

# ***The Gigabyte Gazette***

**The Monthly Newsletter  
of the  
*Sun City Summerlin  
Computer Club***

**March  
2016**

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## **President's Message**

*by Howard Verne*

### ***Dear Computer Club and friends***

Please take the time to subscribe to our club's SCSCC\_News Yahoo group so you get all the reminders and important club news. If you are like me you will find all the reminders and club news very helpful and maybe even necessary. First thing to do is go to the club website ([www.scsccl.com](http://www.scsccl.com)) and click on the button titled "Subscribe to SCSCC News". All you have to do is send a message, following the instructions. Please note, the message must come from YOU. No one else can send it for you.

Remember to read your on-line Gigabyte Gazette newsletter for information of all computer club activities.

Every Tuesday from 1 to 4 PM your club offers a FREE hardware / software repair session. All too often your fellow members come in with computers that will not boot up and they stand a chance of losing all their hard drive pictures and music. We urge all of you to please purchase an external hard drive and back up the drive inside your computer to it. In the event of disaster, it is easy to transfer your backup hard drive on to your internal hard drive and you will be back in business. Come in on Tuesday afternoon and your hardware SIG techs will show you how to do this

Where else can you get all of the above for a mere \$10 per year?

***Howard Verne, President***  
***(702) 527-4056 [pres.scsccl@gmail.com](mailto:pres.scsccl@gmail.com)***

## **Issue Contributors**

<b>Tom Burt</b>	<b>Zane Clark</b>
<b>Kathy Kirby</b>	<b>David Kretchmar</b>
<b>Pat Lemay</b>	<b>Howard Verne</b>

## **Submissions Welcome**

We are always looking for new information to share with our club members. If you have computer or technical information you would like to share with members of the club, send your articles to Tom Burt at [tomburt89134@cox.net](mailto:tomburt89134@cox.net). Thank you to everyone for your contributions.

## **SCSCC Board of Directors Actions**

The Computer Club Board of Directors took the following actions on February 10, 2016:

Chuck Wolff made a motion that the minutes of the January 13, 2016 Board meeting be approved as submitted. The motion was seconded by George Lobue and unanimously approved by the Board.

Edith Einhorn made a motion to eliminate the Computer Club Library. The motion was seconded by David Kretchmar and unanimously approved by the Board.

Chuck Wolff made a motion that the Board adjourn at 9:50 AM. George Lobue seconded the motion and was unanimously approved by the Board.

## **General Membership Meeting**

The March meeting will be held on Thursday, March 3rd, 7PM at Desert Vista. Our speaker will Stu Gershon, discussing Google's Picasa photo program and online photo website. Come join us for an informational presentation, refreshments and fellowship.

For Club information go to [www.scsccl.com](http://www.scsccl.com), or contact Howard Verne, President at: 702-527-4056 / email [pres.scsccl@gmail.com](mailto:pres.scsccl@gmail.com).

## **Welcome New Members**

The following new members joined the Computer Club between January 24<sup>th</sup> and February 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Monica Bonnem  
Paul Brandt  
Joseph Creaghe  
Lena Eriksson  
Dolly Frick  
Herbert Frick  
Marcia Gewelber  
Alan Gill  
Colette Gill  
Gloria Gutierrez  
Richard Gutierrez  
James Kobolt  
Patty Lipnick**

**Robert Mccauley  
Gloria Meyers  
Lavonne Motznik  
John Murphy  
Candy Olson  
Robert Peters  
Janet Rohde  
Rimma Skibinsky  
Sharyn Smith  
Bambang Soedarjatno  
Susan Stevens  
Jeff Wilkinson  
Mark Wills**

## **March 2016 Calendars**

To view the January classroom and lab calendars, click the following hyperlink:

[http://www.scscclub/Calendars/scscclcalendar\\_2016-03mar.pdf](http://www.scscclub/Calendars/scscclcalendar_2016-03mar.pdf)

## Special Interest Groups

**Special Interest Groups (SIGs) provide a forum for general discussion on a specific computer related subject. Admission to all SIGs is on a first-come, first-seated basis and is subject to the maximum allowed by fire code regulations. All of the following meetings are held in the Classroom. <W> or <M> or <H> indicate whether a SIG would be of interest to a Windows, Macintosh or Hand-held Device (i-thing or Android) user.**

### **Genealogy <W> Dark Mar**

*2nd Thursday, 10:00 a.m.*

Karen Ristic (702-749-6489)

Genealogy is one of America's most popular and rewarding hobbies. Come; let us help you find your ancestors on the Internet. We will explore helpful, free, sites and assist you in building your family tree. Check out Karen's new series of Family Tree Maker classes in the lab on the ***second Tuesday of the month.***

### **Internet Investing <W/M>**

*3rd Thursday, 9:00 a.m. in even months*

*Next meeting: April 21.*

Tom Burt (702-341-7095)

The Internet Investing SIG provides a forum for members interested in using Internet resources for researching and managing investments to meet, discuss, and learn more about the topic. The SIG's target audience is members with intermediate computer skills and investment experience, but all members are welcome.

### **GMail <W/M> Dark Mar**

*1st Thursday, 10:00 a.m.*

Pat Lemay (702-254-1499)

This SIG covers Gmail as well as other Google applications. All members are welcome. This is your place to learn about all things Google.

### **iPad <iPod, iPhone, iPad>**

***4th Wednesday, 9 a.m. (new day)***

Zane Clark (702-562-3684)

This SIG will be your forum for learning about and discussing the Apple iPhone, iPod and iPad tablet devices. It's for Apple hand-held device owners of all experience levels.

### **Hardware / Software Repair Lab <W >**

*Every Tuesday, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.*

Chuck Wolff (702-233-6634) and

Chuck Hagen (702-418-2614)

The Repair Lab provides **CLUB MEMBERS ONLY** with no cost assistance for those having upgrades and / or hardware and software problems with their computers. Bring in only your PC tower and your problems. Our TECH team will give you our best effort. ***Be sure to mark your cables so you can re-connect when you get home.***

### **Macintosh Users' Group <M/H>**

*2nd and 4th Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.*

Ed Barkin (702-243-6597) and

Rose Mary D'Aloisio (702-255-2813)

This SIG is for Macintosh users of all experience levels. We will have Q&A, so bring your questions and/or problems.

**Photoshop <W>**

*2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m.*

Un-moderated discussion group

This SIG covers many of the basic elements found in both Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Photoshop Elements, two excellent tools to get professional-quality results. If you wish to enhance your photographs, this SIG will be most helpful and of great value. This SIG's target audience is intermediate to advanced digital imaging users, but all members are welcome.

**Photoshop Elements<W>**

*4th Mondays, 1:00 p.m.*

Mary Miles

This SIG covers many of the basic and advanced elements found in Adobe Photoshop Elements, especially layers. If you wish to make the most of your photographs, this SIG will be very helpful. This SIG's target audience is intermediate digital imaging users, but all members are welcome.

**Picasa <W> *Dark in March***

*3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays, 1:00 p.m.*

Stu Gershon (702-255-3309)

Stu conducts this SIG as a monthly workshop, using Picasa 3 as the tool for organizing and editing digital photos. This SIG's target audience is beginner to intermediate digital photography users, but all members are welcome.

**Windows 10<W>**

*First and Third Saturdays at 10:30 am*

Bill Wilkinson (702-233-4977)

Each session will be devoted to assisting new Windows 10 owners in becoming familiar and comfortable with Microsoft's newest operating system for desktop and laptop computers. Assistance will be given individually or in small groups as circumstances warrant. Bill's notes are available by clicking [HERE](#).

## **Kaffee Klatches**

Kaffee Klatches provide a forum for general discussion on all computer-related subjects. Admission to all Kaffee Klatches is on a first-come, first-seated basis and is subject to the maximum allowed by fire code regulations. All of the following meetings are held in the Classroom. **<W> or <M> or <H> indicate whether a SIG would be of interest to a Windows, Macintosh or Hand-held Device (i-thing or Android) user.**

### **Beginners Kaffee Klatch <W/M>**

*First and Third Saturdays, 9:00 a.m.*

Bill Wilkinson (702-233-4977)

If you are a novice or near-beginner computer user, or if you just want some refresher information together with a refreshing cup of coffee, then jump-start or recharge your computing knowledge by attending the BKK sessions. At each session, attendees will explore from one to four topics of particular interest to beginners and near-beginners. The topics are always announced a couple of days in advance via e-mail to SCSCC members who have subscribed to the club's message board. Each topic is presented in a step-by-step manner and is supported by "how to" notes that can be easily and conveniently downloaded from the BKK web page. Following each "up front" presentation of one or more topics (approximately 60 minutes in duration), an informal open-ended Question and Answer period takes place for those who wish to participate, listen, reflect, or inquire.

### **Kaffee Klatch <W/M/H>**

*Every Tuesday, 8:30 a.m.*

Sandy Mintz (702-838-2525)

This KK is for all users from beginning to advanced. The KK discussions are not restricted to any one subject, computer platform or computer-knowledge level but should be computer or technology related. We will try to answer your questions, help you keep your systems updated and provide some useful "tips and tricks." If you have a tip or information you would like to share, we encourage you to bring it in and share since the SCSCC is built on "neighbor helping neighbor." The fellowship is great, the coffee is good, and the education received from the KK attendees is priceless. Stop by on Tuesday morning and have a cup of coffee with us.



## March 2016 Classes

**Because there are a limited number of computer stations available for hands-on participation, pre-registration is necessary for all classes. See individual class descriptions for details on how to register.**



### **BOOT CAMP CLASS for Windows Vista, Win7, Win8.1 and Win10 Users**

***No classes in March***  
**Each Session Meets from 9 am - noon.**  
**Lead instructor: Bill Wilkinson**

**Place Your Name on the Registration List  
for the Next Three-Session Class**  
*(Dates to be Determined as Interest Dictates)*

#### **Course Description:**

Boot Camp is an introductory course designed for residents who are novice users of the Microsoft Windows operating system. **It also serves as an excellent review for intermediate users who want to fill some gaps in their computer knowledge.**

This hands-on class has a **limited enrollment of 12** with each participant working at an individual computer station in the Computer Lab. A team of lead instructor and four coaches will provide step-by-step instruction that will include demonstrations, guided practice and individual coaching assistance.

#### **These strategies will be covered:**

- Secrets for using the mouse and the keyboard effectively
- Basic vocabulary needed for an understanding of Windows (Vista, Win 7, and Win 8.1)
- Managing and organizing your personal data files (documents, pictures, videos, and music)
- Protecting your computer from viruses and other malware
- Safely downloading and installing applications from the Internet
- Efficient and safe use of an Internet browser and search engine.

**Course Fee: \$10 for current club members; \$20 for non-members**

**Materials include: a step-by-step user's manual and a flash drive**

#### **Registration Details:**

To reserve one of the remaining slots in this final Boot Camp class of 2015, telephone Bill Wilkinson at **702-233-4977**.



# WINDOWS 10: the Basics and Beyond

## A NINE-HOUR HANDS-ON CLASS

March 28, 29 & 31

Each Session Meets from 9 am - noon.

Lead Instructor: Bill Wilkinson

### Place Your Name on the Pre-Registration List for the Next Three-Session Class

This 9-hour hands-on class, delivered by a team of an instructor and five coaches, will provide participants with a printed manual with over 100 step-by-step strategies and procedures geared specifically to Windows 10.

In addition, we will provide some tips on how to effortlessly make your Windows 10 machine look and feel like your favorite earlier edition of Windows (either XP, Vista, or Win7). Now that's comfort ... having the familiarity of your old computer combined with the speed and power of the Windows 10 system!

Prerequisites: Club Membership for 2015 (\$10); Class Fee for Instructional Manual (\$10); comfortable with using a Mouse.

If you are interested in placing your name on a high-priority reservation list for the next available class, simply send an email message to: [WILKINLV5@COX.NET](mailto:WILKINLV5@COX.NET) and include the following information:

- Include "**Windows 10 Class**" in the Subject Title
- Your first and last name
- Your 8-digit Sun City Summerlin Association number
- Your telephone number
- Your email address

Your reservation will be acknowledged by return email.

Please note: All hands-on classes are limited to 12 participants. This class fills very quickly.



## Write Your Family Story on Family Tree Maker 14

***March class has been cancelled***

~~Tuesday, March 8, 2016, 9 AM to 11 AM~~

**Presenter: Karen Ristic**

**Location: SCSCC Lab**

### *Computer Genealogy Lab Class*

This series will run once a month for nine months on the second Tuesday of the month. This new lab class will help you learn to use on the computer the Genealogy software program, Family Tree Maker (FTM) version 2014. The lab contains 12 Windows 10 computers and two iMac computers set up with FTM. You may also bring your own laptop computer with Family Tree Maker installed on it. *You must be a current member of the Sun City Computer Club to participate. A basic familiarity with your computer is also recommended.*

### *Purpose*

The use of FTM will help you discover and preserve your family's heritage. It's quick and easy to use for those just starting to research their family history, but it's also robust enough for the most serious genealogist. You can use FTM to store, display, and print any kind of family information you want—from names, birth dates, marriages, and deaths to priceless family stories, pictures, and audio/video files. The ultimate goal for all participants is to eventually gather together their genealogical information, put it in the computer, print it, and share it.

### *The Computer Lab*

There will be Windows computers to use so the limit will be 12 people. At the last Genealogy SIG Class in June, people in that class had the opportunity to sign up for this lab class. If you are interested in this class, please sign up in advance for each month's class by sending Karen ([nerak2000@earthlink.net](mailto:nerak2000@earthlink.net)) an email. Computers will be allocated on a first-sign-up basis each month.

Please bring: 1) a flash drive (there will be some for sale at this meeting) and 2) a paper copy of less than 50 of your ancestors / family members on paper with their birth, death, and marriage dates and places to enter into the computer. You will be able to save this information on your flash drive at the end of class — and you will be able to enter more people both at home and in the class.

***Please RSVP if you plan to attend to Karen Ristic: [nerk2000@earthlink.net](mailto:nerk2000@earthlink.net).***

***You will receive a response ASAP.***

## March 2016 Seminars

**For Computer Club seminars, there is no requirement for advanced registration unless explicitly stated. Seating is first-come, first-seated.**



### **Activity Bracelets Canceled**

**Presenter: Stu Gershon  
Monday, February 7 at 1 pm  
Location: SCSCC Classroom**

Stu will cover a variety of fitness tracking bracelets that run the price gamut from \$20 to \$250.



### **iPad / iPhone Basics**

**Wednesday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm  
Presenter: Zane Clark  
Location: SCSCC Classroom**

Zane will present a comprehensive “beginners’ overview” tutorial on how to use iPad tablets and iPhones.



**Ask Chuck Q & A?  
Thursday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM  
Presenter: Chuck Strickland  
Location: Classroom**

Chuck will hold forth in the classroom, answering your technical questions. If you wish, you can e-mail your questions ahead of the session to: [chuckstr89134@gmail.com](mailto:chuckstr89134@gmail.com).



## **Taking Photos with your Camera or Smart Phone Canceled**

**Presenter: Stu Gershon**  
**Monday, March 14 at 1 pm**  
**Location: SCSCC Classroom**

Stu will present a workshop on how to use your digital camera and/or smartphone to take photos. This session is "*hands on*", so you are encouraged to bring your camera and/or smartphone.



## **Creating a Video Slide Show**

**Wednesday, March 16<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM**  
**Presenter: Mary Miles**  
**Location: SCSCC Classroom**

Learn how to select pictures for your show, choose transitions, use pan and zoom and how to add titles to your pictures. And a most important part of your show -- how to add music!

We will be using a free Windows program.



## **Google Chrome**

**Thursday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm**  
**Presenter: Pat Lemay**  
**Location: SCSCC Classroom**

Google Chrome is Google free browser that has been developed for Windows, Macintosh and the Linux operating systems. Chrome is designed to be fast in every possible way. It's quick to start up from your desktop, loads web pages in a snap and runs complex applications fast. The browser is streamlined, clean and simple. Chrome is designed to keep you safer and more secure on the web. It has built-in malware and phishing protection, plus auto updates to make sure the browser is up-to-date with the latest security updates. Chrome uses technologies such as Safe Browsing and sandboxing. Chrome has many useful features built-ins, including extensions, translation in the browser, themes, applications and more. This class will be taught on the Windows version of Chrome.



## **Using the Paint.Net Image Editor**

**Wednesday, March 30<sup>th</sup> at 9 AM**

**Presenter: Tom Burt**

**Location: SCSCC Classroom**

**Paint.Net** is a full-featured, open source (free) image editing program.

The Computer Club has SIGs and seminars on several other popular photo / image editing programs such as Picasa, Photoshop Elements and Photoshop. This two-hour seminar will add to that mix by introducing Paint.Net. We'll walk through its basic image editing features, its drawing tool set and its special effects tools. We'll touch on the "layers" features and we'll conduct several simple demonstration projects to illustrate some interesting image corrections and enhancements.

This seminar is aimed at "comfortable" Windows users who also have done some image editing with a software tool like Picasa and want to learn more about "digital darkroom" techniques. However, all Club members are welcome to attend.

The presentation handout is available at:

[http://www.scs-cc.com/smnr/Image\\_Editing\\_With\\_Paint.Net.pdf](http://www.scs-cc.com/smnr/Image_Editing_With_Paint.Net.pdf)



## **Introduction to Facebook**

**Wednesday, March 30<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM**

**Presenter: Kaynella Williams**

**Location: SCSCC Classroom**

Facebook is a highly popular social media site where "Friends" gather to share information about the goings on in their lives, opinion about the events of the day, photos, videos, music and more. This seminar will offer an introduction to Facebook, including setting up an account, posting, connecting with "friends". Bring your own mobile device to follow along and bring all your "how do I" questions.

The seminar notes are available at: <http://www.scscc.club/smnr/FacebookForBeginners.pdf>



## Tom's Tech-Notes

### **New Lab Media PC Tom Burt, SCSCC Vice-President**

For quite a while, I've been working to build a new Media PC for the Computer Club Lab. Our old media PC was getting long in the tooth and its DVD burner wasn't working reliably. I decided to repurpose the previous classroom instructor PC into a new Media PC. However, as configured, that PC was also running very slowly and had gotten corrupted sufficiently that it would no longer install Windows Updates.

So, I decided to go for a clean install of Windows 7 Ultimate SP1 as my base OS. Once that was done, I planned to install the various audio and video tools that had been installed on the older Media PC. I was unpleasantly surprised to find that our Dazzle video capture device and the supporting software from Pinnacle Studio refused to install, even though they had been running OK under Windows 7 on the old Media PC. I suspect this was caused by Pinnacle having gone through a series of buyouts and spinoffs in the intervening years.

I found a newer video capture unit and supporting software by Diamond Multimedia (the VC500, about \$35 on Amazon.com). That hardware and software installed without problems. I successfully tested it Friday, morning February 26<sup>th</sup>. The new video capture program is called EZ Grabber. One big difference, however, is it that EZ Grabber captures the incoming analog video stream to a file on the hard drive, rather than writing directly to a DVD. You can choose the file format before recording; the default is set to .MP4, which is good for posting to YouTube or Facebook or saving to your tablet or smart phone.



The above screen shot shows the EZ Grabber program recording a VHS tape home video of a wedding to a .MP4 file on the Media PC hard drive. By default these video files are placed in the D:\Video\_Temp folder on the hard drive. From there, you can copy them to a flash drive and take them home to work on or to burn to a video DVD using any good DVD burning program.

The Media PC also has ARCSOFT, a capable video editing program that can do basic edits and can burn DVDs using the .MP4 file as input.

The media PC is also able to capture analog stereo audio input and convert it to the .MP3 format on the Media PC's hard drive. The program to use for this is Spin-It Again. It's unchanged from the previous Media PC. Spin-It Again can record incoming audio from either an audio tape deck or from a LP record turntable. It has a step by step interface that is easy to use.

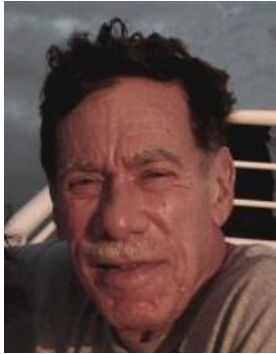
I've also included a few other tools, including:

- GoldWave, the digital music editor
- iTunes, which among its many features has a very nice MP3 tag editor

I also plan to install Windows Live Movie Maker as an alternative video editor that can accept .MP4 files as source clips.

Yet to be done is a major update to the Media PC user guide with step by step instructions for all of the above activities.





## **Kretchmar's Korner**

**By David Kretchmar, Computer Hardware Technician**

### **HDMI cables**

Today you can buy a 6-foot-long HDMI cable for \$4.99, or \$99.99 or more. Retailers and cable manufacturers expend a lot of effort to make you believe that you'll get better picture and sound with a more expensive HDMI cable.



They're not telling the truth. That's probably because they can make more money selling pricy cables than the components the HDMI cable will be connecting.

The markup on expensive cables is so great that every brick-and-mortar and online retailer has a huge incentive to feature high-end HDMI cables in the hopes of tricking the buyer into spending many dollars more than necessary.

The signal transmitted by a HDMI cable is virtually perfect. Industry standards allow for one error in one billion bits of data, or roughly one second playing time of a high definition movie. No human eyes are sharp enough to see the errors.

Expensive HDMI cables offer no difference in picture quality over cheap HDMI cables, for technical reasons, as detailed in an October 2012 CNET online review. A condensed and simplified summary of that analysis follows.

### **The signal**

The first thing to understand is what's transmitted over the cable in the first place. HDMI uses Transition Minimized Differential Signaling, or TMDS.

TMDS has two basic aspects. The first is that the ones and zeros at the source (a Blu-ray player or HD cable/satellite box) are not exactly the ones and zeros your TV uses to create a picture -- at least, not in exactly the same order. Before sending the signal out via the HDMI output, the ones and zeros are rearranged to minimize how many transitions there are. So instead of 10101010, the transmission may look like 11110000. If you really like math, how it does this is cool, but it's not really important to understanding the concept as a whole.

Even though this protocol seems strange, it makes it much more likely that the data transmitted can be rebuilt on the other end (as in, at the TV or computer monitor).

The second part of TMDS (the DS part) is the HDMI cable itself. Each HDMI cable is actually multiple small copper wires. Two versions of the data are sent over different sets of wires. One of these is out of phase with the "real" signal. The TV receives all the data, puts the out-of-phase signal back in phase, then compares it to the "real" signal. Any noise picked up along the way will now be out of phase, and as such it is effectively negated and ignored.

TMDS works really well, allowing for both short cables and long cables to carry a great deal of data. It also means you can have inexpensive cables that work just as well as expensive ones.

More important to you, it means that when something goes wrong, it goes really wrong. It's often said that with an HDMI signal, you either get everything and it's perfect, or it isn't perfect and you get nothing. If you are getting an image that looks correct, and there are no dropouts in the audio or video, then you're getting everything that's being sent. If the cable is faulty, or it's a really long but poor quality cable, most of the time you'll just get nothing at all.

As you've read, the ones and zeros of an HD image move happily along, more or less, from your source to your TV. Over short runs (the standard 6 feet or so), there really isn't anything other than a faulty cable (which itself isn't that likely) that would cause any issue. Over long runs, it's remotely possible that interference of some kind, or a poorly made cable can reduce the "quality" of the signal to the point where the TV can't make heads or tails of it. Heads or tails -- that's a digital joke.



It's important to note that any artifact, usually "snow" on your screen, is pretty unlikely, even over long runs. You are way more likely to just not get anything at all.

All the claims about differences in picture quality are remnants of the analog days, which were barely valid then and not at all valid now. There is no way for different cables to create a different color temperature, change the contrast ratio, or anything else picture-quality-wise.

## Audio

Several companies claim that their HDMI cables sound better than other HDMI cables. One in particular claims this is because there is no error correction on the audio and its cables are more likely to transmit all the data.

This is untrue. Audio over HDMI actually has more error correction than the video signal. But even if this weren't the case, it's still nonsense. Dolby has extensive error correction built into its codecs. In other words, if you are sending a bit stream of data over HDMI from your Blu-ray player, the data going into your receiver is bit-for-bit the same as what's on the disc. Cheap or expensive, the cable is irrelevant when it comes to transmitting digital sound.



If the cable is faulty or if there is some issue causing data to be lost between the player and the receiver, the decoders are designed to mute instead of

blasting out bad data (noise). There is no such thing as an audio version of "snow". Instead, you just get a total dropout of the audio. So if you're getting audio dropouts, it's possible it's the HDMI cable. But if you're not getting video issues as well, the problem is likely elsewhere. If the audio isn't muting, then as long as you're outputting sound, you're getting exactly what's being sent.

The big "if" that I've been repeating is "if the signal gets there." Over short runs -- a few meters, say -- it is incredibly unlikely that even the cheapest HDMI cable won't work perfectly. Over longer runs, the answer is less clear-cut. The variables of the transmitter and receiver combo in the source and display, plus any repeaters you have in the mix (like a receiver), mean that not every long HDMI cable can handle all the data. By long, I mean 50 feet or more.

If you need to run long HDMI cables, it's a safe bet you're going to run it through a wall. If so, it is vital you test the cable with all your equipment before you install it. Plus, as tempting as it is to get the cheapest cable that will work in this case, just because a cable works with all your current gear, doesn't necessarily mean it will work with your future gear.

## **Another cable lie**

When cable manufacturers claim their cables are "Made for 240 Hz" they are lying to you. The conversion to 120 or 240 Hz is done inside the TV. There is no such thing as a 120 Hz or 240 Hz signal.

More expensive cables can be more rugged, with thicker casings, a beefy connector, and higher potential durability. But how much wear and tear do your cables really endure?

## **Conclusions**

There is absolutely no picture or sound quality difference between a \$3.50 cable and a \$1,000 cable.

Most users only need a few feet of HDMI cabling to run from a Blu-ray player and cable/satellite box to a TV. Over these short distances, even the cheapest HDMI cables are going to work. And if they work it means you're getting perfect image and sound.

The old common analog video output, VGA, for all intents and purposes, is now obsolete. Some new computers are coming with only HDMI output. I would not buy a new monitor without HDMI input, no matter how cheap it was.



## **iPad News and Tips**

**by Zane Clark**

### **SETTINGS**

Once you have your device, it's always nice to customize it to better fit your needs, and one place to do this is Settings.

Here are just a few of the things you can do in Settings:

1. Change font size and appearance
2. Change how you view your mail messages.
3. Change alert sounds for phone, reminders, etc.
4. Change the home and lock screen photos

You can also find information on:

1. Number of photos, apps, songs, etc. on your device
2. Storage used and available
3. See which apps are using the most storage

Appearance and functions on individual apps can be changed in Settings, including these apps:

1. Safari
2. Maps
3. Reminders
4. Contacts
5. Messages

To make it easier to find the place you want in Settings, there is a very good search link at the top left in Settings.

As usual, any questions, send me a note ... [zclark@cox.net](mailto:zclark@cox.net).



## **Stu's Media Column**

**By Stu Gershon**

*No column in March*

## March Lab Monitor Schedule

As of 02-27-2016

Monitor Name	Day and Date
Kathy Kirby	WEDNESDAY March 2, 2016
Marcy Ishum	SATURDAY March 5, 2016
Jeff Southwell	
Millie Taylor	MONDAY March 7, 2016
Carol Przybycien	
Tom Brennar	WEDNESDAY March 9, 2016
Jan Edwards	
Fred Cohen	SATURDAY March 12, 2016
Jim Enlow	
Donna Bailey	MONDAY March 14, 2016
Opal Smih	WEDNESDAY March 16, 2016
Blanche York	
Mary Hedin	SATURDAY March 19, 2016
John Zuzich	
Nilda Fernandez	MONDAY March 21, 2016
Marilyn Gramms	
Joyce Davison	WEDNESDAY March 23, 2016
Tammy Collins	
Mary Hedin	SATURDAY March 26, 2016
John Zuzich	
Lowana Mannlein	MONDAY March 28, 2016
Sharon Cline	