Community Computer and
Electronics Swap Meet

Saturday, January 20

Hilton Houston Galleria Area Meeting Room
6780 Southwest Freeway, Houston, TX 77074

9 am – 1 pm

Swap
Meet

Houston Area Apple Users Group is Houston's oldest and largest Apple User Group. If you are interested in joining HAAUG, please call the HAAUG hotline at (832) 422-8437 or sign up via our web site at www.haaug.org.

Annual membership is $35 for regular members, and $10 for student members (limited to students enrolled at a high school, community college, or university.) The Hotline is also the Mentor line if you need help. Guests are welcome to attend one or two meetings to get acquainted with HAAUG, but participation in certain activities may be limited to members only. For a full list of membership benefits as well as a form to join HAAUG by mail, see the Membership Benefits page later in this issue.

BOSS HAAUG SPEAKS

by Phil Booth, 2018 HAAUG President

Welcome to 2018! We were greeted by record cold for a few days while the rest of the country battled blizzards. I can be thankful that we did not have the precipitation that battered the east coast. We were also greeted by news of a processor flaw that had the potential of undermining your computer's security.

The two flaws were given names Meltdown and Spectre. As much as I tried to read the tech press I still have little understanding of what is going on. Some of the tech press said that Apple has "mitigated" the Meltdown flaw and that a fix of Safari will be out soon to "mitigate" the Spectre issue. Keep your eyes out for security updates for macOS and iOS. From what I read the Apple Watch is not involved.

It is January and the Swap Meet will be at the Hilton on the Southwest Freeway near Hillcroft. Swap Meet is a great time to look over what folks have to sell and visit with your HAAUG Friends in a less formal way. Those that attend usually have a good time. In February we will be back at the CenterPoint Meeting facility in Bellaire.

At the December meeting we elected the board for 2018, and surprise, it is the same as the board for 2017. The board will be meeting to plan programs for the next year and I hope that we will have a tentative list in the next Apple Barrel.

Did you or a member of your family have a bright shiny new Apple product under your tree? Write an article about it and send it to the Editor of the Apple Barrel. We are always looking for things to post.

Well I am looking forward to the Astros spring training. Let's see if they can repeat as World Series Champion.

Club and Meeting News

Community Computer and Electronics Swap Meet

Saturday, January 20

Hilton Houston Galleria Area Meeting Room

6780 Southwest Freeway, Houston, TX 77074

9 am – 1 pm

	Hilton Galleria Area Meeting Room
9:00 am	
9:30 am	
10:00 am	
10:30 am	**Swap Meet**
11:00 am	
11:30 am	
12:00 pm	
12:30 pm	
1:00 pm	
1:30 pm	
2:00 pm	

Swap Meet Registration

Registration is now open for the upcoming HAAUG Swap Meet on January 20, 2017! The swap meet will take place at the Hilton Houston Galleria Area Meeting Room (6780 Southwest Freeway, Houston, TX 77074) from 9 AM to 1 PM. Vendor setup begins at 8:30 AM.

To register, visit <http://haaug.org/swap>.

Join the HAAUG Board of Directors!

We will soon be asking for members to volunteer to serve on the Board of Directors. Please consider putting your name up for a leadership position. For more information, talk to any board member at a meeting or send an email to president@haaug.org.

Meetup Group

The Houston Area Apple Users Group is now on Meetup.com! Click here to visit our group's Meetup page and join. We will of course continue to publish all meeting news on our website at haaug.org, to our Facebook group, and all other outlets as usual; this is simply an additional way to market our organization to the local community. If you are already a HAAUG member and join the Meetup group we will mark your dues as paid on the Meetup website, so you won't have to pay HAAUG dues twice!

HAAUG Website Updates

If you haven't vistited the HAAUG website recently, stop by and check it out. Learn more about the organization, get up-to-the-minute news and updates, and browse the Apple Barrel archives, dating back to 1996!

Submit Your Content to Apple Barrel!

Have you tried a new Mac or iOS application? Found a neat accessory for your iPhone? Want to share a cool tip you've come across? Write about it, and send your column to editor@haaug.org. You can help make the Apple Barrel a better publication while providing valuable insight and opinion to your fellow HAAUG members.

Apple Releases Meltdown and Spectre Info and Updates by Adam C. Engst of TidBITS

The tech world has been abuzz with discussion of Meltdown and Spectre, massive "speculative execution" security vulnerabilities recently discovered in the CPUs used by nearly all modern computing devices, including the Intel CPUs used in Macs and the ARM-based CPUs in iOS devices. Ars Technica has a good explanation of the problem and overview of the response from different companies.

Late last week, Apple posted a support note explaining the situation from the company's perspective. In short, Apple released mitigations for Meltdown in iOS 11.2, macOS 10.13.2, and tvOS 11.2, and claims that its changes resulted in no measurable reduction in performance. (Initial speculation suggested that blocking these vulnerabilities could cause a 5 to 30 percent performance hit.)

In that statement, Apple said that an upcoming release of Safari would mitigate the Spectre exploits with only a minimal performance impact. The company wasted no time, pushing out iOS 11.2.2, macOS High Sierra 10.13.2 Supplemental Update, and Safari 11.0.2 (for OS X 10.11.6 El Capitan and 10.12.6 Sierra). All three updates "include security improvements to Safari and WebKit to mitigate the effects of Spectre (CVE-2017-5753 and CVE-2017-5715)."

We strongly recommend installing these updates immediately, since the Spectre exploits can be implemented in JavaScript — in other words, any Web page could theoretically become a conduit to your computer or device being compromised.

On the Mac, it's equally as important to make sure you're running the latest version of Google Chrome (which updates itself; just quit and relaunch) and Firefox, along with any other Web browsers you use. Both Google and Mozilla have released interim updates and have more significant releases scheduled for the fourth week in January.

Apple says that the Apple Watch is unaffected by both Meltdown and Spectre.

All these updates are good, but note the word "mitigate" in Apple's security notes, rather than the company's usual "addressed" terminology. Spectre, in particular, is a subtle vulnerability, and we'll likely be seeing additional protections worked into software over time.

In other words, staying up to date with the latest security updates from Apple is becoming ever more essential.

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WPA3 Promises Better Wi-Fi Security with Less Effort by Glenn Fleishman of TidBITS

The Wi-Fi Alliance, which certifies Wi-Fi products, has announced WPA3, a major upgrade to Wi-Fi security that will appear in 2018 and take care of known flaws while simultaneously requiring less effort on your part. Among other things, it will eliminate the nasty KRACK vulnerability and secure open Wi-Fi networks. (See "Wi-Fi Security Flaw Not As Bad As It's KRACKed Up To Be," 17 October 2017.)

The Wi-Fi Alliance is a trade group that dates back nearly 20 years. It has long been responsible for keeping all the cats in the local wireless networking bag, preventing forks and proprietary standards that have plagued other technologies. Almost 15 years ago, the Wi-Fi Alliance worked to recover from the terrible flaws in its original network encryption standard, WEP, by getting the whole industry to switch to the far more secure WPA2.

WPA2 encrypts traffic passed over the Wi-Fi wireless local area network to prevent anyone without the network passphrase or an enterprise login from being able to decipher the flow of data. On an enterprise network, even devices on the same Wi-Fi network can't see each other's data. It's supposed to work that way on passphrase-only Wi-Fi networks too, like what you have in your home, but flaws in the protocol allow someone with the network's shared password and a simple cracking tool to access data from other network users.

While the WPA2 standard was largely designed well, it hasn't changed in 15 years, which is a long time in the security world. Last year, a security researcher discovered a major flaw that he dubbed KRACK. It could allow someone in proximity to a Wi-Fi network to recover certain kinds of otherwise protected data. Major vendors, including Apple, released patches for Wi-Fi adapters and routers, but older hardware that is unpatched or unpatchable remains vulnerable,

and the repairs were more bandages than curative surgery.

The new WPA3 fixes the fundamental flaw related to KRACK by replacing the four-way handshake between a Wi-Fi device and a base station that turned out to be vulnerable. Precise details of WPA3's redesigned method of establishing a secure connection aren't yet available.

The new WPA3 standard also adds the following:

> Even when a user picks a weak passphrase — like pass1234 — WPA3 will process it without user involvement so that the password can't be extracted via brute-force attacks that rely on iterating through short, common, and dictionary-based passwords.

> WPA3 provides better security for devices with limited input methods, like printers, to join a network securely. That was supposed to be the job of WPS (Wi-Fi Protected Setup), but it never reached its potential, and the WPS spec has security flaws.

> Encryption key length in WPA3 rises from 128 bits to 192 bits to meet a level of protection required for U.S. government use.

> Joining a password-free network will now securely set up an encrypted connection.

> All connections will now be protected from other users of the same network, something that's reliably available only with enterprise connections today.

These last two points are a major improvement for public Wi-Fi networks. Unsecured networks are con-

venient because businesses and institutions don't have to provide a Wi-Fi password to everyone who walks in. However, eliminating the need for a password also means that users send their traffic across unprotected connections that can be intercepted by anyone nearby with a Wi-Fi sniffer. With WPA3, Wi-Fi providers won't have to choose between convenience and security.

The Wi-Fi Alliance also said it's upping its game with WPA2, adding more tests of how WPA2 is implemented by companies to provide better consistency and security.

WPA3 will start appearing in hardware in 2018, but WPA2 will remain available for compatible devices for some time to come — almost certainly for several years, given its installed base. Unfortunately, most devices that run WPA2 likely can't be updated to WPA3, possibly apart from some more recent devices that were designed with an idea of what hardware features WPA3 would require.

That means that WPA2 will remain the weakest link in Wi-Fi security until WPA3 is supported by every device you use and all the base stations to which you connect. As we saw with the transition from WEP to WPA2, which involved the interim WPA standard, that can be a long process.

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Board Meeting Minutes

Houston Area Apple Users Group

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors, October 21, 2017

Location: CenterPoint Energy Community Center, 7001 5th Street, Bellaire, TX.

Attendees: Phil Booth, David Jaschke, Marcy Spears, Mike King, Steve Bridgham, and Clair Jaschke. Ryan Eisworth, Mike Epstein

Call to Order: By President Phil Booth at 12:40 p.m. following the conclusion of the October presentation.

Monthly Reports

General Announcements: It was a great meeting with David Hamilton. Phil expressed thanks to Gerald and JUNCO for helping to set up yesterday. There was a good crowd at the meeting. The early notice sent out last Saturday helped.

Secretary: Marcy Spears presented the minutes of the August and September 2017 BOD meetings. Approval of the August minutes were tabled because of Hurricane/Tropical Storm Harvey. Acceptance of the minutes of August and September 2017 BOD meetings was proposed by Phil, and seconded by Clair and Mike Epstein, and were approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Clair Jaschke reported our checking account balance as of the end of September 2017 was $3,326.65. Our savings account balance was $10,004.70, for total cash on hand of $13,331.35. All bills were paid and all funds deposited for August. Phil noted that the rent had been paid for three months, through December 2017.

The 2016 audit is still pending and will be rescheduled.

Membership: David Jaschke said HAAUG ended September with 129 members, down by 4 from August at 133. In September 2016 we had 132 members. We had six renewals in September of which one was by Credit Card and three were from the web site. We also had one two-year renewal.

Programming Report: PPhil Booth and Steve Bridgham began the discussion of main presentations confirmed and/or possible. Steve Bridgham, David Jaschke, Ryan Eisworth, and Phil Booth met on August 8, 2017 to discuss other ideas for upcoming meetings.

(No update) Phil said that he will contact Josh Centers of TidBits regarding his presentation on home automation—for a possible March 2018 presentation. He would see if he could come for the June meeting or schedule it for a later date. Josh is the author of the "A Prairie HomeKit Companion," which focuses on the what, when, why, and how of home automation.

(Update) The programming members may need to find an alternative presentation for November. Phil was not able to get a response from Duncan Wilcox who developed Sparkle (https://sparkleapp.com/docs/index.html), a visual web design tool.

(Update) Ryan Eisworth suggested that we ask Mike Bombich to do a presentation on Carbon Copy Cloner, including discussing the HFS+ to APFS filesystems.

He also suggested that HAAUG get a donated copy/or purchase Carbon Copy Cloner to raffle off for the presentation. If the "Sparkle" presentation does is not possible, this approach may be used for the November meeting.

December's program could include Holiday gift ideas and more presented by a panel. Phil may be out in December and will not be part of panel. Suggestions for the panel include Doug Smith and/or Jeff Davis. This is not confirmed.

Steve Bridgham proposed/discussed programming for 2018 that includes:

> January 2018 SWAP meet

> Using e-mail and related problems may be a good topic for a future meeting.

> Bob Levitus is confirmed to speak in February, 2018.

HAAUG Electronic Communications Systems: Ryan Eisworth reported that the Apple Barrel was published on time. Both the HAAUG Facebook and Meetup sites were up-to-date. The August and September Final Board Meetings were not included in the Apple Barrel because they were not received by the Secretary, Marcy Spears, in time.

New Business:

> Phil sent an e-mail regarding the venue for the January Swap Meet. He will call to make sure that it has been booked.

> Marcy Spears will be out in November. Clair said that she would take notes at the Board Meeting for the minutes.

> A suggestion was made to combine the audits of 2016 and 2017.

> Clair said she would draw up the budget for the December meeting so that it could be approved.

> Because of cost and versioning there is an issue with continued use of FileMaker Pro for the HAAUG database. Ryan and David will take a look at the problem and workout a solution.

Adjournment: Phil Booth adjourned the meeting at 1:05 p.m. and it was seconded by David Jaschke and Mike King

Membership Benefits

Monthly Meetings
This is where the excitement begins. On the third Saturday of each month, members of HAAUG meet for a day filled with activities, including presentations by major software and hardware vendors, special interest group (SIG) meetings, raffles, and much, much more. Swap Meets are held twice each year, in January and July.

Social Media & Internet Presence
The HAAUG web site at http://www.haaug.org is the place to go for up-to-date information on what we are doing. In addition, there is a HAAUG group on Facebook, where people can go to interact with fellow HAAUG members on topics of interest related to Apple and its products.

Club Magazine
Club and industry news, meeting information and special member offers are published in our monthly newsletter – The Apple Barrel, which is available to members on the HAAUG website in Adobe PDF format.

Mentor Program
The HAAUG Mentor Program puts people with hardware, software, system or network problems in contact with volunteers who can provide solutions. Contact with the mentors can be made through the HAAUG Hotline, e-mail, or at the monthly meetings.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
People with common interests, including Macintosh and OS X basics, iOS, Internet, games, educational computing, databases, publishing, graphics, desktop video, programming and more gather for in-depth discussion, product demonstrations, tutorials and general knowledge sharing.

HAAUG Hotline
Call the HAAUG Hotline at 832-305-5999 for the latest meeting information and to leave voice mail for officers.

Lots of Fun & Friendships
HAAUG is a not-for-profit volunteer group founded in 1978, three years before there was an IBM PC. Approximately 200 members enjoy the benefits of HAAUG. We range from beginners to experts, but we all know the secret to making our computers more valuable: a HAAUG membership!

Learn more about the benefits of HAAUG membership at www.haaug.org.

Join by Mail
Please print out and complete the following form. Send a check or money order payable to HAAUG and mail it to the address shown below. Dues for regular members are $35 per year. Student memberships are available for full-time students at a high school, community college or university for the rate of $10 per year.

Your membership card will be mailed to you. You may pick up your starter kit at the next HAAUG meeting.

First: _____   Last: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Home Phone: _____   Work Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

Type of Computer: _____

Membership:
____ New Membership ($35.00)   ____ Renewal ($35.00)
____ Two-Year Renewal ($70.00)   ____ Student ($10.00)
                                                          Requires Student ID

Check # _____   Member # (if renewing): _____

How did you hear about HAAUG?

_____

_____

_____

Do you know someone who would be willing to join HAAUG?   Y | N

Would you be willing to volunteer in HAAUG?

_____

_____

_____

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HOUSTON AREA APPLE USERS GROUP