

SUPERCOM COMPUTER CLUB TECH TIMES

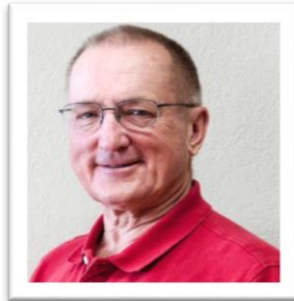
Volume 07 February 18, 2017

Objective:

To bring the latest technology news to you, our members. Tips and suggestions will help you to keep your device(s) running smoothly and help you be aware of threats. Technical tips will be coming to you through our Technical Committee.

Committee Members: (Pictured Below)

Ben Tarbell, Mike Gerkin, Jim Oliver, Peggy Bullock, Jim Mills, Rick Heesen, Lowell Lee and Steve Andreasen (Apple/Mac).



Dick Strong is on "time off" for season 2016-2017.

Greetings

The Tech Committee is busy keeping informed on what is going on in the Technical World so it's time to bring you some new, updated information so you can stay on top of keeping yourself safe while using your computers and other equipment.



We hope you all treated your special Valentine with extra special love on that day! Be it candy, flowers or a special message, it's the thought that counts. I for one, got a letter/message on a piece of notebook paper. I cried through the whole thing! It was worth more than any flowers, candy or \$5.00 card!!



An update from the meeting of February 3, 2017: The proposed changes to the SuperCom Computer Club by-laws was changed as presented from the Executive Board. The changes were to

Article IX

One third (1/3) of the paid up members

-to-

One fourth (1/4) of the paid up members

And

Article V Section 3

Associate membership may be granted to non-residents of SSLRVR only if they were members prior to April 1, 2010 and upon payment of such dues and/or assessments as are set for Associate Membership by the Executive Board. Associate Members may not serve on the Executive Board and have no voting privileges.

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Associate Membership may be granted to non-residents of SSLRVR with paid consecutive membership and upon payment of such dues and/or assessments as are set for Associate Membership by the Executive Board. Associate Members may not serve on the Executive Board or be Chairman on any Board.

The full updated By-Laws are on the [Website](#).

The Annual Meeting of the SuperCom Computer Club was held on Friday, February 10, 2017. The Secretary's report was read and approved, the Treasurer's report was given with a balance of \$13,716.71 as of Jan. 26, 2017.

The following officers were presented by the Nominating Committee (Ben Tarbell, Mike Gerkin & Bev Hooper): Bev Hooper will move to Chairperson, Rick Heesen, Vice Chairperson, Lowell Lee,

Secretary/Treasurer, Velda Dotterer, Member-at-Large, Steve Andreasen, Member-at-Large and Maurice Agnew, Past Chairperson will remain on the Executive Board as an Ex Officio member.

Jim Mills and David Pisney were appointed by Moe Agnew to Audit the Treasurer's books.

The meeting was followed by Rick Heesen presenting a program on Security Software. Check out the website for this "Tech Tip" from his presentation.

Recognition goes to Velda Dotterer this month for being chosen as the Above and Beyond Award winner. Thank you Velda for all you do for our club. Your volunteerism is an asset!

From Ben Tarbell and Peggy Bullock:

Which is the most secure browser

While Microsoft Edge has been throwing splash screens up on your desktop proclaiming that Edge is faster than Chrome, I am more interested in which browser is more secure.

Sure Edge indicates they are approx. 8% faster than Chrome, but who is most secure?

There was an article published by TipTopSecurity where they compared the top six browsers:

Comparison Chart

Browser	Version	Security	Privacy	*Browserscope
 Chrome	53	The Best	The Worst	16/17
 Firefox	49	Okay	The Best	15/17
 Opera	40	Very Good	Good	16/17
 Edge	38	Good (Tentative)	Okay	N/A
 Safari	10	Good	Okay	15/17
 IE	11	The Worst	Okay	14/17

Google has long had a solid reputation for security. It seems that reputation is only getting stronger.

It's also worth mentioning that historically, Google has had the fastest response time to security vulnerabilities. The difference is slim, but still worth mentioning.

Chrome is now a mature browser. It's been around for a decade and has proven to be a solid workhorse. Google's business is the internet, so it only seems natural for them to have such a handle on it. If all you're looking for is a secure browser, Chrome would be the one to have.

Credit: <https://tiptopsecurity.com/what-is-the-most-secure-web-browser/>

From Rick Heesen:

Should I Run CHKDSK on My SSD?

CHKDSK and Defrag are different tools for different purposes, and have different side effects. One is OK on any drive; the other should be avoided on SSDs.

I've heard I should not defragment my SSD because it'll wear out faster. How does that apply to CHKDSK? Should I run it or not?

CHKDSK (standing for Check Disk) and Defrag are different tools for different purposes. When it comes to CHKDSK, it doesn't matter what type of drive you have; it won't harm the drive the way a defrag might harm an SSD.

Let's look at why that is. In fact, I'll see if I can't extend one of my metaphors – perhaps to the point of breaking – to clarify what's going on.

Defrag: scattered pages

To summarize from a previous article ([What is 'defragging' and why should I do it?](#)):

Imagine you have a book, but the pages are randomly scattered throughout your house. You have a list of where each page is, so when you want to read your book, you go find page 1, then you look on the list for page 2 and go to that, then look up page 3, and so on. To read your book in order, you're racing around the house, because the pages are all over.

That's a fragmented file – lots of "fragments" scattered all over the disk. It takes time to do all that running around to read the book from beginning to end.

Defragmenting is nothing more than the hard disk equivalent of collecting up all the pages and putting them next to each other, in order, for every book on your shelf.

Defragging an SSD: wearing out the paper

Let's say that all the pages of your books, while still very much scattered about, are within reach. You can reach any page you need *very* quickly – almost as quickly as if they were organized into their original page-after-page book form. In fact, they're so close, there's really no point in rearranging them at all; you wouldn't really be able to access them any faster. You can *read* them quickly.



That's an [SSD](#) (Solid State Disk). SSDs are fast. Really fast.

Let's say you want to rearrange them back into their book form anyway, and you set about "defragging" the pages.

The mere act of shuffling the pages around to get them back in order causes friction. (Remember, this is a metaphor – there's no friction in a real SSD.) That friction causes each piece of paper to get a little thinner each time you move it (write it to disk).

Eventually, the paper crumbles and you lose its contents completely.

I hope you have a backup.

Takeaway: defragging an SSD drive is not a good idea.

Defragging a hard drive: schlepping stone tablets

Now let's say that each page of your book is carved into a stone tablet. It's heavy, slow to read, and slow to move around, but it's exceptionally durable.

That's your traditional spinning-platter hard disk drive (HD or HDD). It's slower than an SSD, but "rock" solid.

Since those tablets are so heavy to find and move, you really would prefer that the pages of your books be one after the other, so they're easy to locate and handle.

Since the stone lasts essentially forever, there's no reason not to take the time every once in a while to put them back in order. It makes sense to defrag your slower stone tablet books, because it'll make reading them much easier.

Takeaway: defragging traditional hard disks is good practice.

CHKDSK: Checking the pages

CHKDSK has nothing to do with where the pages of your books are, or even whether they're paper or stone.

CHKDSK is mostly about each book's Table of Contents. It locates each Table of Contents, reads through it, and makes sure all the pages for each chapter can be found. If not (and if you've specified the /F "fix it" option), CHKDSK will update the Table of Contents the best it can to reflect what's missing. In tech speak, CHKDSK verifies that files are stored on disk properly and fixes logical file system errors.

Occasionally, CHKDSK finds missing pages, doesn't know to which book they belong, and sets them aside in a separate book, just in case they happened to be important.

CHKDSK vs Defrag

The key difference here is that CHKDSK does a lot more reading than writing. In fact, most often CHKDSK *only* reads data, confirming that everything's fine. Where it needs to fix something, the write is very small and very quick.

That's in contrast to Defrag, which is constantly writing data as it moves your "pages" around to put them in order.

In short:

- Defrag should only be done on actual hard disks, not SSDs.
- CHKDSK can happen on any kind of disk.

When to run each

In recent versions of Windows, Defrag runs automatically once a week, and only on the drives for which it makes sense. That's plenty. You needn't do a thing more.

CHKDSK is something that, quite frankly, I ignore unless I experience a problem or have some reason to suspect there's something wrong CHKDSK might find and fix. Running CHKDSK on a disk – any disk – that has no problems is completely benign.

It's important to note that CHKDSK will never *cause* a problem. At its worst, it more explicitly exposes problems that were there all along... and that's a good thing.

Credit: https://askleo.com/should-i-run-chkdsk-on-my-ssd/?awt_l=4m769s&awt_m=ltbRsYami3dfbL&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=20170207&utm_medium=email&utm_content=featured

From Peggy Bullock:

A couple of recent articles regarding Facebook security have been talked about in our Facebook SIG on Tuesday afternoons from 1-3pm. Come check us out if you have Facebook questions or problems. We all, including me, learn something new every week!

Kim Komando has been sharing some vulnerabilities in MAC's and iPhones. You might find these interesting reading. [76 iPhone Apps cause vulnerability to id theft](#) and [Windows Malware Now Targeting Macs](#); and [More On Mac Malware](#).

From Mike Gerkin:

We have repeatedly cautioned our SuperCom members to be alert for scams, phishing attempts, unsolicited phone calls, and unusual emails.

I've been hearing more and more cases of the old tech support phone scams lately. The caller typically says he's calling on behalf of "Microsoft" (or maybe your bank) and tells you that there's a serious problem with your computer or your account. The supposed "fix" usually involves granting the caller remote access to your computer, or downloading a program that will fix the problem automatically.

Of course, what usually happens is that the scammer runs a fake scan which shows all sorts of problems, then scares the victim into paying for a solution or a subscription to worthless "security" software. In other cases, the scammer's goal is to steal the victim's financial data or install software that enslaves the victim's computer.

Why, you may ask, do scammers call potential victims instead of sending their pitches via email, which is a much cheaper and faster way to troll for victims? There are several reasons. Anti-phishing protections are everywhere these days, on email servers and users' desktops. The computing public is constantly warned about the dangers of phishing emails, but more rarely are told that a phone call might be phony. The immediacy of a phone call leaves little time to think, "Wait, can this be real", especially when the caller is trained to press hard for immediate action.

I got one of these calls recently from a person with a heavy Indian accent. When he told me that he was calling about problems detected on my computer, I knew right away what was happening. He aggressively tried to convince me he was really Microsoft. After a few minutes this, I hung up on him.

There are more than just fake "Microsoft" callers trying to fool you. I have receive calls about warranty extensions, bank account issues, and of course "free" vacations. All were trying to learn some personal information.

If It Happens to You....

My simple advice is to hang up. Granting a stranger, especially one with malicious intent, full access to your computer can expose all sorts of personal and confidential information. Here is some more suggestions for prevention or recovery.

Treat any unsolicited phone call as a probable scam, even if it supposedly comes from a firm you trust. Microsoft does not call Windows users; it distributes security fixes only via Windows Update. Your bank or the IRS will not be making an unsolicited call.

Never reveal any sensitive information, such as a credit card number, to any unsolicited caller.

Do not follow any instructions at the insistence of any unsolicited caller. This may include visiting a website, installing software, re-configuring Windows, or viewing system error logs.

Run a full anti-malware scan. If you have been fooled by a scammer, start with your anti-virus software, then do additional scans with Malwarebytes or SuperAntispyware. Your SuperCom geeks may have additional tasks to perform such as more serious scans or even System Restore.

Treat the incident as a serious security breach. If you fall for a fake tech support scam and later realize your mistake, immediately change all of your passwords. Uninstall any software that you installed at the caller's behest. Disable remote access if you enabled it. Monitor your bank and credit card accounts closely and consider closing them if you detect any unauthorized transactions. Bad things can happen swiftly and be very significant.

Sadly, we have had people victimized by these situations and it has cost them. We can caution you, but only you can stop becoming a victim.

Friday Morning Presentations coming up:

February 24	Q and A	Tech Committee (Geeks)
March 3	Winners of Photo Contest	Carol Heesen
March 10	Google Maps (Tentative)	Rick Heesen

CLASSES

Friday morning meetings (9:00 AM in Ballroom) are an opportunity to find out about the classes being offered and sign up for them.

You can visit the Club's website at supercomcomputerclub.weebly.com for more details on the classes currently running.

Keep your eyes and ears open because more classes may be added.

SIGs (Special Interest Groups)

These meetings are facilitated by a club member. It is an opportunity for like-minded club members to gather and ask questions to learn more about the particular area of interest.

Current SIGs running in January are – iPad, Windows 10, Android Phones, iPhones and Facebook.

Ben has been having a Wednesday 4-6pm SIG on LastPass, a password manager.

Coming soon is a SIG for Photo Shop Elements.

See the website and/or bulletin board for additional information on when and where they meet.

OPEN LABS

A reminder of dates for **February Open Labs: Feb. 24th, March Open Labs are: March 3rd, 17th and 24th as of this printing.** These are opportunities for the club members to bring their computer to the Lab to have a member of the Tech Squad help them with something that does not work correctly or some change they need made.

Several photos were submitted by members for the 3rd Annual SuperCom Photo Contest. I believe there are 60+ entries. Make sure you take the time to view the beautiful photos in the Alcove off the Ballroom so that you can submit your votes by February 27th. Ballots were placed in each resident's

mailbox. Voting is open to all park residents. The Ballot Box is in the Alcove so make sure you take your ballot with you so you can mark it and place it in the box.

- March 3rd Winning entries announced. Please plan to attend this meeting if you submit an entry.
- March 10th Non-winning entries can be picked up after computer club meeting.

Winning entries will be framed and remain on display until the completion of next year's contest.

Important Note: PLEASE do NOT share with others which photographs are yours. Let your image win or lose on its own merit!

As Warner Brothers would say.....



Ok, Rick, so I thought your ending was cute!!

Tune in soon for more Tech Tips and club announcements. Remember, always check the Bulletin Board in the Hallway by the restrooms, check the Website (www.supercomcomputerclub.weebly.com) and attend meetings to hear some great programs.

From Ben, Peggy, Rick and Mike