard and fast promises to grant your wishes.

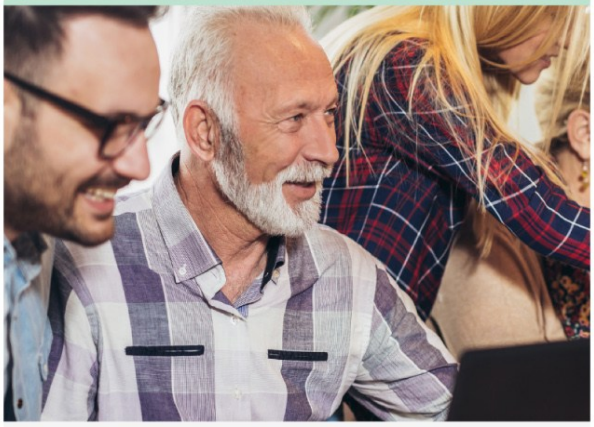
Just well-intended "maybes."

TECH TIME

By Appointment Only

Need assistance on your laptop, phone, or other personal device? Call (847) 223-5313 or visit us online to schedule an appointment with one of our tech specialist librarians!

A Grayslake library card is no longer required for appointments. Limit of two appointments per patron, per month.



GRAYSLAKE AREA PUBLIC LIBRARY
Where Ideas Take Shape
grayslake.info | 847.223.5313

CLICK HERE

EVENTS CALENDAR

Are you new to computers or mobile devices, haven't used them for a while, or just need a refresher? Or maybe you've taken classes on topics like Zoom, internet privacy, email and iPads with Senior Planet and are looking for some extra practice!

AT&T Connected Learning Resources focus on enhancing digital access and literacy in underserved communities through several initiatives:

- **Connected Learning Centers (CLCs)**: AT&T plans to open 100 CLCs by 2027, providing free internet, computers, and digital literacy workshops. Currently, 50 centers are operational.
- **Digital Literacy Programs**: Partnerships with organizations like the Public Library Association and National PTA offer virtual courses and workshops, supported by AT&T employee volunteers.
- **The Achievery Platform**: A free K-12 digital learning resource available at CLCs.
- **ScreenReady Initiative**: Resources for families on digital parenting and online safety.

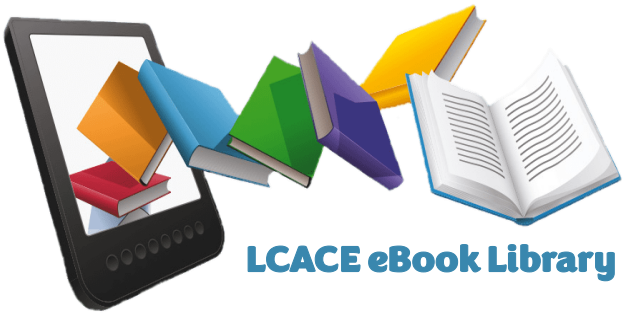
Investment Commitment: AT&T aims to connect 25 million people to high-speed internet by 2030, with significant investments in network infrastructure.
These resources can help you continue building your skills and confidence!

https://seniorplanet.org/att-connected-learning-resources/

HUMOR

It hurts when you first noticed that it has been a while since you were asked for I.D. to purchase alcohol.

Now it hurts because you realize it has been a while since anyone ask you to show your I.D. to receive the Senior Special Discount.



⇒ Winning the Inbox Battle
⇒ Linux Bash Keyboard Shortcuts
⇒ How to Use ChatGPT for Learning
⇒ 200 Secret Netflix Codes
⇒ How to Sleep Better with Tech
⇒ WhatsApp Tips and Tricks
⇒ Tricks to Simplify Your Digital Life

GetHuman

By Perplexity AI

Free tools that help you talk and write to companies & state agencies

GetHuman.com is a website that aims to help customers bypass automated phone systems and connect directly with a live customer service representative. Based on the reviews, it seems to have a mixed reputation, with some users finding it extremely helpful and others experiencing frustrations.

Pros

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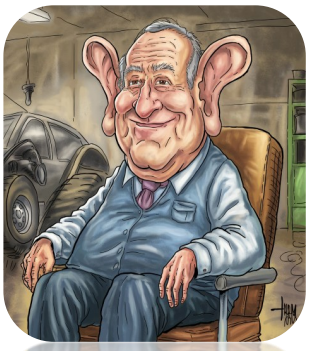
Gethuman.com

GetHuman

Why didn't someone tell me that when you get older, you go through the terrible twos again? Now I've got 2 chins 2 spare tires and two really big ears



VLC is a free and open-source cross-platform multimedia player and framework that plays most multimedia files, as well as DVDs, Audio CDs, VCDs, and various streaming protocols.

Here are some key points about VLC:

1. Media Player: VLC is primarily known as a powerful media player that can play a wide range of audio and video formats (MPEG, AVI, MP4, MKV, FLV, OGG, etc.) without the need for additional codecs.
2. Cross-Platform: VLC is available for various operating systems, including Windows, macOS, Linux, Android, iOS, and others, making it a versatile choice across different platforms.
3. Streaming: VLC can stream media over networks and has the ability to act as a server to stream multimedia files.
4. Customizable: VLC offers a highly customizable interface, with the ability to add extensions, skins, and plugins to enhance its functionality.
5. Media Conversion: VLC can convert multimedia files from one format to another, as well as transcode videos for streaming or playback on different devices.
6. Subtitles and Audio Tracks: VLC supports a wide range of subtitle formats and allows users to change audio tracks for movies with multiple language tracks.
7. Open Source: Being open-source software, VLC is free to use, and its source code is available for developers to modify, contribute to, or create custom builds.

VLC's simplicity, versatility, and ability to handle a vast array of multimedia formats have made it one of the most popular media players worldwide, used by individuals, educational institutions, and businesses alike.

INTERNET ARCHIVE
WayBackMachine

CLICK HERE

The Internet Archive (archive.org) is a free online library that saves:

- Old websites (through the Wayback Machine)
- Books
- Music
- Videos
- Software
- Other digital content

Think of it like a huge digital museum that anyone can use to find historical content or access free materials. Its most famous tool is the Wayback Machine, which lets you see how websites looked in the past.

SENIOR PLANET CLASSES

Live Online Classes for Seniors

Tech Discussion Group—Lunch & Learn

Class Description

Join this Tech Discussion Group to have open conversations about technology and your struggles. Come discuss different topics related to the latest technology trends and news.

Click group meeting every Thursday

13:30 GMT Central Time

Join "Tech Disccusion Group"

Got a Windows or Android device? This group is for you! Share your knowledge and ask questions about your computer, smartphone, and the internet. Volunteers Michael and Judy Yublosky will assist participants with all things *not* Apple.

Every Monday @ 4:00PM CDT

Join "WACI Group"

Ctrl+ click white arrow to go to our YouTube site

Windows & Android Tips

10 MAJOR REASONS TO UPGRADE TO WINDOWS 11 NOW – A slick new interface, better security, Copilot AI, updated apps, and info widgets are just some of the perks of upgrading to Windows 11. Here's why you should do it sooner than later. Read more at https://www.pcmag.com/news/reasons-to-upgrade-to-windows-11-now

HOW TO RESET WINDOWS 11 WITHOUT LOSING YOUR APPS, FILES, AND SETTINGS – Windows 10 and 11 offer a reset feature that you can run if you're bumping into technical troubles with the operating system. But there's a downside to performing a traditional reset. All your installed applications and customized settings are lost, forcing you to reinstall and set them up from scratch, even if the reset fixes the problem. With Windows 11, however, there is another option. Find out more at How to reset Windows 11 without losing your apps, files, and settings | ZDNET

SENIOR PLANET FROM AARP

Senior Planet is a program from AARP that helps older adults learn how to use technology to improve their lives

If you're an older adult, these live online classes are designed just for you! Learn about Finance, Wellness, Fitness, Computers and Technology, and so much more. You'll learn so much, and also find a real community of fellow life-long learners. *Need help joining a class?*

Senior planet

Call the free Senior Planet Hotline: 888-713-3495

JOIN MEETING

November 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

Seniors Helping Seniors

Learn Technology

LCACE Hotline

PHONE: (847)623-3815
(224)303-4420

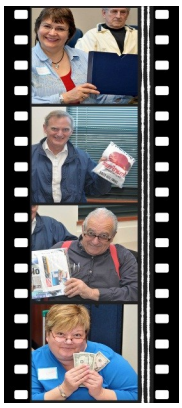
Members

WEB SITE

BLUETOAD AUCTIONS

Take a good look, you just might see yourself.

LCACE Video Library



Member of apcug

An International Association of Technology & Computer User Groups