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The Digital

Viking



Twin Cities

PC USER GROUP

NEWSLETTER

Minneapolis & St. Paul, Minnesota USA • Vol. 40 No.2• Sept. 2019

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, Sept. 10, 2019 7:00 PM

Show Us Your Gadgets

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

Whether it's a tech gadget or an app or program add-on or some "fix" you have discovered for a computer issue that you want to demonstrate and/or recommend or some computer issue you warn to us about, please bring it to the September meeting and give us a short spiel. A gift card to Micro Center may be your reward. 

Tech Topics with Jack Ungerleider leading off our meeting at 6:00 PM. Always new stuff to learn. 

Note: Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are back on the Calendar: Check out the calendar on page 14 for dates and times.

TC/PC is a Member of



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

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 2018-2019 Board of Directors

Meets once or twice per year. All members welcome to attend.

Visit www.tpc.com for meeting details.

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TC/PC Member Benefits

Product previews
and demonstrations

Special Interest Groups
Monthly Newsletter

Discounts on products
and services

Contests and prizes

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FREE ½ page ad on
payment of each renewal

20% discount on all ads
Placed in the *Digital
Viking* Newsletter

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

Newsletter Staff

Editor Sharon Walbran

Upcoming Meetings

Tuesday, October 8, 2019—Stratasys Tour— We will gather at Summit Place at 7pm and then go to the headquarters of Stratasys in Eden Prairie for a tour of their commercial 3D printing operations. **Note: No Tech Topics at 6pm on Oct. 8.**

New Amazon Alexa Skill (Plex)

By Jeff Wilkinson, Sun City Summerlin Computer Club, NV
www.scsccl.com, pres.scsccl@gmail.com

In a constant search for new things to try, I came across a new Amazon Alexa skill that I thought would be of interest to club members.

Requesting music on an Amazon Echo smart speaker or an Echo Dot, always seems to get an invitation to subscribe to more songs than I could ever listen to, for a monthly fee. Since I have a CD collection of the artists I enjoy, I've avoided signing up. The problem is – how do I play my music collection on my Amazon Echo smart speakers? I began looking for a solution and came across an Alexa skill that makes use of my Plex (www.plex.tv) media server.

What, you ask, is a Plex media server? In my case it's an always-on Windows 10 PC that resides on my network and has multiple drives with media such as music, movies and photos. The Plex media server organizes my music, photos and movies from various locations on my network and streams them to other devices such as a television, computer or personal device or an Amazon Echo. There is a free version of the Plex Media Server app and various paid versions which offer additional features. I am using the free version of Plex Media Server in conjunction with my Playon (www.playon.tv) app to record streaming videos from free services such as Tubi, Prime Video, the Roku Channel and many paid services you may subscribe to.

You can enable the Plex skill on your Amazon Echo smart speaker by opening the Alexa app on your computer or mobile device and looking for skills on the list on the menu on the left of your screen, select and then enter Plex in the search box. With your Plex media server on your same network and configured properly you can say "Alexa, ask Plex to play (artist, song or album)". I am still organizing my music collection, but I am amazed at how the Plex skill is able to locate specific songs or artists multiple folders deep. You can also add a Plex channel to your Roku device and watch movies, view photographs and play music stored on your Plex server.

While this may not be for everyone since it requires some "tweaking" it is a challenging task that let you play your music collection on you Amazon Smart speakers.
Until next month ...

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Sad Story, Happy Ending

**By John Roy, President, The PC Users Group of Connecticut
August 2019 issue, The Program, www.tpcug-ct.org
[johnroy1 \(at\) comcast.net](mailto:johnroy1@comcast.net)**

I have an Android phone and use Google Photos. I wanted to create some storage space on my phone and decided to delete photos that were already residing in the cloud in Google Photos.

Using a local photo application, I started deleting photos off my phone. Being a little tedious doing this one-by-one I looked for a select tool but couldn't find it. I then realized it was available on the Google Photo application so I then started some bulk deletes using Google Photos. I then had this startling revelation that I was deleting my cloud Google Photos and not the dupes residing on my phone. Panic quickly set in when I realized, in my haste, that I was no longer using the original phone application that was only deleting photos on my phone.

I took a deep breath and searched for recovery solutions. Hooray, there was an easy solution that I had never used. The photos were dumped into a trash bucket that holds deletions for 60 days. Following the steps below recovered the deleted photos.

Recover permanently deleted files from Google Photos in Trash

Files that are accidentally deleted from Google Photos will stay in your trash for 60 days. So, if you permanently delete your photos or video on your phone, you can try to fully retrieve them back in Trash during this period.

1. Open the Google Photos app and tap on "Menu." Then select your "Trash" folder.
2. All of your deleted files will be listed. Simply select the photos or videos you wish to recover, and then tap the Restore button to restore them. 

Very Large Array (VLA)

**Author: George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society, AZ
July 2019, www.aztcs.org, [actuary110 \(at\) yahoo.com](mailto:actuary110@yahoo.com)**

The VLA is a physical structure about 50 mile west of Socorro, New Mexico. It consists of 27 large disk radio telescopes in a "Y" arrangement, a Control Center and various auxiliary structures. The purpose is to capture and analyze radio waves being emitted from space to create meaningful pictures and data about outer space objects.

It was originally created in 1980 and has been significantly improved since then. It is used

by astronomers and others as needed in their respective occupations.

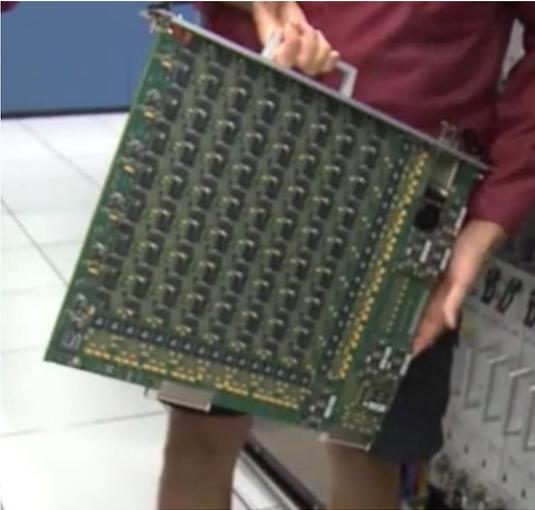


Each disk is massive, weighing 220 tons and is 82 feet in diameter and 94 feet high. It can rotate and tilt so as to aim in any given direction. Any disk can be moved along special railroad tracks. Since each disk presents such a large surface, they are subject to damage in high winds. In this event, the disk is parked pointing upward to present the least surface for the wind.



Each leg of the “y” formation contains nine disks, which can be rearranged in several ways. The configuration changes periodically from fully spread out along the “Y” to fully compressed and to two intermediate designs. The effect is to widen the aperture of the telescopes or to narrow them.

The signals from each disk are transferred by fiber optic cables to a system which translates the analog data to digital. The process is quite complicated but is performed by a supercomputer called the correlator.



Each of the boards comprising the correlator contains some 180 ICs each with from 250 to 600 pins. VLA personnel state that it is five times faster than the fastest general- purpose computer in the world!

Anyone can access the data produced, for whatever purpose desired. The VLA can be requested for a particular job needed by an astronomer by submitting a proposal. If approved, the proposal is translated into a script for controlling the array for a specific period of time. After completion, the results are given to the requestor and after some months made available to the general public.

The facility is open to the public and a visitor center is available. Tours are provided from time to time.

The site of the VLA is the plains of San Augustin, selected to be as far away from other electronic emanations as possible. Cell phones, for example, emit a radio signal several hundred times louder than the faint signals from outer space. Visitors are asked to keep their phones in airplane mode to mask these signals. In addition, the plains are surrounded by mountains which help to shield the array from man-made radio noise.

For more information see
<https://public.nrao.edu/telescopes/vla/>

The Very Large Array is owned and operated by the National Radio Astronomy Observatory.

A few of my favorite things (aka websites)

**By Lou Torraca, President Emeritus, The Tug – MOAA User Group, HI
August 2019 issue, The Tug Newsletter, www.the-tug.org
editor (at) the-tug.org**

Time for an update of My Favorite Things...can you hear Julie Andrews singing the song: Raindrops on Roses and Whiskers on Kittens; Bright Copper Kettles and Warm Woolen Mittens; Brown Paper Packages tied up with Strings, These are a few of my favorite things.

We all spend lots of time on the 'net, but the sheer size of it makes it hard to find lots of neat places unless someone tells us, so, I've made a list of some of my favorite things (aka web pages) and I've added a few brief comments on each, but you really need to go there yourself and see what's there and in some cases try out the program.

<https://alternativeto.net>

It's really easy to find any alternatives for a software program that you don't want to spend big bucks on when you use the search function at this website.

<http://www.nasa.gov>

Hard to beat this one for kids of all ages. Lots of great information and images, things to do and games for everyone.

<http://www.wpclipart.com>

This is where some of the clipart you see at the top of this column comes from. The owner, Mr. Paul Sherman has posted them for public use, free of any restrictions. So, feel free to use them in your letters, e-mails or whatever. Thanks, Paul!

<http://www.musipedia.org>

The folks at Musipedia are busy building a searchable, editable, and expandable encyclopedia of tunes. And you're invited to take part in the action. Their Melodyhound can find a tune even if all you know is the melody. Or, see the next one.

<http://thenostalgiamachine.com/>

Pick a year and you will get a list of that year's hit to listen to

<https://www.popularmechanics.com/>

Pretty much anything you can think of is probably on this webpage!

<https://radio.garden/listen/wpkn/e0lD4oHy>

This is one you will love. Search the globe for radio stations anywhere in the world!

<http://www.merriam-webster.com>

If you do any amount of writing, whether for the office or just e-mails, I'd be surprised if you haven't found this one, which, along with the Encyclopedia Britannica are essential tools.

5

<http://twitter.com>

After blogs, this one was inevitable...you "twitter" (yes, it's a verb) by answering the question "What are you doing?" in 280 characters or less. It looks like more of a fun thing than a serious one as you can see from the example of how little 280 characters is.

<http://www.gcflearnfree.org>

This page is an incredible online learning site from the Goodwill Community Foundation. On the site, there are thousands of video lessons covering 125 topics, taught by professional educators. Topics are geared to everyone from kids, to college students, to people who want to learn English, or even adults who need to beef up on job skills, like learning to write a resume or using Microsoft Office.

<https://www.travelblog.org>

This is a place where you can write an ongoing blog documenting your travels. It's a great way to share stories and chronicle your trip.

<https://www.afi.com>

Here you will find an amazing amount of information about films you have seen or wanted to...complete story lines, a list of the top 100 films and lots more to explore. If you are a film buff, you will love this site.

Hope you enjoy exploring these; have fun out there on the www, but remember to be safe! Aloha, Lou 🖥️



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Musings on Medicine and Computers

Author: Maryellen Amato, M.D., Member, ICON Users Group, MO

April 2019 issue, The ICON Newsletter

www.iconusersgroup.org, [meamato76 \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:meamato76@gmail.com)

When Mary Phillips asked if I would be willing to write an article for the ICON newsletter, I didn't want to say no, even though I was a newbie. After all, Mary had done so much for me. When I attended the Mercy Seniors' Computer Course last year, she sat next to me, guiding me on my journey into Windows 10 which I had never before used. She was forever patient and encouraging.

Mary also introduced me to the ICON meetings at our local libraries, and I soon joined ICON and tried to attend as many of the meetings as I could. Month after month I would observe Mary arriving early and staying late, lugging equipment and paperwork in and out of these meetings, using her time and skills as a top-notch teacher to lead and guide our group into new worlds of technology. From Mary as well as from our guest speakers, I learned about things ranging from genealogy to drones.

I did not want to admit to anyone that I had worked with computers for many years in a limited setting.

You see, the computers that I used at the hospitals or out-patient facilities where I worked

had already been purchased, set up, turned on, and preloaded with the programs and apps that we needed to use. In addition, there was a group of savvy computer information technologists at our beck and call if there was ever a question or problem.

So what can I, someone with somewhat “limited” computer experience, discuss in an article?

That got me thinking. Since I am trying to cultivate an attitude of gratitude, I thought I would share my gratitude for computers in Medicine, which have changed all of our lives, mostly for the better.

When I started medical school in 1977 (Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio), we had a refrigerated room full of large bulky computers tucked away somewhere, but we never worked with them. If I wanted to better understand something or look something up – in medical school or in my early years of medical practice – I had to make a mad dash to the medical library to search for a book that might have the information I might need. (... and I would be praying that book was not checked out!) As I progressed in my studies and years of experience as a diagnostic radiologist, my mad dashes became less frequent, but occasionally a disease we didn't see too often or a pressing question caused me to hit the books. This was especially difficult when I was on call in the middle of the night, the only physician available, and was even worse if the medical library was locked. It was also very time consuming and took me away from my patients.

Voila! The biggest benefit of having a laptop or an iPhone connected to the internet was that medical information was now at my fingertips. The mad dashes to the library became things of the past.

In addition, when I was on call at night, for most of my career, I would have to physically be present at the hospital or drive in from home at 3 a.m. or whatever ungodly time I was called. Now I could sit in front of a computer screen at my home and call up the x-ray images I needed to read. I did not even have to get out of my pajamas or bunny slippers to make the harrowing drive through fog, ice, and snow.

Computers also translated into great benefits in a number of other helpful ways. When I started my career, patient requisitions for imaging tests were written out by hand and had to make it down to the X-ray department. Imagine the frustration we felt when we got a requisition for a test “to be done TODAY” at 6 p.m., particularly noting the test was ordered at 1 p.m. Computers did away with these delays.

Our reports of completed tests also got out sooner. For many years, after interpreting an x-ray, I dictated my findings into a machine that was transcribed by a pool of transcriptionists. It sometimes took a couple of days for the report to be typed. Toward the latter part of my career, this time was chopped since we were now typing our own reports or using voice dictation algorithms. Signing a completed report was also much easier. Back in the day when each report was typed using carbon copies, if we

altered a single word on the page (such as changing the word left to right, a critical change), the entire report had to be retyped for just that one word and sent back to the typing pool. That might cause a delay of an additional few days. Now we could just pull up the reports on our computer monitors, make changes ourselves, push the button, and send the report on its way immediately.

The way that x-rays were taken and stored also evolved during my career due to computer technology. We went from using film (like film in your old camera, only bigger and heavier film) to using digital images that were quicker to acquire and easier to store and retrieve.

With our old-fashioned x-ray film, we had to take time to put the films up on lightboxes and take time to sort through dozens of old films in heavy folders to search for comparison views so we could assess for new or interval changes. Sometimes those old films were even stored in the bowels of the hospital and we had to wait hours to get them, delaying our final interpretation. Even worse, sometimes the old films were lost!

I had a ruler, a magnifying glass, and a “hot light” sitting next to me on my desk. My “hot light” was bolted down, but sometimes someone would “borrow” my ruler or magnifying glass and I would become irate. These tools are no longer needed since computers come with their own measuring and magnifying tools, and the background and intensity of images can be “dialed” up or down. This also slashed the need for radiologic technologists to re-take films if an image was over or underexposed. This translated into less radiation for the patient as well as great time savings.

Many computerized imaging studies which we use commonly today were also either not in existence or only being dreamt of in the 1970s. This includes the CT scanner, invented by British engineer Godfrey Hounsfield (a Nobel Prize winner that I had the privilege of meeting). The “C” in CT stands for computerized – and CT is shorthand for computerized tomography. This allows for making x-ray slices of body parts, improving our diagnostic capabilities. Without going into all the computer detail and physics involved, let me simply say that this was revolutionary. Diagnoses are now made more quickly, more accurately, and often with less pain for the patient because of CT and computers.

When I started my radiology residency in 1981 at Washington University, it took an entire hour to do a CT scan on a patient’s chest. This meant that the patient had to hold their breath multiple times and the images were more likely to be degraded by motion artifact. In addition, only a limited number of patients could be scanned in a day and there was a waiting list so we scanned into the night hours. Today, it only takes a matter of seconds or less to scan someone’s chest (or other body part), so it can be done on a single breath-hold. It actually takes longer to get the patient on and off the scanning table than it does to do the scan itself! This means quicker diagnoses and increased patient “throughput.”

Virtually all of our current imaging modalities are dependent on computers, ranging from digital mammography to MRI (magnetic resonance imaging).

I have just touched the tip of the iceberg here, but I think you get the idea. Computers in

Medicine have been extraordinary and they are here to stay, unless they are replaced by another technology that is currently in someone's imagination.🖥️

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Password Managers

By Dave Gerber, Windows 10 Forum, Sarasota Technology Users Club, Florida
July 2019, www.thestug.org, [davegerber1 \(at\) verizon.net](mailto:davegerber1@verizon.net)

A question about Password Managers came up during the Windows 10 Forum at the July STUG Meeting so I thought I'd share some info common to all of the best known and reputable programs ... Dave Gerber

Password managers are the most recommended tool by security experts to protect your online credentials from hackers. But many people are still hesitant to use them. Here's why password managers are safe, secure, and your best defense against password-hungry cyber criminals.

What is a password manager?

Think of it like a safe for your passwords. When you need something inside the safe, you unlock it. Password managers work the same for your online credentials.

You create a single, super-strong password, which acts like a key. Install the password manager app on your phone, computer, browser, and other devices. Your passwords are securely stored inside it. Anytime you need to log in to an account, unlock your password manager and retrieve your login info.

With website vulnerabilities and security incidents on the rise, many people have grown to mistrust a tech tool to manage their passwords. What if the password manager gets hacked?

Reputable password managers take extra steps to lock down your info and keep it safe from cyber criminals.

A good password manager:

- Doesn't know your master password (so hackers can never steal it)

- Encrypts all your data

- Does not store any of your data on their servers

- Can generate strong, secure password

No privacy tool can completely guarantee your online safety. Even the most elaborate lock can be broken into. Yet we still lock our doors to our houses and cars.

The alternative to using a password manager is to rely on your own memory to remember all your credentials. This inevitably leads to recycling passwords or using variations — a bad habit that hackers love.

Password managers can be such an effective security tool because they help us improve bad habits. With a password manager installed on your computer and phone, it's a lot easier to take your logins everywhere so you can use unique, strong passwords on every account.

Password managers don't store all your credentials together in one place. Any data you store in a password manager — passwords, logins, security questions, and other sensitive info — is securely encrypted. Even if the password manager gets hacked, cyber criminals would not be able to see your logins.

The only way to access your data is with a single master password that only you know. You use this password to unlock the manager on your computer, phone, or other devices. Once it's unlocked, a password manager can fill in your logins to websites and apps.

Our memories sometimes fail us. Ever clicked a “forgot password?” link? It's very common to use variations of the same password to make them easier to remember. With a password manager, you don't need to remember any of your credentials. It can be installed on all your devices and will auto-fill your passwords for you. Once you get in the habit of using one, you'll no longer have to worry about forgetting your credentials.

Sure, it takes time to log all your credentials in a password manager. But you don't need to do it all at once. You can always start small and change just a few passwords at a time. Try installing a password manager and creating new, unique passwords for the websites you visit most frequently. Over time, as you log in to other sites, you can add others. 

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Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

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

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.tpc.com

Board of Directors*

All members are welcome! Check www.tpc.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 Kuhlmeier 952/934-8492
skuhlmeier@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 Kuhlmeier 952/934-8492
skuhlmeier@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.tpc.com

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

September October

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 General Mtg Show Us Your Gadgets 6pm Tech Topics	11	12	13	14 9am-Noon Linux on Sat- urday
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 9am-Noon Microsoft Office (including Access)
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 General Mtg Stratasy's Com- pany Tour No Tech Topics	9	10	11	12 9am-Noon Linux on Sat- urday
13	14	15	16	17	18	19 9am-Noon Microsoft Office (including Access)
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
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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.)



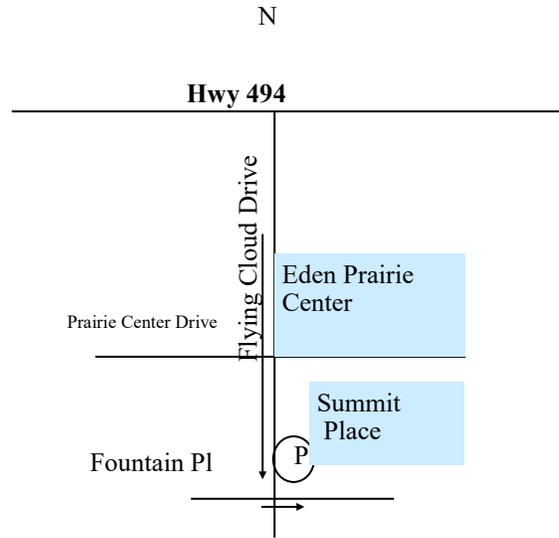
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September 10, 2019
General Meeting 7:00 PM

Show Us Your Gadgets

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

More info and map: www.tpc.com



341 County Rd C2 W
Roseville, MN 55113

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