— The DataBus —

Monthly Newsletter of

The Dayton Microcompter Association

Volume XI (New Series) Nº 8 (August 2021)

Amazon Sidewalk®: Is it Right for You?

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SAVE A TREE (or at least a branch)! If you prefer to print your DATABUS rather than read it directly from a monitor, don't print page 17 unless you must renew your membership.

Post Office Box 4005
Dayton, Ohio 45401
(937) 777-DMA1
(777-3621)

Visit us at:
DMA1.org

Your 2020/21 Officers:

President
Ken PHELPS
Vice-President
Peter HESS
Secretary
Glady CAMPION
Treasurer
Pat FLYNN
Officers need not be Trustees.

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Glady CAMPION
Edwin DAVIDSON
Patrick FLYNN
Peter HESS
Chester HOWES
Ken PHELPS
Ed SKUYA

Webmasters:

Mark CAMDEN
& Brent KERLIN

Webmaster Emeritus:
Dave LUNDY, †4/13/20

ESTABLISHED IN 1976, DMA is a group of Dayton-area professionals and enthusiasts in the field of computing and digital information technology. General Membership Meetings are usually held on the last Tuesday of each month. DMA has a number of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) in areas ranging from digital investing and genealogy to the Linux operating system. Each SIG meets according to its own schedule. DMA is a member of the Association of Personal Computer Users' Groups (APCUG) and the Affiliated Societies' Council (ASC). Click on any of the logos—including our own (top left)—to go to that organization's Web site.

Submissions ...

THE DATABUS welcomes compliments, complaints, suggestions, and especially articles. We can accept articles in ASCII, or as attachments in plain text, Microsoft Word, Open or Libre Office Writer, or, yes, even in WordStar (a word-processing program that goes back to about 1980!). Send articles to:

Editor@DMA1.org

All articles are subject to editing for spelling, grammar, usage, and space. Retain a copy of your work, as THE DATABUS cannot be responsible for loss. When articles are of roughly equal quality and importance, those by paid-up DMA members receive preference.

ALL REGISTERED TRADEMARKS, for example: the DMA Arrow, APCUG, Amazon Sidewalk, Linux, Norton/Lifelock, Windows, WordFence, or ZOOM, are the property of their respective owners. However, the Registered Trade Mark symbols (® or ™) have been omitted for better readability. The Editor occasionally inserts comments into articles. Such comments are sometimes preceded by the phrase: "EDITOR'S NOTE," are often in square brackets [like these], and are always in sans-serif type, like these paragraphs.

THE DATABUS is written and published by volunteers. We do not give professional advice on hardware, software, or network installation, repair, security, or troubleshooting. If you need expert assistance for your digital device or network, please seek the advice or services of a qualified professional.

August Meeting: 7:00 P.M., Tuesday, the 24th

No Driving—No Parking—No Charge*

* This is a "hybrid" meeting: via ZOOM, but also in person. Come at 6 P.M. if you wish to join us in person for dinner at T. J. Chump's Restaurant in Huber Heights, next door to the Meijer's Supermarket. Click *here* for a map. The restaurant has free parking. It is also accessible via RTA bus routes 18 and 19, but there is a short walk from the bus stop in the Meijer's parking lot to the restaurant.

Gary COY:

Amazon Sidewalk: Is It Right for You?

If you come in person, join us at 6:00 P.M. for dinner.
The Main Meeting starts at 7 via ZOOM.

GARY COY HAS WORKED IN THE ELECTRONIC AND COMPUTER INDUSTRIES for over twenty years, while at the same time running a computer repair business. He has been a member of the Dayton Microcomputer Association for over ten years, where he has served as an officer and a trustee. He is currently the VP of the NASAC computer user group, based in Clark County, Ohio. Gary currently works for the Speedway Corporation where he started as a repair technician and is now a customer service claims specialist. He also serves his community as a volunteer and part-time EMT.

The DMA's Amazon Sidewalk presentation isn't about the sidewalk in front of your house. It is about a new technology offered by Amazon, which may cause security and privacy concerns. Gary will be talking about the many pros and cons of Amazon Sidewalk and how to opt out of the product.

The Amazon Web site says: "Amazon Sidewalk creates a low-bandwidth network with the help of Sidewalk Bridge devices including select Echo and Ring devices. These Bridge devices share a small portion of your Internet bandwidth which is pooled to provide services to you and your neighbors. And as more neighbors participate, the network becomes even stronger."

This is a quote from Microsoft: "The switch is about to be flipped on Amazon Sidewalk, the tech giant's vision of smart neighborhoods connected by an array of its gadgets." Amazon originally announced the networking project in September 2019.

The low-bandwidth shared network uses a smidgen of your home Wi-Fi to connect Echo devices, Ring security cameras and lights, and Tile Bluetooth trackers to help everyone's devices "get connected and stay connected," according to Amazon's Web site.

"This connectivity across neighborhoods could be helpful when your Echo speaker or Ring camera loses its Wi-Fi connection. When that happens, Sidewalk can more easily reconnect your devices." Amazon's Web site claims.

Our meeting starts at 7:00 P.M. DMA members will receive an invitation by e-mail for use with Zoom. Not a member? You may request an invitation using:

http://www.dma1.org/contact-us/

Or… join us at T.J. CHUMPS, 7050 Executive Blvd., Huber Heights OH. Click *here* for a map.

Minutes are normally published almost two months late, because the Minutes for, say, the July Board meeting must be approved by the Trustees at the *following month's* meeting — in this case, early August. The corrected and approved July Minutes would thus appear in the August DATABUS (this issue), published toward the end of the month.

Trustees' meetings are on the *first Monday of each month,* except when that day is a legal holiday, for example: Labor Day in September. As the epidemic wanes, Trustees have begun holding "hybrid" meetings, in person or via ZOOM. Meetings begin at 7 P.M. Request ZOOM credentials (that's a fancy way of saying "an invitation") from Vice-President PETER HESS or Secretary GLADY CAMPION at the August General Membership meeting — or come in person!

DMA Board of Trustees

Meeting of Monday, July 12, 2021 (5 July was a legal holiday.)

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 P.M. by Peter Hess, both via Zoom and at Fairborn Fire Station #2.

Trustees present: Martin Arbagi, Glady Campion, Edwin Davidson, Pat Flynn, Peter Hess, Chester Howes, Ken Phelps, and Ed Skuya. **Guests:** Mark Camden, Gary Turner.

OFFICERS' REPORTS

President – Ken Phelps

No report

Vice President – Peter Hess

Peter thanked everyone for stepping in while he was recovering, including Mark and Glady who worked together on last month's presentation on Windows 11.

Peter wants to add an issue to the DMA needs list. We still have no location for the long awaited computer museum.

Secretary – Glady Campion

Glady presented Minutes for the previous board meeting. Peter Hess moved the Minutes be accepted. Martin Arbagi seconded and the motion passed with Glady abstaining.

Treasurer – Pat Flynn

Pat presented a report for the past month.

—Notice—

Because of confidentiality concerns (hackers could readily discover in what financial institutions DMA holds its assets), Treasurer's Reports will not be published hereafter. However, account balances will be available to DMA members on request.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Audit – Glady Campion

In progress

Fundraising – Peter Hess

In progress

Marketing – Edwin Davidson, Pat Flynn, Peter Hess, Debra McFall

In progress

Membership – Glady Campion

At last month's General Membership meeting, we had 47 Regular, 4 Associate, 0 Student, and 5 Life members for a total of 56. Attendance was 27, including 17 who attended in person at T.J. Chumps.

(Continued on page 5)

(JUNE MINUTES—Continued from page 4)

Prizes: Chester Howes chose the Echo Dot. Bruce Lykins took home the Wenger Beta 14" Sleeve. Gary Coy snagged the Sandisk 128GB 3.0 Flash Drive. Stephen Frey won the Kingston USB 3.0 Kingston Flash Media Reader from the Dave Lundy collection.

Net Administration Team – Ken Phelps, Gary Turner, Pat Flynn, Brent Kerlin, Mark Camden

Mark e-mailed the trustees a report by Wordfence on the security of our website, reporting no immediate threat. Mark also attended an SEO meeting to learn more about Search Engine Optimization.

Mark added our site to Google's Search Console, a free Web service for webmasters to check their site's indexing status and optimize their site's visibility. He found some subaccounts that are dormant. He is looking to identify which Web pages are most frequently viewed on www.DMA1.org.

Mark is still trying to meet with Brent to learn more about our Dreamhost account.

Programs – Peter Hess

Thank you to Mark Camden for the presentation on Windows 11; and also for the look at navigating the DMA website and how to find DMA videos on YouTube.

Jere Minich of APCUG has agreed to do a presentation on Password Managers this month. Gary Coy will do a presentation on Sidewalk later this summer.

Other suggested topics: Ransomware, Deep Fakes, Streaming video, Car hacking, Chromebooks, Bitcoin and Block chain, InitiativeQ.com, Data.ohio.gov, the Apple M1 chip, converting laptop to Chrome

Publications – Martin Arbagi

The June DATABUS issue was posted to the Web site.

UNfiNISHED BUSINESS

Wright State Archives – Martin Arbagi, Glady Campion

Still in progress

Next Board Meeting

The next Board meeting will be 7:00 P.M. on Monday, August 2, 2021 via Zoom and on person at Fairborn Fire Station #2.

The Fairborn Fire Station #2 is reserved through December 2021.

List of DMA accounts – Glady Campion

Glady is continuing work on a list of all accounts currently held by DMA.

Summer Picnic – Glady Campion

Our picnic is set for Saturday, August 28, at Shellabarger Park in Riverside. Our reservation is from Noon until 5:00 P.M.. This will be a "bring your own" brown bag lunch event, with lunch at 1:00 P.M. and raffle at 2:00 P.M. There is electricity and plans to bring a hotspot. Glady is handling the details.

Tickets ($5) are on sale now.

NEW BUSINESS

Make IT Dayton Festival – Glady Campion

Glady did a Web search for information on the event normally held the first weekend in October. The site makeitdayton.org has not been updated since the 2020 event was cancelled. The site Daytonhistory.org shows the event postponed until 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

Pat Flynn moved to adjourn at 8:27 P.M.. Ed Skuya seconded, and the motion passed.

— Respectfully Submitted,* GLADY CAMPION, *Secretary

Have a business card? Are you a DMA member?

Any paid–up member of the Dayton Microcomputer Association is entitled to a *free* business card–sized advertisement in The DataBus. Send a good–quality image (600 dpi or better) to Editor@DMA1.org, or give your business card to **Martin Arbagi,** the Editor, at any DMA meeting. We can embed a link to your Web site (if you have one) within the image of your card. Under weird IRS regulations, your Web site may not include discount coupons for DMA members, although discount offers may be included in the advertisement *itself.*

☺ Help DMA by using Amazon's Smile program! ☺

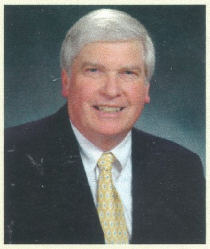
Amazon, the Internet's largest retailer (if you haven't noticed, Amazon isn't just for books any more!) has a "Smile" feature whereby Amazon donates a percentage of almost any purchase you make to a selected nonprofit organization. There is *no* extra cost to you. Click *here* to learn more or *here* to go directly to the sign-up page. Be sure to put DMA down as the beneficiary of your purchases.

Nominations for the DMA Board of Trustees are now open! Contact any current Officer or Trustee for more information.

Nominees must have been DMA members for one year.
Trustees serve 3-year terms.

A TYPICAL DMA TRUSTEES' MEETING

Wayne Fourman
May Financial Group, Inc.
Financial Planning Services
425 Memorial Drive
P.O. Box 320
Greenville, OH 45331
Phone (937) 548-5035
www.waynefourman.com



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News & Gossip from the Industry

Compiled from various sources

Qualcomm vs the M1

According to Qualcomm's new CEO, Cristiano Amon, the company plans to produce laptop chips to compete directly with Apple's M1 without working with ARM. This new system-on-a-chip (SoC) will include a 5G modem as well as a CPU. How can they be so confident? Earlier this year, Qualcomm bought the startup Nuvia for $1.4 billion. Nuvia was founded by former Apple employees who worked on Apple's transition leading to the launch of the M1.

Clippy may soon return for an encore performance

About two weeks ago, Microsoft posted a tweet saying, "If this gets 20k likes, we'll replace the paperclip emoji in Microsoft 365 with Clippy." We're not sure if this was a promise or a warning. Microsoft received 30k likes in just 2 hours. Could it be these responders were just too young to really have known Clippy?

Easter egg found on iOS

An Easter egg has been found hiding in the Google app on iOS. It's a reasonably full featured pinball app. Here is how to bring it up. Open the Google app on an iOS device. Tap on the Tabs button on the bottom right of the screen. Tap repeatedly on the Tabs button. Watch for colorful shapes creeping up from the bottom of the screen. Swipe UP on those shapes. If you have trouble, try closing any open tabs first. The game has several levels, scores, and three lives. Enjoy!

Flexible ARM chip

Just a few days ago, ARM and Pragmat-IC announced a new processor called PlasticARM. It's built using "metal-oxide thin-film transistor technology on a flexible substrate" instead of the silicon currently used for processors. The PlasticARM is not powerful, but could have a serious impact on connected devices, providing an extremely low-cost, ultra-thin, processing package for everyday objects. The Cortex-MO-

(Continued on page 10)

(DIGITAL WHISPERS—Continued from page 9)
based SoC has just 128 bytes of RAM and 456 bytes of ROM, but is 12 times more complex than previous flexible electronics.

Moving beyond drones to autonomous aircraft
Startup Merlin Labs and aircraft supplier Dynamic Aviation have joined forces to fly autonomous aircraft. Merlin recently revealed they have been developing autonomous tech since 2018. The hardware and software is designed to be compatible with any plane. So far, the aircraft have been empty. The plans are to transport packages first, then passengers. Test flights so far have ranged from 10 minutes to several hours across the California desert using three types of aircraft. No worries — there is always a safety pilot on board.

World's first 3D printed steel bridge
Next time you're in Amsterdam, check it out. Earlier this month, the full bridge was lifted off its barge and installed over a canal in Amsterdam's red light district. The bridge is now open to pedestrians and cyclists. Physical construction required four giant, torch-wielding robots six months to complete, laying down 4.9 tons of steel, layer by layer; but only after the Dutch company MX3D spent four years in development. The bridge is studded with sensors for stress, movement, vibration, and temperature. All data collected are fed into a bridge simulator to allow the structure to be monitored closely. (See illustration on page 11.)

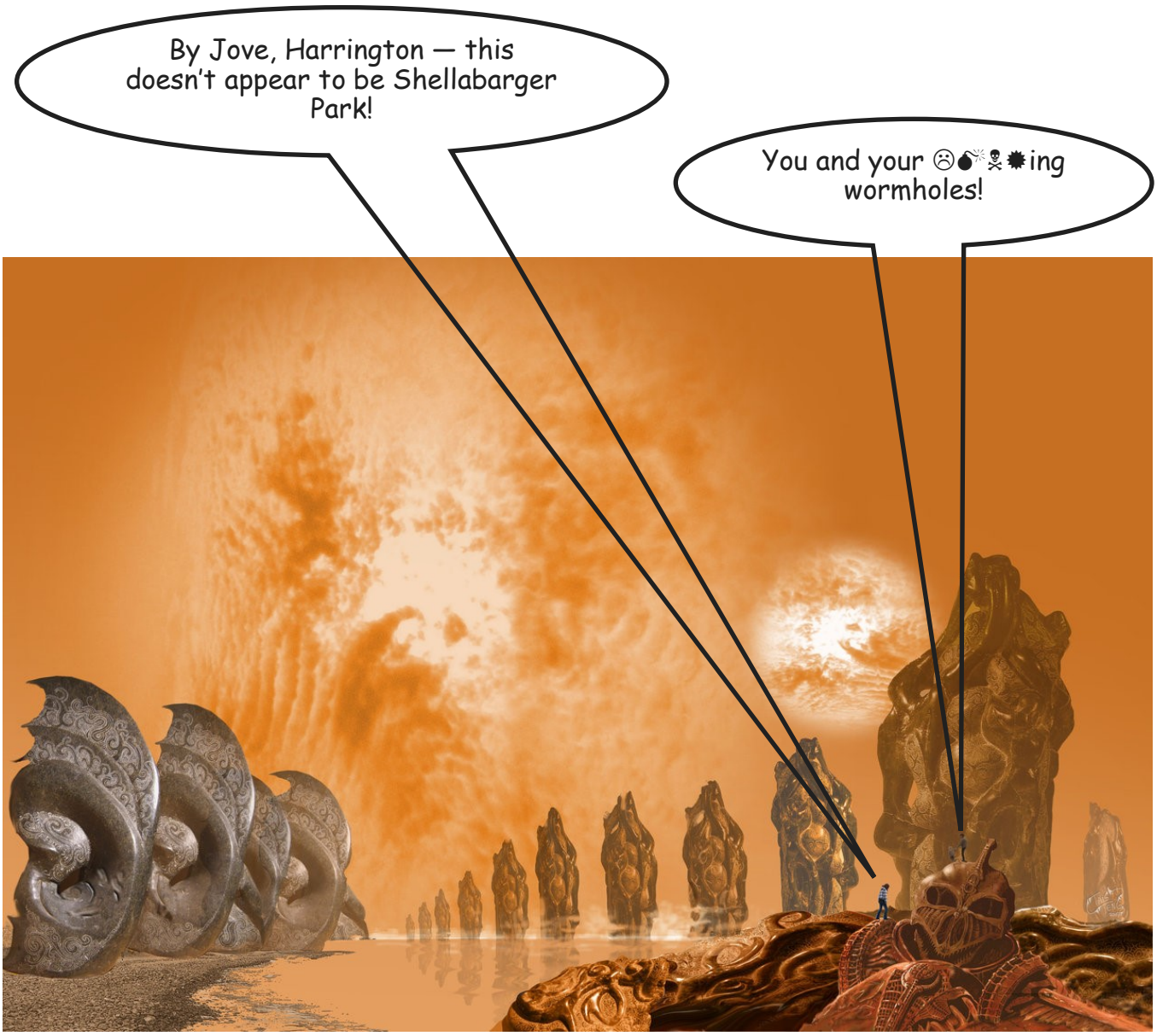
California style hood ornament
Earlier this month, a California driver was stopped and ticketed for having a satellite dish firmly mounted to the hood of their Toyota Prius. The officer wrote an account of the incident on Facebook. When he asked the driver if the dish blocked their view, the reply was, **"only when I make right turns." [!!]** (See illustration on page 12.)

Avast-Norton Merger
The merger between Avast and Norton-Lifelock has now taken place. In recent years, Norton appeared largely to have abandoned the individual consumer market in favor of businesses and government agencies. Avast, which has the reputation of focusing on protection for digital devices used at home or by individuals, will help "round off" Norton-Lifelock's security offerings. [EDITOR'S NOTE: Judy Taylour of APCUG has been in touch with Norbert "Bob" Gostischa, Avast's contact with users' groups. He knows no more about the merger than has been released to the press. Bob is not an employee of Avast, but rather a paid independent consultant. THE DATABUS hopes that the merged companies will continue Avast's policy of keeping up good relations with computer users' groups and other professional associations.]

(See illustrations on pages 11 & 12.)

Is the red-light district on this side?
Shut up, you idiot!! Someone from DMA might be looking!

Rumors that this car is registered to Peter Hess have been vigorously denied by his Press Agent.



2021 DMA SUMMER PICNIC

Don't be like Harrington and his friend! Click *here* for directions to our new location: Shellabarger Park in ritzy suburban Riverside. This will be a "brown bag" picnic (bring *your own* food) on Saturday, 28 August, from Noon to 5 P.M. Electricity will be available, and we'll try to supply a hot spot. No alcoholic beverages or glass bottles, please!!

$5.00 ... Cheap! See Glady Campion for tickets.

Linux Mint 20.1

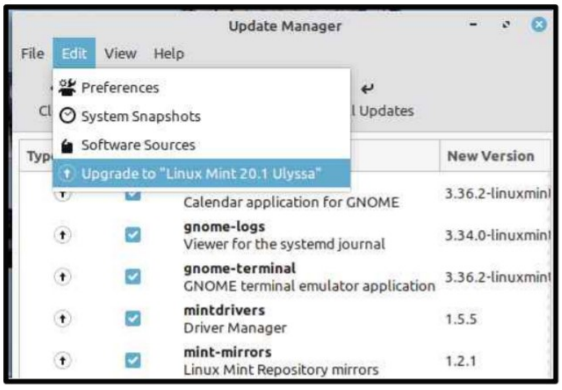
By Cal Esneault, former President of CCCC and leader of many Open-Source Workshops & SIGs
Cajun Clickers Computer Club
February 2021 issue, CCCC Computer News
www.clickers.org
office (at) clickers.org

Linux Mint is a Linux distribution based on Ubuntu. A long-term support version, Linux Mint 20, was released in June of 2020. An updated version, Mint 20.1, was released on January 8, 2021. This version is known as a "point" release, and only software developed by Linux Mint has features different from Mint 20 (the majority of programs remain tied to the Ubuntu 20.04 LTS repository).

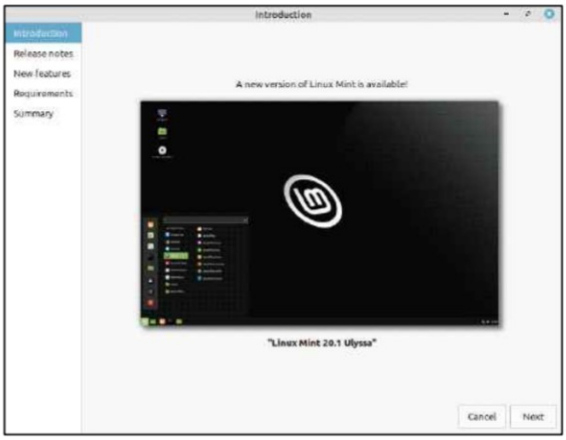
Point releases tend to "refresh" some of the GUI features, and I checked out the Mint 20.1 version with the Cinnamon desktop. Examples of changes that were upgraded to the newest Cinnamon 4.8 desktop and a new set of screen backgrounds.

Mint continues its practice of making an upgrade from the previous LTS as easy and automated as possible. First, it will alert the user that a new "Update Manager" application is available. When this is updated, a new entry appears in the "Edit" section that gives a "one-click" upgrade. Be sure to perform all the other regular upgrades before proceeding.

The first steps in the upgrade lead you through a series of pages (see illustrations) where you click "continue" to progress down a list. First and foremost, you are encouraged to back up your system in case problems arise.



There are sections on "Release Notes" (problems commonly encountered or helpful configuration hints) and on "New Features" (detailed descriptions of improvements and changes). You can skip the links if you wish, but I always find it advisable to take a quick glance. If you later need to review them after install, you can find these items on the Mint Web site.



Before anything is changed, you must check a box stating you understand any potential risks (for this type of release, risks are minimal). The upgrade only takes a few minutes, and a message at the end indicates if it was a success. You have to reboot for the upgrade to take effect.

As usual, this interim upgrade went smoothly on my machine. Although only a few minor items were changed, it is always good to keep current.

DMA Events for Aug 22 – Sep 25, 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Aug 22	Aug 23 **Apple Dayton SIG** CANCELLED	Aug 24	Aug 25	Aug 26	Aug 27 **Python Self-Study** Noon, Online	Aug 28 **DMA PICNIC**
Aug 29	Aug 30	Aug 31 **MAIN MEETING** 7:00pm Online -AND- TJ Chumps 7050 Executive Blvd Huber Heights	Sep 1	Sep 2 **Genealogy SIG** CANCELLED	Sep 3 **Python Self-Study** Noon, Online	Sep 4 **Classic Computers** 3:00pm By phone
Sep 5	Sep 6 	Sep 7	Sep 8 **Dayton Dynamic Languages** 7:00pm Online	Sep 9 **NASAC** 6:00pm Xenia Library	Sep 10 **Python Self-Study** Noon, Online	Sep 11
Sep 12 	Sep 13 **DMA Trustees** 7:00pm Online	Sep 14 **Investment SIG** 7:00pm Online	Sep 15	Sep 16 **Linux SIG** 7:00pm Online	Sep 17 **Python Self-Study** Noon, Online	Sep 18 *Software Freedom !* **Classic Computers** 3:00pm By phone
Sep 19	Sep 20 **Apple Dayton SIG** CANCELLED	Sep 21	Sep 22	Sep 23	Sep 24 **Python Self-Study** Noon, Online	Sep 25

Please note that the Digital Investment Group's September meeting has been canceled. Meetings will resume in October, via Google Meet or in person.

About The Dayton Microcomputer Association, Inc. (DMA)

By Peter HESS, DMA President, 2018-2020

ABOUT FORTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, a small group of computer enthusiasts from the Dayton, Ohio area gathered around a kitchen table looking at, and playing with, an early personal computer called the Altair 680 that one of them had purchased. This computer had been featured earlier on the cover of the January 1975 issue of *Popular Electronics* magazine. Paul Allen had shown the selfsame article about the Altair to Bill Gates, and later, they wrote software together for that computer. Still later — and still together — Allen and Gates founded the Microsoft Corporation.

Shortly thereafter, those Dayton-area computer enthusiasts joined together with many others to form THE DAYTON MICROCOMPUTER ASSOCIATION (DMA), now one of the oldest (if not *the* oldest) continuously-operating computer user groups in the world. Typically, computer user groups, and the newer iteration, technology user groups, are volunteer-run operations. The DMA is an all-volunteer led, organized, and run 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Now, there are hundreds of computer (or technology) user groups in the world, all of which continue to foster improved communication between technological equipment and software publishers, and users of their products. User groups (both computer and technology) provide an environment where more experienced technology users introduce additional and advanced techniques to novices.

DMA offers both monthly General Membership Meetings, which cover new and innovative topics including a wide range of generic technological topics, and its Special Interest Groups (SIGs) which address concerns about specific technology interests. There are eight different SIGs sponsored by the DMA, covering such topics as the Linux operating system, various programming languages such as Python, the use of technology to investigate genealogy, and digital aids to investing. Neither SIG members nor attendees at DMA General Meetings need be members of the parent organization, though they are encouraged to join so DMA can continue providing its services to the public.

Annual dues for DMA membership, which have not been raised for decades, are $25 for Regular Members, and $12.50 for Family/Associate Members (someone living at living at the same address as a Regular Member). Nonvoting Student Memberships are *free* to students through age 22. Door prizes at General Meetings, picnics, banquets, and other DMA events, and both product and service discounts are available to all DMA members. **... TDB**

Dayton Microcomputer Association Membership Form

Today's date _____/_____/_____

❒ *NEW* Please credit the DMA member who recruited me: _____

❒ *RENEW* Contact information below is new ❒ Y ❒ N

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

❒ *REGULAR*

Name _____ Home / Work (_____) _____-_____

Email _____ Mobile Phone (_____) _____-_____

❒ *ASSOCIATE* Family Associate membership is for a family member living at the same address as a Regular member. Name of Regular member: _____

Name _____ Home / Work (_____) _____-_____

Email _____ Mobile Phone (_____) _____-_____

❒ *STUDENT* Free Student membership is available to those under 22 years of age, enrolled full-time in a program of higher education. Name of School: _____

Name _____ Home / Work (_____) _____-_____

Email _____ Mobile Phone (_____) _____-_____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

INTERCHANGE

Skills & interests you might share with DMA _____

What you hope DMA will provide _____

❒ *SHELL ACCOUNT* A shell account on the DMA web server provides file storage, hosting of a personal non-commercial website, @dma1.org email alias (forwarding address), all for a one-time fee of $10. A username must be 8 alpha characters. The usual default is last name and first initial, no caps or punctuation. DMA reserves the right of final decision on all usernames: 1st choice _____ 2nd choice _____

DUES AND FEES

Regular membership	$25.00 x ❒ 1yr ❒ 2yr ❒ 3yr	$_____
Family Associate membership	$12.50 x ❒ 1yr ❒ 2yr ❒ 3yr	$_____
Student membership	FREE	$ 0.00
One-time setup fee for Shell account	$10.00	$_____
Total		$_____

**Note: $10.00 fee will be charged for any returned checks*

Make your check payable to: **Dayton Microcomputer Association, Inc**
Mail check and application to: **PO Box 4005**
Dayton OH 45401-4005

Or use Paypal to send your payment to: **membership@dma1.org**

DMA use only

Member# _____ *Exp* ____/_____ *[ ] Cash [ ] Check#* _____ *[ ] Paypal Proc by* _____

Member# _____ *Exp* ____/_____ *[ ] Cash [ ] Check#* _____ *[ ] Paypal Proc by* _____

Member# _____ *Exp* ____/_____ *[ ] Cash [ ] Check#* _____ *[ ] Paypal Proc by* _____

Revised February 25, 2020