SARASOTA TECHNOLOGY Users Group

MONITOR

thestug.org

PRESENTATION | January 8 • 7 PM

There will be no face-to-face meeting this month. We will be broadcasting it via Zoom.

TOURING THE WEB #11

by JB Burke
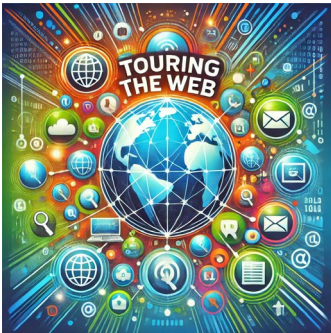
On this tour, you will learn what OneDrive really is, see some iconic photos from the 20th century, and learn how an 8-story, 11,000-ton building was turned 90° while work continued inside. Plus, you'll hear about WWII innovations, favorite ice cream flavors worldwide, how to launch a satellite without a rocket, historic aircraft, and why you should switch to a Chromebook. Unsure about AI? We'll share some tips on how to get started. Plus, enjoy videos, links galore, and much more!

About JB Burke:
JB grew up in Chicago and graduated from the Illinois Institute of Technology in 1963. He moved to Silicon Valley in 1968 and worked for IBM and other companies for 36 years. In 2004, he moved to Prescott, Arizona, with his wife of (now) 58 years, Nita. He is currently the President of the Prescott Computer Society (https://pcs4me.com/) and Secretary of the Board of his neighborhood HOA. He also provides tech support for friends and neighbors.

JB dabbles in photography, is a member of the Tech Committee of the Yavapai College OLLI program (https://www.yc.edu/v6/lifelong-learning/olli.html), and teaches occasional OLLI classes. Otherwise, he is retired!

Mission Statement

It is our mission to bring to our members quality education in using today's personal technology products, and to provide to qualified Sarasota County citizens refurbished computer equipment.

Member of
apcug
An International
Association of Technology
& Computer User Groups

President's MESSAGE

Happy New Year to everyone!

It's another new beginning for STUG, and I am delighted to announce that we are starting the year with two new board members: (Margaret) Jean Cannon and Barbara Shapiro. I am so happy to welcome them aboard! We held our elections in December to elect board members, and afterward, we met to decide who would take on each position. Here is how it turned out:

President: Ann Ross	**Director 2:** Drew King (STUG Website)
1st Vice President: Hewie Poplock (Zoom Master, Teacher)	**Director 3:** Dick Bayles (Email Coordinator)
2nd Vice President: Jim Cerny (Education, Teacher)	**Director 4:** Peter Schneider (Special Events)
Treasurer: Mike Hutchinson (Refurb Manager)	**Director 5:** Barbara Shapiro
Secretary: Leah Pittard (with Jean Cannon starting February 2025)	**STAR Board Director:** Prabhav Govindu (Student from Pineview)
Director 1: Bill Crowe (Monthly Presentations, Teacher)	

Transition Note: Leah Pittard will work with Jean Cannon until February, at which point Leah will become Director 6.

We also have two valued members who prefer to remain off the board but are vital to our success:
Nancy Dennis: Oversees all aspects of Membership.
Kate Holmes: Manages Facebook, blogs, and contributes to the Monitor.
Additionally, although Marshall DuBois has retired, we still consider him our Historian.

New Classes for 2025

Please take note of the new classes being offered this year. Per Jim Cerny, there must be at least three members signed up for a class to be held. There is currently no maximum number of attendees.

Our teachers work hard to prepare these classes, so please check the Monitor for the class offerings and sign up if you can. All our teachers are highly knowledgeable, and I can promise you an informative and engaging experience. For now, all classes will be held on Zoom for your convenience.

Have Ideas for the Monitor?

We'd love to hear your suggestions! If you have ideas for Monitor topics, please let any board member know. We're always looking to expand and improve.

Get ready for a great new year!

Ann Ross, STUG President, 2025
annross8@gmail.com

GENERAL MEETING FOR DECEMBER 4TH WAS HELD VIA ZOOM WITH 56 MEMBERS PRESENT.

214 people attended our <u>various</u> Zoom meetings and classes in the month of November 2024.

TOTAL STUG MEMBERSHIP COUNT
December 2024 - 233

TO SEE AVAILABLE CLASSES/ FORUMS AND ANY OTHER OFFERINGS FOR THIS MONTH, PLEASE CHECK THE WEEKLY EMAIL SENT TO ALL MEMBERS.

Migrating to a
NEW VERSION

Jim Cerny

You've got a new version of some software—congratulations! Using the latest version (or latest update) of your software apps is always a good idea. But why are software apps always being updated? Among other reasons, updates fix problems and strengthen the security of the software. Here are some tips for transitioning to a new release of a software package. To simplify, I'll use one popular software app, Word for Windows, as an example.

Let's say you are currently using an older version of Word, and everything is working fine. Someone with a newer version of Word creates a document and sends it to you as a file attachment in an email. When you try to open the document with your older version of Word, you get a message stating that some features are unavailable in your older version. The software will do its best to open the document, providing you with a version you can still read and work with.

Here's what's happening: the newer version of Word includes features (or "bells and whistles") that are not available in your older version. The software compensates by adapting the document to work within your older version's capabilities.

If you send a document created in your older version of Word to someone using a newer version—no problem! Newer versions are designed to open files created in older versions of the software.

Now, suppose you've installed the newer version of Word. Will it still open your old files? Yes, it will. It will also open old files sent to you by others. This is called "upward compatibility." However, be aware that when you save a document in the newer version, it will save in the newer format. If you use any new features exclusive to the newer version, they may not be readable by someone using an older version.

To address this, you can use the "Save as…" menu option to save your document in an older format. Here's how:

- Click on the little arrowhead in the "Save as type:" box.

- Select the version you want from the drop-down list.

Upgrading to a newer version of software is a good thing and nothing to fear. Don't forget to consult Google for additional tips and guidance—there's always more to learn! Like migrating from 2024 to 2025, upgrading software helps us look ahead to better things.

TECHNICAL THOUGHTS

Do you need a Tablet?
YOU MIGHT BE A CANDIDATE FOR ONE.

Phil Sorrentino

I'm not suggesting a tablet as a replacement for a laptop (or desktop), but as an addition to it when there is a need for computing on the go. Tablets are like computers but have smaller screens and typically lack keyboards. Tablets and smartphones are considered mobile devices, whereas desktop and laptop computers are considered more stationary. (Of course, laptops are designed to be portable, but they are usually larger and heavier than tablets, and users typically expect to use them with a keyboard and a mouse or trackpad.)

Tablets tend to have screens smaller than laptops but larger than smartphones. They almost always have Wi-Fi but often cannot connect to cellular networks. While tablets are much lighter than laptops, the lack of a physical keyboard makes them more challenging for creating information. They are better suited for consuming information. For example, many TV news readers have tablets in front of them while on camera. They are likely using them to keep up with current events (consuming information) rather than documenting what is happening (creating information).

If you use a laptop regularly, you might be a candidate for a tablet. However, if you create many files using software like Word, Excel, or PowerPoint, you may not benefit from a tablet unless you use it alongside your laptop. In this case, your laptop (or desktop) would be used for creating information, while the tablet would be used for consuming information on the go.

Tablets come in three main categories: Apple, Android, and Windows. All operate similarly and can produce comparable results. The best choice for you may depend on which platform you are most familiar with. For example, I use

Windows computers daily, so a Windows tablet is a natural addition to my setup. A Windows tablet can participate in my home network, making file sharing with other computers seamless. (I also occasionally use an inexpensive Android tablet when my Android smartphone's screen is too small.)

The Apple iPad is one of the most popular tablets and runs on the iPadOS operating system. iPads range in price from around $500 to $1,000 for the Pro version. Android tablets are available from manufacturers like Samsung, Amazon, and Google, running the Android operating system. Prices range from about $100 to $800 for a high-end Samsung tablet. Windows tablets, manufactured by companies like Microsoft, Lenovo, and Dell, run the Windows operating system and cost between $400 and $1,000 for a high-end Microsoft Surface.

Screen size is a key differentiator: smartphones have screens in the 4.5 to 7-inch range, laptops range from 11 to 17 inches, and tablets fall in the middle, typically from 7 to 11 inches. The primary interface for tablets is their touch-sensitive screens, with minimal physical controls. Tablets

typically have a power switch, a volume rocker, and a charging/data port—usually a USB Type-C connector. Some tablets also offer a micro USB port for external memory or expandable storage. Audio output is often provided via Bluetooth or a USB Type-C connector, though some tablets still include a 3.5mm audio jack. Modern tablet batteries can last 8 to 12 hours, and their lifespan is generally 3 to 5 years.

If you need portable computing, you might be a good candidate for a tablet. Tablets are particularly well-suited for tasks where lightweight and compact design are advantageous. While smartphones meet these criteria, their smaller screens can be limiting in certain scenarios. Tablets excel when portability and screen size are both important.

Common tablet use cases include streaming movies or videos, responding to texts or brief emails, engaging with social media, staying updated with the news, and browsing or shopping online. If these activities align with your needs, you might find a tablet useful.

Tablets are a valuable addition to your computing environment, even with some limitations. They typically have less processing power than laptops (and desktops) and may struggle with demanding tasks like video editing. Many tablets have limited internal storage, and some models do not support expandable memory. Additionally, tablets use operating systems that differ from laptops, meaning they cannot run the full range of desktop applications. The reliance on a virtual keyboard can also be less efficient and comfortable for prolonged typing compared to physical keyboards. However, tablet keyboards are often larger and easier to use than those on smartphones.

Tablets may also have multitasking limitations compared to laptops or desktops, such as displaying multiple apps or windows simultaneously. These advantages and disadvantages can vary depending on the tablet's operating system and model.

Even with these drawbacks, if you find the idea of a tablet appealing for on-the-go computing, you might be a good candidate for one.

STUG is excited to offer new computer classes designed to cover the basics of using **Microsoft Windows**. No matter which version of Windows you have, these classes will provide a foundation of essential skills and give you the opportunity to ask questions.

Topics of these classes will include things such as the Desktop screen, the Taskbar, Files and Folders, Apps (applications or software), computer security, searching the internet, playing games, and much more.

CLASS SCHEDULE

We'll start with two classes in January:

- Tuesday, January 14: 10–11 a.m.
- Tuesday, January 28: 10–11 a.m.

Both classes will be held on Zoom, so you can attend from anywhere with an internet connection. Future classes will be scheduled based on attendance and interest in January. Many people have expressed enthusiasm for these topics, and we hope to see you there!

HOW TO REGISTER

Check the January issue of the Monitor for more details on specific class topics and instructions for registration. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Jim Cerny at jimcerny123@gmail.com.

Help Desk Q n A's

Our Help Desk is held every month, half an hour before our regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Zoom. To attend our Help Desk, just join the meeting at 6:30.

Here's a sample of what we discussed on December 4th, 2024:

Windows 11:
Were there any issues converting from Windows 10 (or earlier) to Windows 11 on a new computer? Comments indicated that there were no significant issues when upgrading to Windows 11.

One attendee mentioned experiencing email problems with Comcast/ Xfinity. Their email stopped working, and after a lengthy and challenging process to reach a real person at Comcast, a password change was suggested and implemented. Additional steps were required to restore the email functionality. No one else reported similar issues.

An attendee shared the following phone number for quickly reaching a real person at Xfinity:
Xfinity Accessibility Department – 1-855-270-0379

BOGUS Emails, Texts, and Notifications:
As usual, many are receiving fraudulent emails, texts, notices, and notifications. Always verify the authenticity of a message by contacting the company directly through an alternative method (e.g., a phone call or online chat). Do not click on any links within the message itself, as they could redirect you to a fraudulent webpage!

Scammers can create web pages that closely mimic legitimate websites and even spoof emails to appear as though they come from someone in your contact list. Stay vigilant and cautious.

Hope everyone had a fun and safe holiday season!

Have a question for us? Join our STUG "Help Desk" on Zoom at 6:30 on our regular monthly meeting night. The regular meeting begins at 7 p.m. If you have any questions about the Help Desk, contact Jim Cerny at jimcerny123@gmail.com.

THE UN-EXPERT
KATE HOLMES

WHAT I LACK IN TECH KNOWLEDGE I MAKE UP FOR IN ENTHUSIASM.

Learn Something

When I was a schoolgirl, my mother would wave me off to school with an encouragement to "Learn something!" While 2025 speak seems to lean more towards "upskill in areas of interest", it still remains a viable New Year's Resolution. And learning more is sitting right in front of you on your electronic device.

There are infinite ways to learn online, but three websites stand out:

KHAN ACADEMY'S driving force is this statement: *"Education is a human right. We are a non-profit because we believe in a free, world-class education for anyone, anywhere."* At first glance, it might seem to be focused on schoolchildren and their educators, but dig in and discover courses designed and curated by subject matter experts. Their offerings tend to the basic, academic subjects. Examples? Anything from Chromatic aberration to the Homestead Act. And all are free. Khan Academy offers the user a way to track progress if you like rewards along the way. Take a look at https://www.khanacademy.org/

COURSERA tends to focus on professional certificates and even offers accredited degrees from prestigious universities. Not all courses are free, but when I looked, there were 6728 free courses just in English! Courses are created by university professors, industry leaders, and professionals from partner institutions like Stanford, Google, and IBM. Explore at https://www.coursera.org/courses?query=free&language=English

UDEMY is actually a marketplace for online learning offering courses created by independent instructors on virtually any topic. As such, content quality depends on the instructor. Its focus tends to be on skill-building, practical knowledge, and hobbies. You can purchase classes individually or subscribe for a monthly fee. Examples: Anyone need to understand the Latin Ablative Absolute? Well, maybe not, but there's 14 free classes on woodworking, and 248 classes for a fee from $12.99 on up. https://www.udemy.com/courses/free/

Some additional sites you might explore are OpenLearn, edX, FutureLearn, and even iTunes U. And of course, you can always build your own courses from YouTube and search engines. Just pick something you've always been intrigued by, and make 2025 the year you satisfy and feed your curiosity.

So what will you learn from your laptop, tablet, or phone in 2025? I'm torn between music theory and the Etruscans. How about you?

Anyone can learn anything. For free.

If your friend is longing to get full use out of their computer, but you simply can't find the time to teach them all you know, gift them now with a STUG membership.

Why now? Because we're offering, for the first time ever, two classes (with promises of more if there's interest!) with Jim Cerny in January. More:

STUG is excited to offer new computer classes designed to cover the basics of using Microsoft Windows. No matter which version of Windows you have, these classes will provide a foundation of essential skills and give you the opportunity to ask questions.

Topics of these classes will include things such as the **Desktop screen, the Taskbar, Files and Folders, Apps (applications or software), computer security, searching the internet, playing games, and much more.**

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Both classes will be on Zoom, so you can attend from anywhere with an internet connection. Future classes will be scheduled based on attendance and interest in January. Many people have expressed enthusiasm for these topics, and we hope to see you there!

Once you've given your friend the gift of membership, Jim will contact them to register for these special classes. Check the January issue of The Monitor for more details on specific class topics and instructions for registration. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Jim Cerny at jimcerny123@gmail.com.

P.S. Of course, you're invited too, as a current member of STUG. Hope to see you then!

the
REFURB GROUP

In November 2024, the Refurbishing Project refurbished 234 computers. In addition, 2 computers were repaired. For 2024, the Refurb Project has refurbished 1,510 computers and repaired 22 computers. Since its inception, the Refurb Group refurbished a total of 22,547 computers.

Equipment was donated to individuals referred by many organizations. Some of the organizations that benefited from donations this month include:

Children's Guardian Fund | Our Mother's House

Goodwill | Sarasota School Students

If you know of a person that needs a computer, but cannot afford to purchase one, he/she should write a letter or send an email to the Refurbishing Project explaining his/her situation (include a phone number for questions that may arise). The letter will be evaluated to see if the individual qualifies for a computer.
Emails should be sent to refurb@theSTUG.org

Write the letter to: STUG Refurbishing Project
3949 Sawyer Rd., Sarasota 34233.

Donations can be dropped off at the Refurbishing shop (941-539-7401). It is located at the address above. A map and additional information is available on our web page: www.thestug.org/refurb.html

PC REFURBISHING Project

As a continuing part of STUG's contribution to the community, the Refurbish Group accepts donated computer equipment for the purpose of refurbishing and updating the equipment. These items are donated to other non-profits and individuals in the community who otherwise would be denied the technology due to economic limitations.

Donations accepted:
Computers, monitors, printers, tablets, peripherals (hard drives, CD/DVD readers/writers and other computer items) on the Windows or Apple platforms.

Donations Return to the Community:
If an individual or a non-profit is in need of computer equipment and cannot afford to purchase the equipment, the Refurbish Group can provide it. Write a letter or send an email explaining the situation to the address below. Please include what the need is and a statement that the computer cannot be afforded. Lastly give us a phone number to contact you with questions or to let you know the computer is ready. The request will be reviewed and, if accepted, the equipment will be provided.

Komputers for Kids:
The Refurbish Group also handles the Komputers for Kids program. Laptops donated by the Sarasota County Schools are refurbished and provided to Sarasota County public school students.

How to contact the Refurb Group:
By telephone: 941-539-7401
By mail: 3949 Sawyer Road, Sarasota FL 34233
By email: refurb@thestug.org
http://www.thestug.org/refurb.html

To drop off a donation or to pick up a computer that is ready:
Shop Location: 3949 Sawyer Road · Sarasota, FL 34233
Hours: Mon-Wed-Fri 10:00 am - 12 noon
(Please call ahead just to be sure someone is there.)

The Sarasota Technology Users Group, Inc. (STUG) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational organization. Financial contributions, as well as material contributions, are considered federal income tax deductible under current IRS rules. If requested, we will provide you with a receipt with each donation.

JANUARY 2025
Classes & Workshops

All classes are free for current members.

Class REGISTRATION

All classes are on Zoom unless otherwise noted.

Notice

A calendar with all our classes, workshops, and forums is available from a link on our website's home page. Click on **Monthly Education Calendar**.

HELP DESK

HOSTED BY JIM CERNY AND OTHERS
NOW HELD PRIOR TO OUR REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING ON ZOOM

Do you have a technical-related problem or question? Join us at the Help Desk. All STUG members are welcome to ask our panel of experts for help. You can also join just to listen in as well if you wish and learn something new to avoid future problems. To attend, just join the monthly Zoom meeting early. Help starts at 6:30 p.m.!

Any questions about the Help Desk change? Send an email to Jim Cerny at jimcerny123@gmail.com or 941-926-7888.

WINDOWS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP
HOSTED BY HEWIE POPLOCK
JANUARY 12 (SUNDAY 1:30 PM - 2:45 PM EST)

The meeting opens at 1:00 PM ET. You must register once at the following link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEvce6grz8qGdyZenMWbknhMmKkQP8Rq01

The Windows Special Interest Group (WinSIG) is a joint meeting for CFCS and STUG members. It covers all things Windows, as well as other general computer topics. This SIG has been meeting for over 25 years and takes place on the second Sunday of each month.

iPHONE AND iPAD CLASSES
HOSTED BY BILL CROWE

Bill is continuing his 27-week series of classes in January. The classes are designed for both beginners and experienced users. Even experienced users will pick up new tips and information they didn't know.

Tell your friends about the series so that you and they can learn the basics and/or enhance your knowledge about these devices. All classes will be held on Saturday mornings from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM Eastern Time.

To participate, kindly register via email at wtcrowe@verizon.net at least one day before each class to receive a Zoom meeting invitation. Include your first and last name along with your email address. If you have attended one of Bill's classes in the past 6 months you will receive an invitation without sending Bill an email.

JANUARY 4TH — iPhone Camera application

JANUARY 11TH — Working with Photos application

JANUARY 18TH — iCloud and Files application

JANUARY 25TH — Books and Music applications

NEW BASIC WINDOWS CLASSES
HOSTED BY JIM CERNY
JANUARY 14 & 28 (TUESDAYS 10 AM - 11 AM)

Taught by Jim Cerny on Zoom, these classes will review the basics of using Windows. The first class will cover the Desktop screen, the Taskbar, and the basic use of multiple open windows on your screen. The second class will focus on working with File Explorer to organize files and folders. Even experienced users may find this a valuable review and discover a helpful tip or two.

To register for these classes (one or both), email Jim at jimcerny123@gmail.com. Jim will reply with the Zoom link needed to join. Please note that if fewer than three people sign up, the class may be cancelled. Questions about the classes can also be emailed to Jim.

CONTACT US

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