
The Memory Map

Canton Alliance Massillon Computer Users Group



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LibreOffice – a Free Office Suite

By Joel Ewing, President, Bella Vista Computer Club, AR

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Almost everyone today that is computer savvy has heard of, or is even a user of, one or more of the classic components of the Microsoft Office Suite: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, & Access. Although there are competing products, the MS Office products are still the purchase choice for many businesses.

For occasional personal use, the purchase cost of MS Office is more than some care to spend on a software package. Microsoft is now trying to attract new users by moving MS Office Suite users from a purchase model to a leasing model under Office365, providing access to local computer and cloud-based Office products for a monthly fee (around \$70 to \$150 annually). This makes for a lower up-front cost and includes automatic upgrades to new versions, but in the long run that approach will be more expensive for the user than a one-time purchase of software if you plan to use it for many years.

Over the last several decades there has been an evolution in the availability of free, open-source alternatives to the components of MS Office. What started as just a free word processing application, Star Writer, evolved into StarOffice, and then later into OpenOffice, which then fractured into two projects, Apache OpenOffice and LibreOffice, that have evolved somewhat differently from the same initial code. Both OpenOffice and LibreOffice are currently available and still have much in common, but they are distributed under different “public” software licenses, which makes LibreOffice easier to enhance and thus slightly more attractive. Yes, even free software must have a license, to ensure that the freely accessible source code people have donated to the project continues to be free and is not exploited for profit in ways the donors did not intend. The main components of LibreOffice are Writer (the word processing counterpart to MS Word), Calc (the spreadsheet counterpart to MS Excel), Impress (the presentation counterpart to MS PowerPoint), Base (partial database counterpart to MS Access), and Draw (similar to MS Paint?).



There are also some significant sub-components, Math for writing mathematical equations, and Chart, which is used to generate charts for documents and spreadsheets. Base is not a complete database application, because it is designed to interface with other free database systems, like MySQL or mariadb, that provide the actual database storage and query support. Base provides an interface to manage an external database, or to use a spreadsheet as if it were a database, and to allow the other LibreOffice components to access information from a database (for example, in a mail merge operation).

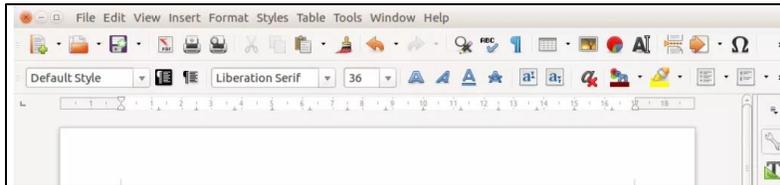
LibreOffice is available for MS Windows, Mac OS, and Unix/Linux platforms. The look, feel, and functionality of the applications are the same (within limitations of desktop differences) across all platforms. This gives LibreOffice (and OpenOffice) an advantage over MS Office, as there is no native-Unix version of MS Office. There are ways the Windows version of MS Office can be run under Unix/Linux, but they are a little kludgy and the simplest method for running MS Office on Linux (wine) frequently has some compatibility issues with the newest versions of MS Office.

The LibreOffice applications have their own native file formats (ODP, ODT, ODS), but can also read and write files in MS Office formats (PPTX, DOCX, XLSX, etc.) as well as other formats. The current MS Office products also contain support for the LibreOffice file formats, support that was lacking in some of the older MS Office versions. This means you can probably generate files from LibreOffice (in either native or MS Office formats) that can be successfully viewed by someone with a later version of MS Office, but if you suspect they may have an older version of MS Office, you may need to save it in an appropriate older MS Office file format. The later MS Office versions have similar cross application support with the Open Source formats used by LibreOffice. Be aware, however, that while there is pretty good compatibility, it is not 100%. There are some features in LibreOffice that have no counterparts in MS Office, and vice versa. You will generally end up with a document that is readable, but there may be some subtle and sometimes not so subtle differences in appearance that might require additional editing to get a polished result. Past experience suggests the MS Office applications may do a more accurate conversion to/from LibreOffice file formats than LibreOffice does converting to/from MS Office formats – quite possibly because MS formats are proprietary and public documentation is lacking. Also, the proprietary fonts available in MS Office do not have exact matches in LibreOffice, and

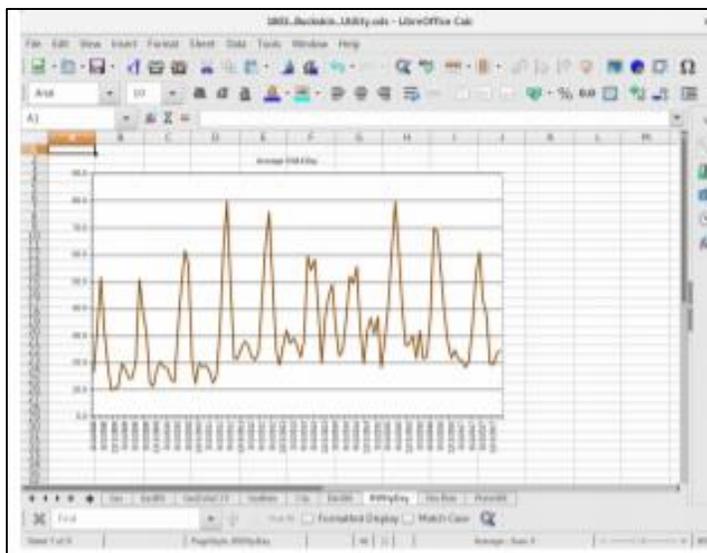
subtle differences in character sizes may change where line splits, column splits, or page splits occur in text.

This means that if you have carefully formatted a document for a formal presentation, and you know the document will be used under a different office suite than was used to create it, you really want to test the document under the targeted office suite to see if any format changes are required. Positioning of images within a document may shift, which in turn will affect how text flows around the image. I have seen cases going between Impress and PowerPoint where images covered up text or font size changed to the point that text ended up outside the normal slide viewing area. A presentation might convert OK, but then in other cases you could have some marginally viewable slides. This is particularly true if the target display system only has the old free PowerPoint viewer, which hasn't been updated for several years and only claims to support files from PowerPoint 2010 and earlier versions. Similar caveats apply whenever you intend to "publish" a polished, formal document: the final editing should be done on the office suite on which the document will be published or presented.

Note that all these issues of formatting compatibility disappear if your goal is not to distribute an editable version of the document but just a PDF (Portable Document Format) version of the document. Both MS Office and LibreOffice will export documents as a PDF file that accurately reflects the way that office suite displays the document, including consistent positioning of text and objects on each page.



I use LibreOffice Writer and Calc extensively, probably multiple times every day; and Impress multiple times monthly.



This article was composed using Writer, as was the entire BVCC Newsletter. I use Calc to manipulate membership rosters, to track home utility usage patterns and utility rates, and to manage a few other tables of various types. I use Impress for all my class and general meeting presentations. I occasionally use MS Word, primarily to proofread a Newsletter for another organization, precisely because there are fonts used that have issues with LibreOffice – that

need could probably even be avoided if I also requested the document as a PDF file and used the PDF version to proofread the line/column/page breaks and font appearance. I rarely use PowerPoint or Excel except when checking out how their capabilities differ from Impress and Calc, or to confirm that a file that LibreOffice finds “broken” has similar problems with MS Office. I routinely use LibreOffice to read and update MS Word and Excel file formats that are shared with others, and only rarely do I encounter issues where I find it expedient to resort to using MS Office (like the Newsletter font issue mentioned earlier).

The user interfaces of MS Office and LibreOffice are significantly different. MS Office has many more different action icons and has “ribbons” of icons. LibreOffice relies more on traditional menu and sub-menu selections. Which approach is easier to use is a matter of personal preference. Both have context-sensitive menus in response to a right-click within a document. In most cases there is identical functionality in MS Office and LibreOffice, but the place and manner of invoking the functionality differs. There are some areas where the MS Office applications are better and others where LibreOffice is better. I have yet to find something I wanted to do that I couldn’t do with LibreOffice, but in some cases on-line research was necessary, and in other cases a change in approach was required.

MS Office by default provides more templates and “cute” backgrounds – if you like that sort of thing – to use for creating documents. LibreOffice has fewer built-in backgrounds, but if you have other image manipulation tools, you can create your own custom backgrounds and add them. There are also some LibreOffice addons that can be downloaded and installed that I haven’t yet tested.

My impression is that there may be more “bugs” in LibreOffice than in MS Office, but that could be because I use it more. I’ve always been able to find ways to work around them. For example, the documentation implies that in a Writer document you should be able to format some pages as multi-column and other pages as single-column; but it doesn’t work as documented – it always changes the number of columns globally for all pages. One circumvention I’ve used is to just use single column format for the entire document, define a large “frame” within the pages you want to be multi-column, and then define the internal structure of text within that frame as multicolumn. Moving images within a document sometimes does strange things – it’s sometimes necessary to delete it from the original location and re-insert it at the desired location. There always seems to be a way to get the desired effect, it sometimes just requires on-line research (and as a less frequent user of MS Office, I find I also must do similar research to find how to do some things in MS Office).

LibreOffice is an incredibly useful suite of applications, and you can’t beat the price. It can be downloaded from <https://www.libreoffice.org/>

CAMUG September 2018 Meeting Minutes

Around 6:15 PM Jan Bredon showed how to use Pinterest. He has been using Pinterest for over a year and has collected information about many topics. This information is contained in pins which he has saved to boards. Jan also noted that some pins are commercials selling things. (A handout was distributed.)

REGULAR MEETING ...



President Dennis Smith called the 421st meeting of CAMUG to order at 7:02 PM on Monday September 17, 2018, at Holy Cross Lutheran Church. There were 12 member families present. Since that is more than 15% of the membership, the meeting was declared valid. Also Mary Ann Kravos' husband Ed and son Ted attended.

The On-Time Drawing: The total number of family members is 30, and members are assigned numbers sequentially from 0 to 30 alphabetically. On the first draw, #12, Tim Elder was selected. Tim was present, was wearing his badge, and was awarded the prize.

There was one visitor: Bill Reis. Dennis reminded members that they get a renewal credit of \$5 for each new member they bring in; bringing in four new members will make renewal free. He asked that people tell board members about programs they want to hear. He also mentioned that people who have volunteered to give programs end up learning more about the topic chosen.

Program: Dennis had contacted Phil Bock, the President of Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts (LCACE) and asked him to present Your Digital Afterlife, the program he had presented at the APCUG Virtual Technology Conference on August 18, 2018. Dennis and Phil used a program called Zoom. We could see and hear Phil and the slides he showed. Phil emphasized the need to plan what should happen to your digital legacy when you die or are incapacitated. He also showed many resources that are available. The members enjoyed the presentation. The original presentation is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WEhjKyJgDWc&t=10s>. A pdf file of the August 18 presentation is found at : https://apcug2.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Digital_Afterlife-PhilBock_APCUG_VTC_8-18-18.pdf

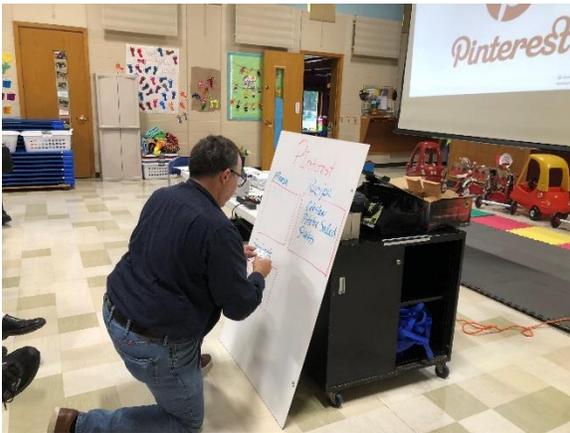
After the presentation and the break, the raffle drawing was held. On the first draw, Ruth Albright won and was awarded the money. Since there was less than \$20.00 collected, there was no second draw.

Q & A: Jerry Schaefer asked about the program next month which was supposed to be genealogy. Bruce Brugger mentioned that his Office 2003 no longer works with the newest Windows 10 update; he solved this by moving to LibreOffice.

At 9:01 PM Jan Bredon moved to adjourn the meeting, Morris Dingman seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Milford, Secretary



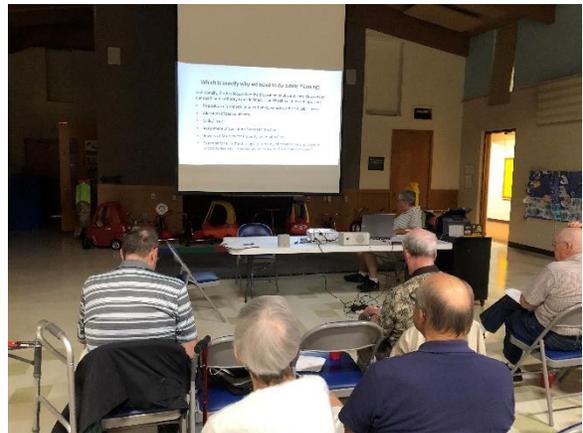
Jan Bredon's Pinterest Demo



Jan Bredon and Pinterest



Phil Bock During His Presentation



One of the slides Phil Bock showed

Next CAMUG Meeting, October 15

6 PM Computer 101: *CaptureWizPro* demo

7 PM –*Google Voice* by Jan Bredon

CAMUG Board Meeting Minutes 9/24/2018

CAMUG Board Meeting Minutes...

President Dennis Smith called the September 24, 2018, Board meeting of CAMUG to order at 7:00 PM at Panera Bread on “The Strip” in North Canton. There were 6 of the 7 Board members present; therefore, the meeting was declared valid.

President	Present	Dennis Smith	president@camug.com
Secretary	Present	Liz Milford	secretary@camug.com
Treasurer	Present	Tim Elder	treasurer@camug.com
Senior Director		Carol Joliat	directors@camug.com
Director	Present	Jan Bredon	
Director	Present	Bernie Newsome	
Director at Large	Present	Morris Dingman	
Web Page		Michael Charney	webmaster@camug.com
Software and Book Review	Present	Jan Bredon	
Membership		Carol Joliat	membership@camug.com
Newsletter	Present	Liz Milford	newsletter@camug.com
Computer 101		Carol Joliat	
Ways and Means	Present	Jan Bredon and Madeline Burkes	
Attending Club Members	Present	Alice Lungociu	

Review September Club Meeting Minutes:

Jan Bredon moved to accept the September Meeting Minutes as distributed at the meeting. Tim Elder seconded the motion. The Club Meeting Minutes were approved unanimously.

Review the August Board Meeting Minutes:

Tim Elder moved to accept the Board Meeting Minutes as published in the Newsletter. Jan Bredon seconded the motion. The Board Meeting Minutes were approved unanimously.

Review September Club Treasurer’s Report:

Liz Milford moved to accept the Treasurer’s Report as emailed. Morris Dingman seconded the motion. The Treasurer’s Report was approved.

Membership Report:

There are currently 30 Member Families. Alice Lungociu reported that she sent renewal reminders to six members.

Old Business:

Dennis had printed an email from Bruce Klipec on the back of the agenda stating Bruce could not give the genealogy program in October as originally planned. It is tentatively scheduled for the February meeting.

Dennis noted that he will be unavailable for the October 15th meeting but will be at the October Board meeting. Carol Joliat, Senior Director, will chair the October 15th meeting.

Discussion October 15th 6 PM 101 Meeting Topic:

CaptureWizPro demo.

Discussion October 15th 7 PM Regular Meeting Topic:

Jan Bredon will talk about *Google Voice*.

New Business:

None.

Motion to Adjourn:

At 8:07 PM Tim Elder moved to adjourn, Bernie Newsome seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted pending Board approval,
Liz Milford, Secretary

Lines from Liz

Liz Milford

Our 6:00 PM program for October is a demo of CaptureWizPro. The board chose that program because APCUG has obtained a 50% discount for us through October 31 and we thought members would like to hear about it. You may remember receiving an email about the discount also. The information below is from that email.

CaptureWizPro captures anything you see or hear on your PC. It even captures tricky items like large scrolling areas, Metro apps, drop-down lists, tool tips, mouse pointers and screen savers. There's also a high-performance recorder for capturing streaming video or creating demos. The new version is compatible with Windows 10 and touch screen input!

It's like having digital scissors; use it to make perfect copies of anything from video presentations to computer settings or PDF files to treasure maps. Just start the tool, select a portion of your screen, then choose an output, like Save, Print, Copy or Email. That's it!

Easy for beginners, powerful for pros.

Simple tools, visible over any background, guide you through the steps.

- Pop-out capture bar
- Speedy predictive capture tool
- Scroll capture that works everywhere and full-screen preview
- Send captured content to an incrementally numbered file (GIF, JPG, PNG, or BMP), printer, e-mail, image editor or desktop sticky note
- Plus, a thumbnail viewer stores screen captures for later use.

Advanced users will appreciate the customizable buttons and hot keys.

Come to the meeting; see the demo. You may then decide to give it a try with their 30-day full-program free trial before you buy. They also have a 30-day unconditional money back guarantee.

<http://pixelmetrics.com/ComputerClubDiscount/>

About CAMUG

Our club is open to anyone with an interest in computers and technology. A household membership is only \$20 per year, and a visitor can attend two meetings free without any obligation.

Monthly meetings are held the third Monday of the month at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 7707 Market Ave. N in North Canton, Ohio. Computer 101 begins at 6:00 PM and the regular meeting begins at 7:00 PM. At every meeting, we cover topics ranging from cell phones to computers and from software to the internet and networking. Board meetings are held the fourth Monday of the month at 7:00 PM at Panera Bread on The Strip. Members are encouraged to attend the board meeting although only board members can vote.

The club mailing address is CAMUG, PO BOX 80192, Canton, OH 44708, and the website is <http://www.camug.com>.

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CAMUG is a member of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG) which is a worldwide organization that helps groups devoted to the world of technology by facilitating communications between member groups and industry.

Membership Report

July 2018

by Carol Joliat



Total Family Memberships – 30
Renewals: None



CAMUG Monthly Summary

Tim W. Elder, Treasurer 9/17/18

	Cash	Checking	Total
Start Balances	\$60.00	\$1,991.05	\$2021.05
Total Income	\$13.50	\$20.00	\$33.50
Total Expenses	\$5.00	\$25.00	\$30.00
Transfer	<u>-\$8.50</u>	<u>\$8.50</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>
End Balances	\$60.00	\$1,964.55	\$2024.55

CAMUG Officers

President: Dennis Smith 330-477-5893
Secretary: Liz Milford 330-896-4284
Treasurer: Tim Elder 330-875-2323
Senior Director: Carol Joliat
Director: Jan Bredon 234-564-0045
Director: Bernie Newsome 330-232-5083
Director at Large: Morris Dingman
330-877-1479

Membership: Carol Joliat
Asst. Membership: Alice Lungociu
Web Page: Mike Charney 330-833-0329
Newsletter: Liz Milford 330-896-4284
Tim Elder 330-875-2323
Computer 101: Carol Joliat
Ways and Means: Jan Bredon
Madeline Burkes

List of Members

Name	E-Mail
Albright, Jim	jima
Bredon, Jan	janb
Brugger, Bruce	bruceb
Burkes, Madeline	madelineb
Casey, Kathleen	kathleenc
Chapman, Lila	lilac
Charney, Michael	michaelc
Conley, Rose	rosec
Crawford, James W.	jimc
Dingman, Morris	morrisd
Elder, Tim	time
Hirst, Gina	ginah
Hirst, Robert	roberth
Joliat, Carol	carolj
Klipec, Bruce	brucek
Kramer, Cecelia	ceceliak
Kramer, Pat	patk
Krantz, David	davidk
Kravos, Mary Ann	maryannk
Lungociu, Alice	alicel
McCoy, Myra	myram
Meiser, Ann	annm
Milford, Elizabeth	elizabethm
Newsome, Bernard	bernardn
Noyd, Hal	haln
Parker, Cherie	cheriep
Ponzani, Doris	dorisp
Schaefer, Gerald	Geralds
Sell, Tom	toms
Smith, Dennis	denniss
Trompower, Gary	garyt

To email members, use the email
name above followed by
@camug.com

Visit our Home Page

<http://www.camug.com>

**Need help
with your electronic gadgets?**



Canton Alliance Massillon Users Group
Computer Users Group

Assistance for users of all ages and skill levels

When: 3rd Monday each month

Where: Holy Cross Lutheran Church
7707 Market Ave. N
North Canton OH

Time: 6pm Computer 101 (Less Advanced)
7pm Main Meeting

Ongoing topics include:

Computers	Tablets	Digital photography
Smart phones	eBooks	Toys & Gadgets

www.camug.com