TC/PC Exists to
Facilitate and Encourage
the Cooperative Exchange of
PC Knowledge and
Information Across
All Levels of Experience

September 2015

General Meeting
Tuesday, September 8, 2015
7:00 PM

SharePoint
Presenter: Don Donais

Summit Place
8505 Flying Cloud Drive
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

SharePoint is part of the Microsoft Office Server Suite and was mainly used in mid-sized to large-sized organizations to set up and manage an Intranet and related functions. With the advent of Office365 which includes SharePoint, its use has become popular in smaller organizations. Our presenter, Don Donais, is an active member of the Twin Cities SharePoint Users Group. He will be introducing us to SharePoint, what it is, how it is used, and how we might make use of it. This should be an interesting and enlightening presentation. Don't miss it! 💻

September Tech Topics SIG 6:00PM with Jack Ungerleider
The Tech Topics SIG for September 2015 will feature a grab bag of topics from about the Internet and mobile devices. Including Comcast's speed boost, the no contract smartphone, and why ad blockers can be the first line of defense in the fight against malware. 💻

TC/PC is a Member of APCUG

24-Hour Information • www.tcpc.com
Application form inside back cover

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The Digital Viking

The Digital Viking is the *official monthly publication of the Twin Cities PC User Group, an all-volunteer organization dedicated to users of IBM-compatible computers. Subscriptions are included in membership. We welcome articles and reviews from members.* The Digital Viking is a *copyrighted publication and reproduction of any material is expressly prohibited without permission. Exception: other User Groups may use material if unaltered and credited.*

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Contact Sharon Walbran at:: SQWalbran@yahoo.com

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Gary Grau	oxygary2389@yahoo.com	
Ross Held	RHeld3745@aol.com	
David Van Dongen	davidvandongen@yahoo.com	

Newsletter Staff

Editor Sharon Walbran

Contributors:

Jeannine Sloan

Last Month's Meeting:
Go Forth and B Groovy
By Sharon Walbran, TC/PC Users Group, sqwalbran(at)yahoo.com

Jack Ungerleider gave us a tour of the various programming languages, the time frame in which they were or are still being used, and details about each language. He explained how one language might produce a series of variations based on the "parent" language and the changes and additions that made each unique. At Jack's Saturday SIG the first Saturday of the month he will continue to explore and teach Python and other programming languages. It's a popular SIG so get there early! Thanks for a great talk, Jack, ⌨

TC/PC Becomes Non-Profit

    A huge thanks to the hard work of Curt Trout, TC/PC is now officially a non-profit, a 501(c)3 organization. As we learn more details we will keep you informed.⌨

Upcoming Meetings:
Tuesday, December 8th—Introduction to Windows 10 at the Microsoft Store at the Mall of America.. ⌨

New Security Exploits May Threaten 950 Million Android Devices
by Ira Wilsker, iwilsker (at) sbcglobal.net

WEBSITES:
http://www.forbes.com/sites/thomasbrewster/2015/07/27/android-text-attacks/

http://bgr.com/2015/08/07/stagefright-android-vulnerability-check-app-fix/

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stagefright_%28bug%29

http://bgr.com/2015/07/27/android-security-flaw-mms-hack/

http://www.engadget.com/2015/08/07/stagefright-patch-detector/

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.zimperium.stagefrightdetector

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-3189613/Millions-Android-phones-risk-software-installed-handset-makers-Certifi-gate-flaw-let-hackers-listen-conversations-steal-data.html

http://blog.checkpoint.com/2015/08/06/certifigate/

http://www.engadget.com/2015/08/06/android-certificate/

http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/certifi-gate-massive-android-vulnerability-affects-hundreds-millions-smartphones-tablets-1514398

https://uk.news.yahoo.com/certifi-gate-massive-android-vulnerability-173000973.html

http://www.net-security.org/secworld.php?id=18730

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.checkpoint.capsulescanner

http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/news/certifigate-huge-android-vulnerability-lets-hackers-take-over-samsung-and-htc-phones-10445228.html

http://www.extremetech.com/extreme/157207-black-hat-hackers-break-into-any-iphone-in-under-a-minute-using-a-malicious-charger

http://www.computerworld.com/article/2473645/mobile-security/mobile-security-black-hat-it-only-takes-a-minute-to-hack-an-iphone.html

    In recent weeks at least two potentially frightening new exploits have been discovered that could threaten an estimated 95% of the one billion devices running the Android operating system. The good news is that as of this writing, there have been no documented attacks on Android devices that take advantage of these two security vulnerabilities. The bad news is that now that information on these security vulnerabilities has been widely published as well as presented at the recent Black Hat hackers' and security convention in Las Vegas, it may only be a matter of time until some bad guys start to take advantage of these security vulnerabilities. Google, the progenitor of Android, was promptly made aware of the vulnerabilities as soon as they were uncovered, and has produced patches and fixes for many of the Android devices that have these vulnerabilities. The problems is that with the exception of a few models of Nexus smart phones supported directly by Google, it is up to the phone manufacturers or the cell phone carriers to release the upgrades and patches to close these vulnerabilities. At present, none of the major third party security software publishers provide any protection from these exploits, leaving many of us vulnerable to these exploits.

    One of these newly discovered Android vulnerabilities was given the moniker "Stagefright" by its finder, Joshua Drake, vice president of platform research and exploitation at Zimperium. Drake first reported on the Stagefright vulnerability in April, disclosing his findings to Google, which quickly developed and provided security patches to its Android partners. Most of these Google partners who have not yet provided the patches to their respective customers may not do so for months, if they provide them at all; many phone manufacturers and carriers have explicitly stopped supporting and patching older Android phones, which are still in use by the millions. In several media interviews, as well as his Black Hat presentation, Drake explained that, "All devices should be assumed to be vulnerable." As stated in a recent (July 27) Forbes magazine interview, Drake said that he believes that as many as 950 million of the one billion Android phones currently in use may be vulnerable to the Stagefright vulnerability. Drake went on to say that only older Android phones running versions of Android below version 2.2 will not be potentially affected by this bug.

    It is important for Android users to understand that Stagefright is not a virus or other form of malware that could infect a phone, but is instead a bug, or unexpected and unforeseen security vulnerability in the Android software itself. This vulnerability is in the heart of the Android software that processes, plays, and records multimedia files.

    According to Drake, the security vulnerability may allow a hacker to illicitly access by simply sending an MMS message (text message) or multimedia file to the targeted device. What is especially nefarious about the Stagefright vulnerability is that it can be taken advantage of by a hacker without any action by the user; the victim does not have to open or click on anything in order for the hacker to access his device. It is also theoretically possible for a hacker to capitalize on this vulnerability when an unsuspecting victim opens a purloined video file on a website. Once a hacker has taken advantage of this security gap in Android, he can access the victim's camera, microphone, and any data or images in the device's external storage. On some devices the hacker can also gain root access to the inner workings of the device.

    In order to easily determine if a particular Android device is vulnerable to the Stagefright vulnerability, Zimperium has released a free "Stagefright Detector App", which is available from the Google Play Store (play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.zimperium.stagefrightdetector). A similar detector utility was just released by the security software company Lookout, which it simply calls "Stagefright Detector". While these

utilities will detect the vulnerability, it will still require a patch or other fix from the phone maker or the cell phone carrier which is supporting and updating the device. In full disclosure, when I first read of this Stagefright vulnerability and the availability of the detector, I downloaded and installed the detector. My year old Huawei Ascend Mate 2 phone, which had previously been upgraded by Huawei to Android Lollipop 5.1 (from 4.4), had the Stagefright vulnerability; coincidently, just yesterday (the day before typing this column), I received a patch from Huawei which among other benefits, closed the Stagefright vulnerability on my phone. I reran the Stagefright detector from Zimperium to confirm the fix, and the vulnerability on my phone has definitely been patched by the recent update.

Another Android security vulnerability was disclosed at the recent Black Hat security convention. A well known security company, Check Mate, disclosed this newly recognized bug, which it named "Certifi-Gate", which may potentially allow a hacker to take control of a victim's phone by utilizing the "Remote Support Tools (RSTs)" software that was installed on the phones by the manufacturers, often at the behest of the cell phone carriers selling those particular phones. Check mate promptly notified the device makers and cell phone companies of the vulnerability.

According to Check Mate, there are millions of phones and tablets made by Samsung, ZTE, HTC, LG, other manufacturers which have incorporated this vulnerable "remote support" function software on their phones; according to Google, Nexus phones do not have this particular vulnerability. Using a security method known as digital certificates, which allows specifically authorized apps to have special access to the phone or tablet, only those authorized personnel could access these support apps in order to be able to provide the remote support capabilities. The problem now is that hackers can spoof or counterfeit these supposedly secure digital certificates, allowing them the same access to the internals and functions of the phone that had previously only been allowed to legitimate support personnel. Once the hacker has tricked the phone or tablet into accepting his spurious digital security certificates, he now has direct access to personal information stored on the phone, contacts, calendars, emails, text messages, and can turn on the microphone to remotely record conversations, track the location of the device and its user, and otherwise threaten the security and privacy of the victim.

While the device manufacturers and cell phone carriers were promptly notified of the vulnerability, it may be months, if ever, before they push the patches to this newly discovered vulnerability. Users can download a free utility which will show the user if his device is vulnerable to this remote support vulnerability. Written by Check Mate, the utility "Certifi-Gate Scanner" can be downloaded directly from the Google play store at play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.checkpoint.capsulescanner.

According to Check Mate, in order for hackers to take advantage of this vulnerability, the user must first download and install an application which contains the code which gives the hacker the access that he wants. The Google Play Store continuously monitors the apps which it makes available, checking them to make sure that they do not contain any malware. Check Mate advises, "We strongly encourage users to install applications from a trusted source, such as Google Play".

With the continual battles among users who seem to love arguing iOS and iPhones versus Android devices, iPhone users should not gloat over these Android vulnerabilities. At the Black Hat convention in 2013, which is where many hackers and crackers rub shoulders with security experts, the vulnerabilities of iOS devices, specifically iPhones, was discussed. In one of the presentations, despite the false but widely held belief that iPhones are immune to attack and are very secure by nature, researchers from the Georgia Institute of Technology were able to inject persistent, undetectable malware into iPhones, iPads, and other iOS devices using the latest generation of the iOS operating system. Using a modified USB charger, nicknamed "Mactans", after a type of Black Widow spider, the researchers were able to compromise any current generation Apple device in under a minute. These researchers first found this iOS vulnerability in 2013, and notified Apple of its existence, but there is some question that Apple still may have not yet fully patched this security vulnerability.

Check your smart phone for these vulnerabilities, and do not download apps from any source other than reputable sources such as the Google Play Store or the Amazon App Store. Do not open any text messages from people that you do not recognize, although text messages can be spoofed just as emails are frequently spoofed. If you find that your device maker or phone carrier is providing a patch, update, or upgrade, strongly consider taking advantage of the offer and update your device immediately. ⌨ <u>Go to Page 1</u>
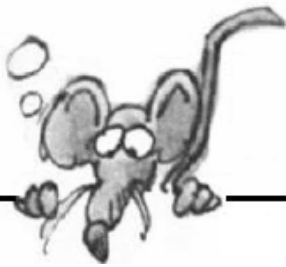
NIBBLERS

By Jeannine Sloan

Open Web Application Security Project

The Open Web Application Security Project (OWASP) is a 501c3 not-for-profit worldwide charitable organization focused on improving the security of application software. Our mission is to make application security visible, so that people and organizations can make informed decisions about true application security risks. Everyone is free to participate in OWASP and all of our materials are available under a free and open software license. http:// owasp.blogspot.com/

Stolen Consumer Data Is a Smaller Problem Than It Seems

Data breaches are an example of a threat that looks worse than it turns out to be. The sheer size of hackings shocks and startles when the attacks are first reported, but it's rare that journalists check on the actual consequences. "The bad guys are getting good," said David Robertson, the publisher of The Nilson Report, a data provider for the card industry, "and the good guys are getting even better."
http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/02/business/stolen-consumer-data-is-a-smaller-problem-than -itseems.
html?emc=edit_th_20150802&nl=todaysheadlines&nlid=67799023&_r=0&abt=0002&abg=1

Windows 10 ISO Now Available For Download

Microsoft has made available **Windows 10 ISO** as well as **Media Creation Tool** for download. It is available to public as well as MSDN subscribers. It has been made available to create your own installation media using either a USB flash drive or a DVD. This means that one can straight away go to the link and can upgrade their PC or create installation media for other PC. http://news.thewindowsclub.com/windows-10-iso-download-79481/

Foiling Malicious Links And Files

Every day, malicious websites and attachments try to trick you into downloading their dangerous payload. Fortunately, there are websites and tools to help you determine what's safe and what might be a trap designed to steal personal information and money. http:// windowssecrets.com/top-story/tools-for-foilingmalicious- links-and-files/ One of the sites recommended is: VirusTotal is a free service that **analyzes suspicious files and URLs** and facilitates the quick detection of viruses, worms, trojans, and all kinds of malware. Bookmark it. https://www.virustotal.com/

Tidbits from Jim:

- Google search will now tell you when a restaurant is busy.
- Photo App is replacing Google+. When you start the App it will store your pictures from

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Google +. Photo storage is free if the camera is shooting 16 megapixels or less. Choose high quality when asked. .
- Sonata cars will now be equipped with Google Apps .
- Google now and Google maps- has an item on its menu called "time line". This tracks where you have traveled and pictures you took when you traveled on any given day. It is only visible to your account. -
- Amazon You can order buttons for certain household items. Keep the item button close to the item in your house (such as toilet paper). When it runs low you just press the button and the order will be placed with amazon.
- - Microsoft is getting friendlier with Apple- If you have Windows 365 or Outlook on your iphone there is an App called send. It allows you to chat with business associates and class rooms without using a phone number. At this time it is available for schools or businesses only. It will be coming to Android and Window devices soon.

Contributed by Jim Matson

Why Are URLs Full of So Many Garbage Characters?

It helps to start with the basic structure of an URL. http:// is what's called the "protocol," which tells your computer how to interact with the server of the site you want to visit. www.somewhere.com — this part indicates the name of the server you want to interact with. Back in the early days of the internet, these basic URL components were enough. For an explanation of the stuff after that go here:
http://gizmodo.com/why-are-urls-full-of-garbage-characters-1719538363

Lithium Ion Batteries

Keep batteries safe and healthy and able to function as it should for potentially years to come with these tips. https://blu178.mail.live.com/?tid=cm1sgquLxB5RG-4NidZ1_ynA2&fid=flinbox
Tip 1: Keep your lithium batteries cool Tip 2: Unplug the charger to save the battery
Tip 3: Don't deep-discharge your battery Tip 4: Slow and steady charge/discharge is best
Tip 5: Whenever possible, carry a spare battery Editor's tip: Read The Article, it is worth it.

Meet the new Mail and Calendar

With the new built-in Mail and Calendar apps, you can better manage your inbox and keep your day more organized. Microsoft Word capability is built into the Mail app, so you can insert tables, add photos, and format text in familiar ways. And the new navigation bar lets you move easily between your email and calendar.
http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-10/getstarted-set-upemail?
OCID=Onboarding_r_Win10_5_Mod6_newEmail

Ad Blockers and the Nuisance at the Heart of the Modern Web

"Some … say ad blocking violates the implicit contract that girds the Internet — the idea that in return for free content, we all tolerate … ads." The reporter concludes: "That suggests another practical utility of ad blocking — it appears to be an effective form of protest. For better ads tomorrow, block ads today." Editor's note: Interesting article from NYTs examines the pros and cons of ad blocking software. http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/20/technology/personaltech/ad-

blockers-and-the-nuisance-at-theheart- of-the-modern-web.html?
emc=edit_th_20150820&nl=todaysheadlines&nlid=67799023

Router Placement

"We discovered that when you put a router on the floor," Wuellner says, "versus on the shelf, the one on the shelf performs twice as well as the one on the floor." Wuellner's team also discovered that making it a tall cylinder made users less likely to stack things on top of it, which also destroys signal. Gleaned from an article in the Wired newsfeed. The article is advertising Google's OnHub router.
http://www.wired.com/2015/08/google-onhub-wi-fi-router/

Keyboard Shortcut

This is a shortcut to remember. Use "Windows-Pause" to open the System control panel applet for "Security>System and security>System" quickly.

Windows 10 Interactive Demo Site

https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/emulator?OCID=ANNOUNCEMENTS_SOC_TW_ORGANIC_Win10Emulator

Device Security

Whatever brand of tablet or cell phone you use it's always good to install and regularly use an anti-malware app. TechRepublic recommends Malwarebytes. Always run a scan after installing an app (no matter from where the app was installed).
From TechRepublic

Customize File Explorer In Windows 10

Quick Access, Ribbon interface, File menu, Picture tools, Searching are features that have changed in the Windows10 OS. This article outlines how to use and/or customize them. Read more:
http://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/how-tocustomize- file-explorer-in-windows-10/#ixzz3jGoZyFiE

Technology marches on, over you or through you, take your pick.

How To Restore Your Windows Computer To Its Factory Settings

With this guide, you'll be able to restore your Windows PC to the settings that it had when you first bought it. We cover every version of Windows since Vista. Read more: http://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/how-to-restore-your-windows-computer-to-its-factorysettings/# ixzz3k1nP2IDy

Top 10 Hidden Windows 10 Features

Many of Windows 10's key features have been talked about at length, but the operating system actually comes with a lot of great features that aren't as immediately obvious to everyday users and even enthusiasts. http://www.techspot.com/article/1045-top-10-hidden-windows-10/

Remote BLOB Storage (RBS)

A **Binary Large OBject** (**BLOB**) is a collection of binary data stored as a single entity in a database management system. Blobs are typically images, audio or other multimedia objects, though sometimes binary executable code is stored as a blob. From Wikipedia

Tech Support Built Into Windows 10

Tap on the Windows-key, type support and select the Contact Support result from the list that is displayed to you. Alternatively, tap on the Windows-key, select All Apps from the start menu and start Contact Support from there. The screens that open are a cascading series of multiple choice questions to get you to the proper place, which could be an online chat with a human.
http://tinyurl.com/ojqbolk

Stingrays

Stingrays - devices that spoof cell phone towers and trick phones into connecting with them, only to track and locate those phones - have been used to intercept calls and text messages. StingRay is the brand name of an International Mobile Subscriber Identity locator, also known as an IMSI catcher, that's targeted and sold to law enforcement. The article discloses some of the ethical issues currently being resolved.
http://tinyurl.com/ncwb7m6

I Am A Seenager (Senior teenager)

I have everything that I wanted as a teenager, only 50 years later. I don't have to go to school or work. I get an allowance (pensions). I have my own pad. I don't have a curfew. I have a driver's license and my own car. I have ID that gets me into bars and the beer store. The people I hang around with are not scared of getting pregnant. And I don't have acne. Life is great

Recover Deleted Files
Check the Recycle Bin

Recycle Bin

Windows stores "deleted" files here as a safety measure. You'll find the icon in the upper-left corner of your screen. if you find the files there, select them, right-click them, and choose *Restore.*

Collaborate Offline Or Online

Quip is a collaboration tool. With Quip, everyone can edit the same version of a document at the same time — from any device.
All the features in Quip work perfectly offline on your phone or tablet. Whether you're on an airplane or in a no-service zone, you can create new documents or edit existing ones, and even send messages. Whenever you have internet connection again, your changes will sync automatically.
https://quip.com/about/tour

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Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Most SIGs will meet at Edina Executive Plaza, Conference Room #102, 5200 Willson Road, Edina, MN
 Confirm with a SIG group if they meet elsewhere.
For more info contact the SIG Leader(s) listed here.

Get SIG announcements!
Link from www.tcpc.com

Board of Directors*
All members are welcome! Check
www.tcpc.com for location.
Selected Saturday mornings

Linux on Saturday
This is for the Linux newbie and those trying
to come over from Microsoft to a different
operating system.
First Saturday @ 9 AM-Noon
Note: No Meetings June-August

Jack Ungerleider   612/418-3494 c
                jack@jacku.com

Tech Topics
**Technical presentation/discussion on
various technical topics from the following
areas:**
- **Web/Internet**
- **Mobile Devices and Apps**
- **Playing with Programming**
- **DIY (3D Printing, R-Pi, other hobby
electronics, etc.)**

Second Tuesday @ 6:00-7:00 PM
Every month
Right before the general meeting.

Jack Ungerleider   612/418-3494 c
                jack@jacku.com

Microsoft Access
All levels. Presentations by expert develop-
ers within the group and by MS reps.
Third Saturday 9:00 AM—Noon
Note: No Meetings June-August

Steve Kuhlmey   952/934-8492
                steve@kuhlmeysystems.com

Microsoft Office
Addresses the use, integration, and nuanc-
es of the Microsoft Office applications.
Combined with Systems on Saturday
Third Saturday of the Month
9:00 AM—Noon
Note: No Meetings June-August

Steve Kuhlmey   952/934-8492
                steve@kuhlmeysystems.com

Microsoft Word for PC & Mac
Any level user can be proficient and efficient
in basics and advanced features of Word..
Combined with Systems on
Third Saturday 9:00 AM—Noon
Note: No Meetings June-August

Tom Ostertag   612/951-5520 w
                651/488-9979 h
Curt Trout   651/484-4569 h
                ctrout@troutreach.com

Systems on Saturday
For all levels of computer challenges and any
type of computer-related question. Incl. Q&A
Meets 3rd Saturdays 9:00 AM-Noon
Note: No Meetings June-August

Curt Trout   651/484-4569 h
                ctrout@troutreach.com

Directions to **Edina Executive Plaza**
for **Systems on Saturday, Access,
Word and Picture Perfect SIGs**: Take
Highway 100 to the 50th Street/Vernon
exit. [If you have come from the north,
cross back over Highway 100 to the
east side.] Take the first right and go
past Perkins [The golf course will be on
your left.] and continue on the east
frontage road (Willson Road) to the
next building—5200 . There is ample
parking in the building's lot.
Conference Room #102 is on 1st floor.

Directions to **Summit Place** for **General Meetings**:
Proceed to Eden Prairie Center Flying Cloud Drive . [Flying Cloud Drive runs along
the West side of the Eden Prairie Center.] Once you have driven past Eden Prairie
Center (on the left) along Flying Cloud Drive you will come to a stop light at Prairie
Center Drive. The next intersection with a stop light and left turn lane is Fountain
Place. Turn left at Fountain Place and go straight into the parking lot. Turn left again
to the first covered entry way of Summit Place. There is plenty of parking in the
large parking lot in front of the first Summit Place covered entry way. When you
enter the door at the first covered entry way, ask to be directed to the Performance
Room for the TC/PC meeting. For a map of more detailed directions and *info on
Web SIG and Board meeting*, check the TC/PC website.

Help yourself by helping others!
Join the team & share your knowledge with others.

Contact TC/PC at www.tcpc.com

Meetings start at 7:00 PM (9:00 AM on Saturday) unless otherwise noted. *Meets at Edina Executive Plaza.

September

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5 Linux and Open Source on Saturdays 9:00—Noon
6	7	8 Gen Mtg 7:00PM SharePoint 6PM Tech Topics SIG	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19 Windows & MS Office (including Access) 9:00-Noon
20	21	22	23	24	25	26

October

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
27	28	29	30	1	2	3 Linux and Open Source on Saturdays 9:00—Noon
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Gen Mtg 7:00PM TBA 6PM Tech Topics SIG	14	15	16	17 Windows & MS Office (including Access) 9:00-Noon
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Joe Bruno's News and Views-Jul-Aug 2015 Part 1
By Joe Bruno, Westchester PC Users Group

Summer Computer Deals?
Sometimes you can get good deals on computers during the summer, except under certain conditions. Usually, around the end of August, prices do NOT drop as vendors are selling lots of "back to school" laptops. Many college-bound students get new computers and a lot of other students do, also. But when a new OS is coming out, many people will wait to see if they want that new OS or a computer with the old one. And since Windows 8 has been a financial disaster for Microsoft, the next version holds promise for them. So, if you don't need a computer now, I'd say wait until you see what kind of deal you can get on a Windows 10 machine. If money is an object, you could buy a Windows 8 machine and update it to 10...or load Linux Mint on it. Of course, if you just need a laptop to do Web browsing, email, and word processing, I still recommend a Chromebook. They are cheaper, lighter, have faster startup and shutdown times and have better battery life. And are MUCH less likely to get infected. Have you even heard of an infected one?
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What Will You Do When...
Although Windows 10 will be free for Windows 7 & 8 registered users, Microsoft has previously said it will be offering software as a rental. So...when they decide to start charging monthly rental for their OS, what will you do? Pay every month for the OS or switch to Mac or Linux or ChromeOS or Android or some other? If you think you might switch, start looking now. For most people the alternatives will actually be easier. If you're not sure what you'd like to use in the future, might I suggest using software that is available for all three platforms? For
instance, if you use a browser that is available on all three, an office suite for all three, and an email client for all three, that is a good start. That way, if and when you switch, you'll already be quite comfortable in another OS. For instance, I use Firefox on Windows, Mac, Linux, and Android. I use LibreOffice on Windows, Mac, and Linux. I use Thunderbird or webmail on most operating systems. Put me in front of any OS and I can figure out a way to do almost anything I have a desire to. Now THAT's learning about computers in a way that you don't have to carry around a notebook of steps on "how to"!
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Trans Pacific Partnership?
Those who have spoken out about this proposed deal have all been critical. It's a trade deal that appears to have been written to protect certain corporate interests. When there was a full leak of the proposed deal several years ago, the country that released it showed just how screwy it was. It's been changed since then, but how? Finally, the U.S. Congress is getting to read it. But they have to do so in a basement room, alone, and can't take notes or have an aide read along...it's that secret. If the citizens of a democracy can't read a proposed law or treaty, and if their representatives, Congress, who will have to vote on it, cannot review it with their staff, or read it with other Congressmen, it is probably very bad for the country...if for no other reason than its extreme secrecy. It's a very bad precedent, the opposite of Open Government. You won't be able to write your Congressmen about certain features you'd like changed because you won't know what any of the features are until after he/she votes. Fortunately, at least
some in Congress are realizing there is something quite odd about this. *Update:* Congress is voting on whether to allow "Fast Tracking" the TPP, meaning that when it comes to Congress, they won't be able to use their minds and abilities to modify the proposed treaty in any way, merely vote Yeah or Nay. And all that without the American public being able to read the fine print. It's WAY past time for a reasoned discussion on such a far-reaching agreement!
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World Beyond Windows
A lot of press is focused on Microsoft's operating system. If you'd like to become more well-rounded, you might want to try the "World Beyond Windows." You can bookmark the site or add it as an RSS feed.
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Invisible Internet Project
The Invisible Internet Project (I2P) really does exist. It's an Open Source project designed to anonymously send messages and file transfers. More about it here. The project is in beta.
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Chromebox?
You don't hear much about Chromebox, the sibling of Chromebooks. But I think you will in the future. "*...The best and worst things about a Chromebox are the same thing: It doesn't run Windows, or Windows apps. If you need to use a Web app that works only with Internet Explorer, or if you need to run a local app that's Windows-only, then a Chromebox just won't work for you. But...life without Windows is a lot simpler and safer...*" Amen! Those who earn a living fixing Windows would have to supplement their incomes. And that isn't factored into the cost of Microsoft
Windows. Would the PC user group continue to exist if everyone had Chromeboxes? Sure, just as we have an Android workshop, there are always tips to share and new things to learn—even if the basic system is quite simple. A growing percentage of us don't simply use one OS...we have mainly Apple users, mainly Linux users, mainly Chromebook users, and, of course, some users like me who use all of those operating systems. Remember, the basics behind Apple, Linux, and ChromeOS are all the same; if you want to do some things quickly, you can even use the same command line instructions on all three. But none requires that anymore, just as Windows doesn't require DOS prompt commands.
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Privacy on the Internet
Now that I've mentioned privacy on the Internet, I'm reminded of people approaching me at club meetings and asking how to be private on the Internet. Of course, they hadn't read about I2P in this column yet. Anyway, depending on your degree of paranoia, or what you are trying to hide, and from whom, I'd recommend different things. My general attitude is that nothing you do will provide you with complete secrecy from the government. I guess I should say that I don't know for sure that there is a way that is guaranteed to be secure. Some methods are more secure than others, and some things once thought secure no longer are. Assuming it's others you wish to hide things from, there are lots of options. Here's a webpage, although old, that is worth looking at for some of the Linux distributions, built with privacy in mind, that you can try. I haven't used any of them, but I have used others, although more for security, speed, compatibility, and ease of use than for privacy.
Robolinux is also supposed to be good for privacy and ease of use although I'd defer to the comments of a club member who uses it.
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Intelligence Personnel Identified?
Here's an interesting tidbit: The résumés of over 27,000 intelligence personnel working in the U.S. have been revealed using ICWatch, using publicly available information from LinkedIn. Why would 27,000 people list this information in a public database? This should ruffle some feathers! Some would say, "If you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to worry about." Although probably not the same people who usually say that!
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Office of Personnel Management Hacked
OPM was hacked again with millions of personal information compromised. What's particularly interesting in this hack is that the data includes people who have applied for or obtained security clearances. Woops. But the personal information of millions of current and former federal employees was also obtained by hackers, just as the OPM's inspector general said it would be, back in November 2014.
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Mac or Linux for the Win
Whenever someone asks, I say that Linux is MUCH more secure than Windows. A new Windows virus will delete the master boot record of a Windows machine if it thinks someone is attempting to analyze the malware. While it's not very difficult to rebuild an MBR, the average user won't know what to do and would end up reinstalling Windows...IF they made the install disks.
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Researchers Create Malware for GPU

Now that I've mentioned how great Linux is against malware, researchers have come up with a proof of concept rootkit for Linux
that runs entirely off the GPU, thus avoiding detection by security programs that inspect what the CPU is doing. Fortunately, it's not in the wild yet...but I'd imagine it's only a matter of time.

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Java: Disallow Ask Toolbar

There are two ways to disallow the Ask toolbar from being installed when you update Java. You can either make sure to uncheck the correct box every time you update **OR** open control panel, search for Java, click on it, open the Java advanced tab, then at the very bottom, check "**Suppress sponsor offers** when installing or updating Java." Click Apply and you're done.

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Patriot Act, Again

For a good bit of history about the Patriot Act, read this. Did you know its real name? *"...Officially called the Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act…"* Wow, that's a mouthful, and giving that such a pet name as patriot, instead of UASAB-PATRTIAOT Act. Uasabpatrtiaot Act kind of rolls off your tongue, doesn't it? My favorite comment about the act was a comment by Jon Stewart, when talking about the New England football team. He said the team was named after the much loved American surveillance act. *Update:* Within a couple of days of the Patriot Act's expiration, the Senate passed the USA Freedom Act, officially called Uniting and Strengthening America by Fulfilling Rights and Ending Eavesdropping, Dragnet-collection and Online Monitoring Act. While it doesn't grant as much freedom to the government to spy on its citizens as the Patriot Act did, it still grants some despite its catchy name, UASAB-FRAEE. And the President signed it into law. No word yet from the New England Patriots as to whether they will change their
name to the New England Free. Or the New England uasabfraee?

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Security, Security, and Security

I've just returned from the May WPCUG main meeting with the nice presentation on security by Anthony Tedesco. It's difficult to do a security presentation that won't put some members to sleep and/or leaving other members flustered. After the comments during the Q&A on security and then the presentation, I couldn't help but think, "Gee, we spend a LOT of time on security...if everybody just used Linux, we'd spend a LOT less time on security and, hopefully, a lot more time on stuff that's more fun!"

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WindowsXP

I was amazed at the number of people still using WindowsXP, knowing how insecure it is. I was glad to hear anyone who wanted to learn about Linux was welcome to go to the club's refurbishing weekly workshops where we rather easily load Linux on a lot of machines (or the club's Linux workshop, which meets every other month). Perhaps we should have a one-time Linux installfest, when **members can bring in their old XP machines and leave with a nice Linux Mint 17.1 XFCE machine**. If interested, let me, or any workshop leader or club officer or director, know and we will schedule such a workshop. (Prior to such a workshop, you should have your data backed up elsewhere.) If your computer is really low on RAM, there are other Linux distributions made for even older machines. Of the old prior-XP machines that I've seen transformed at the club meetings, Mint 17.1 XFCE has worked fine. And for a REALLY, REALLY old computer, try WattOS, or even older, Micro-WattOS.

Chromixium

This might be another good choice for an old XP machine if it has a 1GHz processor and 512 Meg of RAM, AND you like the Chrome browser. Try Chromixium. It's a Linux distribution you can use either as a "Live" DVD or a 1 GB or larger USB stick (so you can see if you like it before you install it) or it can be installed. It has the look and feel of Chrome OS and anybody should be able to figure out how to use it. Or at least anyone who has used a Web browser before. I've only used it in a virtual machine so far (VirtualBox) but like it very much. Then again, I've tried over 200 Linux distributions over the years and have had a new favorite every year or two. I find when I use most modern Linux distributions, I enjoy their ease of maintenance and reliability and security. Have fun! -- [Part 2 will be included in a future issue.] 💻 Go to Page 1

Twin Cities PC USER GROUP

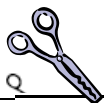## You have just read an issue of The Digital Viking.

Would you like to receive this delivered directly to your email or business each month?

As a member of TC/PC, the Twin Cities Personal Computer Group, one of the benefits
is reading this monthly publication at www.tcpc.com..

As a member of TC/PC, you may attend any or all of the monthly Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings and be eligible for
software drawings. The small membership fee also includes
access to real-live people with answers via our helplines, discounts, and various other perks.

Does membership in this group sound like a good way to increase your computer knowledge?

It's easy to do! Simply fill in the form below and mail it to the address shown.
(If you use the form in this issue, you will receive an extra month for joining now.)

9/15

Here's the info for my TC/PC Membership:

Full name_____

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City_____ State_____ Zip_____

❍Home ❍Business ❍Change address: ❍Perm. ❍Temp. 'til _____

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Where did you hear about TC/PC? _____

❍ I DO NOT want any of my information disclosed.
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I'm signing up for:

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If an existing member your # _____
Make checks payable to:
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341 County Rd C2 W
Roseville, MN 55113

http://www.tcpc.com

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❍ New member ❍ Renewal ❍ Prior member
I'm interested in:
❍ Training classes ❍ Volunteering
❍ Special Interest Groups: New User, Access, etc.
List here:

September 8, 2015
General Meeting 7:00 PM

SharePoint

Presenter: Don Donais

Summit Place
8505 Flying Cloud Drive
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

More info and map:
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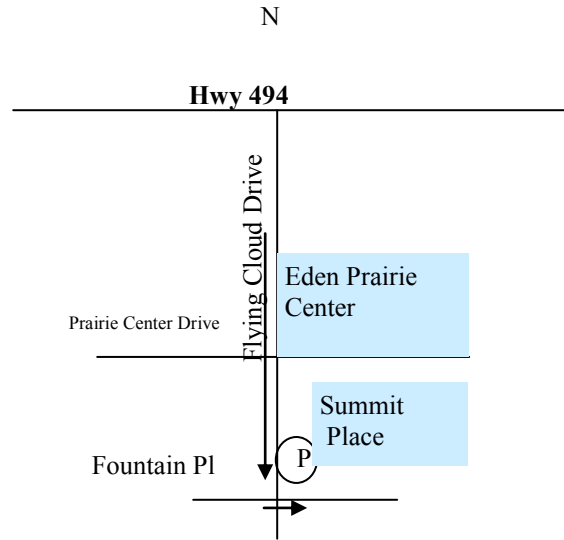
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