

# THE PRINTER

Chesapeake PC Users Group, Inc.

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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

*Happy New Year!*

Happy 2012! I hope everyone has had a safe and happy new year. I'm sure many of you found tech toys under the tree. Feel free to bring these to the next meeting.

### **BRING YOUR LAPTOP WITH YOU TO THE NEXT MEETING!**

If you bought a laptop or have a laptop, please bring it to future meetings to 'follow along' with the presentation. We have a wireless router that keeps an open Wi-Fi connection and if necessary, we can bring your laptop to the projector and allow you to show any issues or questions you have.

#### **Live Drive for all members!**

Over the past year or so, we discussed the importance of making backups of your data. Specifically we have discussed in depth the importance of keeping your backed up data off site. Now the Chesapeake PC Users Group is offering a **FREE** membership to the Live Drive ([www.livedrive.com](http://www.livedrive.com)) backup service. If you would like an account, please send an e-mail to [president@chpcug.org](mailto:president@chpcug.org) and request a Live Drive account.

This is an unlimited account. It means you can backup an unlimited amount of data from an unlimited number of computers. With the Live Drive service you can also restore your data to any

other computer. An example of the use would be; you have your data backed up a catastrophe happens and your computer is completely destroyed. So you get a new computer. You can restore all of your data to the new system. It's that easy!

We try to give you services for your membership donation and this is one example of the many items that the users group gives you that would normally cost \$60 a year. Please take advantage of the Live Drive service as well as many of the services provided by YOUR users group.

#### **Upcoming meeting topics**

**January 11** – Mike Young will present wireless security techniques to keep your wireless network secure.

**February 8** – Joyce Shue will demonstrate on-line data backup and recovery using Live Drive. Don't forget, February is election month so be there if you don't want to be elected.

*I hope everyone has a safe and happy New Year!*

*See you at the next meeting!*

*Michael*

## Free Training - cont'd

viewer, and other utilities. The heart of Eldy is "The Square" which is a desktop with six large buttons, one each for sending and receiving email, surfing the web, participating in online chats, viewing "Eldy TV", managing the user's personal profile, and a tools button with additional utilities. For the user who wants a functional but minimalist web experience, this "Square" can provide it. When the email button is clicked, a simple email menu opens where the user can simply create emails, and add attachments or embed images. Eldy can create and maintain email address books, and handle other email functions, all with a single click. To open and read an email also takes a single click, with Eldy automatically handling any attachments or embedded images. The large "Surf the Web" button opens a simple browser, where favorites and bookmarks are displayed as large buttons that display a miniature of the webpage. The chat button allows the user to join a chat room, start a chat, or otherwise communicate with anyone using a compatible chat client. The Eldy TV button opens a language specific assortment of streaming TV and video, including CNN, BBC, Hulu, YouTube, TED, VIMEO, and other streaming media; simply clicking on the appropriate button starts the streaming video and TV. The Tools button includes a notepad utility, a documents viewer (displays images, video, and several document formats), and allows the user to make free telephone calls over the internet using a basic form of the popular Skype service. For the senior who is averse to modern technology, but still wants to have the benefits of the internet, Eldy would be a good choice.

By utilizing as appropriate any of these five services, from the simplicity of Eldy to the sophistication of Meganga and Internet4Classrooms, seniors, and anyone else interested in learning about computers and the internet may freely do so.

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## New MagicJack Plus Offers Inexpensive Phone Service

by  
Ira Wilsker

WEBSITE:  
<http://magicjack.com>  
<http://www.freemagicconference.com>

If you watch any TV, you have undoubtedly seen the countless commercials for magicJack, offering to save the users hundreds of dollars a year in phone bills, for a monthly fee of about \$2. When it first came out about three years ago, I reviewed the original magicJack in this column and on my weekly radio show. At that time, magicJack offered some of the least expensive unlimited local and long distance phone service in the country by utilizing the small \$39.95 USB connected original magicJack device, a broadband internet connected computer, and an attached telephone.

MagicJack is very useful in that it offers unlimited local and long distance calling throughout the U.S. and Canada, deeply discounted international calling via prepaid minutes, free directory assistance, call waiting, voice mail, caller ID, and free international calling when calling the U.S. MagicJack also offers its users free conference calling; as long as the user creating the conference call is a registered magicJack user, anyone else may participate in the conference call. Creating a "conference call room" is very simple, and instructions are online at [www.freemagicconference.com](http://www.freemagicconference.com).

According to its website, over eight million of the original magicJack units have been sold. MagicJack uses VoIP (voice over internet protocol) technology to send and receive phone calls over the internet, a technology utilized by several other internet or "digital" phone services. I used the original USB connected magicJack for about two years, primarily for making long distance calls from home rather than using

prime time cell phone minutes. I also took my magicJack and an old telephone with me when traveling such that I would have local and long distance service from hotel rooms, and thus avoid expensive hotel telephone charges, or using limited cell phone minutes. I took my magicJack and phone with me when evacuating from a series of coastal hurricanes, providing me with phone service while away from home. The final use of my original magicJack was in my office so that I could make or return long distance phone calls without incurring long distance charges for my college.

Except for one glitch during a periodic automatic upgrade of the original magicJack software, which led to the loss of my phonebook, it always served me well as long as I had a broadband internet connection and my computer was turned on. The requirement that the original magicJack must be connected via USB to a powered and booted computer was its Achilles' heel. While the voice quality was good, and features comprehensive, the original magicJack could only be used if the computer was on, and I always shut down my computer when I was not using it. With the computer off, the original magicJack was also off, resulting in missed calls, or the inability to make calls until the computer was on and booted. Because of this inability to function while the computer was off, I started using a competitor's product, NetTalk Duo, which connected directly to my router, and did not require that it be connected to a powered and booted computer, meaning that it was always functional, as long as I had an internet connection.

Recently, a new magicJack Plus (\$69.99 retail, 30 day trial available) was introduced

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# Choosing a Smartphone

by

Sandy Berger, CompuKISS

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There are so many different smartphones available today that choosing between them can be difficult. Each phone and each operating system has many different pluses and minuses. So today, I'll give you a brief rundown of what you can expect in a smartphone.

Windows Mobile cell phones are just coming of age and they may well be a good choice in the future. However, right now the choice will probably come down to choosing between the Apple iPhone and one of the many Android phones that are now available.

The Android operating system is upgraded several times a year and new Android phones are released all the time. Apple, however only releases a new iPhone and a big update to their iOS operating system once a year. The new iPhone and iOS updates were released in October. The new Android phones running Gingerbread, the most current Android operating system, will be on the market this month (November 2011). So today we will talk about Apple and Android, and do a quick comparison of the current phones and operating systems for each.

Since it is so new, I haven't yet been able to review the new iPhone 4S. However, I have reviewed previous iPhones. I have also installed Apple's new iOS 5 operating system on my iPad, so I have been able to take an in-depth look at most of the new features that will be on the new iPhone. Now I am ready to make my list of the benefits of each.

There is no doubt that that the camera on the new iPhone is superior to almost all the

# Choosing a Smartphone - cont'd

The most unique feature of the new iPhone is Siri, a personal assistant who will answer verbal questions that you ask. This would, no doubt, be very useful, entertaining, and truly state-of-the-art.

Android phones also have voice capabilities. They use Google's Voice Search. Most screens that popup a keypad for text entry, also have a small microphone. Just press the microphone and speak. It is amazingly accurate and you can use it for everything from entering email text to searching to navigating to a point on the map. Probably not as sophisticated as Apple's Siri, but it works well.

My biggest disappointment with the new iPhone is that it is a 3G phone. It does not take advantage of the faster 4G network. Right now the fastest phone for data will be the Android 4G phones that run on a 4G LTE network. If Verizon currently has a 4G LTE network in your area, you may want to consider a 4G Android phone rather than the iPhone 4S.

Android phones also have some things that I love that are not available on iPhones. The first of these is the fact that you can get a larger screen size on an Android. All iPhones currently have a 3.5-inch screen. Several good Android phones have 4.3-inch screens. My aging eyes really like the larger screens.

I also like the four buttons on the bottom of the Android screen. These are very, very useful. There is a Back Key, a Menu Key, a Home Key,

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# Free Basic Computer Training for Seniors (and others)

by  
Ira Wilsker

## WEBSITES:

<http://www.ilovefreesoftware.com/02/webware/5-free-websites-how-to-use-computer.html>  
<http://www.internet4classrooms.com/on-line.htm>  
<http://www.seniorsguidetocomputers.com>  
<http://www.internet101.org>  
<http://www.eldy.eu>  
<http://www.meganga.com/lessons/>

As many of you already know, I occasionally volunteer to teach some computer classes at the Best Years Center. I am well aware that seniors probably make up the largest group of new computer users, as many had lived their entire lives without utilizing many of the current technologies. I was pleasantly surprised when I saw an article recently published on the "I Love Free Software" website, "5 Free Websites for Seniors on How to Use Computer and Internet" ([ilovefreesoftware.com/02/webware/5-free-websites-how-to-use-computer.html](http://ilovefreesoftware.com/02/webware/5-free-websites-how-to-use-computer.html)). As its title describes, it listed and reviewed five websites that offered free training for seniors (and anyone else) who could use some basic training on computing, popular software, and the internet.

The first website listed that I visited was "The Senior's Guide to Computers" at [seniorsguidetocomputers.com](http://seniorsguidetocomputers.com). At first glance, I was very impressed by the wealth and quality of information available. This one website, by itself, is totally capable of providing anyone, novice to geek, with a broad variety of information, ranging from the basics (common computer terms illustrated and explained), email, the internet, PC safety and security, the necessity of backing up ("Probably the single most important task you'll perform"), hardware, and software. By starting at the beginning, the basics, and progressing through the short illustrated lessons,

the user will be able to understand and master the functions of a computer and its operating system, and how to make maximum utilization of the internet. Everything is covered including what to look for in a computer, the components and parts of a computer, the differences between the types of internet service providers (ISPs), methods of backing up critical data, proper security precautions and software, different types of software (including freeware), email use and safety, and just about any other practical computer topic. While clearly directed at seniors, the content and lessons on this website would be appropriate for anyone of any age to learn about personal computing. For this purpose, "The Senior's Guide to Computers" is one of the best websites that I have ever seen.

Another basic computer training website, with professionally organized free lessons, is Meganga's "Free Basic Computer Training" available online at [meganga.com/lessons](http://meganga.com/lessons). Consisting of 94 lessons, the user is free to choose whatever topics he finds necessary or interesting. At the most basic level are 28 "Free Beginner Lessons" which include an orientation to the computer; exercises on how to use a mouse, a cursor, and the keyboard; guide to the desktop and icons; creating desktop icons and gadgets; how to use the start menu, applications, and Windows; how to create documents, files and folders; internet web browser basics, homepages, address bar, toolbars, search engines, and hyperlinks; how to complete online forms; and detailed instructions on how to create, send, and read email. A dozen lessons instruct the user on the basics of popular software, including Word, WordPad, Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, Excel, and Hotmail. Meganga's "Free Basic Computer Training" is

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# Free Training - cont'd

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also an excellent resource to teach anyone the basics of computing, and how to use the internet and popular software programs.

For anyone needing some intermediate or advanced training in computer topics, Internet4Classrooms (I4C) at [internet4classrooms.com/on-line.htm](http://internet4classrooms.com/on-line.htm) offers over a dozen free online groups of tutorials on popular software packages and operating systems. Each group of tutorials consists of an orderly series of lessons which are easy to comprehend and master. For users of Microsoft Office (and its clones and competitors such as OpenOffice and LibreOffice), lessons are provided in Excel (spreadsheet), PowerPoint (presentation program), and Word (word processor). As an example, the "Basic Word Tutorial" consists of nine distinct lessons starting with a basic overview of Word, and ending with the user creating a newsletter. The "Advanced Word Topics" includes such tasks as mail merge, converting Word to PowerPoint, using hyperlinks in Word, writing equations, special fonts, how to use the thesaurus, and how to determine the reading level of a passage. I4C also includes lessons on software applications including Internet Explorer (web browser) and Dreamweaver (sophisticated web design software used to create professional web pages). Detailed tutorials are available that cover both the Windows and Macintosh operating systems, as well as lessons on how to troubleshoot both Windows and Mac operating systems. These I4C lessons are a great tool for learning how to use the products covered, and are suitable for those who have already mastered the basics of computing but want to advance their skills.

Several of the seniors that I teach are interested primarily in using the internet, mostly to be able to surf the web, and send and receive emails. The "Internet 101" website at [internet101.org](http://internet101.org) provides instructions on these tasks, as well as the other online activities that more advanced users would like to do. Internet 101 consists of

several dozen internet topics ranging from the most basic descriptions of the internet and its history, to advanced uses of the internet. Covered are basic instructions on how to use the internet; selecting an internet provider; using email; online shopping; blogs; online safety and security; web searches (including how to find street addresses and internet road maps); selecting a browser; online chat; using Skype, VoIP and other online phone services; how to view streaming movies (such as Netflix and YouTube); social networking; building websites and registering domain names; and several other interesting internet related topics. Internet 101 is an excellent way for anyone to learn about the basic and advanced features of the internet.

Some of the seniors that I work with have told me that they do not want anything fancy, and want the most simple software available to surf the web, do email, and other related basic online tasks. An Italian company, "Eldy Seniors' Computer Software" ([www.eldy.eu](http://www.eldy.eu)) is offering a free software utility that creates a desktop with just a few large buttons, each of which automates basic internet tasks. According the Eldy website, "Eldy is a software that turns any standard PC into an easy-to-use computer for people that have never used a computer before. (Eldy) Provides an easy six buttons interface email, internet, chat, videoconferencing, documents, pictures, Skype and more." The group that created and distributes the Eldy software describes its purpose as, "Eldy Association is a group reaching out to the elderly and disabled community offering a combination of technological tools and human support with the purpose of reducing their isolation, and loneliness. Eldy encourages people to stay active and social." The Eldy software is available for Windows, Mac, and Linux operating systems, and is available in 22 languages. It is a large download (the Windows version of Eldy is a 40.6mb download), but it includes a browser, email client, online TV

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## Streaming Video Presentation

by

Mike Kaltschnee

Meeting Review

by Richard Corzo, President, Danbury Computer Society, CT

November 2011 issue, DACS.org

[www.dacs.org](http://www.dacs.org)

[dacsprez \(at\) dacs.org](mailto:dacsprez@dac.org)

Perhaps you've heard of people "cutting the cord," getting rid of their cable or satellite TV subscription, and relying on the Internet to watch television programming. Maybe you just want to catch up on episodes that you may have missed, or be able to watch movies that aren't available from your cable or satellite provider.

Mike Kaltschnee explained the options, both services and devices you can hook up to your TV. He is well known for his web site [www.HackingNetflix.com](http://www.HackingNetflix.com). So of course he mentioned Netflix, which has both a video streaming service and DVD rental by-mail service. The streaming service seems to be available on every TV, Blu-ray player, and game console; along with all the streaming devices he showed us, and a Windows PC or Mac.

Hulu and Hulu Plus is another service featuring mostly TV programs, and come in both free and paid versions. Amazon offers streaming through its Amazon Prime offering, as well as a huge selection of video on demand titles. HBO Go is available only to HBO cable subscribers, but lets you watch shows on portable devices and selected set-top boxes.

Blockbuster is similar to Netflix in offering both streaming and DVDs by mail. However, the streaming option for now requires a Dish

satellite subscription. You can select from the various options based on the service's selection of titles, price, how often you watch, and what devices they support.

To find where particular titles may be offered, Mike mentioned TV Guide (<http://www.tvguide.com/>), Fanhattan (<http://www.fanhattan.com/>) which has an iPad application and will soon offer a website guide, and clicker (<http://www.clicker.com/>), the "Internet Television Guide."

To watch Internet TV on your television, you could hook up your Windows PC or Mac with an HDMI or VGA cable, or use your game console. Your TV itself or Blu-ray player may offer some of these services. You might also want to watch TV on your portable devices, phone, iPad, etc.

Finally, there are dedicated streaming boxes such as the Roku, Boxee, Apple TV and Google TV. A TiVo combines a DVR with an offering of Netflix, Hulu Plus, Amazon Video on Demand, and Blockbuster.

The Sony Dash was an interesting device I wasn't familiar with, and has a built-in screen. So there are a lot of options, and we're no longer limited to cable or satellite TV.

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## Diskeeper 2011

by

George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society, AZ

November 2011 issue, eJournal

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One of the essential parts of your computer, the hard disk, is also one that can cause the computer to be unable to boot. The Windows operating system provides tools to keep your hard disk in good health. Fragmentation of files is one of the consequences of efficient space utilization. File deletion leaves portions of disk space available for use by another file, but only if the new file is the same or smaller size as the deleted file. If larger, a portion of the new file is stored in the deleted file's space, the balance somewhere else. This splitting of a file may result in a file being cut into several pieces. It takes longer to retrieve a file in this condition, than if it is stored as one contiguous piece.

Fragmentation can be reduced or eliminated by a special program that rearranges files so that each occupies only one spot on the disk. This produces more efficient file retrieval. The defragmenter in Windows can be operated whenever desired. In Windows 7, it is run every day at a specified time that can be changed by the operator. In earlier versions of Windows, though, the defragmenter must be run manually, requiring you to remember to do so.

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Diskeeper uses a different approach. Its IntelliWrite feature prevents fragmentation before it occurs. When a file is saved, this technology prevents fragmentation from occurring. In the rare event that a file is fragmented, the Instant Defrag feature fixes it in the background. These operations occur without any noticeable degradation of performance. Boot-time defragmentation is a feature that can be used to defrag those files that are being used by Windows and cannot be changed while Windows is running. Instead, they are operated on before Windows starts. This may add a bit to start-up time.

You can, if you wish, manually defragment your disk, but Diskeeper does a more efficient job, so let it do its job.

Sold in different editions with prices to match, the lowest price is about \$40, certainly reasonable for such a sophisticated program.

About: Diskeeper 2011

Vendor: Diskeeper

[www.diskeeper.com](http://www.diskeeper.com)

Price: \$40 and up

Requires: Works with WIN XP/Vista/7



## MagicJack Plus - cont'd

cont'd from Page 3

which maintained all of the features, portability, and services of the original magicJack, including the first year of service, but now offers the user the choice of being USB connected to a live computer (just like the original product), or being connected directly to a broadband router, which will provide an always-on capability. With this router connected option, there is no need for the magicJack Plus to be connected to a computer, as long as the broadband connection is live and the router is powered.

The new magicJack Plus comes in a package with the simple pictorial connection instructions inside the cover, and registration instructions on the back cover. The device itself is about the same small size as the original device, 1.7"x2.7"x0.7", black in color, with a small blue LED on the front corner which indicates that the device has power, and a green LED by the Ethernet connection, which indicates that a signal is present. On the right side of the device is a standard male USB connector, with the left side having both Ethernet and phone jacks. In the package with the device is a short USB extension cable, Ethernet cable, and a wall plug transformer with a standard USB connection. Connecting the device is simple and intuitive. To originally setup and register the device requires that the device be connected to a powered USB port on the computer (or a fully powered hub); the included USB extension cable can be used to connect the device if port spacing is a problem.

When connected directly to the computer via USB either for the one-time registration process or for computer based telephone service, the device and its drivers will automatically load unless the security software on the computer blocks external devices from automatically running. If the USB connected magicJack will not automatically load when inserted with the computer booted, the user may either uncheck

the security software box that restricts external devices from automatically loading, or may manually run the "autorun.exe" on the magicJack drive, which will download, update, and install the magicJack software on the computer, and start the registration process. If it is desired to run in USB mode whenever the computer is on, the magicJack installation process will insert a file in the computer startup sequence that will automatically load the magicJack software at the next boot.

While the actual one-time registration process was simple, it was burdened by a series of about a dozen screens attempting to up sell the user into purchasing additional features and services. One of the first up sell screens offers the user the choice of being assigned a free local phone number by choosing a state, area code and city, or for a \$10 fee the user could create a vanity phone number using any combination of available numbers and letters, or the user can select a Canadian phone number. While not displayed at this time during the registration process, magicJack does offer the ability to transfer an existing phone number to the magicJack service. Another choice was the \$3 fee for selecting your own "last four digits" of your assigned phone prefix. One problem became apparent for our local 409 area code; all of the phone numbers listed for 409 were for Galveston; there were no local numbers for the Golden Triangle area of Texas. Another screen offers an optional "this one time only" no-fault comprehensive warranty on the device itself for \$1 per year instead of the normal \$10 per year. The next screen offers the "5 Year Platinum Service Plan" which adds another 5 years of service, plus a 5 year extended warranty on the device, for a one-time charge of \$99.95. A following screen offers a second year of service and a one year warranty extension for \$29.95. Still another screen offered the user the option of buying additional devices for \$69.95, with free rush shipping. Not yet done selling additional

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## MagicJack Plus - cont'd

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services, subsequent registration screens offer deeply discounted prepaid international calling, and a \$20 lifetime warranty. Once these up sell screens completed their sales pitch, the user enters an activation code emailed by magicJack during the registration process; the user is then shown his magicJack phone number; given the opportunity (twice) to automatically email friends and family the new phone number; and then choose the desired connection method, USB or Ethernet. The registration process is now completed, and the user may now make and receive unlimited calls using the magicJack.

Once registered and activated, the magicJack Plus can be used in USB mode by plugging any standard phone into the phone jack on the device; the power is provided by the USB port (note that this will not work on USB hubs that are not fully powered; many USB hubs do not provide full electrical power to attached devices). The device is now fully functional, and calls may be made using the dial on the phone or by dialing using the magicJack phone book on the desktop.

Alternatively, once registered and activated, the magicJack may be connected directly to the router using the included Ethernet cable, and powered by connecting the device directly to the wall-plug transformer or by using the included USB extension cable to the wall-plug power supply. Utilizing this method, which is my personal preference, is what provides the always-on functionality without the necessity of

a powered computer. For those with a simple cable or DSL modem that does not include an extra Ethernet port, the big box office supply and electronics stores, as well as the discount stores, have a "network switch", which is a simple box (about \$15) that provides additional Ethernet ports to the cable or DSL modem, and functions as a router.

I found the new magicJack Plus to be feature rich and reasonably priced for the amount of services provided, with very good voice quality. I like the portability and small size of the device, as well as the option to use it with a direct connection to the router, negating the necessity for a powered computer. On an annual basis, having unlimited local and long distance calling, directory assistance, caller ID, voice mail, 911 service, and conference calling for about \$2.50 per month is a money saving bargain. I also found that the new magicJack Plus does work fine with my home fax machine. Using the magicJack connected to my router, I have not encountered any functional problems with it; the only negative issue is not having a local Golden Triangle phone number. Other than the several marketing screens displayed during the one-time registration process, the magicJack Plus was very fast and easy to install, configure, and setup. For those with broadband internet, the new magicJack Plus may be an effective alternative to high local and long distance phone bills.



The Next Regular Meeting will be at  
The Severn River Middle School

**Wednesday**  
**January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012**

Meeting will be held in the large meeting room.  
It starts at 7:00 P.M. with club business  
and a short discussion period.

*presentation on*  
**Wireless Security  
Techniques**  
*by*  
**Mike Young**

Members and their friends are welcome to  
come, ask questions and become enlightened.

### How to Find: Severn River Middle School

SRMS is close to the Arnold, MD campus of the Anne Arundel Community College. From Annapolis and points south, take Rte 2 (Ritchie Highway) north about 3 miles from the intersection of Rt. 50, **turn right on College Parkway**. At the first light, turn left on Peninsula Farm Road. (Of course, if you are coming from points North, you would turn left onto College Parkway) about a half-mile down the road the large SRMS school building, set back off a large two level parking lot, will be visible on your right. Park here and go to the main entrance. Signs will be posted to direct you to the **Large Group Room** where we will be meeting.

How to find: The Technology SIG, A ChPCUG  
Special Interest Group\*\*

The meetings are held at the SRMS in the Library.



1783 Forest Drive #285  
Annapolis, MD 21401

FIRST CLASS

### INSIDE THIS VERY ISSUE!

President's Corner  
magicJack Plus  
Streaming Video  
Smart Phones  
Free Computer Training  
.... and a little bit more!

**Note:** The date above your name on the mailing label is the expiration date of your membership. Contact the Membership Chairman (page 2, column 2) to update.

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