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

November 2021

General Meeting
Tuesday, November 9, 2021
7:00 PM

Encrypting Your Data

Location: Accord, 1515 Energy Park Dr. St. Paul, MN
and
Via Zoom

This month we will be viewing a webinar from APCUG with excellent information on keeping computer data secure using encryption. Mark Schulman will introduce us to some free encryption software and demonstrate how to encrypt single files, to create encrypted containers, and to encrypt entire drives. Mark is an IT professional working in a medical office where keeping patient data secure is critical, so he brings years of experience to the topic. If you have experience encrypting your own data, share that with the rest of us on Tuesday!

Directions to **Accord, 1515 Energy Park Drive** for **General Meetings**:From I-94 in St. Paul, take the Snelling Avenue exit, then go north on Snelling Avenue about one mile to Energy Park Drive. Take Energy Park Drive and take the first left into the driveway to 1515 Energy Park Drive.

From I-694 or Hwy 36 in St. Paul, take the Snelling Avenue exit, then go south on Snelling Avenue past Como Avenue to Energy Park Drive. Take Energy Park Drive and take the first left into the driveway to 1515 Energy Park Drive. 💻

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

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.

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Full page (7½ x 9½)	**$100.00**
Two-thirds page (7½ x 6)	**80.00**
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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 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

Roybi Robot

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

This is more than just a child's toy, although it is designed to be for a child.

In fact, it is an educational companion powered by AI (artificial intelligence).

It tutors young children in languages, with over 500 lessons, 70 categories and a 70,000 word vocabulary in Chinese and English.

In the company's words, "Through play, children can learn a second language, practice language arts, explore scientific subjects and develop communication and analytical thinking skills."

The categories include sessions in technology, math, science and language arts. Here are some of them:
Alphabet
Continents
Places
Math
Senses
Science
Biology
Nouns

The categories and content are updated from time to time.

The robot includes voice recognition (understands your child's responses), has a 1080p camera, has a durable body to withstand drops, is made with material that is safe for children, and has an 8 hour battery.

It is powered by connection to a USB port by the included cable.

Mandarin-Chinese and English are currently supported, but French, Spanish, German, and Russian versions are being planned.

Ages 2-8 are recommended for English use, but for learning a new language, there is no age limit.

An Android app is available for parent use for scheduling or directed learning.

Roybi Robot
https://roybirobot.com/
Price $300, currently $150 (4/3/21)

In 2021, vow to start using a password manager
By Kurt Jefferson, Editor, Central Kentucky Computer Society
January 2021 issue, CKCS Newsletter
www.ckcs.org, lextown2 (at) gmail.com

I keep telling students in my CKCS classes that they need to start using a password manager. You should be using a password manager on your iPad, iPhone, Mac, Windows PC, and Linux PC. Seriously? Yes.

With a good password manager, you only need to remember one password. That's right. You don't need to remember the one you use when you buy from Amazon. And the password you use to pay your water bill. And the one you use to log into your bank account.

Password managers are apps that securely keep track of your passwords, allow you to create private notes, automatically log you into your password-protected websites, and more.

Some of the best include:
- 1Password
- Dashlane
- LastPass
- Keeper
- NordPass
- RoboForm
- Sticky Password
- bitwarden
- RememBer
- Enpass

If you're reluctant to use a password manager, wired.com says you've got company. "Password managers are vegetables of the Internet. We know they're good for us, but most of us are happier snacking on the password equivalent of junk food," writes Wired in an article headlined, "The Best Password Managers to Secure Your Digital Life."

As I read that I said to myself, "Ain't that the truth." I know plenty of really smart people who are committed to their habits, who are stubborn, and who simply cannot change. They don't use password managers. You probably know your web browser will save your passwords automatically for you. The website Tech Republic says this is a bad idea.

Why you should never allow your web browser to save your passwords shows others can see your passwords. The article describes step–by–step procedures that someone can use to view your saved passwords in Google Chrome, Firefox, and Safari browsers.

The article concludes: "Don't allow your browser to save your passwords. None of them. Not one. If you do, those passwords are vulnerable. All someone has to do is have access to

your computer (remote or physical) and, unless you use Safari or the Master Password feature in Firefox, those passwords are available for anyone to see. If you absolutely must have your browser store your passwords, and you're not using macOS, make sure to use Firefox and enable the Master Password feature. Use Chrome at the peril of your passwords. In place of having your web browser store your passwords, make use of a password manager."

If you use a Mac, you might avoid using Apple's built-in keychain system and opt instead for a password manager. Glenn Fleishman, who writes about security issues for Macworld, gets into the details and digs deeper into this if you're interested.

Tom's Guide spoke with several digital–security experts. While some are not fond of password managers, plenty of others use them, trust them, and rely on them.

Cybernews writes, "You really should use a password manager. Yes, they have their flaws and vulnerabilities. But it's still better than re-using the same weak passwords and writing them down as a note on your smartphone that becomes a playground for your kids after work." 🖥️

Intro to Geocaching
Get outside, and find those hidden containers
By John Krout, Writer/Presenter, Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society
www.patacs.org, krout75 (at) yahoo.com

INTRODUCTION

What does geocaching mean? The word is derived from GEO, meaning the world, and CACHE, meaning a hidden container. The noun geocache means a box hidden somewhere, usually outdoors. The verb to geocache, or geocaching, refers to the process of the game. Another noun, geocacher, means anyone who plays the game.

The game got started in the general area of Portland Oregon in the year 2000. A hiker had several hiker friends and all owned hand-held GPS receivers. Those GPS receivers were the best solution of the time for tracking your hiking path, measuring the distance you traveled, and retracing your path back to your car.

The hiker decided to hide a box in the woods and obtained map coordinates of that spot using his GPS receiver. Then he emailed the map coordinates to his friends and challenged them to find the box. Many of them did and said they enjoyed the process thoroughly and asked him to do it again. Also, one or two of his friends hid other boxes and sent out map coordinates for those.

Eventually, a website was founded for providing the name, map coordinates, and other info about geocaches. The website URL is www.geocaching.com. Each cache has its own Web page on geocaching.com. As of early 2021, there are about 3 million geocaches in

the world, and over 1 million inside the US.

When I learned of Geocaching, in November 2002, I had been a map collector for 23 years, and I owned a hand-held hiking GPS receiver. Since the GPS receiver was, at the time, the equipment needed to participate in geocaching, and since I have always been fascinated by maps and geographic information, in the spring of 2003 I decided to give it a try.

Fortunately, the price of game entry has declined a lot. Back in 2000, those hand-held GPS receivers cost upwards of $300. In mid-2002, My first one cost about $150. Today, you can use the GPS receiver built into your smartphone, and appropriate free apps, to see and save info on geocaches you want to find, to display the description and photos posted by finders, and to see a direction and distance to a geocache. You can also see a map of local streets and perhaps you can identify trailheads and nearby parking on the map.
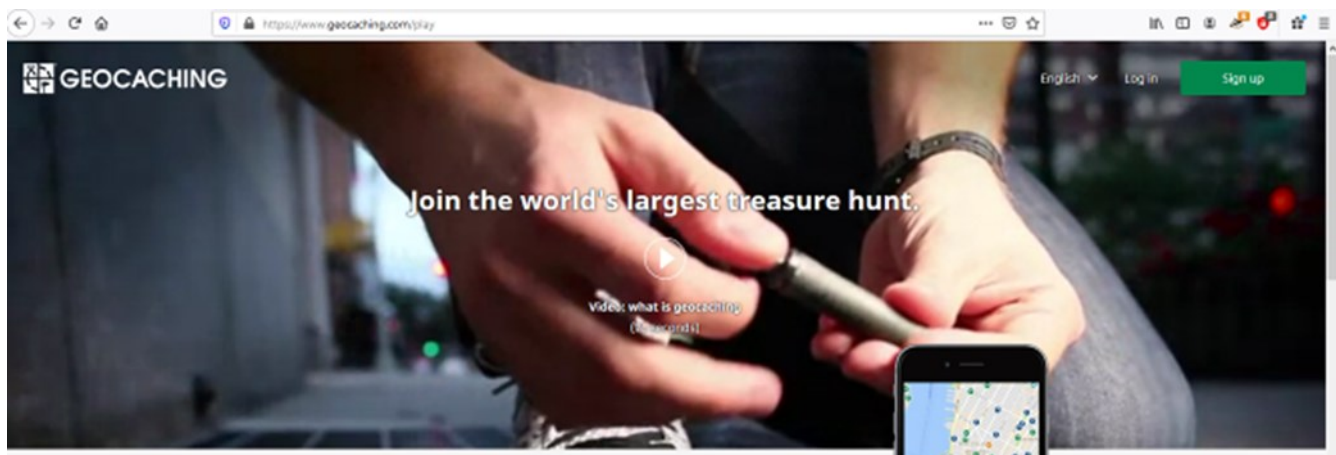
There are urban and suburban geocaches also, where trails are not involved and sometimes you might be able to park within 10 feet or so of the hidden geocache. Near where I live, some of the Smithsonian buildings have geocaches on the grounds, placed by museum staff.

Each geocache contains, at a minimum, a paper log on which you sign your account name and the date on which you found the container. Bigger geocaches may also contain trade goods, sometimes called swag. If you want to remove a swag item, then the protocol is that you need to put something in its place, in trade. While growing up, my kids were very enthusiastic about inspecting all the trade goods in a cache, looking for something of interest.

One important constraint: never put candy or food in a geocache. Those things attract animals. If you find food or candy in a geocache, then remove it.
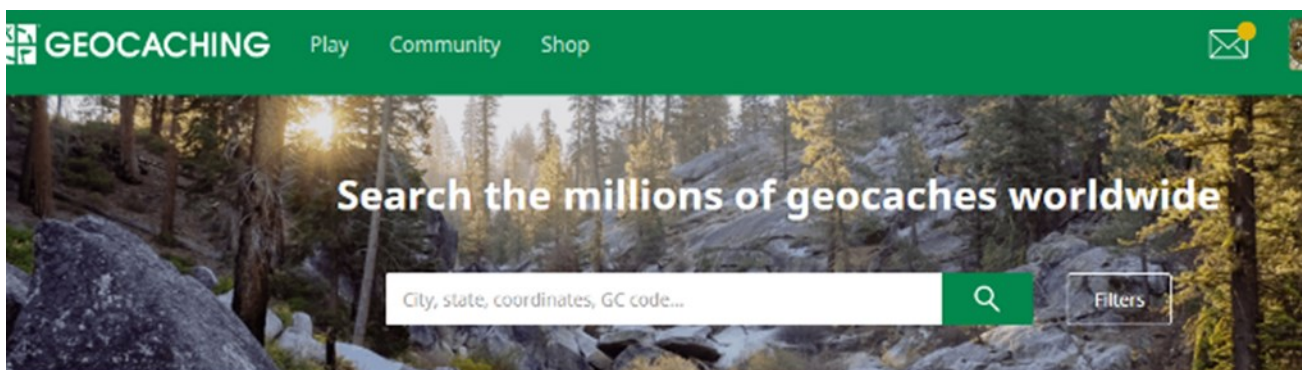
GEOCACHING.COM

The geocaching.com home page is shown in **Illustration 1**. You can tap the Play button, the triangle in the center of the home page, to see a 75-second video intro to the game.
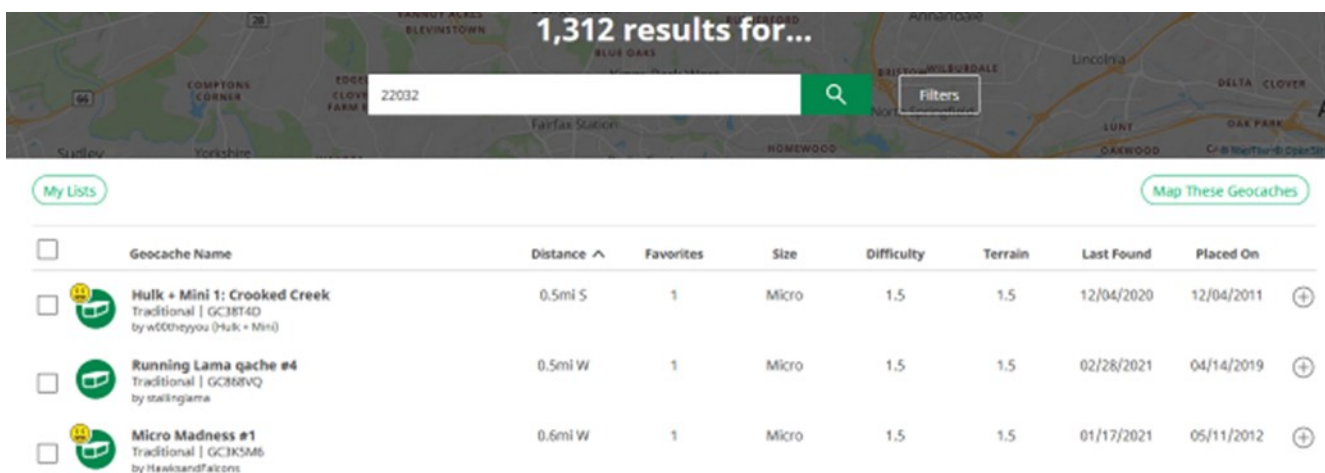
To obtain geocache info from this website, the site requires you to create a **free account**. Tap the SIGN UP button on the top right of the home page to begin creating your account. You need three items of info to create a free account: (1) an account name, 19 characters maximum, (2) a password, and (3) an email account. I strongly recommend that you do not use your first or last name in any one of those three items. The account name will be visible to all other account holders on geocaching.com, and the email account will be visible to system administrators. Keep it anonymous.

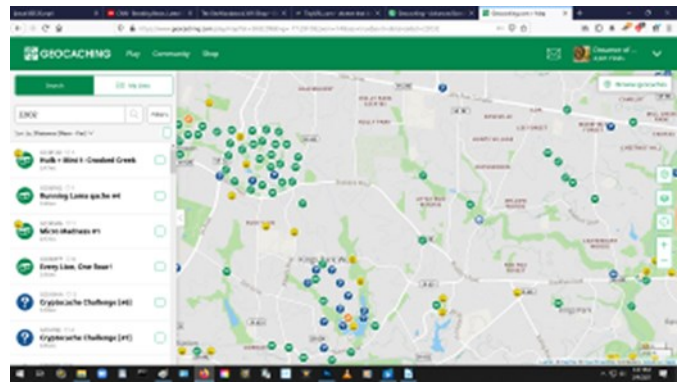The basic use of geocaching.com is to identify nearby caches. After you create an account or sign in, you will use the Search field in the center of the page, as shown in **Illustration 2**. In the search field, type your home Zip code as a first search. That will produce a list of geocaches, in order by distance from the center of the Zip code. You can see an
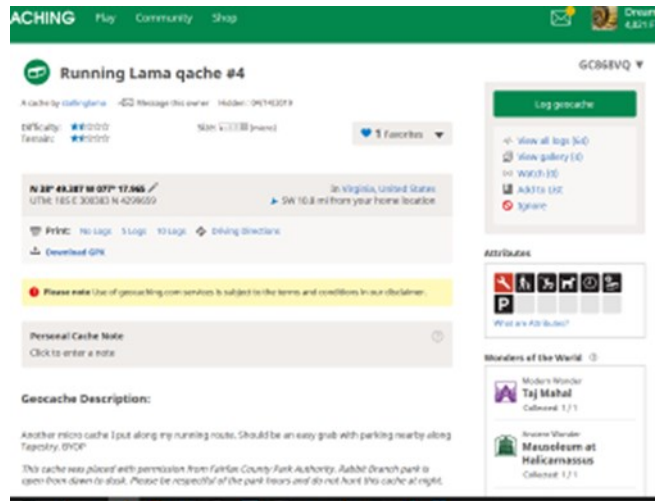

example in **Illustration 3** for Zip code 22032**.**

At the top right of the list, there is a **Map these Geo-caches** button. Click that button, and geocaching.com will display a map. The map includes an icon for each geocache. The smiley icon tells me that I have already logged finding the cache, so I need not find that one again. You can see a sample map in **Illustration 4.** On the map, you can click on any geocache icon to read about it.
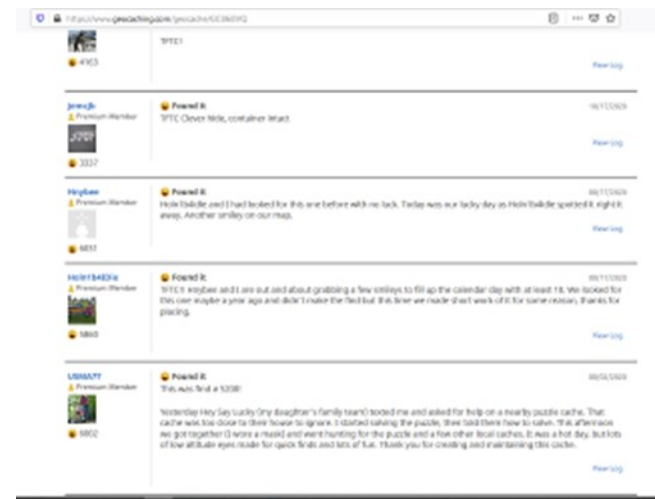
You can see the top of a sample geocaching.com page describing a cache in **Illustration 5**.

Geocaching.com does allow account holders to see map coordinates of geocaches, and to create an online log of their experience of finding each geocache. One advantage to you as an account holder for writing an online log is that geocaching.com reports to you the number of caches you have found. You can see some sample online logs from the sample cache page in **Illustration 6**. You will see an acronym TFTC in some of the logs. That is cacher-speak for Thanks for the Cache.

You can also report the condition of the geocache, and, in particular, if the paper log is full or is ruined by water. That will help the CO to maintain the geocache.

It can be fun in the online logs to provide hints indirectly that might help later cachers find the container.

GEOCACHING APPS FOR SMARTPHONES

I have used the **c:geo** app on my Android phone for about 7 years. It allows you to configure your account name and password so that the app can log into geocaching.com automatically whenever you start the app.

The app displays maps including cache icons, and you can tap a cache icon to read about it. You can save cache coordinates and other info on the smartphone for offline use, for instance in mountainous areas where cell power data service is unavailable   You can even install offline maps so that you can see the roads and trails without cell data service. You can use the app to log cache finds, though I prefer to write those logs on a computer.

Similar apps exist for iPhone and iPad users, such as **Cachly** and **Looking4Cache**.

WHO CREATES GEOCACHES?

Geocachers create geocaches. They want to give back to the geocaching community. They often want to show you a great spot that they have found, for instance, a waterfall known only to a few. Ruins and abandoned cars are popular hideouts. A person who creates a geocache, and writes about it on geocaching.com, is known as the Cache Owner, abbreviated CO.

The classic waterproof container is a US military metal ammunition box, known as an ammo box. Other typical containers are large plastic jars, like pretzel jars or nut jars. Smaller containers can include plastic sandwich containers, plastic military decontamination kits (decon kits), breath mint tins, pill bottles, and film bottles.

GEOCACHE SIZE RANGES

Knowing the size of a geocache often helps reduce the search effort. Every geocache has a size description, in addition to coordinates, terrain and difficulty ratings, and whatever else the CO wants to say about the cache. Here are the size definitions from the geocaching.com knowledge base, and some examples of containers:

LARGE= 20+ liters (sealed bucket)
REGULAR=1 liter to 20 liters (ammo boxes, plastic jars)
SMALL=100 milliliters to 1 liter (large bison tube or pill bottle)
MICRO < 100 milliliters (film bottle, pill bottle, small bison tube)

There is an informal type, called nano, a metal cylinder or plastic cone barely big enough to hold a 1/4th inch wide log strip wound into a spiral.

BENEFITS OF GEOCACHING

Aside from the bragging rights for finding lots of geocaches, for me, there have been health benefits. I was desk-bound as a software engineer and later a system documentation writer. In my case, I have gotten accustomed to hikes of 4 to 6 miles in up-and-down terrain, often an afternoon hike on trails to find half a dozen or more geocaches. My doctor told me to keep doing it, because the exercise brought down my blood pressure and heart rate, kept my weight down, and improved my stamina. I have hiked to find geocaches in parks and national forests in Virginia, where I live, but also In West Virginia, Wyoming, Texas, Massachusetts, Tennessee, Ohio, and many other states.

The parks generally welcome geocaches as a way to increase attendance in parks.

Urban and suburban geocaching is seldom so challenging physically, but the mental challenge is non-stop. There are indoor geocaches too, some in libraries, hidden between books or even inside a book.

GPS RECEPTION CAN VARY

GPS is not accurate even to the yard, and certain environments degrade the GPS signal. Trees do that, and tall buildings do that. Under trees, the accuracy is seldom better than about 20 feet, so when the GPS says you are close, look around and ask yourself: **Where would I hide it?**

In the woods, a common hiding tactic is to hide the container under sticks, bark or rocks, or in a hollow tree or log. Those man-made hideouts are called **geopiles**. You might also find an informal trail formed by prior finders, called a **geotrail**. I found one geocache a mile down a jeep trail in Idaho, under a pile of light-weight volcanic rocks, a type of rock I had never encountered on the East Coast.

A bigger GPS antenna helps. For most of us, the largest available antenna is in a tablet rather than a smartphone.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: John Krout has been writing and speaking about creative uses of personal computers since the early 1980s. After a long career as a software engineer for federal contractors, he wrote technical documentation about a major federal computer system during his final 14 years on the job. He is now retired and lives in Arlington Virginia with his son, many computers and cameras, and too many cats.

The Day the Music App Died
Google's Play Music app is gone on some Android devices, and soon will be completely gone
By John Krout, Writer/Presenter, Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society
www.patacs.org, krout75 (at) yahoo.com

INTRODUCTION

I am a music collector. I have a large collection of audio CDs; roughly 1,600 songs are on the micro-SD card in my Samsung Galaxy S10 phone. I bought that phone in late 2019, and my carrier recently upgraded the phone's Android OS to version 11.

I started my Android experience on a Galaxy S5 phone, which I still own. That phone runs Android 6. I also own two Galaxy tablets, a recently purchased S5e running Android 10, and a much older A model running Android 8.1.0.

On February 1, 2021, I started the Play Music app on my Galaxy Tab S5e. The app displayed a screen stating that Play Music is "no longer available". The same announcement recommended installing the YouTube Music app.

Google Play Music is no longer available

You can still transfer your library, including playlists and uploads, for a limited time

TRANSFER TO YOUTUBE MUSIC

MANAGE YOUR DATA

You can see that screen in **Illustration 1**.

WHY I WON'T USE THE YOUTUBE MUSIC APP

YouTube is owned by Google. The intent of the YouTube music app is to play music stored "in the cloud".

There are three reasons why that cloud storage approach is not ideal for me.

First, that network-intensive method is a classic way for a dedicated fan of music to run into the ceiling on cell network data usage very quickly each month, with financial penalties for exceeding the ceiling, if your carrier contract has such a limit.

Second, despite claims that music stored in the cloud is available wherever you go, there are vast stretches of the US where data service is minimal or is completely absent. Drive through any mountainous area and that becomes obvious very quickly. With 5G, which has a much shorter range than 4G, that problem will be even more acute. The mountains will be the last place carriers build the extra towers necessary to make 5G work on every mile of interstates. Don't count on that to happen on other mountain highways in the next ten years.

Third, there is a privacy issue. Music stored and accessed in the cloud is an invitation for the cloud storage provider to learn about one's music preferences and monetize that knowledge, such as through endless ads.

WHAT GOOGLE DECIDED TO DO

I went to my desktop computer and googled the status of the Play Music app. I learned that, in 2020, Google announced that the company would no longer support the app as of December 3, 2020.

That end of support, by itself, does not cause the app to stop working. I use the Play Music app daily on my S10 phone. So far, the app still works just fine.

The fact that Google **disabled** the Play Music app on my Tab S5e tablet was quite an unhappy surprise. Even with the music indexing quirks in Play Music, which I wrote about a couple of years back, the Play Music app was reliable and reasonably easy to use.

I surveyed the fate of the Play Music app on my other Android devices. On the S10 phone, running Android 11, the app can still play my music collection stored on the phone. On the S5 phone, running Android 6, the app can still play my music collection stored on the phone. On my Galaxy Tab A, the app acted like the app on the Tab S5e, displaying the no longer available screen.

I expect that the end is near for the Play Music app on my current S10 phone and my old S5 phone.

THERE ARE MANY OTHER MUSIC PLAYER APPS

Of course, I went to the Google Play Store and looked for music player apps. That category is a huge, bewildering forest. The Play Store app recommended some alternative searches, including "music player no ads", so I tried that. Ads are another unwelcome use of cellular network data.

For each app, I looked at the review rating average, the number of reviews, and the total number of downloads. I also made sure that each was capable of playing music stored on the phone, not in the cloud.

Musicolet has been downloaded 5 million times and has a 4.7 rating average in almost 120,000 reviews. That is a very strong rating average. So I downloaded that app on my Tab 5e.

When I started the Musicolet app and worked through its setup steps, I learned that it has one feature I liked immediately. The app provides the option to specify one or more particular folders on the phone or tablet in which to find sound files. I chose the folder on my micro-SD card where I parked my 1,600+ songs (1,637, according to Musicolet). The advantage is that, unlike Play Music, the app will ignore my voice memos that are stored in a different folder. Play Music app automatically threw in all my voice memos, which are far less entertaining than my music.

Musicolet also offers a feature to play songs in random order, sometimes called Shuffle Play, just like the Play Music app. I use that constantly so that my music sounds like an FM progressive music station in the 1970s. I have other music on my phone as well, from the 1950s through the 2000s.

Another ad-free music player app with just about the same attractive stats is **Pulsar Music Player**. This one claims to support use on car sound systems via Android Auto.

Most sound systems in recent cars already provide Bluetooth capability. If you only want to access phone or tablet music, and you do not have the Android Auto feature in your car, you can play music from your phone on the car stereo via Bluetooth. Android Auto offers other advantages.

THE BOTTOM LINE

I hope other app publishers do not follow this disappointing Google precedent. When support is ceased, let the user base continue to enjoy the capabilities of the app, at least until an Android OS update breaks the app.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: John Krout has been writing about creative uses of personal computers since the early 1980s. He worked for decades as a C and C++ developer for contractors of several federal government agencies. After more than a decade as a documentation writer for one such agency, he quit in April 2020 and now writes whatever he wants to. He resides in Arlington VA with his son, many computers and cameras, and too many cats.

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 **Accord, 1515 Energy Park Drive** for **General Meetings**:
From I-94 in St. Paul, take the Snelling Avenue exit, then go north on Snelling Avenue about one mile to Energy Park Drive. Take Energy Park Drive and take the first left into the driveway to 1515 Energy Park Drive.
From I-694 or Hwy 36 in St. Paul, take the Snelling Avenue exit, then go south on Snelling Avenue past Como Avenue to Energy Park Drive. Take Energy Park Drive and take the first left into the driveway to 1515 Energy Park Drive.

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

November

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 7pm General Mtg Encrypting Your Data 6pm Tech Topics	10	11	12	13 Linux on Saturday SIG 9am-Noon
14	15	16	17	18	19	20 Microsoft Office SIG (including Access) 9am-Noon
21	22	23	24	25	26	27

December

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 Linux on Saturday SIG 9am-Noon
12	13	14 7pm General Mtg TBA 6pm Tech Topics	15	16	17	18 Microsoft Office SIG (including Access) 9am-Noon
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Twin Cities
PC USER GROUP
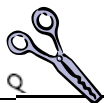
You have just read an issue of The Digital Viking.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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11/21

I'm signing up for:

❍ Individual/Family Membership ($18)
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If an existing member your # _____
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Twin Cities PC User Group
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http://www.tcpc.com

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

November 9, 2021
7:00 pm
General Meeting

Encrypting Your Data

Location: Accord,
1515 Energy Park Dr.
St. Paul, MN
and
Via Zoom

Twin Cities
PC USER GROUP

341 County Rd C2 W
Roseville, MN 55113

FIRST CLASS MAIL