

Bits & Bytes

Arkansas' Premier Computer Club



January 2023

The Bella Vista Computer Club - John Ruehle Center

Highlands Crossing Center, 1801 Forest Hills Blvd Suite 208 (lower level), Bella Vista, AR 72715

Website: <http://BVComputerClub.org>

Email: editor@bvcomputerclub.org

MEETINGS

Board Meeting: January 9, 6pm, in John Ruehle Training Center, Highlands Crossing Center.

General Meeting: January 9, 7pm, "Digital File Management Conventions: Making Files Easier to Find", by Joel Ewing. The more files you create and accumulate on your computer, the more difficult it becomes to find anything — unless you adopt some naming conventions and organize your files into folders in a way that makes sense to you. The default folders and file naming suggests a beginning approach, but you must adapt and expand upon it to fit your individual needs.

We will meet in-person in Room 1001 on the lower level of The Highlands Crossing Center, 1801 Forest Hills Blvd, Bella Vista, or you may attend the meeting on-line via Zoom. Zoom access information is published on our website.

Visitors or Guests are welcome.

Because of the continuing presence of COVID-19, we recommend observing any current guidelines that may be in effect at the time of the meeting. Consider attending by Zoom if you or others in your family are in a high risk category.

HELP CLINICS

January 7, 9am - noon at John Ruehle center

January 18, 9am - noon at John Ruehle center

Members may request Remote Help on our website at <https://bvcomputerclub.org> at menu path Member Benefits ► Remote Help .

MEMBERSHIP

Single membership is \$30; \$15 for each additional family member in the same household.

Join on our website at <https://bvcomputerclub.org> at menu path Get Involved ► Join/Renew, by mailing an application (from the web site) with check, or complete an application and pay in person at any meeting.

CLASSES

(At BVCC Training Center)

Wednesday, January 11, 9am-11am, "Data: Where Is It And What To Do With It", with Pete Opland.

Tuesday, January 17, 2pm-4pm, "Basic Computer Security, Part 1", with Justin Sell.

Wednesday, January 18, 1pm-3pm, "Storage Solutions", with Pete Opland (**NEW CLASS**)

Advance sign up required for each listed class: For reservations: email to edu@bvcomputerclub.org, or sign up at the General Meeting. Classes are free to Computer Club members.

Check the monthly calendar and announcements for any last minute schedule changes at <https://bvcomputerclub.org> .

NEW OR RETURNING BVCC MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome the following new members or members returning to BVCC after an absence since last month's newsletter:

Peggy Taylor

Barbara Templin

Linda Neymeyer

Beth Kastl

BVCC DESKTOP COMPUTER FUNDRAISER RAFFLE IN FEBRUARY

At our February 13th General Meeting we will raffle off an extremely capable desktop computer that has been customized by our own Pete Opland. Someone will win a great Dell Computer tower, keyboard and mouse (monitor not included) for a small donation of \$10 per ticket. You do not need to be present at the meeting or be a member of BVCC to win; but if not present at the drawing, you would need to be able to schedule a time to pick up the prize.

The base machine is a Dell Optiplex 5060 Tower Desktop with an 8th generation CPU that benchmarks at 12.89. It has been enhanced to include Windows 11 Pro (on the solid state drive), MS Office 2021 Pro Plus, and has two mechanical hard drives configured as 1 TB RAID-1 storage to protect user data from a single hard drive failure. A comparably configured computer could easily retail in excess of \$700. For more details about the computer, see the [Feb2023 Computer Raffle](#) on the BVCC website: www.bvcomputerclub.org.

Raffle tickets are offered for a donation of \$10. Tickets may be obtained at the January and February General Meetings, or by contacting Woody Ogden (479-966-9357) or Geri Hoerner (479-340-4886). Other BVCC members willing to assist in distributing tickets may pick up tickets for that purpose at the January BVCC General Meeting -- just be sure that all ticket stubs (with donator's contact information on the back) and donations reach Woody Ogden or Geri Hoerner no later than the February General Meeting.

MEMBERSHIP DUES INCREASE

In light of our recent annual deficits and the known increases in the rent for our Training Center at HCC over the next three years, The BVCC Board voted in December to increase BVCC annual membership dues by \$5 for each member. Effective January 1, 2023, the membership fee for 12 months will become \$30 for a single membership and \$15 for each additional membership in the same household. It is hoped that our members will continue to see BVCC as a bargain given the services we can provide.

IT'S TIME TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR IPHONE CLOCK

*By Jim Cerny, Education Chair and Forums Coordinator
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Most of us have and use an iPhone, and it comes with a great and straightforward app called simply "clock." The app icon looks like an actual clock, and the app icon itself shows you the correct time. So, let's open the "clock" app and see what it can do for us.

You will notice it has four different options at the bottom of your screen – the "World Clock," "Alarm," "Stopwatch," and "Timer." These are really all easy to use and mostly self-explanatory. But let's look closely at each of these and see what fun we can have.

World Clock – will show you the time anyplace on the globe. You can ADD a new location (city) by touching the plus sign ("+"). You will get an alphabetical list of cities and a search area at the top where you can enter the city's name if you prefer. Not every city is listed, so you may have to pick a city near the location (that is, in the same time zone) you want. If in doubt, ask Google what time zone a city/town is in or "What's the time in Pago-Pago?" to help you. You can have several cities on this list, and the clock will tell you how many hours (plus or minus) the city is from your time, even if it is another day. So, add your "time" locations for your friends and relatives, and you'll never have to guess the time difference again.

Alarm – will allow you to set one or many alarms to alert you at any time you choose. This simple function comes with several options which may be helpful. You can set and save several alarms. You can turn "on" any of them that you like. If an alarm is not "on" (by touching the round white circle to show a green patch), it will not go off. When you set a new alarm, or if you touch on an existing alarm time to edit it, you can set the following options: Repeat an alarm on certain days, Label an alarm to any name you want to give it, Sound the alarm with your chosen sound (or song!), and/or Snooze for a second chance in a few minutes. And you can "Delete Alarm" to remove it from your list.

Quite a list of options for just alarms!

Stopwatch – will time anything. Do you like walking as I do? Or riding a bike? Or driving, doing chores, cooking, or whatever? Why not time what you do? This stopwatch has a digital display and an old-style classic stopwatch display. It only has two commands, the "Start" and "Stop" buttons and the "Lap" button. I bet you can figure out the start-and-stop button, but the Lap button can be fun. I have never timed a race around a track, but when I go for my walk, I hit the Lap button at each milestone on my route. This way, it will record a time for each leg of my walk without interrupting the overall time. I can tell if I am lagging behind and if I should walk faster to improve my time.

QR CODE SCAMS – BE CAREFUL WHERE YOU POINT THAT SMARTPHONE

*By Phil Sorrentino, Secretary and APCUG Rep, Sun City Center Computer Club
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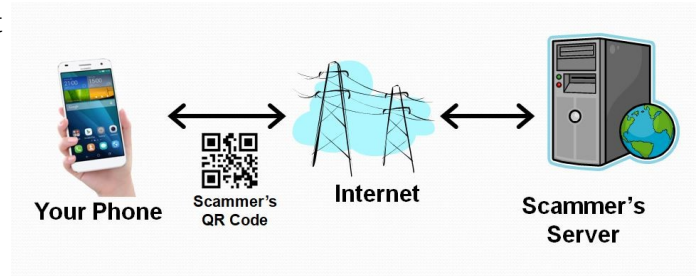
QR Codes seem to be everywhere today. You'll find them anywhere someone wants to give you more information than is possible by other means, like a sheet of paper or a machine-readable standard bar code. Initially, QR codes were created to track manufacturing processes where barcodes couldn't store enough information. However, a bar code has one dimension. A QR code is 2-dimensional and can store significantly more data than a bar code. Roughly speaking, a QR code may contain as many as 7,000 characters as opposed to a bar code that may contain up to around 40 characters. That's over 170 times the amount of data. This increased amount of information makes the QR code so worthwhile.

QR codes were invented in Japan in the 1990s. They were first used by the automotive industry to manage production but have spread everywhere. There are even websites and apps that let you make your own. A QR code is a machine-readable, 2 dimension matrix of black and white squares. A QR code may represent many different data types, such as text, a hyperlink to a website, a telephone number, an email address, or a text or email message. QR codes, like billboards, clothing labels, walls, TVs, and even tattoos, can be placed on almost anything. QR stands for Quick Response. Quick Response comes from the manufacturing industry and deals with how fast a product can be replaced on the seller's shelves. Quick Response is "the rapid replenishment of a customer's stock by a supplier with direct access to data from the customer's point of sale." A QR code is merely a data storage representation of some information using the binary code. (For example, the letter A is represented by "01000001") The little squares and patterns of the QR code represent the binary information. The actual QR code is read-only, so it cannot record or steal any personal information on its own. Nowadays, the smartphone's camera app can scan the QR code when the camera is directed at it. (Most smartphones no longer have to download a separate app from the App store for reading QR codes.)

A QR code with an embedded hyperlink to a website can connect you to a specific website quickly and easily using your smartphone. There is very little one needs to know to take advantage of a QR code. But a lot of the latest technology is being used to accomplish the task. The three major technology components are your smartphone, the internet, and a server (on the internet, or "in the cloud"). This collection of technologies goes by the name "Client-Server Technology," and all three components have been developed to work together. For example, your smartphone has a camera App that connects the smartphone, as the client, to the server website whose URL was embedded in the QR code. (URL is the Universal Resource Locator, the term for a web address on the internet.) This allows the provider of the QR code the ability to connect your phone with the QR code provider's server when you scan the QR code. Once connected to the server, the smartphone can access all the information that the server can provide.

QR codes take people from the physical world to the online (cyber) world. They let smartphones connect to an enormous world of information quickly and easily, but unfortunately, they also allow smartphones to connect quickly and easily to a scammer's website. This is why scammers have started using QR codes in attempting to get in touch with potential victims. It gets people online with the scammer's server. It is similar to "phishing" emails and telephone calls. QR codes are another way for scammers to get in touch with potential victims.

Many scammers (aka cybercriminals) have started to exploit the technology's convenience. Scammers create malicious QR codes to connect unwitting consumers to the scammer's server and dupe them into divulging their personal information. Anytime new technology comes out, cybercriminals attempt to find a way to exploit it. This is especially true with technology like QR codes. It seems like



most people can figure out how to use them, but they probably don't really know how they work, and it's always easier to manipulate people when they don't understand their technology. Scanning the scammer's QR codes won't do anything malicious to your smartphone, such as installing malware. Still, it probably will take you to a website designed to try to get personal or financial information from you.

Like any other phishing scheme, it's impossible to know precisely how often QR codes are used for malicious purposes. Experts say they still represent a small percentage of overall phishing, but numerous QR code scams have been reported to the Better Business Bureau. As a result, many people know they need to be on the lookout for phishing links and questionable attachments in emails that purport to be from your bank. But thinking twice about scanning a QR code with your smartphone camera isn't second nature for most people yet.

Recently a QR code scam was uncovered in a Texas city. Drivers were led to a scammer's website after scanning a QR code sticker on a parking meter. Eventually, around 30 such stickers were found. The QR code was supposed to help the motorist pay for online parking. However, instead of being taken to the city's authorized website, the motorist who scanned the fake stickers was led to a fake website that collected their credit card information. With a warning of the parking meter scam, officials in another city issued a warning to motorists after spotting similar stickers on parking meters.

Fake QR codes have even shown up in emails. Scammers may like using QR codes in phishing emails because they often aren't picked up by security software, giving them a better chance than attachments or bad links to reach their intended targets. It boils down to QR codes being just one more way for cybercriminals to get what they want and yet another threat for people to be on the lookout for.

So be careful when scanning QR codes. Here are some tips from security experts. Think before you scan. Be especially wary of codes posted in public places. Take a good look and determine if the sticker is part of the sign or display. If the code doesn't look like it fits in with the background, it may have been put there by a scammer. Be suspicious of any QR code that comes in an email. If you scan a QR code, look at the website it led you to and determine if it looks like what you expected. If it doesn't look appropriate, then leave the website. If it asks for personal information you don't think is appropriate, don't provide it. And, in the words of one of the Computer Club's past presidents, Matt Batt, "Be careful out there!"