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

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General Meeting Tuesday, June 8, 2021 7:00 PM

Annual Meeting And Election of Officers

Via Zoom

It's that time of year again when we meet to review the past year and discuss our future plans and elect officers for TC/PC. Please join us for the June 8th meeting online via Zoom. Bring your ideas for future meetings and possible locations to hold in -person meetings. Our president, Bill Ryder, is relocating to Phoenix so we will be honoring Bill for his service to TC/PC, and voting on new leadership and a slate of existing officers. Unfortunately, we will not be going to Punch Pizza afterwards, so it's B.Y.O.P. See you there!■

COVID NOTICE: Because of COVID, our current access to Summit Place is restricted and future use is uncertain, so TC/PC meetings will continue to be conducted on Zoom through September 2021.

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

TC/PC is a Member of



The Digital Viking

The Digital Viking is the official monthly publication of the Tvin 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.

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Full page (7½ x 9½)	\$100.00
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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 2020-2021 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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Product previews and demonstrations

Special Interest Groups Monthly Newsletter

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Up to 5 newsletters mailed to your site (only a nominal cost for each additional 5 mailed)

Newsletter Staff

Editor Sharon Walbran

Alerts, Notifications, and Alarms - Oh, My!

By Dorothy Fitch, Editor, GVR Computer Club, AZ January 2021 issue, Green Bytes, https://www.ccgvaz.org/ dmfitch (at) cox.net

I have started using alerts, notifications. and alarms to get my attention. Some of these come to my phone and some by email. Most of the time, I can choose what works best for me for each purpose. Of course, there are notifications that you get even if you didn't specifically ask for them, such as doctor appointment reminders, books that are ready to pick up at the library, and many others.

Here are some of my finds and handy tools.

Alerts:

My bank's website allows me to set up alerts for activity related to the bank and credit card accounts. For example, whenever my credit card is charged, either in a store or online, I immediately get an email. If that card is ever stolen or hacked, I will know right away. I can also set up alerts for payments due, deposits, balances, etc.

We have a smart indoor thermometer that alerts us to temperature changes outside a specific range that we set up. That way we can tell from wherever we are reading email if the house gets too hot or cold.

Notifications:

You can <u>sign up at the AZDOT website</u> to be notified of construction activity, accidents, or delays on I-19. After you submit your email address, you can choose which areas of the state, including I-19, you wish to include. These notifications were particularly handy when the Irvington construction area was still active. They also have a <u>phone app</u> that can notify you of highway events.

The US Postal Service offers a free <u>Informed Delivery</u> service to let you know what mail is coming to your mailbox. As mail is scanned in the postal processing center, an image is sent to your email address. (Lately, my email keeps showing me a picture of a postcard from the USPS that says that mail may be delayed. Ironically, that postcard still has not yet arrived!)

UPS's <u>My Choice</u> system tracks your packages and notifies you of their delivery. It's fun to check the map that shows the exact location of the delivery truck when it is in your neighborhood! FedEx has a similar <u>Delivery Manager</u> system and offers to deliver the package to a secure location where you can pick it up if you don't want it left outside your door.

On Election Day, I learned of the phone app from <u>The Guardian</u> that sends alerts to the "lock screen" of my phone when breaking news occurs. The Guardian is a British newspaper with a great reputation and worldwide coverage. So during the evening on 11/3, as

election results started coming in, I would hear the distinctive tone I set up for my phone. That sound would prompt me to go look at the television to see the latest results. It was very handy. I am still enjoying the breaking news. I'm using the free version of the app, though a premium version is also available.

I have also subscribed to the free <u>New York Times Morning Briefing</u> and "breaking news" emails. (I usually get the Guardian notifications about 5 minutes before the NYT ones!) Their Morning Briefing has a summary of news headlines and a mini crossword puzzle. To read the entire article or enjoy the full crossword puzzles, you need to pay for a subscription. Lately, the headlines have been enough for me!

The weather station on our roof sends us an email every day with the day's high and low temperatures, wind speeds, and other data (the rain measure has never worked well, so its rainfall reports are rather suspect). It even has its own website, which I can access from my phone. If we ever get to travel again, we'll be able to see what the weather is like at home!

Alarms:

Alarms aren't just for waking you up. They can be great reminders to take your medicine, walk the dog, or whatever suits you. I use the Alarm feature of the Clock app on my Android phone and expect that an iPhone offers the same functionality.

Another phone alarm goes off at 6:59 pm Mon–Fri. We're usually preparing dinner at that time, and we like to listen to "Exploring Music" with Bill McLaughlin on the radio (KUAT, 90.5 FM). This reminds me to set the tuner to the radio so we can listen.

Once a month, my husband needs to submit data for his <u>Rainlog</u> project, where citizen scientists report the amount of rain received in their rain gauge. So, that alarm goes off on the first day of each month at noon as a reminder for him to do that. We have it on our shared Google calendar as a recurring task, but do we ever look there anymore? That calendar is rather empty these days.

It's nice that you can set up and customize multiple alarms to recur on specific days and times.

There are so many possibilities out there that you can subscribe to or set up. Give it a try! If you have a favorite attention-getter you would like to share, reply to this newsletter and let me know.



"Ambassador" Interpreter

By George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society www.aztcs.org actuary110 (at) yahoo.com

If you travel outside the United States, this is a product you need. It allows you to speak and understand 20 languages and 42 dialects.

It has an over-the-ear headphone but can also be used through an app or text. It can even be broadcast live in a conference environment!



What is especially useful for this product is that it can be used for fluid ongoing conversations, unlike other translation apps and handheld devices which are best for short, occasional conversations.

There are three modes in which it can be used:

• Listen mode provides seamless personal translation in the selected language within 8 feet or so and automatically translates to the user in their native language. It also provides the translation as text with an accompanying app.

- Lecture mode broadcasts the words of the speaker wearing the device to people in a lecture or conference setting and streams audio translations to their smartphone, which can be played over their speaker or paired to any audio system.
- Converse mode allows users to engage in two-way conversation while each is wearing an Ambassador device. This method can be used with up to four people.

The languages include English, Spanish, French, German, Italian, Arabic, Greek. Russian, Hindi, Turkish, Polish, Mandarin, Japanese, Korean, Cantonese, Hebrew, Vietnamese and Dutch.

It is the perfect accessory for international travel and when communicating with friends and family members that have different levels of language fluency.

It comes with two Ambassador units, a charging cable, a carrying bag, and a User Manual.

"Ambassador" Interpreter by Waverly Labs www.waverlylabs.com
Price \$199

Apps and Applications – Mobile and Desktop

By Phil Sorrentino, Newsletter Contributor, Sarasota Technology Users Group January 2021 issue, STUG Monitor, www.thestug.org philsorr (at) yahoo.com

When we talk about computer software nowadays, we typically use the term Apps, referring to any software that is running on a computer, smartphone, or tablet. The term Applications was originally used for software other than the Operating System, but that seems to have changed over the last few years with the advent of Mobile devices - Smartphones and tablets. Also driving the change has been the migration towards the "Client – Server" architecture, where smaller Apps running in a client device (smartphone or tablet) can control a much more elaborate collection of Applications software running in a much larger server (in the cloud). Computing has been moving in this direction ever since the internet and the World Wide Web have become available to us. The term "App" has become very popular. In 2009, technology columnist David Pogue even proposed that the new mobile smartphones be nicknamed "App Phones". And in 2010 App was listed as the "Word of the Year" by the American dialect Society.

So, here are some definitions, at least for this discussion. A computer program is a generally structured collection of instruction sequences that perform a specific task when executed by a computer. (How's that for a "Nerdy" definition?) Software is a general term and will refer to all types of computer programs for all types of computers. An Operating System is a collection of computer programs that manage computer hardware and software resources and provides common services for Application programs. An Application program is a computer program designed to perform a group of coordinated functions, tasks, or activities for the benefit of the user, for example, a Word Processor, a Spreadsheet, an Accounting program, a Web Browser, or even a computer game. These applications are designed to run on the computer hardware with the assistance of the Operating System (like Windows10, macOS, or Android), which is mainly involved with managing the computer hardware.

Before the Smartphone, circa 2007, we only had Desktop Applications, because we only had Desktop computers. Yes, I know laptops were available and they could be easily moved around, but basically, they were just portable desktop computers. So, Desktop Applications are software programs intended to be run on a desktop (or laptop) computer. Then came the Smartphone (and shortly later, circa 2010, the tablet), and these devices were very much different in that their screens were noticeably smaller and there was no mouse for selection/navigation, only a touch-sensitive screen. So, applications that could be used in this new smaller environment had to be created specifically to run on a small screen using your finger as a pointer/navigation device. These applications are software programs intended to be run on a mobile computer, a smartphone, or tablet, with limited input and output capabilities. So, a mobile app is a computer program designed to run on a mobile device, like a smartphone or tablet, with the assistance of the Mobile Operating System (like Android or iOS, or even Windows 10 for tablets).

Desktop applications are usually "fuller featured", whereas the Mobile app equivalent is usually smaller, "lesser featured", simpler, and may or may not be easier to use. This should not be unexpected when you consider that most desktop Apps are built to be used with the more capable input and output devices, (a mouse, a keyboard, and a much larger display), whereas mobile Apps are intended to be used with only a finger and a much smaller screen.

With the arrival of mobile devices, many popular Desktop Applications were the basis for new mobile Apps for the new mobile devices. Many Google desktop applications have been recreated for mobile devices. Your Google email can be accessed from the desktop application or the mobile App. Both devices will provide the same information from the Google email server. But, as we have noted, Mobile Apps are different from Desktop Applications in that they have to run on a much smaller device with limited input and output capabilities. And not only is there a display size and input/output capability difference, but the mobile devices are different way down at the hardware level, the central processing units, most of which are slower than their desktop counterparts. So, many applications exist as both desktop and mobile versions. Microsoft Word is available in a desktop version, the one that most of us learned word processing on, and Microsoft has released a mobile version that is available for both Android and iOS devices. This also holds for Excel and PowerPoint. Adobe Photoshop image editor is a desktop application and Adobe Photoshop Sketch is a mobile app that lets you draw and paint on a mobile device but is a condensed version of Photoshop.

Besides the Apps that have migrated from the Desktop world, there are hundreds of thousands of Apps that have been developed for mobile devices that take advantage of the fact that these devices are mobile. These Apps use the power of the server to provide capabilities to the user that could never have been accomplished with only the processing power of the device itself. Maps and navigation immediately come to mind. The memory and the processing power required for these capabilities, at least with the current technology, would never fit into a device the size of a smartphone. And some Apps take advantage of the fact that they know your location; remember smartphones have GPS and other techniques for location determination. For example, Glympse lets you send your current location to another device, so the user of that device will know where you are (for as long as you choose to give him that information). There are even some Apps that use your location to notify you if one of your friends (or contacts) is nearby. The capabilities that can be developed for the mobile devices have only scratched the surface. It almost looks like the software applications development emphasis has moved from desktop Applications to mobile Apps.

Blocking Unwanted Email

By David Kretchmar, Computer Technician Sun City Summerlin Computer Club, https://www.scscc.club, dkretch (at) gmail.com

Sooner or later this happens to all of us. You continuously receive unwanted emails, (spam) from an individual or organization. Legitimate organizations usually have an Unsubscribe



button within their message, which enables you to be dropped from their email list. If you attempt to unsubscribe from a less-than-legitimate mailer you are just confirming that your email address is good and even more spam will come your way.

Some individuals will not respect your request to stop sending (usually forwarding) you useless or offensive messages; more charitably they might lack the knowledge

to be able to remove you from their mail distribution list.

Unwanted emails can be more than just bothersome or offensive. Some contain viruses that can render your system useless and destroy your data. Some people have had to abandon email addresses when they received many dozens of unwanted emails every day.

Fortunately, all email programs have a feature that will allow you to block all emails from specific email addresses.

I'm going to describe the email blocking procedures for three popular web-based email programs: **Yahoo Mail, Outlook, and Gmail**. If you are using another email provider, the described procedures can be used to at least point you in the right direction.

Each of these programs allows you to use a list of blocked senders for individual senders whose messages you don't want to receive but can't easily stop.

Yahoo Mail

Yahoo Mail can block all mail from up to 500 email addresses. All mail from these senders will be automatically deleted before you see it. To have Yahoo! Mail automatically delete all mail from a particular address:



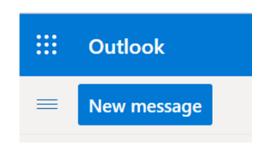
- Left mouse click (hereafter I'll just say click if it's left) or just put your cursor on the settings gear in the upper right corner of the Yahoo Mail page.
- Click on "Mail Options" from the pull-down menu that has appeared.
- Click "Blocked Addresses" category under Advanced Options.
- Enter the unwanted email address under "Add an address:".
- Click on "+".

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Your updated list of blocked senders will be saved automatically.

<u>Outlook</u>

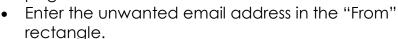
- Click on the gear that appears in the upper right corner of the Outlook mail window.
- Click on "More mail setting".
- Click on "Safe and blocked Senders".
- Click on "Blocked senders".
- Enter the unwanted email address in the "Blocked email address or domain" rectangle.
- Click on "Add to list>>"



Your updated list of blocked senders will be saved automatically.

<u>Gmail</u>

- Click on the Settings gear that appears on the upper right corner of the Gmail window.
- Click on "Filters" near the top middle of the page.
- Click on "Create a new filter" at the bottom of the page.





- Click on "Delete it".
- Click on "Create Filter".

≡ M Gmail

Conclusions and Recommendations

Never reply to or unsubscribe from spam; it just alerts the sender that it has a good email address. When you get a spam message, click on your program's "Spam" or "Send to Spam" or "Report as spam" to get rid of it and help your email provider learn to block messages from that server.

Even though email providers have active programs to help stop spam, it still comes. What winds up in your inbox is just a small fraction of the trash that is sent your way. Spammers are constantly changing techniques to defeat any filters.

You can work around the problem by creating and maintaining a "junk" or "throw down" email address that you know will be mostly spam. When I have to give out an email address to a website that I feel might be questionable, I provide the junk address and avoid possible spam in my "good" inboxes.

Backing Up

By Dan Douglas, President, Space Coast PC Users Group The Space Coast Journal www.spcug.com, datadan (at) msn.com

We've discussed the subjects of performing backups recently at our meetings, so I thought I would update the article I wrote on the topic back in 2018.

Two types of files are required to be backed up. There are your personal files, normally stored in the following folders under your login account in Windows: Desktop, Documents, Downloads, Favorites, Music, Pictures, and Videos. Each user that has an account on a PC has their own set of these folders. If the user only uses the programs that come with Windows or has a standard set of programs that they add to Windows that are can be easily re-installed either from a DVD/CD backup or a download file, then that makes backup and recovery much easier. The other type of files to be backed up would be the Windows System Files. These include the Windows Operating System itself plus all of the programs/apps, files, and data used by those programs/apps.

If you have all of your personal files backed up and you have the files required to reinstall your programs, then you can easily get a replacement PC or hard drive restored completely.

Just about every PC user has heard that they should back up their PC, but based upon what I've seen, only about 20% have an active plan in place.

The reasons that I've been told that users do not perform backups regularly are along these lines:

- I don't know how to set it up
- It will slow down my computer too much
- It's too costly
- I forget to do it

None of these are acceptable excuses anymore!

Let's go through these one by one and see how to address the issues.

Setting up your backup

In Control Panel, under every version of Windows since Vista, there is an app named Backup and Restore or Backup and Restore (Windows 7). This app is suitable for 99% of the user community.

This app lets you pick a target location for where your backup will be stored either on a local drive or a network storage location, which can include cloud storage. A schedule can be set for what frequency you want to use for creating your backups – daily and what time of day or weekly by day of the week and time of day or monthly by day of the month and at what time of day. You can also determine if you want just your file libraries

backed up or the whole disk(s). In both cases, a System Image will always be created as well. The System Image can be used by a restore program to exactly duplicate your hard drive onto a new PC or a new hard drive. The retention period can also be set for how long to keep a backup for or you can allow Windows to manage the space and to automatically replace the oldest backup with the newest.

Selecting the best time to perform your backup When you select the time of day to run the backup as described in the previous section, you must pick a time that will be when your computer will be powered on. The backup program cannot power on a PC that is turned off to perform a backup. So if you use it each Sunday at 7 pm, make sure you leave your PC on every Sunday evening. A backup that runs when you are using the PC can impact your responsiveness and will take longer to complete than running at a time that no one is using the PC.

Cost of running the backup

Since the backup program is included with every copy of Windows, there is no software cost. In addition, almost all external backup drives include a backup program of some sort. Cloning/backup software from Macrium is also recommended. The only cost is that of providing a backup drive, either as a local hard drive or a network-accessible location such as a Network Accessible Storage (NAS) or cloud storage. This drive can be used for other purposes so even that cost can be split across other activities. An external 5TB USB 3.0 drive can be bought for less than \$130 lately, so that's cheap insurance for not losing all of your data.

Set it once and it's automatic

As we saw in the sections above, once you set up the backup program, it will run automatically as long as the backup location is accessible and the computer is turned on at the scheduled time. Perhaps a repeating calendar reminder note will help make sure that you are always protected!

Restoring from a backup is best suited to situations where your hard drive is damaged and some files can no longer be accessed or the system won't even boot up. I've seen a lot of computers recently, where the owner complains of poor performance and upon investigation, I've been able to determine that it was a hard drive failing that was causing the lack of responsiveness. The hard drive would sometimes retry reading a file hundreds of times before either being successful or unsuccessful. This causes the hard drive to fall behind in any other requests for data and therefore the whole system slows down.

The File History app, which was introduced in Windows 8, is the best program to use for restoring individual files. Every time a file is created, changed, or deleted a copy can be written to the file history backup drive. This drive can then be used to restore a previous version if required. This is a great recovery tool if you are ever a victim of a ransomware attack where your personal files are encrypted. You can add additional directories to be backed up in addition to the normal set of personal file folders.

The option of Save copies of files specifies how often File History runs automatic backups. The default is hourly, but you can set the frequency to 10, 15, 20, or 30 minutes; 3, 6, or 12 hours; or choose to back up files once a day. Please note that a new version is created only when at least one item has changed in the file. The Keep saved versions option specifies how long to keep the backups. By default, these are kept forever, but you can also select 1, 3, 6, or 9 months, or 1 or 2 years. If your backup drives are tight on space, you can select the "Until space is needed" option and risk losing older backups quickly.

The best approach is to use the Backup and Restore program regularly, perhaps just using the System Image backup function, together with File History to fully protect all of your important files and folders. That way you will be protected against both hardware failures of the hard drive as well as accidental deletion or corruption of important documents.

Don't pass up the free cloud storage from Microsoft, Google, and others that can supplement what you backup to a local/network drive. Cloud storage is impractical for full drive/image backups due to the extremely long time that it would take to do a full recovery over the internet, but for individual files, it's great.

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.

w Work phone h Home phone c Cell phone * Meets at an alternate location

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

TUES Mon Sun WED THU Fri SAT 7pm General Mtg 9am-Noon Annual Mtg & Linux on Sat-Election of officers urday 6pm Tech Topics 9am-Noon Microsoft Office (including Access) 9am-Noon Linux on Saturday 7pm General Mtg 9am-Noon Microsoft Of-Τ̈́ΒΑ fice (including Access) 6pm Tech Topics



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.)



6/21 I'm signing up for: Here's the info for my TC/PC Membership: O Individual/Family Membership (\$18) O Business Membership (\$100) If an existing member your # Company name Make checks payable to: **Twin Cities PC User Group** 341 County Rd C2 W Roseville, MN 55113 State Zip http://www.tcpc.com OHome OBusiness OChange address: OPerm. OTemp. 'til _____ O Check # O Bill me Home phone_____ Work phone____ O New member O Renewal O Prior member I'm interested in: Online address(es) O Training classes O Volunteering O Special Interest Groups: New User, Access, Where did you hear about TC/PC? _____ List here: O I DO NOT want any of my information disclosed. O I DO NOT want to receive any mailings Administrative Use Only Rec'd

June 8, 2021 7:00 pm General Meeting

Annual Meeting And Election of Officers

Via Zoom

More info: www.tcpc.com



341 County Rd C2 W Roseville, MN 55113

FIRST CLASS MAIL