

Zoom security

Lancaster Area Woodturners has decided to use free Zoom software to have virtual meetings. There are other useful programs out there and we truly don't know which software is best. Our own limited research suggests each has benefits and problems of one sort or another. We chose Zoom for several reasons:

- **Free, easy to learn** and use, and lots of people have it and like it, including our grandchildren at school and many faith communities.
- **Gets along well** with Mac and PC browsers and calendars, works on iPads and smartphones, and we had one member log in from a Kindle. It's even possible to join by voice telephone, for those with limited or no Internet.
- **Works for our meetings.** 80% of our members, many of them computer-dumb elderly gents, have successfully downloaded the software, joined our morning coffee hour, and attended a virtual club meeting. We can show-and-tell our work, video-tour our workshops and collections, and share demos by our own club members.

Several criticisms of Zoom are floating around the Internet.

- Steals your info. All you give them is your email address and a password that you make up. Or you can sign in with your Google account, or with Facebook, and yes, it probably shares info with them, as does most other commercial website you've ever visited. That's the Internet.
- Security. It's not secure when companies share spreadsheets and sensitive business information in a meeting they record to the Cloud. But Lancaster Woodturners doesn't record Zoom meetings, nor do we possess any sensitive business info. That security question really isn't about us.
- Attention tracking. A business "feature." For us, turned OFF by default, though we hope our virtual club meetings are at least as interesting as, say, network TV.
- Malware, Zoom-bombing, hackers. In large open meetings a troll may crash and take over everyone's screen. But is unlikely to happen to us. The Host controls who enters the meeting. The Host can controls sharing for everyone, can shut off anyone's mic and video, and can boot any troublemaker off the meeting.

Indeed, every one of us will have to make up their own mind about this. Several of our club members have been using Zoom socially and in business for almost two years, with no problems. It's fun, its free, and it's a way we can get together face-to-face during this strange time.