

Bits of Bytes

Newsletter of the Pikes Peak Computer Application Society, Colorado Springs, CO

Volume XLII

December 2022

Issue 12



The Prez Sez

by Cary Quinn,
President,
P*PCompAS

For officer nominations in December, I will be putting my hat in the ring for the position of 2023 President. If my work schedule causes conflicts with attending meetings, it is my hope that the Bylaws will allow me to appoint a replacement member to preside over that month's meeting.

For the December meeting, I have a couple of videos covering different levels.

Beginner topic: PortableApps; free is good.

Intermediate topic: They're not selling your data. It's much worse; with Naomi Brockwell.

Advanced topic: Windows Optimization with Chris Titus' Winutils. ☺

Meeting Minutes

by Greg Lenihan,
P*PCompAS Secretary

President Cary Quinn opened the 5 November 2022 membership meeting at 9:13 am. David George made the coffee, and we had no doughnuts, but Cary Quinn offered to get some during the first break. A \$1 donation is requested from members for doughnuts and coffee. A motion was made to approve the October minutes in the newsletter and the motion passed.

OFFICER REPORTS

President Cary Quinn said the presentation today would be by Judy T aylour from the APCUG on

Next P*PCompAS meeting: Saturday, 3 December 2022

Ann Titus will show two videos on USB-C and streaming. Cary Quinn will then show some beginner, intermediate, and advanced topics.

the topic of social media for seniors. He is still working on a presentation for December.

Secretary/Newsletter Editor Greg Lenihan announced the next newsletter deadline is 19 November.

Treasurer Toni Logan stated our savings account grew by another 12 cents and currently is at \$2833.12; checking stands at \$21.74 for a combined total of \$2854.86.

Membership Chair Ann Titus had nothing to report.

Librarian Paul Godfrey had nothing to report.

APCUG Rep/Webmaster Joe Nuvolini said our website continues to run and we need to pay our APCUG dues.

BOD Chair Ann Titus reported on a meeting with the Board, which has been published in this newsletter.

OLD BUSINESS

Cary Quinn visited Golden Corral and gathered prices and hours that were printed in the October newsletter. Since they do not currently open until 11 am, we will maintain our monthly breakfasts at Perkins.

The club is still looking into a microphone solution for our meetings.

The club is looking for officers for next year. Cary Quinn said he would be willing to be vice president.

Paul Godfrey has been in discussions with Natalie at the church about the donation of two motorized screens for sale. He is currently waiting for a response from Natalie.

Officer Elections

December is when we elect officers for next year. Not all positions have candidates yet, so consider running for office. Nominations can be accepted at the December meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Joe Nuvolini said December is the last month he will set up equipment prior to the meeting. He will be available at 7 am on December 3rd to train anyone willing to take on that role. The person doing this should also be our interface with the church.

Joe does not want to file our 501(c)3 tax return in the future. Toni Logan said she should do it as Treasurer. Joe will give Toni the needed information. Joe will keep the roles of webmaster and APCUG representative.

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Officers

President: Cary Quinn
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Vice President: Vacant

Secretary: Greg Lenihan
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Treasurer: Antoinette Logan
antoinettelogan@gmail.com

Staff

APCUG Rep/Webmaster: Joe Nuvolini

Barista: David George
Drawings: Cary Quinn
Editor: Greg Lenihan
Librarian: Paul Godfrey
Membership: Ann Titus

Committees

Audio: A.J. Whelan
Hospitality: Vacant
Programs: Vacant
Publicity: Vacant
Nominating: Vacant

Board of Directors

Ann Titus
Harvey McMinn
Joe Nuvolini (for Jeff Towne)
A.J. Whelan
John Pearce



President Cary Quinn at the November meeting.



Presenter Judy Taylour from APCUG.



Members present at the November meeting.



Digerati at the November breakfast. (Picture by Cary Quinn)

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P*PCompas welcomes any comments, letters, or articles from members and non-members alike. Please send any articles to the editor (see last page for address). The editor reserves the right to reject, postpone, or edit for space, style, grammar, and clarity of any material submitted.

Meeting Minutes (Cont. from page 1)

We will vote on officers next month so will need to take nominations from the floor for president.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next social breakfast meeting will be Saturday, 19 November, at Perkins, starting at 8:00 am.

Our next membership meeting is Saturday, 3 December.

John Pearce brought in cables and CDs and offered them to anyone wanting them.

Cary brought in the 3 monitors offered for the drawing last month. The larger 23-inch HP monitor did not have a power cable.

AROUND THE ROOM

John Pearce continued his saga of scanning financial documents. He downloaded Paperport SE software that takes over his scanner and handles OCR well, but does not handle graphics well, like tables with lines and columns.

Cary Quinn said a decision was made to keep the club computer running on Windows 10 for now and not upgrading to Windows 11.

AJ Whelan asked where to take a Samsung S8 cell phone that needs a new battery. Two suggestions were "Batteries + Bulbs" or "You Break We Fix."

Harvey McMinn listened to YouTube videos on Starlink and routers. He bought an AX10000 triband Wi-Fi 6 gaming router. Starlink is working well for him, so he canceled CenturyLink. He also bought himself a Walabot to find things in the wall.

Ann Titus must have hit the wrong button and inadvertently got Windows 11 and does not recommend it. She is now back to running Windows 10.

Greg Lenihan showed off a Minisforum TH50 mini PC he

bought that looks like a small square box, but has all the ports and specs that he wanted. It runs Windows 11 Pro, has 16 GB of RAM, and a 512 SSD for around \$440 (with taxes).

Jim Miller wasn't able to download brokerage statements anymore into his Quicken program. He called the company and they don't support his older format. They tried to set him up, but the data he receives is now pretty much worthless. He ended up restoring his version from a backup and is now able to read his statements.

Toni Logan bought a Ring doorbell. Afterwards, her indoor doorbell did not ring. Long ago, they had installed a diode when they had a chime, but Bob Logan fixed it.

Cary Quinn had a desktop computer fail with a burnt electronics smell. It appeared to be a fan in one of two internal video cards. He is going to have to order a fan. Right now he has an external fan blowing at the computer.

PRESENTATION

Judy Tylour from the APCUG gave a program on social media for seniors. She covered many different types of social media, security tips, and special settings. ☺

Minutes from the Board of Directors Meeting held in October 2022 - from Ann Titus

Recognize the obvious, that age and physical challenges make it very important to have specific contact information available. This would include church contacts.

The treasurer is probably the one who should have contact information for IRS payments for our 501c3. We could keep a flash drive with our trunk at the church (and possibly with the treasurer) with our contact information.

The Board does not recommend raising the cost of doughnuts or coffee. Anyone who feels generous is welcome to add extra to the fund.

Per our bylaws, we need to have a president. If he/she cannot attend, then someone else can step in. Ann Titus has prepared a list of items to be covered at each meeting to simplify the process.

The same applies to the vice president. Between the APCUG programs and various topics that others have collected, it is not a problem for someone else to step up and conduct a program.

John Pearce has once again volunteered to look into solving the microphone problem. We really need a good system as more of us have hearing challenges these days in addition to the members who attend remotely. ☺

One Year On, Windows 11 Still Hasn't Taken Off

by Dave McQuilling, reprinted with permission from [ReviewGeek.com](https://www.reviewgeek.com)

Original article at: <https://www.reviewgeek.com/135386/one-year-on-windows-11-still-hasnt-taken-off/>

Windows 11's launch was fraught with problems. Alongside the bugs and compatibility issues that come with the launch of a new operating system, Windows 11 also had [stringent hardware requirements](#) that left many people unable to get it, even if they wanted to. One year on, and uptake is still bad.

Even though those [hardware requirements](#) have relaxed slightly, only 15% of PC users are currently running Windows 11. That's only around 5% more than the number of people using Windows 7, despite support for that particular OS being withdrawn over two years ago.

The current most popular operating system is Windows 10, with over 70% of machines running

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USB's Confusing Names and Numbers are Being Simplified

by Arol Wright, reprinted with permission from [HowToGeek.com](https://www.howtogeek.com)

Original article at: [usb%e2%80%99s-confusing-names-and-numbers-are-being-simplified/](https://www.howtogeek.com/2022/08/09/usb-confusing-names-and-numbers-are-being-simplified/)



The USB standard often gets a bad rep because of its overly-confusing labels and brands, but it might be about to get easier very soon. The USB Implementers Forum (USB-IF) has announced a series of new branding guidelines that *should*, in theory, make things simpler to read.

As per the new guidelines announced, the USB-IF is dropping most of its older branding, continuing as the culmination of an effort that began last year. For one, the "SuperSpeed" name, which was first used by USB 3.0 when it was released, is no more. And neither is USB 3, USB 3.2, or even USB4, for that matter. Instead, the consumer-facing name will just be "USB" and the exact speed.

Instead of referring to USB ports or devices by a version number, the USB-IF is instead shifting to naming that reflects actual specs, rather than

actual transfer speeds. If a cable supports a specific charging wattage, they'll also have to list it.

Basically, if a USB port supports 40Gbps data transfer and 240W charging speeds, it shall be marketed as "USB 40Gbps 240W." That's... Still pretty bad, but probably better than USB's previous system ([USB4 Version 2.0, anyone?](#)), since at least the consumer knows what specifications they'll get.

Expect to start seeing this new scheme within the next few months on new hardware devices. This is very unlikely to serve as an end-all solution to USB's branding woes, and it has a very real chance of making things worse, but being honest, there's probably no way to fix that properly at this point. ☹



Logo Name	Packaging Logo	Port Logo	Device/Power Port Logo	Logo Name	Packaging Logo	Cable Logo
USB 40Gbps	USB 40	40 Gbps	40 Gbps	USB 40Gbps Cable	USB 40	40 Gbps 240W
USB 20Gbps	USB 20	20 Gbps	20 Gbps	USB 20Gbps Cable	USB 20	20 Gbps 240W
USB 10Gbps	USB 10	10 Gbps	10 Gbps	USB 10Gbps Cable	USB 10	10 Gbps 240W
USB 5Gbps	USB 5	5 Gbps	5 Gbps	Hi-Speed USB Cable	USB 240W	60W

Win 11 Still Hasn't Taken Off (Continued from page 3)

it at this time. Those users may not be in a rush to upgrade either, as Windows 10 support is [set to last until October 2025](#) at the very least.

Overall, Windows users account for around 80% of the desktop and laptop market. iOS users, who use Apple products like Macs and

MacBooks, account for 15%, with the remaining 5% using open-source operating systems like Linux.

Businesses may be behind the low uptake. Between the hardware requirements, the ongoing support for Windows 10, and the current economic climate—one of Microsoft's markets might be holding off on making the upgrade.

Shortly after its release, Microsoft did scale down a few of Windows 11's requirements, but nothing major really happened. The most significant change was arguably a couple of 7th Gen Intel Processors cropping up on the list of compatible hardware. As things stand, more drastic changes may be needed before the majority of users commit to an upgrade. ☹

Nine Tips for Online Holiday Shoppers

By Bob Rankin, <http://askbobrankin.com>, published through the APCUG

In last year's holiday shopping season, spending totaled \$887 billion, up over 14 percent from the previous year. Post-pandemic shoppers are back in stores, but ecommerce sales are expected to rise again. Fortunately, some tools have emerged to help consumers find the best deals. Check out these clever tips to help you save money when you shop online for the holidays...

Try These Online Shopping Tools

Shopping online is a two-step process; first, find the product you want, and then find the best price for it. A lot of factors may come into play, including sales tax, shipping fees, and the availability of discount coupon codes. Here are some nifty tools that will try to help you get the lowest price when shopping online...

Lots of people shop on Amazon because of their "free 2-day shipping" option for [Amazon Prime](#) members. But the truth is that free shipping isn't always free, and Amazon's price for a given item is not guaranteed to be the lowest.

[Paypal Honey](#) automatically finds coupon codes for you while you are shopping. Just register at Honey's site and install the browser extension for Chrome or Firefox. Then, when you add an item to a site's shopping cart, click the Honey icon to display the coupon code that saves you the most money (or learn that no coupons are available).

When shopping on Amazon, Honey compares sellers for you, and takes into account shipping costs and your Prime status. Honey's price tracking and price history tools will tell you if it's a good time to buy the item, or if it might be better to wait. The Droplist feature lets you mark an item you're not ready to buy yet. If Honey detects a price drop at that store, they'll notify you.

The coupon codes provided by Honey work most of the time and save users considerable amounts of money. The company says that users save an average of 17.9% (or about \$129) when shopping with their 30,000 participating merchants. Honey has a loyalty rewards program that pays "Honey Gold," a feature that lets you earn gift cards which can be redeemed at popular stores. [Honey's privacy policy](#) is refreshing and clear: "We know how important your personal data is to you, so we will never sell it without your express permission first."

[Capital One Shopping](#), formerly known as WikiBuy has price comparison and coupon finder tools, similar to Honey. Capital One Financial Corporation bought WikiBuy a few years ago, and I have shied away from it since. Maybe it has something to do with the fact that they also bought Paribus and rolled it in to the Capital One Shopping app. Paribus snoops around in your email inbox to find out where you've been shopping and what you buy. Or maybe it's the new name, so closely associated with a huge financial corporation, that gives me pause. (What's in my wallet? None of your business, Jennifer Garner.)

[Rakuten \(formerly Ebates\)](#) has a simple, straightforward business model known as a loyalty program. The company earns a commission from participating sellers each time a Rakuten member makes a purchase. Part of that money is shared with members as cash back payments. Rakuten has over 15 million members and they've paid out over \$2 billion in cash back rewards since 1999. According to their stats, the average member saves \$63.50 per year.

Rakuten offers up to 25% in cash rebates when you shop online at popular stores like Amazon, Best Buy, JCPenney, Kohls, Macy's, Old Navy, Target and over 3500 more. There are no points, and no "funny money" -- you get cash to spend however and wherever you wish. You get paid every three months via your choice of Paypal or paper check. You can join Rakuten for free and get a new member \$10 Welcome Bonus if spend at least \$25 within ninety days.

Price comparison services like [Google Shopping](#) are also handy for bargain hunters. Other price comparison tools such as [Bizrate](#) and [Pricegrabber](#) let you compare prices when shopping for computers, electronics, clothing, cameras, sporting goods, furniture, appliances, toys, and other popular categories.

The [Camelizer extension](#) works only with Amazon. It provides a shortcut to the CamelCamelCamel database of historical prices, presenting charts that show how the price of an item has varied over time. Amazon prices, along with new and used Marketplace sellers' prices

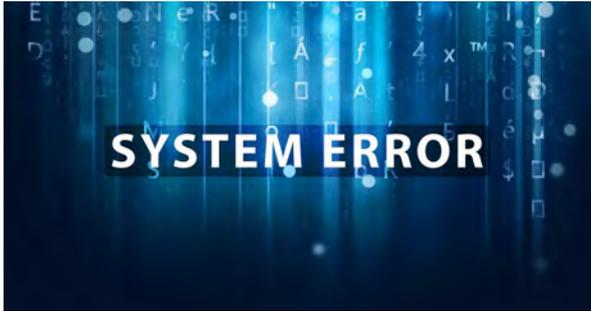
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How to Back Up a Machine That Won't Boot

You need to boot to back up, but you can't boot. What then?

By Leo A. Notenboom, <https://newsletter.askleo.com/>; published under the Creative Commons License

The rescue or emergency disk provided by many backup programs is more useful than most people realize.



Here's the scenario: all is well and you're getting lots of work done on your computer when all of a sudden, it crashes. No idea why — it just crashes.

What's worse, it won't [reboot](#). Maybe it just hangs on boot, maybe it says the drive isn't found,

maybe there's something else interfering.

To make matters worse yet, you stand to lose all that work you were doing because it hasn't yet been backed up. Your most recent work seems to be locked inside a hard drive you can't access.

There may be a way to back it up before dealing with the crash.

In Short

Back up a machine that won't boot

Overview:

- Create rescue media for the backup software you use.
- Boot the problematic machine from that rescue media.
- Use the rescue media to create a backup of the machine.

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Holiday Shoppers (Contt. from page 5)

are plotted on a single graph. At a glance, you can see the volatility of an item's price and which sales channel you should choose. If an item's price is pretty stable, you may as well buy it now. But if it has fluctuated significantly in the past, you may want to set a future date on which to check the price again. The Camelizer accommodates these options. The Camelizer works with a slew of national retailers, and is available for Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Microsoft Edge, Opera and Safari.

Here's one I recently discovered that has worked out really well. [HugeOff.com](https://www.hugeoff.com/) offers coupons that you can use at Lowes or Home Depot. The coupons cost a few dollars but you can save a lot on big ticket items. Some are valid in-store only, and some can be used both online and in-store. Some current offers are \$25 Off \$200 Purchase at Home Depot (\$3.45) and 20 Percent Off any purchase at Lowes

(\$4.99, max saving \$100). Your coupon comes to your email, so you can use it right away online, or print and use at your local retail store.

Depending on the source, ecommerce stats show that 40-50% of all online purchases happen at Amazon. I try to keep in mind that there are plenty of alternatives to buying on Amazon. So often I'll check first at [Walmart.com](https://www.walmart.com/), which has a wide selection of goods, including clothing, electronics, toys, groceries, home furnishings, auto, beauty and many more. Sometimes I find that the price for an item is lower than on Amazon. And like on Amazon, there's a Walmart+ Plan, which offers free delivery on most items. Other perks include video streaming with Paramount+, discounts on gasoline, and the option to use mobile scan & go to skip the checkout line in stores. Walmart+ costs \$12.95/month, or \$98/year. If you don't join Walmart+, you can still get free shipping by spending a minimum of \$35 on your

order.

Other times, I'll start a shopping trip with a Google search and then use a price comparison tool, which often leads to me finding an excellent supplier with good prices.

Each of these shopping tools has unique features, any of which may be decisive if you have to choose just one shopping tool. But you don't have to make that choice. You can disable any or all of them for most of your web-surfing time, and enable one or more only for significant shopping sprees. (Use your browser's settings icon in the upper-right corner to turn extensions on or off.)

I really don't need to compare five prices when shopping for pencils; the price differences are going to be negligible. But when it comes to expensive geek toys or power tools, I will often use at least two of them to find a good deal. Note that I didn't say "the best deal." That is and will remain as elusive as a unicorn. ☺

5 Signs You Need a New Laptop

by Kim Komando at Komando.com (tip from 11/5/22)

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You might be shocked to learn that the most reliable Chromebooks have an honest-to-goodness expiration date. Once that date is reached, it's trash. The Chromebook will not get any more patches or updates.

[Tap or click for a list of 17 Chromebook make and model numbers to avoid buying.](#)

If you're Googling, "Do I need a new laptop?" or "Should I upgrade or replace my laptop?" the answer is probably yes. [Tap or click here for my picks for the best Chromebooks and Windows and Mac laptops for every budget.](#)

Let's look at the clear-cut signs buying a new laptop is in your immediate future.

Sign 1: Your laptop is a slow poke

I'm not just talking about web pages taking a little longer to load. I'm talking about when your laptop takes 10 minutes to turn on. Maybe you're running two programs at once, and everything slows down to a crawl.

A laptop getting slower is mostly a sign of age. Of course, it could also mean you have malware or hackers on your device. [Here's how to tell if your computer has been compromised.](#)

Laptops slow down as their memory fills up and when multiple applications are running at once. Sometimes you can speed up a computer by upgrading the CPU and RAM. You could save yourself a lot of money by upgrading your hardware.

My rule of thumb: When the cost to upgrade or fix an old laptop is 30% of the price of a new one, buy a new one.

RELATED: Want to keep your computer running smoothly for a long time? [Tap or click here for 7 essential maintenance tips to keep your laptop happy.](#)

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Won't Boot (Continued from page 7)

Attach your external hard drive if you haven't already; this is where you'll place the backup image you'll be taking.

Take the [steps in your backup program](#) to [create a backup image](#) of your computer's hard drive. The steps, of course, vary depending on the backup program you've selected.

There is a potential roadblock here as well: if the problem with your computer prevents your [hard disk](#) from being visible to the backup program, you may not be able to back it up. You'll need to try [a different technique](#) if this happens.

Now you have a backup image

Assuming you were successful, you can now do two important things:

- On another machine, use that backup image to extract the important files you might otherwise have lost. (And maybe back them up while you're at it.)
- Repair your computer without the need to preserve the hard drive contents. This could include using repair tools to fix improper settings, reinstalling the operating system from scratch, or even replacing the hard drive completely.

By taking an image of the machine in its failed state, you've given yourself options without the fear of data loss.

Do This

If you [back up](#) your computer regularly, you would never need to do this, so ensure you have a good reliable and automated backup in place.

However, stuff happens. This technique—booting from rescue media—is another tool in your toolbox for recovering when things go wrong. ☺

5 Signs (Continued from page 8)

Sign 2: It's hot

Laptops come with built-in fans to keep cool. You may have heard the fan whirring when your machine has been running for a long time. It's trying to make the toasty device drop a few degrees in your lap.

Over time, these fans can get full of dust and debris — or they're just worn down. When this happens, your laptop will still heat up, but now it can't cool itself down.

Ultimately, this kind of heating up signifies that you should replace your laptop. If your computer gets hot enough, it will cease to function. Consistent overheating can even lead to breakage or even melting.

[Tap or click for 10 reasons your computer is running hot and how to fix them.](#)

Sign 3: It's a risk to use

Count your blessings if your laptop is more than four to five years old. One downside: Often, using an old machine is a considerable cybersecurity risk.

Software updates are critical for your digital health. Operating system updates come with new features that make life easier, but they also patch bugs that hackers exploit.

For example, you're in danger if you're still using Windows 7. Microsoft doesn't update that OS anymore. Windows 10 or 11 get frequent updates, which means they have better cybersecurity protections.

Dig through your settings to see which OS you're running. Research the latest update and see if your device can run it. If not, take this for what it is: One of the most prominent signs you need a new laptop.

Sign 4: Your screen or your keyboard is busted

Laptops are durable and made to take a beating. But even if you're careful, accidents happen. Your screen might be missing a few pixels. It can also start flickering for no apparent reason.

Your laptop keyboard may be missing letters and numbers. Or perhaps certain keys no longer work at all. The trackpad may lose its sensitivity over time, too.

Rather than replacing a laptop screen, you can save some money and hook an external monitor up to it. You could also do the same with a keyboard.

Unless your laptop is less than three years old, repairing a screen or a keyboard is usually not the best decision. Sell it and apply that money towards purchasing a new laptop. Have a parent or grandparent who needs a little help with their computer? [Tap or click here for five tips to set up a PC for seniors.](#)

Sign 5: Your battery doesn't hold a charge

Laptop batteries, like phone batteries, lose charge as you use them. Over time, your laptop will eventually need to be charged more often.

This can escalate to the point where you must plug it in all the time to work. For many people, particularly those whose only computer is a laptop, keeping it powered up isn't that much of a hardship. Laptops should be portable, though.

Not sure how your battery is faring? [Tap or click here to check on your laptop's battery health.](#) 😊

Proposed Budget for the Pikes Peak Computer Application Society for the Year 2023

*By Toni Logan, Treasurer, P*PCompAS*

Incoming		Outgoing		
Dues	\$20.00	Church donation	\$300.00	
Dividends	<u>\$ 1.44</u>	APCUG dues	\$ 50.00	
Total	\$21.44	CO Secretary of State	\$ 10.00	
		Volunteer Luncheon	\$250.00	
		Software/hardware	\$100.00	
		Refreshments	<u>\$ 50.00</u>	
		Total	\$760.00	Balance \$738.56

P*PCompAS Newsletter
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Coming Events:

Next Membership Meeting: 3 December beginning at 9 am (see directions below)

Next Breakfast Meeting: 17 December @ 8:00 am, Perkins, 3295 E. Platte Ave.

Newsletter Deadline: 24 December

Check out our Web page at: <http://ppcompas.apcug.org>

