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

July 2021

General Meeting
Tuesday, July 13, 2021
7:00 PM

Windows 11:
A Peek into the Future

Via Zoom

Although we were all informed that Windows 10 was the last version of Windows and that there would only be updates after that, Microsoft is announcing the arrival of a new version, Windows 11. Insiders are testing it out and giving their preliminary reviews. At the July meeting, we will look at the available information that's out there so far and show some of the reviews on YouTube that will give us a preliminary picture of what we can expect and whether we need to adopt this newcomer or wait a while.🖥

COVID NOTICE: **Because of COVID, TC/PC meetings will continue to be conducted on Zoom through August 2021. See TC/PC News on page 3 for update on in-person meetings starting in September.**

Tech Topics with Jack Ungerleider via Zoom at 6pm before the General Meeting.

The Digital Viking

Advertising

TC/PC 2021-2022 Board of Directors

Meets once or twice per year. All members welcome to attend.
Visit www.tcpc.com for meeting details.

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Newsletter Staff

Editor Sharon Walbran

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TC/PC News — Election of Board & Officers, In-Person Meetings

Annual Meeting and Elections: At TC/PC's Annual Meeting in July, we elected a new president, Lee Kaphingst, a long-time, active member of TC/PC and those in attendance voted to re-elect members of the Board. We thanked Bill Ryder for his years of service as president and wished him the best as he and his wife move to Arizona. Bill promised to stay connected when possible through TC/PC meetings on Zoom. Sheri Trout presented the annual financial report, which shows the club has sufficient funds to run its operations.

In-Person Meetings: In anticipation of returning to in-person meetings this fall, a search was initiated to locate a meeting place that would provide the IT and A/V requirements, meet the space needed for our typical turnout, and be available at a reasonable cost. Jack Ungerleider has arranged for a September 12th meeting at his offices: Accord Offices, 1515 Energy Park Drive, St. Paul, MN. This meeting space may also be available on a regular basis. Curt Trout is negotiating with his church in Roseville for meeting space rental at a small fee as a backup plan. There is also discussion of having hybrid meetings so that those who want to or need to continue coming via Zoom will have that option. Huge thanks to Jack and Curt and all the other members who are helping with this project.🖥

Bits & Bytes of Memory
By Dorothy Fitch, Editor, GVR Computer Club
November 2020 issue, Green Bytes
https://www.ccgvaz.org/, dmfitch (at) cox.net
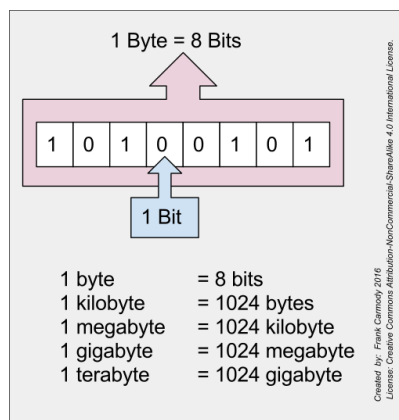
Down in these parts of AZ south of Tucson, if your memory momentarily fails you, you might say you are having a "Green Valley moment." Your computer, of course, also has memory. Let's take a look at how it is organized.

You have probably heard of bits and bytes, megabytes, and gigabytes. Do you know what each one is? What comes after a gigabyte?

A bit (BInary digiT) is like a light switch. It is either on or off. On represents a 1 and Off

represents a 0. Your computer works by combining bits with each other to make larger units.

4 bits = 1 nibble, as in 0000, 0010, 0111, 1011, 1111, etc.

8 bits = 1 byte. You can do a lot more with a byte! There are 256 possible combinations of bits in a byte. A byte can store one letter of the alphabet. For example, an uppercase letter A is stored as 01000001 (which is 65 in the decimal system).

2 bytes (16 bits) = 1 word

1 megabyte (MB) = 1024 bytes (1024 is 2 to the 10th power)
1 gigabyte (GB) = 1024 megabytes
1 terabyte (TB) = 1024 gigabytes
1 petabyte (PB) = 1024 terabytes
1 exabyte (EB) = 1024 petabytes
1 yottabyte (YB) = 1024 exabytes (a yottabyte = 1 trillion terabytes)

Those are the officially recognized units of memory, However, additional ones have been proposed (each one is 1024 times the previous one): Brontobyte, Geopbyte, Saganbyte, Pijabyte, Alphabyte, Kryatbyte, Amosbyte, Pectrolbyte, Bolgerbyte, Sambobyte, etc., all the way to Blamnebyte!

You can see them all here. http://www.sciencepic.com/the-largest-unit-of-storage/
This website says that if you are downloading 1YB (yottabyte) of data using a super high-speed Broadband, it will take 11 trillion years to download. It's all quite mindboggling, isn't it?

Now when you have a "Green Valley moment," you can call it something classier, such as a Yottabyte moment!🖥

A Brief Tour of the VLC Media Player
By Tom Burt, Vice-President
Sun City Summerlin Computer Club
https://www.scscc.club, tomburt89134 (at) cox.net

The free **VLC Media Player**, by non-profit VideoLAN Corporation, is a useful and powerful program for playing all types of audio and video files, including video DVD and Blu-ray disks. It also is able to convert audio and video files from one format to another.

The VLC Media Player has versions for Windows, Mac OS and LINUX. You can download it from: www.videolan.org. The VLC installer from the VideoLAN website does not attempt to install any extra junk-ware, but always pay attention as you click through the setup dialogs. During the setup, you can choose the audio and video file types for which VLC will become the default player. Once VLC is installed, double clicking on one of its file types, such as .MP4 files, will launch VLC to "play" that file.

VLC can directly play Adobe Flash Videos (.FLV files) downloaded from web video sharing sites such as YouTube.com. This can be helpful if you want to build your own collection of YouTube videos and play them on your PC monitor or even stream them to your HDTV.
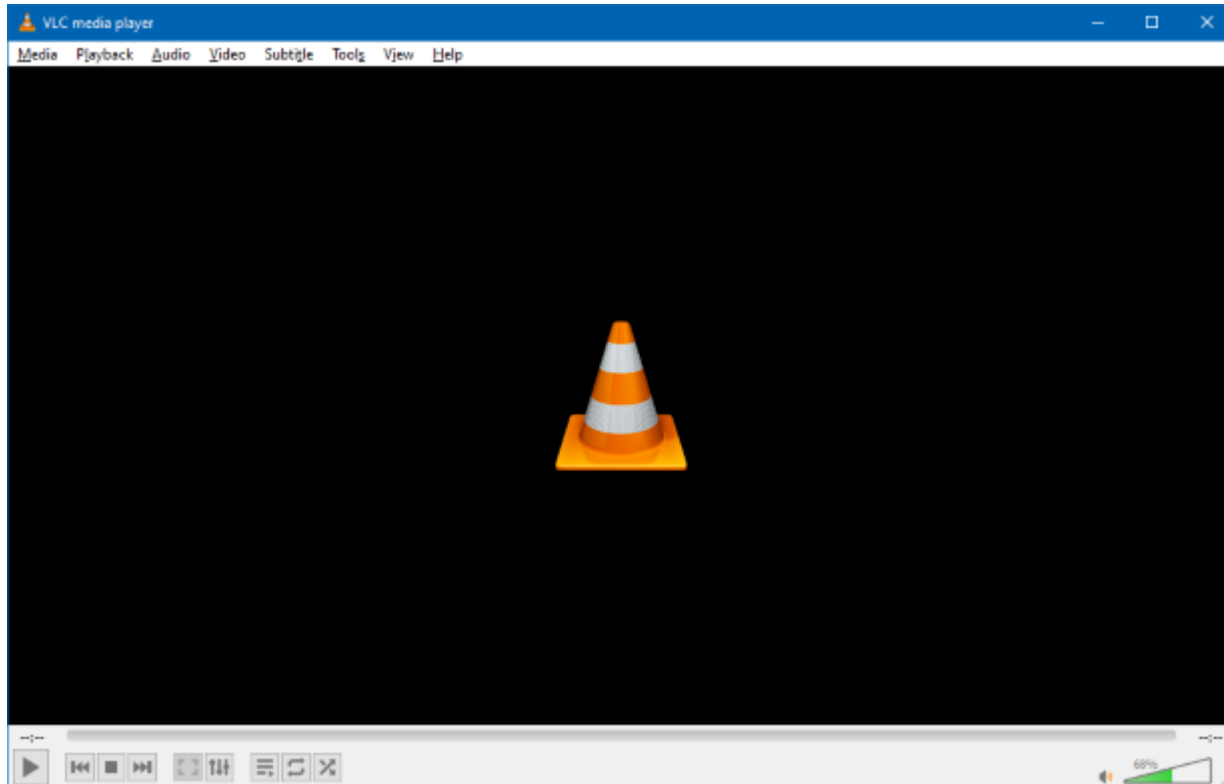
As you can see in the above screen shot, the VLC user interface is quite simple, featuring a menu bar at the top, the main video window and then player and volume controls at the bottom.

Media Menu
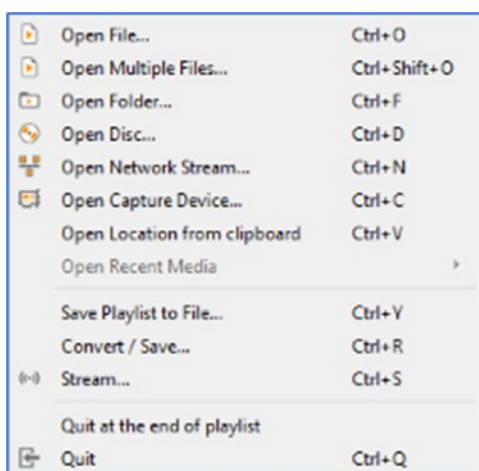
The VLC **Media** menu is the gateway to all operations involving files. Commonly, if you have double clicked a media file, VLC will just start up and play that file.

However, VLC can also play audio/video directly from a capture device, such as a camcorder or it can play audio/video from a network stream, such as an Internet radio or TV station.

The Convert / Save function allows you to convert a set of files from one type to another – for example from .WMV to .MP4 or from .AAC to .MP3. We'll look at this in more detail below.

Playback Menu / Control
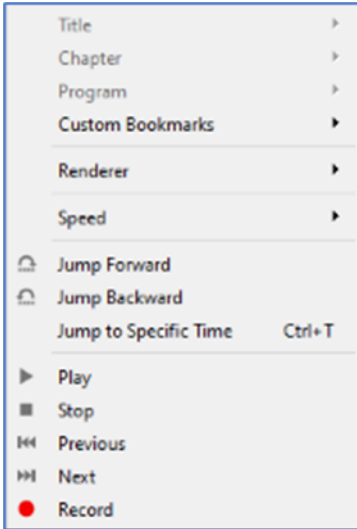
The Playback menu allows you to control the playback of the media file. Within a file you can control the playback speed (faster or slower), jump forward or backward or to a specific time.

If playing multiple files or a playlist, you can skip forward or backward to the next or previous file.

You can also *record* whatever is playing. This can be handy if playing a streaming video.

The Playback control at the bottom of the VLC window offers a set of *graphical* controls to manage playback.

Audio Menu
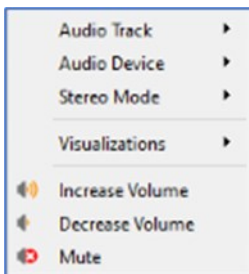
When playing an audio file, the **Audio** menu lets you control the audio playback, including turning on visualizations, stereo mode (stereo, left track, right track), what audio device to send the sound to, which track to play of a multi-track set, such as a CD.

You can also control the volume, although that is easier to do with the Windows volume control at the lower right of the screen.

Video Menu
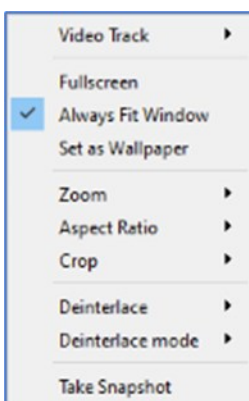
When playing a video file or disc, the **Video** menu lets you control the video playback. You can control which video track is played, switch to full screen and back and set the zoom factor and the aspect ratio of the video window.

You can crop the original video to only show part of the video on the screen. You can specify whether and how the original video should be deinterlaced. And you can grab a particular video frame as a single image.

Media File Conversion

Finally, let's explore the VLC Media Conversion tool.
On the Media menu, click "Convert / Save". The following dialog will open with an empty

file list. Click the Add… button to add one or more files to the list to convert. The Convert/ Save dropdown at the bottom right will become enabled. Click the down-arrow and then choose Convert.
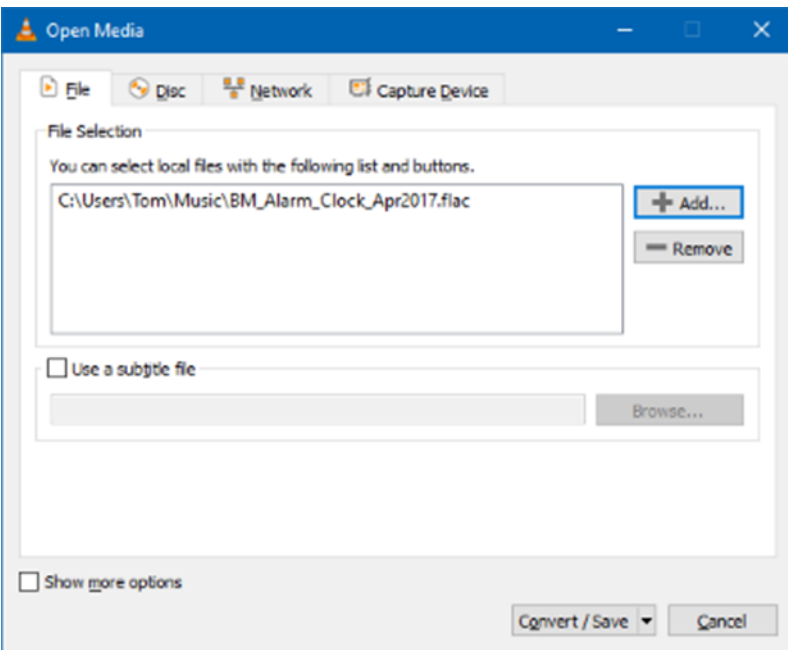
That will open a second dialog (see below) showing the name of the source file. In the dropdown at the middle, choose the desired resultant file type.

In this example, we are converting a music file format called .FLAC to the more common .MP3 file format. However, you can convert to and from many audio and video file formats. A common format conversion is camcorder .MOV video files to .MP4 video files for posting to YouTube or Facebook.

Once everything is set up, just click the Start button in the lower right of the dialog and the file conversion(s) will proceed.

The time required by VLC to perform a conversion will depend on the size and complexity of the file. Audio files are usually done in a few tens of seconds. Videos may take quite a bit longer.

So, that's a quick look at some of the features of VLC. I've only covered the basics. There are many more features in this very powerful program. Give it a try yourself.⌨

Casting, not in the theatrical sense – Cast your data to the screen
**By Phil Sorrentino, Newsletter Contributor, Sarasota Technology Users Group**
March 2021 issue, STUG Monitor
www.thestug.org, philsorr (at) yahoo.com

Most modern computers have HDMI outputs so it is easy to display your computer screen on a big-screen TV, but what about displaying your smartphone screen on that same big screen? Most phones do not have HDMI or more specifically micro-HDMI connectors. (Though I have seen some tablets with micro-HDMI connectors, in fact, I even had one that I used for teaching a smartphone/tablet class.) So, you have to find another way to get the smartphone screen displayed on the larger TV screen. Fortunately, Google has provided a solution with its Chromecast hardware device and Casting software that is becoming part of many Apps. (If your App supports Chromecast, you will see the Chromecast icon somewhere on the App's opening screen). The Chromecast device gets plugged into an HDMI input port on the big screen TV, and power is provided to the device by a micro-USB connection. A

Chromecast device and an App that supports casting can turn a dumb TV into a pretty smart TV, at least for those Apps that support casting.

Chromecast Device   Chromecast Icon

Besides the Chromecast device, the only other thing you need is Wi-Fi. Wi-Fi is the mechanism used to transfer the smartphone screen information to the Chromecast device which in turn provides the HDMI interface to the big screen TV. So, to make it work, both the smartphone and the Chromecast device have to be on the same Wi-Fi network. Many current Wi-Fi routers provide many networks. Usually, the main network is in the 2.4 GHz frequency band and there may be another network in the 5 GHz band. The 5 GHz network sometimes includes 5G in the network name which can possibly be confused with the 5G wide area network provided by companies like Verizon and AT&T. (Future Wi-Fi routers can even take advantage of a new 6 MHz band.) Also, some routers may provide a guest network in the 2.4 GHz or 5 GHz band. The trick here is to make sure that when you set up the Chromecast device you choose the same network that your smartphone is using. You can see what network your smartphone is using by going into Settings on the smartphone and selecting "Network & internet" or "Wireless", or something like that, where the network name will be shown. This is usually early in the list of settings. (When you select this screen, you will also see the other networks that are available but are not currently being used by your smartphone.)

Once you know the Wi-Fi network you will be using you can set up the Chromecast device. This will be done using your smartphone and usually the Google Home App.

Google Home App Icon

You can download the Google Home App from the Google Play Store or the Apple App Store. Apps are updated regularly and screens may change so specific directions for this setup may be different by the time you need them but when you do need directions, Google something like "How to set up a Chromecast device using the Google Home app". The results will probably be several tutorials or even better a few videos with up-to-date instructions. (The Google Home App provides control for many devices besides the Chromecast. Home automation lights, cameras, and switches are also set up using this App. Additionally, this App also provides control for Google's "Google Home" assistant.) Once you have set up the Chromecast device you can cast your smartphone screen to

your big screen TV. (And to see what else you can do with the Home App, just find the "Discover" icon which looks like two sheets of paper. This is really an advertisement for all the wonderful things Google can do for you once you have their products.) As well as Google Home their other Apps that can be used to set up the Chromecast device and that support Casting, such as LoCast for Chromecast, iMediashare, Cast to TV, Mirroring360 Sender, and Plex but I have not tried any of these.

With the Chromecast device setup, all we need to do is find Apps that can Cast. Some of the more popular Apps are YouTube, YouTube Music, Google Photos, Disney+, Prime Video, Hulu, Media Monkey, Movies Anywhere, Netflix, Crackle, Pluto TV, Tubi, Hoopla, and HBO Max. There are even a lot of Apps that appear to be cable channels like A&E, History, AMC, MTV, and TNT. Many more Apps may have this ability in the future. You may already have some of these apps on your smartphone like YouTube, but the other Apps are available at the Google Play Store or the Apple App Store. Once you've downloaded the App of interest, look for the Cast icon somewhere on the opening screen.

Hoopla App

Hoopla is an App supports casting. This means that you can now take advantage of all the video media at your local library; videos, TV shows, and feature-length movies. You can use your phone to access the media and then cast the media to your Chromecast device plugged into any TV that has an HDMI input. Using Wi-Fi to cast the media means you are also using Wi-Fi to access the media from the library, so there is no cost associated with the whole process. You can think of that as free movies for the whole family, at least if the big screen TV is big enough to satisfy the whole family. All you have to do is supply the popcorn. By the way, as was discussed in a previous article in September, Hoopla can also bring you E-books to read, audiobooks to listen to, and even music to listen to. What a bargain. If you haven't gotten the Hoopla App yet, go to the Google Play Store, or the Apple App Store and download it and start taking advantage of this very useful, and did I mention, free App.🖳

Changing the Mouse Pointer
By Cal Esneault, former President of CCCC and leader of many Open-Source Workshops & SIGs
Cajun Clickers Computer Club
February 2021 issue, CCCC Computer News
www.clickers.org, office (at) clickers.org

A key item in the Windows desktop graphical interface is the "pointer" (controlled by either a mouse or by a laptop touchpad). Since we use it often, finding it quickly makes our sessions more efficient. The default setting has a white pointer with a black outline. It can take time to locate when on   a white background (see screenshot below)

Windows 10 (as with previous versions) gives us an easy way to customize this pointer. From the "Settings" menu, chose the "Ease of Access" item (see below)
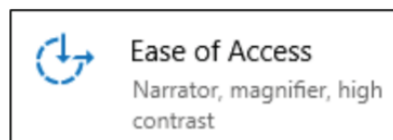
Pointer options are shown below.

You can change the color of the pointer to any other basic color that you desire. For example, below the cursor has been changed to a black fill (with white outline) over the same screen as seen earlier. This may allow for improved recognition. Other colors can be selected based on your preference (for example, green or yellow).

Cajun Clickers Event Calendar

28 Workshops currently scheduled

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Skill Level Codes: B=Beginner   E=Everyone   I=Intermediate   A=A(
Exp=Expert

January 2021

You can also choose the "inverted" option. This changes the color of the pointer depending upon the color of the background. Thus, better contrast is automatically selected, but you must reconcile your mind-muscle connection to accept the fact that the cursor will not always be the same color.

In the mouse pointer dialog, there is also a slider to change the size of the pointer. By default, it is set to "1", but you can make it larger (for example, "2" or "3") using the slider. This improves recognition, but it takes some getting used to having a large object constantly moving on your screen.

As with any personalization setting, results vary based on your perception of what is "better". Give it a try to see if this helps. There are many other ways to customize the screen, text, taskbar, dark mode, etc. Search the internet to see if you can find some that improve your situation.🖥

Chromebook Update
By Jeff Wilkinson, President
Sun City Summerlin Computer Club
https://www.scscc.club
pres.scscc (at) gmail.com

I have become more interested in Chromebooks as an alternative for our club members who need to replace an outdated desktop or laptop computer. Many, if not most, of these users don't need the features of today's typical laptops and since so many of the tasks are accomplished online without the need for local storage, a Chromebook becomes a very attractive option. With a Chromebook and a free Google account; email, web browsing, video streaming and a host of Android applications are available.

In addition to its comparatively low cost, a Chromebook offers a useful synergy with Android phones and applications along with light weight and long battery life. The complete Google Suite of Cloud applications is available free and offers a useful alternative to Office software suites.

Another attraction is the ability to repurpose outdated laptops with the installation of Google's Neverware CloudReady software. The free Home version listed as being "useful for Tinkerers, Parents and Students, and Other Humans Ready for a better OS" was right up my alley. I successfully converted two old laptops that were not upgradable to the current Windows operating system. Both worked well although they

had some limitations. With a new HP Chromebook I was able to make use of all the latest features of the Chromebook operating system including one of the latest updates for scanning. By simply logging into my Google account with my Gmail address and password I had all my browsing bookmarks, photos and Gmail available to me.

So, when I saw a recent news report about the tracking of Chromebook users it raised some concern. As has been discussed before, an inquiry about a specific product or service, more often than not, results in the sudden appearance of ads for that product or service or similar products in many of your search results, popups on YouTube views, social media pages and emails. The gist of the new report I saw was the concern for the profiling of Chromebook users and the use of the collected information to target market to that user. The main way of collecting the metrics used to target market are cookies that are ostensibly used to "customize" your web experience. While a "do not track" setting is available in the Chrome and Edge browsers, be aware of this official Google statement "Most websites and web services, including Google's, don't change their behavior when they receive a Do Not Track request". Chrome doesn't provide details of which websites and web services respect Do Not Track requests and how websites interpret them. Do Not Track is not available on iPhones or iPads.

Clear cookies and site data when you quit Chrome	⚪
Send a "Do Not Track" request with your browsing traffic	🔵
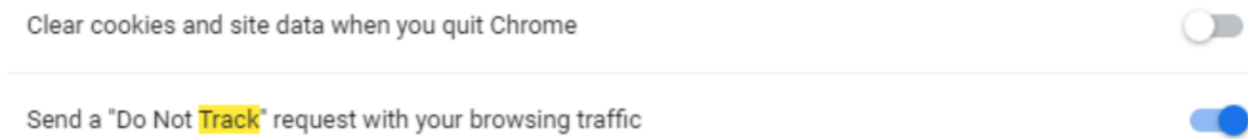
Does it work? Not very well … seems every time I search for anything, I get pop ups and ads for that or similar items for days. Of course, the data collection is true of virtually all the so-called free software in which your usage data is the real product. So be aware, while Chromebooks offer an attractive alternative to a Windows or IOS laptop they tightly integrate with Google in ways you may not realize.

https://www.usatoday.com/videos/tech/2018/09/25/-google-chrome-tracking-you/37935707/
https://clark.com/technology/google-chrome-do-not-track/
https://www.pcmag.com/how-to/how-to-get-google-to-quit-tracking-you
https://www.wired.com/story/google-tracks-you-privacy/
https://9to5google.com/2020/02/06/google-chrome-x-client-data-tracking/
https://lifehacker.com/what-data-of-mine-does-chrome-send-to-google-5763452
💻

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.
Second 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 developers within the group and by MS reps.
Third Saturday 9:00 AM—Noon
Note: No Meetings June-August

Steve Kuhlmey   952/934-8492
                            skuhlmey@hotmail.com

Microsoft Office
Addresses the use, integration, and nuances 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
                            skuhlmey@hotmail.com

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.

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.

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. *Virtual Meetings during Covid pandemic.*

July

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 7pm General Mtg Windows 11 6pm Tech Topics	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

August

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 7pm General Mtg TBA 6pm Tech Topics	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31			Go to Page 1	

# 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.)
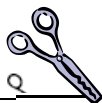
7/21

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

Full name_____

Company name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

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

Home phone_____ Work phone_____

Online address(es) _____

Where did you hear about TC/PC? _____

❍ I DO NOT want any of my information disclosed.
❍ I DO NOT want to receive any mailings

I'm signing up for:

❍ Individual/Family Membership ($18)
❍ Business Membership ($100)
If an existing member your # _____
Make checks payable to:
Twin Cities PC User Group
341 County Rd C2 W
Roseville, MN 55113

http://www.tcpc.com

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

| Administrative Use Only | Rec'd_____ | Chk#_____ |

July 13, 2021
7:00 pm

General Meeting

Windows 11
A Peek into the Future

Via Zoom

More info: www.tcpc.com

Twin Cities
PC USER GROUP

341 County Rd C2 W
Roseville, MN 55113

FIRST CLASS MAIL