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

June 2017

General Meeting
Tuesday, June 13, 2017
7:00 PM

Annual Meeting And Free Pizza

,

**Summit Place
8505 Flying Cloud Drive
Eden Prairie, MN 55344**

It's that time of year when we gather to vote on officers and discuss the future of our club. Please come. We need your input on ideas for general meetings and SIGs.

We will start off at Summit Place for Jack Ungerleider's Tech Topics SIG from 6:00 PM to 7:00PM and then hold the election and other new business.

Following the meeting we will head to Punch Pizza on Prairie Center Drive where TC/PC will foot the bill for pizza and soft drinks for any member attending .

Hope to see you there. 💻

The Digital Viking

The Digital Viking is the *official monthly publication of the Twin Cities PC User Group, a 501(c)(3)organization and 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.*

    Disclaimer: *All opinions are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the TC/PC, its Board of Directors, Officers, or newsletter staff. TC/PC does not endorse, rate, or otherwise officially comment on products available; therefore, readers are cautioned to rely on the opinions presented herein exclusively at their own risk.* The Digital Viking, *its contributors, and staff assume no liability for damages arising out of the publication or non-publication of any advertisement, article, or other item. All refunds in full or in partial, for advertising, membership or any other item shall be at the sole discretion of the Twin Cities PC User Group Board of Directors.*

Advertising

Full page (7½ x 9½)	**$100.00**
Two-thirds page (7½ x 6)	80.00
Half page (7½ x 4¾)	65.00
One-third page (7½ x 3)	50.00
Quarter page (3½ x 4¾)	40.00
Member Bus. Card (2 x 3½)	10.00

Multiple insertion discounts available.

Contact Sharon Walbran at:: SQWalbran@yahoo.com

Deadline for ad placement is the 1st of the month prior to publication. All rates are per issue and for digital or camera-ready ads. Typesetting and other services are extra and must be requested in advance of submission deadlines.

Payment must accompany order unless other arrangements are made in advance. Place make checks payable to: **Twin Cities PC User Group**

TC/PC 2016-2017 Board of Directors

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

President —William Ryder	br@rydereng.com
Vice President —Curtiss Trout	ctrout@troutreach.com
Secretary - Sharon Walbran	sharon.walbran@gmail.com
Treasurer - Sharon Trout	strout@troutreach.com
Newsletter Publisher Sharon Walbran	952-925-2726 sharon.walbran@gmail.com
Web Master Curt Trout	ctrout@troutreach.com
Board Members:	
Steve Kuhlmey	skuhlmey@hotmail.com
Lon Ortner	612-824-4946 csacomp@comcast.net
William Ryder	br@rydereng.com
Jeannine Sloan	Ambassador for Friendship Village
Curtiss Trout	ctrout@troutreach.com
Sharon Trout	strout@troutreach.com
Jack Ungerleider	jack@jacku.com
Sharon Walbran	sharon.walbran@gmail.com

Rooting and Custom ROM Installation of Kindle Fire HD 2nd Edition

By Bob Woods, Webmaster, Under the Computer Hood UG, CA
February 2017 issue, Drive Light, www.uchug.org
webmaster (at) uchug.org

We like to have a radio tuned to a talk radio station or music station during the day. Our location is in a town in a valley surrounded by mountains so our radio reception is poor. As a solution, we have been using a couple of older Kindle Fire HD 2nd generation tablets streaming our favorite stations via iHeart radio. Recently, one of the Kindles started having connectivity issues and was replaced with one of the newer $50 Kindle Fire HD tablets. Since the problematic unit was not being used for anything I decided I would try replacing the Amazon tweaked version of Android with a standard version. I wasn't worried about ending up with a brick as the unit is four years old so not in warranty and was no longer in use anyway.

The files listed and the following steps are intended for the Kindle Fire HD 2nd edition. They will not work on other manufacturers devices or even different models from the same manufacturer. The steps will be pretty much the same, but you will have to conduct an internet search with your models OS version to get the correct files and any step differences for your device. There are no guarantees that you will not experience any issues. That being said, lets jump into the thick of it.

First, I set the Kindle back to factory defaults. Since I will be replacing the Amazon OS with a standard version of Android I not register the unit. I also logged onto my Amazon account and de-registered the device. Next, onto the internet with multiple Google sessions looking up what was needed.

The first thing I found was the unit needed to be Rooted. This is to allow root access rights to the operating system. On units with proprietary operating systems, like the Kindle or phones tied to a particular service provider, root access is blocked by their version of the operating system. Rooting the unit is done via a root kit, which is an app that has been created specifically to give root access to a specific version of the installed operating system. This required using the Kindles settings setup to obtain its version of the operating system. Then do a Google search to look for the root kit. In my case the search term was "Root Kindle Fire HD OS 7.5.1". What I found was a YouTube video from Tekify with step by step instructions and links to the required software. It also had a link to written instructions.

There are two methods for installation. One with a PC to download, save and run files to do the actual root to the Kindle via USB. And one without a PC where you use the Kindle's browser to download, save and run the files directly. Since I was having Wi-Fi connectivity issues with the Kindle I opted for the method with the PC.

Following the video instructions:

1. On your device go into settings (Swipe down from the top and press more) then scroll to "Security". Set enable ADB to on and press 'Ok' on the warning. Go home on your device, make sure your kindle is NOT connected to the computer yet.
2. Download the Tekify – Root Kindle Fire HD .zip file on to your computer and extract it.
3. In the extracted folder, you will find another folder and a file named "KindleDrivers", double click this file and press install, when another window pops up press next and wait for the install to complete, once it is done you can click finish and close out the remaining window. Your computer is now ready to use ADB and Fastboot.
4. Once again in the extracted folder open the folder named "Root_with_Restore_by_Bin4ry_v33". inside is a number of items. Double click "RunMe" (not the .sh file) and a command prompt will open.
5. Plug your Kindle into the computer with a USB cable and press 3 on your keyboard followed by enter.
6. After a bit of script has run a message asking you to restore your data will appear on your Kindle, click "Restore my data", don't worry this will do nothing.
7. 10 Seconds later your device will reboot. Once it has booted up the lockscreen will be black and your device will be slow, this is normal.
8. Once your computer recognizes the device again some more script will run and the window will close. Your device will also reboot one last time.
9. When your device is booted up you will have Root as well as an app called SuperUser installed.

At this point the Kindle is Rooted. However, the Amazon OS is still on the Kindle. To replace it would require two things:

- A backup and recovery application that sets outside of the OS and can be called up at bootup. Think of this as the equivalent of using the function key to get to a Boot Menu on a PC to boot from a USB or DVD drive. This is the only way to be able to replace the OS as Android devices always boot directly to the OS.
- A custom ROM to replace the Amazon Kindle OS. In the Android world a ROM is not a physical device, Read Only Memory. It is a software package of a version of Android custom configured to be compatible with your hardware. It will be close to stock Android, but usually has some additional features. I found there are different custom ROM builds, each with slightly different extra features over plain vanilla Android. The choice is up to you.

For the backup/recovery program I installed an open source program called TWRP (Team Win Recovery Program). For the ROM I settled on Omni 5.1 which is Android Lollipop 5.1.1. I could have gone with Android Marshmallow 6.1 from Cyanogen, but the Kindle ROM version was an unofficial beta version (CyanogenMod 13).

The instructions for installation of TWRP are at Tekify at http://www.tekify.co.uk/kindle-fire-hd/recovery/. Not wanting to use the Kindle WiFi I again downloaded the three files listed below from the URL links in the instructions and transferred them to the Kindle download folder via USB. These would then be run directly on the kindle. The below instructions are shown in the YouTube video, but since it is easy to brick the Kindle during this process, I wanted to follow the written instructions (also listed) after watching the video.

1. On the Kindle, enable Installation of Applications from Unknown Sources. (Settings > Device > Allow Installation of Applications).
2. Download the three files onto your device: FireFlash.apk, KFHD7 Freedom Boot.img and either KFHD7 TWRP 2.7.0.0.img or KFHD7 TWRP 2.8.3.0.img (It doesn't matter which one however 2.8.3.0 is obviously the latest version). As before, I downloaded the three files onto my PC and transferred them to the Kindle via USB. The rest of the steps for TWRP are then done on the Kindle.
   Install FireFlash.apk and open it up.
1. Grant the app Root Access if necessary.
2. Under the 'Bootloader' heading tick the 'Flash kfhd7-u-boot-prod-7.2.3.bin'. *This is required or your device will be bricked.*
3. Under 'Boot Partition' click 'Not Flashed' and find where you downloaded the files.
4. Select 'kfhd7-freedom-boot-7.4.6.img' (This is the correct one even though we are on a later version).
5. Still under the 'Boot Partition' heading tick 'Apply Stack Override'.
6. Under the heading 'Recovery Partition' once again click 'Not Flashed'.
7. This time select the other file ('kfhd7-twrp-2.7.0.0-recovery.img' the number will be different depending which version of TWRP you downloaded).
8. Make sure to tick 'Disable Recovery Auto Update' .
9. Now at the bottom under the heading 'Execute' press 'Flash, Install Script'
10. Once this has finished (DO NOT CANCEL IT) tap 'Reboot Into Recovery' and wait for your device to boot into TWRP.

I would strongly recommend making a backup once in TWRP.

Finally, you can boot into TWRP any time from a powered off state by pressing the 'Power Button' as normal and then holding just the volume up button until you enter recovery.

Now for the ROM.
Omni 5.1 is a ROM is based on CM12 (Cyanogen Mod 12) however is modified to suit the Kindle Fire HD. Make sure you have at least 70% battery. As a quick warning do not try to overclock the CPU on this ROM as it will cause your device to totally freeze up after a couple of minutes of use. Once again, the instructions are on Tekify at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_c5hHSCO_o8 .
Download the Omni 5.1 ROM, Gapps for 5.0 and Update SuperSU onto your device. once again, I downloaded to my PC and transferred to the Kindle via USB.

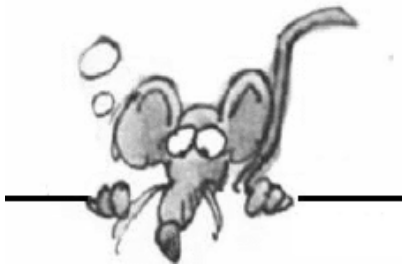The rest of the instructions are done on the Kindle.
1. Reboot into the TWRP Backup/Recovery app.
2. This is done by first, completely shutting down the Kindle (push and hold the power until you get the shutdown button and touch it).
3. Then push the power button to boot up. When the Kindle Fire logo shows, push and hold the left volume button (volume up) until the word Fire turns blue and let go of the volume up button after a second or two.
4. The Kindle will open in the TWRP application. The TRWP home screen looks like the following image. The video shows the other screens in TWRP you will be dealing with.

1. Make a backup using the default settings just in case something goes wrong and you need to restore to a previous state.
2. After the backup, click 'Wipe' and swipe to factory reset. *This MUST be done or you will have problems later*. This does not wipe your Internal Storage don't worry.
3. Then press 'Install' and navigate to the folder where you downloaded the Omni 5.1 ROM and tap it.
4. Swipe to confirm flash, this will take a while DO NOT cancel.
5. After it is done DON'T press reboot system or you will have no Google Apps and you will experience errors.
6. Click 'Home' and then once again 'Install'
7. Select the 'gapps 5.0' file and once again wait. Once again go 'Home' otherwise you will not have root access.
8. Click 'Home' and then 'Install' for the final time.
9. Select Update SuperSU.zip and press reboot system once it is done flashing.
10. First boot up may take a while. However, if it takes more than 10 minutes hold the power button till your device goes off and try turning it on again. From the video we learned that after a ROM replacement you can get into a boot loop, but it should resolve after one or two reboots.
11. If it still won't boot go back to TWRP recovery and restore your backup. This will restore your Kindle OS which was saved during the backup. Then check Tekify for hints on how to proceed.

I did not have any issues with any of the steps and all worked after the process was finished. So, what were the results? So far, the Wi-Fi connectivity issue I was having has not surfaced again, being solid. Could have been caused by a system glitch in the Kindle OS or botched update from Amazon. I can now install applications that previously required the device to be rooted. My efforts will not be over written by any updates Amazon is pushing out as the Kindle is no longer a registered device. If I wish I can try other ROM updates by just loading them through TWRP.
Rooting a device and installing a custom ROM is not for everyone. If something goes wrong during the Root or ROM process you stand the chance of turning your device into a brick, though there are recovery step instructions out on the internet. Rooting will void your manufacturer's warranty. Installing a custom ROM is not so much a necessity these days as Launchers are available to replace the stock home page launcher that came with your device, often with advantages over the built-in launcher. However, a launcher is just an app that runs on the stock OS that came with your device with all of the lockdown the manufacturer put into the OS. if you are looking for an updated Android version or to completely unlock your device look into Rooting and installing a custom ROM.

💻

NIBBLERS

By Jeannine Sloan

Find PDF Results Only

Add fileType: to your search to display results that only match a certain file type. For example, if you wanted to display PDF results only type: "dell xps" fileType:pdf -- this is a great way to find online manuals.

Keyboard Shortcut

Both the Ctrl+S and Shift+Insert key combinations will paste the text or object that's stored in the clipboard.

Set a Default Folder View

In Windows File Explorer, you might have noticed the different folder layout s ettings for different folders. Some of the folders have smaller icons while some puts on a large icons view layout. There are several folder layouts available in Windows 10/8/7 which you can choose from, for any folder. While Windows has set these defaults based on the nature of the files in the folder, if you wish, you can set a default Folder View for all folders. In this post, we will show how to set & apply the same view settings of the current folder, as the default, for all other folders on your PC.
http://www.thewindowsclub.com/set-default-folder-view-windows

Extend the Life of Hearing Aid Batteries

A MN student discovered a way to extend the lifespan of zinc hearing aid batteries by 85 percent. Some hearing aid battery packages instruct users to remove the plastic tab on the back of the battery and let it sit for one minute. Manuell further tested this suggestion, allowing the tab-less batteries to sit for various amounts of time before testing their longevity in his vibrating toy bugs. He found that five minutes was the golden length of time needed to achieve maximum results. http://mentalfloss.com/article/94681/7

Another 'Trash to Energy' Startup

The United States, alone, creates over 250 million tons of waste each year. Landfills are exceeding their capacities all over the world. Not only that, they are major emitters of greenhouse gases and sources of harmful environment contamination. No one has found a way to cleanly and profitably convert all of this waste. Until now.
http://www.sierraenergy.com/fastox-gasifier/why-fastoxgasification/

Tech Tidbits

300,000 new computer viruses are discovered every day according to malware expert David Perry, of Comodo.

Ransomware

A Microsoft spokesperson speaking to Sky News has confirmed that customers who have Windows

Sweet Zone

Operating Li-ion batteries in the "sweet zone" prolongs battery life because a partial cycle is less stressful than a full cycle. As the capacity fades with use, the battery management system (BMS) may engage the full working range of the battery.

http://batteryuniversity.com/learn/article/premature_voltage_cut_off

Syncing Favorites

You can now automatically sync your favorites between Edge and IE, and in this guide, we'll show you how to do it.

http://www.windowscentral.com/how-keep-favorites-synced-between-microsoft-edge-and-ie-windows-10#sync_favorites_ie_edge_regedit

Microsoft Surface Laptop vs. Apple MacBook: Tech Spec Smack-Down

Are you consdering switching from/to PC or MAC? Check this comparison chart.

http://www.windowscentral.com/surface-laptop-vs-apple-macbook

Clear Your Browser History

Here's how to clear it in every major browser:

https://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/how-to-clear-browserhistory/?utm_source=feedly&utm_medium=webfeeds

Manage Startup Programs to Troubleshoot Problems

How many programs run automatically every time you start your PC or sign in to Windows? Very few installers warn you that they're about to add a helper program or an automatic updater that runs in the background. Each of those auto-starting programs takes a toll on your available memory. Some background programs can conflict with other software, resulting in mysterious slowdowns or crashes. That's especially true of security software, disk utilities, and other low-level system tools. One of your first troubleshooting steps when you're trying to figure out the cause of a performance or reliability problem is to eliminate startup programs as possible culprits. To see a partial list of auto-starting programs in Windows 10, open Task Manager in More Details view on the Startup tab. In Windows 7, the equivalent list is on the Startup tab in the System Configuration tool, Msconfig.exe. Right-click any item and choose Disable to temporarily prevent it from running at the next startup.

After your testing is complete, repeat those steps and choose Enable if you want to allow it to run again.

http://www.thewindowsclub.com/manage-startup-items-windows-8

New CPU

Intel rolls out its first consumer CPU to offer a teraflop of compute power. Only $1999

https://www.windowscentral.com/intels-core-i9-extreme-edition-18-core-monster-retails-1999

DNS, or Why Reboot

This article explains what DNS is and how it works. The article is easy to understand. Recommended read from AskLeo newsletter:

http://tinyurl.com/y9rs4wcf

Keyboard Shortcuts for Windows 10

Keystroke	Operation
[Windows]+[Left Arrow]	Position a window on the left half of the screen
[Windows]+[Right Arrow]	Position a window on the right half of the screen
[Windows]+[Up Arrow]	Maximize a window
[Windows]+[Down Arrow]	Minimize a window

8 Tips to Secure Those IOT Devices

Make sure the Internet of Things isn't a route for hackers to get into your home.
http://www.networkworld.com/article/3085607/internet-of-things/8-tips-to-secure-those-iot-devices.html
And https://www.google.com/search?q=steps+to+secure+iot+in+your+home&ie=&oe=

Bitmap Image Formats

Regarding GIFs, they are "bitmap" images, as are JPGs, BMPs, PNGs and TIFFs. The most-used bitmap format is JPG, which can contain millions of colors, whereas a GIF is limited to 256 colors. However, a GIF can be made movable, and it's the format used for most of the animated cartoons seen. The word "bitmap" pertains to an image that has many, many tiny "bits" which are "mapped" onto a background ("canvas"). In digital images, a "bit" is another name for "pixel" ("picture element"). The smaller the pixel size in an image, the sharper it will appear on a screen. This also applies to printouts on paper – a 600 DPI (dots per inch) picture will be much sharper than a 300 DPI image. The average pixel count available on most PC monitors is about 96 DPI. But using 96 DPI on paper can look rather splotchy. Use 300 DPI or larger.

Phone Photography

- Avoid direct sunlight.
- Choose the highest quality setting available so you lose less detail and don't get a muddy photo.
- Wait for the magic hour: sunrise and sunset.
- Stabilize your camera phone.
- Use the rule of thirds.
- When the background of your picture is cluttered and the lighting is questionable, fill the frame of your camera phone by moving in closer to your subject.
- By mastering the technique of panning, you can create some very cool images.
- Shoot a panorama.
- Anticipate shutter lag.
- Shooting in black-and-white in any light can help develop your photographer's eye by letting you concentrate on the relationship between light and shadow without the distraction of color.
- Put horizons in the right place.
- Experiment with both the angle of your composition and the angle of light.
- Try using a black background to make a subject stand out.

http://www.nationalgeographic.com/photography/photo-tips/camera-phone-photos/

Add a Control Panel Shortcut to Start

1. Type control in the search box on the taskbar.
2. From the list of search results, right-click Control Panel: which is identified as a "desktop app."
3. Click Pin To Start from the shortcut menu.
Now click the Start button and look for the newly added shortcut.

Change the Computer Name in Windows 10

To change the computer name in Windows 10, go to Settings > System > About. The current computer name is near the top of that page, with a large Rename This PC button below it. Click that button and enter a descriptive product name using any combination of letters, numbers, and hyphens. (Sorry, no special characters or spaces allowed.) The maximum length is 15 characters. Click Next to finish the renaming process and then restart your PC.
http://bit.ly/2rLzrlR
From Tech Republic ezine

Speed up Drink Chilling

Take a container—preferably a cooler—and fill it with enough water to submerge the beers, along with ice and lots of **salt**. Make sure each drink is surrounded by liquid, and wait five minutes.
http://www.popsci.com/fastest-way-to-chillyourbeer?src=SOC&dom=fb

Google's Street View Cars Are Now Measuring Pollution

With constant exposure to foul air endangering the health of those who live with it, Google decided a couple of years ago to make more use of those Street View cars as they tour U.S. roads, fitting them with devices that gather pollution data. This week the Silicon Valley, California-based company shared the first results of this ongoing project, which it's conducting with the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) using measuring equipment built by Aclima. From digitaltrends ezine:
http://bit.ly/2r2ASPD

Last Month's Meeting: Raspberry Pi with Jack Ungerleider…
And the Winner is…(or a good reason to attend a meeting)

At the May meeting Jack Ungerleider assembled a Raspberry Pi from a Complete Kit purchased from Micro Center. He then showed us the I/O connections and hooked up the Raspberry Pi to a monitor and gave us a tour of the programming software (Scratch, Python, etc.) that comes with the Raspberry Pi.

As part of this meeting, Jack had created a program to randomly select a member to win the Raspberry Pi (the kit retails at Micro Center for about $90.00.), courtesy of TC/PC. That winner was H. Cameron Smith. As a condition of winning, Cameron will submit an article for a future Viking detailing what he, or one of his engineering team, has used the Raspberry Pi for. Congrats!🖥

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 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 **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

June

July

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Gen Mtg—Annual Mtg/Pizza 7PM 6PM—Tech Topics	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 Gen Mtg—TBA 7PM 6PM—Tech Topics	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24				28	29
30	31					

Note: Saturday SIGs are suspended for the summer months June to August.

Picture Management – Something we all need.

By Phil Sorrentino, Contributing Writer, The Computer Club, Florida
http://scccomputerclub.org / Philsorr.wordpress.com
philsorr (at) yahoo.com

With the advent of the smartphone, a camera is always only an arm's length away, because your smartphone is probably in your pocket or your handbag. And having the camera so available means we take, and hence have, many more pictures (and maybe even videos). With this increased number of pictures comes the problem of organizing or managing them so we can access them when they are needed. The picture may not seem so valuable if you can't find it when you want to show it to someone.

I think it was very innovative and forward thinking of Steve Jobs at Apple to include a camera in the original iPhone. Today, the camera is probably the second most important reason why you have a smartphone (the first being the fact that the smartphone can make phone calls). The cameras, built into smartphones, have really improved in the short time that smartphones have been in use. Originally the cameras might have only been a mega pixel or so in picture size (the original iPhone had a 2-mega pixel camera); now the cameras have as many pixels as some professional cameras (the iPhone 7 has a 12-mega pixel camera). And, though the quality of the pictures from the earlier smartphones may have been only acceptable, the quality of the pictures from many of today's cameras is only surpassed by pictures from very expensive professional cameras.

So, with all these pictures, we naturally look for help to organize them, and fortunately help comes in the form of digital picture management software. Photoshop Elements is a possible solution with a price tag of around $80.

Picasa has been a very popular, free, picture editor and management software application. Unfortunately, Picasa which was available from Google since July 2004, was discontinued February 2016. Google is recommending its cloud-based "Google Photos" be used in place of Picasa.

"Google Photos" is not the same as "Photos" that you will find on a Windows 10 computer in the "All Apps" list. The Windows 10 Photos App is a photo viewer that provides minimal picture management. Google Photos is a cloud-based App that encourages you to upload your pictures from all of your devices to the cloud, where the photos are stored and managed. Then, using the Google Photos App, you can view all of your photos from any device with an internet connection.

Google gives you 15GB of storage space (you can purchase more if needed), and then (with a setting) gives you a choice of "High Quality (free unlimited storage)", or "Original quality (full resolution that counts against your 15GB quota)". The "High Quality" selection produces "Great visual quality at reduced file size", as stated on the website. (This 15GB of storage appears to be separate from your "Google Drive", if you have one, because there is a setting to "Show Google Drive photos and videos in your Photos library".)

The photos.google.com website states "the photos are automatically organized and searchable", and "the photos can be organized by people, places, or things". The website tutorial also indicates that you can "Easily edit and share" your photos. So, it seems like once your photos are uploaded to the cloud, they can be organized by your needs, and any photo can easily be accessed.

Another free photo management application is Photo Gallery, which was available from Microsoft but unfortunately had its support ended January 10, 2017. If you have a copy of Photo Gallery you will see that it can organize your pictures, but it also has a few neat features. One of these features is "Panorama". Photo Gallery allows you to create panoramas from (overlapping) pictures that were sequentially taken of a wide scene. The picture interfaces are stitched together, resulting in a wide panorama of the original scene. If the lighting was consistent and the overlap was easy for the software to find the edges, with a little cropping the results were quite good. Panorama stitching is not that unusual a feature, but Photo Gallery also has a feature called "Photo Fuse". This feature allows you to correct many unwanted things in a picture. To use this, you have to take multiple pictures of a scene that has some unwanted movements, like people moving in the background, or children turning their heads at inconvenient times. Once you have a number of images (maybe 5 or

6) of basically the same scene, you're ready to use Photo Fuse. Photo Fuse lets you choose which picture will be used for a given selectable rectangular area. If there is a person in the background in picture 1 but not in picture 4, then you can use picture 4 for the rectangle that shows the unwanted person. Similarly, you can customize many rectangles with sections from other pictures. When you are finished, all the unwanted people or unwanted movements may be eliminated. This type of feature is typically only found in some very expensive software packages. It reminds me of "Layers" in Photoshop Elements, but "Photo Fuse" is not nearly as powerful. Photo Gallery may still be available from the Microsoft Download site, but without support from Microsoft it may not be something you want to be dependent on. But if you have a copy, Photo Gallery certainly has a lot of really great features, and is fairly easy to use.

There still are a few free Photo Editing and Management applications available. A quick check finds Zoner Photo Studio Free, StudioLine Photo Basic Free 3, Jet Photo Studio 5, XNView MP, Faststone Image Viewer, and DigiKam, but I haven't tried any of them yet. A quick look at the features makes me wonder if there will be a replacement for Photo Gallery. If you are willing to spend a few dollars, there are a few possibilities that may be a good replacement. Photoshop Elements, Magix Photo Manager, and Acdsee come to mind.

Keep in mind that Picture Management software typically does not re-arrange or move your picture files or folders. Picture Management software just acts as a lens viewing all the pictures in the picture folders that you let it use, usually with an "Include folders" setting. So, in my opinion, the only way to really manage your photos is to create a hierarchical arrangement of folders using File Explorer and then manage that set of folders yourself, again using File Explorer. And then let your Photo Management software use all of those folders. Depending on the size of your picture collection, this may take a big effort and a firm commitment to create, organize and maintain the folders. But whatever method or software you decide on, do it quickly, because your picture collection is probably increasing, even as we speak.🖳

Multiple Virtual Desktops – Task View

By Phil Sorrentino, Contributing Writer, The Computer Club, Florida
http://scccomputerclub.org / Philsorr.wordpress.com , philsorr (at) yahoo.com

One desktop is all most of us need, most of the time, but Windows 10 has included a new feature that allows you to create multiple "virtual" desktops. Virtual desktops aren't new. In fact, Xerox PARC (the creator of Ethernet, Laser printers, and the Graphical User Interface using a mouse) created one of the earliest virtual desktop experiences called Rooms, back in the 1980s and subsequently made a version available for Windows 3.x. (Desktops are Virtual in that your one monitor provides the display for multiple desktops, which are created by the Operating System, in RAM. That being said, the number of desktops that can be created is only limited by the amount of RAM in your system.) More than one desktop can be helpful in organizing multiple activities. You can dedicate a desktop to a specific activity. You might have one desktop for messaging; that could include your email apps like yahoo mail, along with your texting apps like Messenger, and even Skype for video conferencing. Another desktop might be dedicated to social networking Apps like Facebook and Twitter. One desktop might collect your browsers like Chrome, Edge, Firefox, and Internet Explorer to be used for exploring the internet and taking advantage of on-line shopping websites like Overstock, Monoprice, and Amazon. Another desktop might be used for working on your picture collection using Photo Gallery and/or Photoshop Essentials. Another desktop might be dedicated to writing letters or articles with Word. (Right now, I'm using Word on Desktop4 for writing this article; desktops 2 and 3 are set up for picture editing and spreadsheet creation.) You might even dedicate one desktop to be used for a guest. I know you can create a guest account, but if you don't need it often enough to go through the trouble of creating a guest account, a "guest desktop" might just satisfy that temporary need. Desktops are easily removed, so you might want to

set up a few to help organize some short-term activities and then remove them once you no longer need that particular type of organization. The more you think about it, the more you might find reasons to use Task View.

Task View is accessed by clicking the "Task View" icon. That's the icon on the Taskbar that looks like a square with square ears as shown here. If the Task View icon is not on your Taskbar, right click on an empty space on your Task Bar and select the Icon.

Click "Task View" and you will see a blank screen with only one control in the lower right side of the screen. (If you had any open windows when you clicked Task View, they would be shown as thumbnails towards the top of the screen.) Click Task View again or press escape to get back to the original desktop. After clicking Task View, new desktops can be created using the "New Desktop +" button at the far right of the screen, just above the taskbar. Click the +, and a new desktop will be created as desktop 2 and it will be shown, towards the bottom of the screen, as a desktop 2 thumbnail, along with a thumbnail representing the original desktop, desktop1. Now you have two desktops with identical capabilities. (The only difference might be the open Apps on desktop1 if you had any open Apps when you clicked Task View.) Subsequent clicks of the + will create desktops 3, 4 and so on. Each new desktop will have all the capability of your original desktop. (Unfortunately, until you open something on a new desktop, they will all look alike; they will have the same background, and icons (shortcuts). There is no desktop number on the actual desktop. It might have been nice if each one had a different, maybe selectable, background so they would be noticeably different.

You can create as many desktops as you need, probably no more than a handful, but that depends on how you want to organize your work. New desktops can easily be deleted by clicking the "X" above the appropriate desktop when you hover over that desktop. If there were any open Apps on the desktop that is being closed, those Apps would be moved to another desktop. So, don't worry, you can't delete any Apps that are open. In addition, you can't delete the original desktop. Once you close desktop 2, the desktop 1 thumbnail is removed and you are back to only one desktop; just the way you started.

Once the desktops are created, you can use them independently and open the Apps needed on the particular desktop, or you can move an open App to a desktop where it is needed. Click Task View and the desktops are shown as thumbnails at the bottom of the screen, and the open Apps, for the desktop chosen, are shown as thumbnails in the middle of the screen. In order to move an open App, just drag the open Apps to the desktop where it will be used. You can go back and forth between desktops just by clicking the Task View icon and choosing the desktop of interest. (There are also keyboard shortcuts using the Windows key, shown here:

Hold down the Windows key and the Ctrl key and then tap the left or right arrows to move to the next or previous desktop.)

Even if you don't think you have multiple activities to organize, give it a try to see how it works. Once you see what it is and how it works you might, sometime in the future, come upon a use for the multiple desktop operation of Task View.🖥️

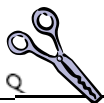# You have just read an issue of The Digital Viking.

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.
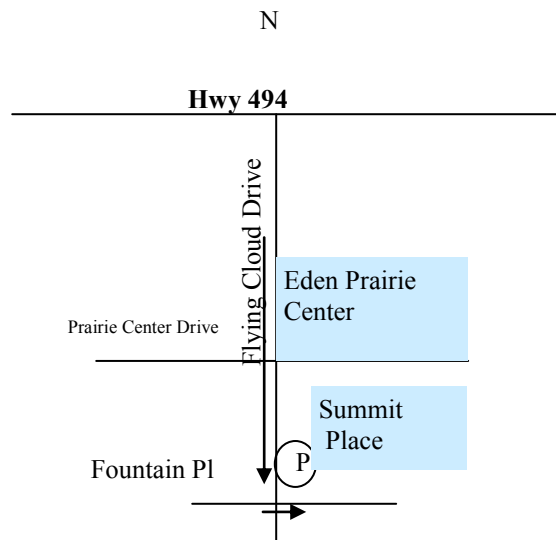(If you use the form in this issue, you will receive an extra month for joining now.)

6/17

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

Administrative Use Only   Rec'd_____ Chk#_____

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:

June 13, 2017
General Meeting 7:00 PM

Annual Meeting
And
Pizza Party

Summit Place
8505 Flying Cloud Dr.
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

More info and map: www.tcpc.com

N

Hwy 494

Flying Cloud Drive

Prairie Center Drive

Eden Prairie
Center

Summit
Place

Fountain Pl   P

Twin Cities
PC USER GROUP

341 County Rd C2 W
Roseville, MN 55113

FIRST CLASS MAIL