



We would be irresponsible if we began this week's FANS Weekly Summary with the normal levity that we're so used to bringing you. The people of Ukraine are enduring the worst of the worst inflicted upon them by a monster, a world menace, ... a person who even gives pond scum a bad rap. Tonight, here at Artemus Central, we continue to pray for those who are stuck in their homeland...



just trying to survive. All over the US, prayers for the Ukrainians' safekeeping are heard. In many congregations, sermons and prayers and choral music addressed the crisis in individual ways. "When people were sharing their prayer

IN MEMORIAM: PETER EARNEST

source: the Washington Post



He worked on covert ops during the Cold War before serving as the International Spy Museum's founding executive director. On February 13, we lost an amazing friend and superb human being. Peter Earnest, a veteran of the CIA's Cold War clandestine operations who ran agents in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, then helped

promote and preserve the history of espionage while serving as the founding executive director of the International Spy Museum in Washington, died Feb. 13 at a hospital in Arlington, Va. He was 88. Peter once acknowledged that his personality sometimes made it difficult to spend years working undercover. "It's hard when you're an open person by nature," he told Washingtonian magazine in 2013. "In some cases, people say, 'You don't seem like a spy.'

"The best spies don't seem like spies."



Mr. Earnest, right, guffs around with actor Richard Kiel, who played the James Bond villain Jaws in "The Spy Who Loved Me" and "Moonraker." (Courtesy of the International Spy Museum)

Peter worked at the CIA for 36 years, serving for more than two decades as a case officer in the clandestine service. He ran and recruited agents, conducted covert operations and in the late 1970s helped safeguard Arkady N. Shevchenko, a top United Nations official who became the highest-ranking Soviet diplomat to defect to the United States. May he rest in peace. We already miss him.

YOUR ANCIENT TABLET IS A LOT MORE USEFUL THAN YOU THINK

Got an old tablet or two taking up space? Turn it into a kitchen computer, a second screen, or an in-car entertainment system.

If I allow myself a moment of harsh but truthful introspection, it turns out that I have too many tablets. Android tablets. iPads. Chromebook tablets. Amazon tablets. Tablets everywhere. And many of them are just old enough that it doesn't make sense to use them for anything more than very limited tasks. Oh, and also: I keep buying tablets! But I generally just use the newest one while all the others stack up higher and higher in a pile of uncharged, unused silicon and glass. So, what to do with all of these old tablets? Here are some of the low-cost ways I've been putting them to work:



KITCHEN COMPANION

This is one of my favorites, and I'd suggest you save it for one of your least-old tablets since you'll use it a lot more than you think.

My first go-around, I plunked down \$15 on this adhesive wall mount and hung an old iPad 3 smack-dab in the middle of the kitchen (there's video of the adventure here).

The initial idea was to use the tablet as a full-time music controller, but it turned into so much more. We used it to stream TV, do full-kitchen FaceTime calls, sync calendars, play games, and a whole bunch of other stuff.

That was back in 2017. Now that I'm a little older, a little grayer, and a little wiser, I'm a big fan of the fridge mount and using the tablet as an always-on digital calendar. We use the Google Calendar app to sync everyone's schedules and set the screen to

never time out.

One of the biggest drawbacks of the adhesive wall mount was that I had to pick my pony when it came to orienting the tablet. I had it in landscape mode and there was no switching to portrait mode since the mount was semipermanent.

For our current setup, I slapped an almost obnoxiously strong adhesive magnet to the back of the tablet instead and then stuck the tablet to the fridge. This option allows me to leave it primarily in portrait mode so everyone can see the never-ending list of calendar entries but then simply turn it into portrait mode for video calls or TV or whatever.

PORTABLE MONITOR

Another favorite around the Aamoth household: using old

tablets as secondary monitors. Setup consists of installing an app on the tablet and a companion app on the computer you want to connect to the tablet, and that's about it.

I've tried plenty of these tablet-as-monitor apps and many of them establish a connection between the tablet and the computer via Wi-Fi. This works okay, but not great.

The most seamless option I've used is Duet: While offering a wireless connection option, it steers you toward using a cable to connect the tablet to the computer. It's a much more reliable solution that feels far less laggy than wireless connections.

The app costs \$15 and is available to mix and match between Apple, Android, and Windows platforms.

THE BEST SPY TOYS FOR KIDS IN 2022

contributed by FAN, Steve Jones

Any kid that's obsessed with spies is in luck: There are loads of spy toy sets out there. A passion for secret agents likely means kids are starting to become curious and interested in exploration and technology. There's a range of toy sets available that help develop such skills while keeping it fun and imaginative for the young ones. Here are a few...

Best spy toys for curious children

KidzLabs Spy Science Secret Message Kit

4M Spy Science Secret Message Kit

This fun and comprehensive toy kit from 4M can give your kids everything they'd need to start sending secret messages. Kids can practice their spy skills with the many items included like the invisible message writer, the Morse code torch and the components needed to make the 20-page spy journal.

Kids can uncover secret messages with the developer, stick code and message capsules, and the cipher wheel and secret codes library will help them learn all they need. Also included in the box is a super spy ID card for kids to show off! An interactive and educational way for your kid to explore their new passion.



Buy now from eBay (\$14.39), Amazon (\$16.99).

Long Range LCD Screen Walkie Talkies



No spy kit is complete without a communication device. Walkie talkies are a great way to get involved with your kids' adventures: Stay on the line as they uncover secrets or take it to the next level and role play as the spy HQ.

These walkie talkies from Toy Zee are designed to be child-friendly, with a simple, straightforward design and a lightweight build that can easily fit a child's hand. Suitable for ages 4+, the walkie talkies also have a VOX feature to allow them to talk hands-free. The devices have nine main channels and one-to-one communication to minimise others listening in on the same channel.

Thames and Kosmos Master Detective Toolkit

BrightMinds' range of children's toys are designed to make learning more fun and accessible, and this kit from Thames & Kosmos can help your child become more familiar with science and lab work. The detective toolkit includes equipment and documents to learn more about securing a crime scene and analysing and documenting evidence, including fingerprints, footprints and tire tracks.



Buy now from Amazon (\$49.95), eBay (\$71.48).

THE IRS WILL USE LOGIN.GOV IN THE FUTURE, BUT FOR THIS TAX SEASON, VIDEO INTERVIEWS ARE HERE TO STAY

contributed by FAN Steve Page

Plans to gather biometric data have been abandoned, but verification will still be done by the controversial contractor ID.me



Two weeks after dropping a controversial facial recognition plan, the IRS has given new details about how it plans to replace the system. In a statement, the agency confirmed that all users of the IRS.gov website will be able to opt out of biometric data collection, offering video interviews as an alternative for this year's filers and promising a shift to the government-run authentication system Login.gov service in the future.

“[A] new option in the agency’s authentication system is now available for taxpayers to sign up for IRS online accounts without the use of any biometric data, including facial recognition,” the statement said. “This is consistent with the IRS’s commitment earlier this month to

transition away from the requirement for taxpayers creating an IRS online account to provide a selfie to a third-party service to help authenticate their identity.”

The implementation of the opt-out feature follows weeks of intense criticism from both legislators and the general public alike, spurred by the IRS’s January announcement that facial recognition scans would be a pre-requisite for accessing tax information through the IRS.gov website.

In the face of the backlash, the tax agency abandoned its initial plans to use facial recognition services provided by identity verification company ID.me, an apparent victory for facial recognition critics.

Per the latest announcement, in the future, the IRS will be transitioning to the use of Login.gov for the creation of online taxpayer accounts. Developed by the government, Login.gov is a secure sign-in service for accessing government services, although it does not perform the same kind of identity verification techniques employed by ID.me.

But with tax filing deadlines approaching, the Login.gov system cannot be rolled out fast enough or securely enough to authenticate taxpayers submitting returns ahead of the 2022 filing date.

In the meantime, the IRS said, it will employ a “short-term solution” whereby taxpayers who do not wish to submit to biometric data collection can verify their identity through a live virtual interview.

THE COOLEST URBAN DESIGN IDEAS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD...PART DEUX

THESE BICYCLE RACKS HAVE SMALL ROOFS TO PROTECT THE BIKE SEATS FROM RAIN.

Since it rains all year round in Denmark, people need to always be prepared. In fact, this place in Copenhagen came up with a great way to keep everyone's bike seats from getting wet. They added small covers to their bicycle racks in order to keep the saddles dry.



THESE PUBLIC PUNCHING BAGS INSTALLED IN NEW YORK CITY.

Created by design studio donttakehithewrongway, these bright yellow public punching bags were installed in Manhattan back in 2019. As part of the New York City Design Week 2019, the inspiration for this art installation was the frustrations that we all face. The designers wanted to offer an outlet for these personal issues in a public setting.



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