

# Bits of Bytes

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

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Created by Windows Copilot

## Meeting Minutes

by Greg Lenihan,  
P\*PCompAS Secretary

President Paul Godfrey called the 2 November 2024 meeting to order at 9:05 am. David George made coffee, and Greg Lenihan brought doughnuts. We welcomed Toni and Bob Logan back to a meeting. A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes for October and the motion passed.

### OFFICER REPORTS

VP Cary Quinn said we had video presentations from three contributors. Cary is working on an APCUG presentation for next month.

Treasurer Toni Logan said we had \$2015.44 in savings (after 9 cents interest), \$33.51 in checking, for a total of \$2048.95 in our accounts. Our next transaction should be \$75 for APCUG dues in December.

Secretary/Newsletter Editor Greg Lenihan announced the next newsletter deadline is 23 November.

Membership Chair Ann Titus had nothing to report.

Librarian Paul Godfrey had nothing to report.

### Next P\*PCompAS meeting: Saturday, 2 November 2024

Cary Quinn presents "The 12 Days of Techmas," with a series of quick tips and Around the Room followups for P\*PCompAS and APCUG.

Hospitality Chair Toni Logan had nothing to report.

APCUG Rep/Webmaster Joe Nuvolini said the APCUG website underwent some changes and he worked with Francis Chou (APCUG) to get everything working. They are now hosted by GoDaddy. Nuvo had to go to Filezilla for moving files by FTP.

BOD Chair AJ Whelan had nothing to report.

### OLD BUSINESS

Cary Quinn is still working on a club cloud storage plan. He plans to set aside storage for files, and also create a YouTube channel where we can post edited videos.

The club decided at the August meeting to upgrade the club PC to Windows 11. Cary does not want to go to 24H2 right away. Our PC won't automatically upgrade because we installed Gibson's app to keep it from doing so.

### NEW BUSINESS

Preliminary nominations for officers for next year were discussed. All current officers will stay in their positions (unless someone wants to seek office and be nominated next month). Two positions were open for the Board of Directors. Greg Lenihan will take one. The other held by Barbara McMinn will remain occupied by her until we learn about her status.

We will discuss a gift to the church in December to be delivered next year.

We will continue our hybrid meetings (in person and via Zoom)

for the foreseeable future.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next social breakfast meeting will be on Saturday, 16 November, at the Golden Corral, starting at 8:00 am.

Our next membership meeting is on Saturday, 7 December 2024.

### AROUND THE ROOM

John Pearce reminded us he had signed up for a service named Incogni to get his data off Internet sites. It says it has removed him from 100 sites and has another 40 to go. He noticed his junk mail has gone from about 15 per day to around 6 a day. John (and some others) received another breach notice from a local pathology lab. He said he found out that data from the Equifax breach around 1997 just surfaced this year.

Toni Logan has a relative on her Netflix account and if she

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#### P\*PCompAS

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**Secretary: Greg Lenihan**  
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**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: Antoinette Logan**  
**Programs: Cary Quinn**  
**Publicity: Vacant**  
**Nominating: Vacant**

**Board of Directors**

**A.J. Whelan**  
**John Pearce**  
**Bob Logan**  
**Barbara McMinn**  
**David George**



**Paul Godfrey presiding over the November membership meeting with a few members in the background attending via Zoom.**



**Members in attendance at the November 2024 meeting.**



**A smaller turnout at the November breakfast, but the digerati enjoyed themselves.**

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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.

## Should I Buy AMD or Intel for a Windows PC?

by Sidney Butler, reprinted with permission from [HowToGeek.com](https://www.howtogeek.com)  
Original article at <https://www.howtogeek.com/should-i-buy-amd-or-intel/>

### Key Takeaways

- Intel focuses on hybrid design, AMD emphasizes identical cores
- For Windows laptops, Intel is better; AMD suits gaming desktops
- Intel is better for multitasking, but AMD offers an upgrade path.

Which brand of CPU to buy is a common question, which I'll preface with the advice that you should ultimately buy a specific CPU based on its own merits, not its brand. That said, there are some general use cases that favor one brand of CPU over the other.

### Intel and AMD Have Different Approaches to CPUs

While AMD and Intel both serve more or less the same market, they have markedly different ways of designing CPUs these days. Intel has adopted a hybrid design, mixing [performance and efficiency cores](#) into the same chip, and doing away with [hyperthreading](#) in their modern CPUs.

AMD, on the other hand, has retained multithreading and offers CPUs where all the cores are identical. Whether one approach or the other is better remains to be seen, but it does mean that these CPUs broadly have different strengths and weaknesses.

### Windows Laptop? Buy Intel



Thanks to their hybrid approach, I feel that laptop buyers in general should more often than

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### Meeting Minutes (Cont. from page 1)

changes her password, it will knock the relative off. Toni wanted to try Copilot and found a way to use it while messaging. In one instance, her eldest son put a medical terminology-laced message through Copilot, and it came out in readable English. Toni bought a mini-iPad last month to make her feel better. She warned that Amazon has twice delivered her packages to her neighbor, so watch out.

Dave George asked about the disposable e-mail article in the October newsletter. Dave thought it sounded like too much of a hassle. Greg Lenihan likes using free disposable e-mail services to sign up for a service or newsletter to keep from getting spammed.

Ruth announced that it was Gene Bagenstos's birthday.

Greg Lenihan received an e-mail from someone who thought our membership would

be interested in a short video on LexisNexis. They collect your information and give it to the credit bureaus. There is a way to contact them to stop giving your data away and to receive a file of what data they have on you. The video was played as part of the presentations.

Ilene Steinkruger asked how long a credit freeze lasts. The answer was it lasts until you unfreeze it. It used to be that you could get a free credit report once a year, but John Pearce said that since the Covid pandemic, you can get a credit report once a month.

Cary Quinn had a Dell laptop that would not power up. The usual advice is to unplug the power cord, take out the battery, press the power button for 10 seconds, and plug it back in. That did not work. His laptop had a sealed battery, and he noticed his laptop power light was not coming on. From watching a YouTube video, he tried

unplugging the power cord, and holding down the power button for 60 seconds. That worked.

Warren Hill would like to see a presentation on removing your data from the dark web. Cary mentioned DeleteMe.com, but they professionally do it. The free services cost you more time than money. John Pearce believes that ZDNet once did a comparison of services. Incogni, which John uses, was recommended by Kim Komando.

### PRESENTATION

Greg Lenihan showed a short YouTube video by Credit Suite (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GeWnVgr194g>) that explained how LexisNexis worked. Cary Quinn then showed two Tech for Senior videos from Ann Titus: Smart Phone Spying and Updates and Passwords. ☺

***AMD or Intel? (Cont. from page 3)***

not opt for an Intel system. In the past I would have recommended laptops with AMD's APUs for their additional graphical power, but Intel's last few generations of CPUs have competent GPUs in them for most purposes.

If you're buying a gaming laptop rather than a general purpose or business machine, then an AMD system with a discrete AMD GPU is fair game, but outside of gaming laptops where the specific laptop's performance is all that matters, Intel is generally the better choice in my opinion thanks to those efficiency cores.

Of course, if efficiency and battery life are really what you care about, consider ditching AMD and Intel both for a [Windows on ARM](#) laptop. Assuming the software you want to use will run properly on such a system.

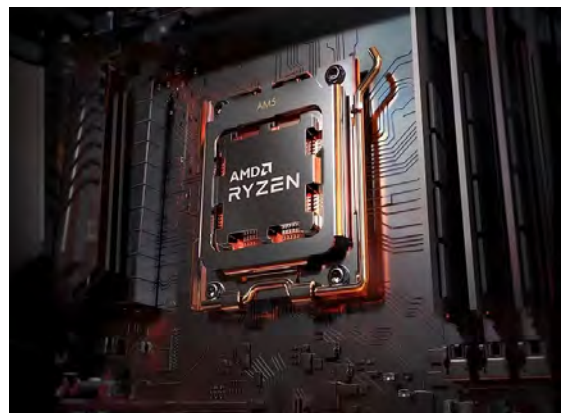
**Gaming Desktop? Buy AMD**

While there's nothing wrong with gaming using one of Intel's latest hybrid CPUs, if the only thing you do is gaming and your other needs don't demand it, then AMD's CPUs are the way to go. In particular, AMD's X3D series of CPUs offer superlative gaming performance at lower prices than Intel, leaving more money in your budget for a better GPU, faster SSD, or more RAM. As of this writing, the [AMD Ryzen 9 9800X3D](#) is the fastest gaming CPU money can buy. Period.

**Professional Multitasker? Buy Intel**

Intel's CPUs have big core counts these days, thanks to all those small efficiency cores thrown in alongside the performance ones. This makes them excellent at running lots of apps at the same time, running lots of processes in the background, or running multi-threaded jobs like video rendering, or streaming video compression.

You'll often see benchmarks where similarly-priced Intel and AMD CPUs trade blows in single-core performance, or in apps like games that don't use many threads, but then the Intel CPU will pull ahead in jobs where all of its cores are engaged. There are professional CPUs like the AMD Threadripper series that boast many high-performance cores, but in the mainstream, Intel still has the edge for multitasking. So if you need to do video editing during the day, and want to play a game at night, Intel's the more suitable option in general.

**Want an Upgrade Path? Buy AMD**

AMD has promised support for its current AM5 CPU socket standard at least until 2027, and (knowing AMD) probably a little beyond that. So, if you build an AM5 desktop system today, you'll have CPU options for years to come. Intel has a pretty poor track record of keeping the same socket for more than a generation or two, so if you care about an upgrade path, AMD's the only game in town in my opinion.

**Average Computer User? Buy Whatever's Cheapest**

If you don't have any particular use case and you just want a general purpose computer for browsing the web and doing office work, then buy whichever CPU or system costs the least. Any modern CPU in a modern PC with an SSD as its main drive will have more performance than you need for basic tasks.

If you really need guidance, we can show you [how to choose a CPU for everyday computing](#), but largely it should be your budget that drives you. ☺

## *Which People Finder Sites are Legit?*

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

A good man is hard to find, or so the saying goes. I first offered tips for “Finding People Online” way back in 2006, and updated that article with “Free People Search Tools” in 2020. Now in 2024, I have to say it’s getting harder to find free information about people and places. If you’re looking for a name, address or phone number, I have some tips on websites you should avoid, and some that actually do what they say, for free. Here’s the scoop.

### **Toll Booths on the Information Highway**

The phrase “information wants to be free” dates back to a hackers conference in the 1980s. The idea was that people should be able to access online information freely, without roadblocks or toll booths. Information might want to be free, but more and more, the people who gather, compile and present that information want to get paid. Almost every resource I included in those previous articles is now out of business or it costs money to get useful information.

But there are still some lookup services that are both truly free and useful. One example is voter registration records. In case you didn’t know, the information you supply when you register to vote is public information, and about half of U.S. states make that information available to interested parties. Colorado’s voter rolls, for example, are updated several times per year. Colorado’s Arapahoe County publishes [voter lists](#) that include name, address, gender, county, political party affiliation, birth year, and active/inactive voter status.

Other States whose voter rolls are available include Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida,

Georgia, Michigan, Ohio, Oklahoma, Rhode Island and Wisconsin. Search online for “Registered voters in {your state}” and you’ll probably find a source. You will almost certainly find some deceased persons listed in these voter records. That’s bad for vote integrity, but possibly helpful for genealogy searchers.



If you’re looking for information on a relative, or you’re interested in genealogy, see my article [Here’s How: Genealogy Research Online](#). I’ve also found that online obituaries, typically printed in funeral home and local newspaper websites, can reveal information about people, their location, and their relatives. I’ve used some of these resources to trace my roots as far back as 1640, when an ancestor of my father came from Holland to a Dutch settlement on Manhattan Island. Does that qualify me as a “Native New Yorker”?

For years, my favorite site for looking up names, addresses and phone numbers was [WhitePages](#). The site lets you search by name & city, and can do reverse searches to see who is associated with an address or phone number. Some lookups are still free, but more often than not, I get partial information, with a link to “View Full Report.” To get past that roadblock, you have to pay \$12, or sign up for a subscription that costs \$6/month

(for mobile & landline numbers, addresses, and reverse phone lookups), or \$33/month (for mobile & landline numbers, addresses, criminal history, and public records).

Other people-finder sites operate similarly, providing teasers, incomplete hits on search criteria intended to get your hopes up that yes, it could be your long-lost brother, and then hit you up for money. Before you run off to 411.com or Switchboard.com, those are also owned by WhitePages, and work the same way. Read the offers very carefully; nearly all contain “gotchas” that commit you to subscribing to an ongoing monthly charge on your credit/debit card. They all promise you can “cancel at any time” and even offer “100% satisfaction” guarantees. But I have

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### **In Memoriam**

**Helen “Pat” Krieger**  
October 10, 1932 -  
November 6, 2024



Pat was a long-time former member who volunteered her services many times as a club secretary and scribe for our meeting minutes. We could always depend on Pat to offer a unique and interesting technical problem during the “Around the Room” segment of our meetings. We offer our condolences to her family, and we are grateful for the help she provided to our club.

## *Why I Keep Saying You're Just Not That Interesting Sorry, but you're not. Neither am I.*

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

Many people are concerned that they are specifically targeted by hackers, advertisers, and others. Nope.



When people express concerns about getting hacked, being tracked by advertisers, or [cloud](#) services scanning our private documents, one of my common refrains is that you and I simply aren't interesting enough to be specifically targeted.

"They" aren't out to get you. You can stop worrying about that.

That's not to say stuff can't happen — clearly, it does. But much more often than not, it's random. It's the luck of the draw. It's because we're part of a larger cohort that is interesting *as a group* (i.e., that can make someone money).

I think I finally have an analogy to help me explain what I mean.

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### *People Finder Sites (Cont. from page 5)*

not tested those assurances.

One people search site that DOES provide free lookups by name, phone or address is [FastPeopleSearch](#). This site's public records data is updated regularly, and in addition to names, it includes landline, mobile, business and residential phone numbers, as well as information for addresses (past and present). In some cases, you can also find relatives and neighbors for people all across the USA. Enter a name (and optionally the city and state) and you'll get a list of possible hits with address and phone numbers. You also can enter a phone number or address to find the person associated with it. FastPeopleSearch does offer paid Background Reports, which promise to dig up Arrest Records, Marriage & Divorce Records, Criminal Records Data, Property Records, Bankruptcies, Judgments, and Liens.

By the way, property records and court filings (for marriage, divorce and bankruptcy) are kept on file by local municipalities, and

many of them are available online. Check with your town or county clerk to see if they are searchable.

### **Promises, Promises...**

As I warned at the opening of this article, there is something sleazy about many of the people-finder sites I found in the course of researching this article. They make unnecessary noise about "connecting to federal, state, and local databases," "establishing a secure connection," "searching billions of records," and so on, while displaying graphics that indicate a search is in progress.

[Spyfly](#) promises to help you "View information about yourself, friends, family, and associates that Google can't show you." After presenting you with the initial search results, which tell you very little, Spyfly hits you up for three dollars. It's only three bucks; let's get that report, shall we? Oh wait, the \$3 fee is just for a 7-day trial, and you'll be on the hook for a \$29.97/month subscription. How about "no?"

[BeenVerified](#) is another site that offers to help you "Search People & Public Records." They promise

to "cross-check billions of data points and dozens of data sources" and "in a few minutes" you'll have access to all the public data they can find. But it's a game. You have to endure screen after screen and several wasted minutes viewing fake progress bars, spinning circles, and dubious testimonials before they hit you with the sales pitch. And it turns out you can't even pay to view a report, they want you to sign up for a Membership that costs \$26.89/month. And you know how hard those things are to cancel. No thanks, again.

Truthfinder, Intelius, Spokeo, PeopleLooker and PeopleFinders all lead you down the same road. Your search returns minimal information, followed by a pitch to pay for a report.

In closing, I'll mention one related free phone lookup service that I use regularly. [Phone Validator](#) can tell you if a phone number is mobile, landline, toll-free or VOIP. It also shows the phone company associated with that number. You may find this useful when deciding if you should send a text message or make a voice call.

☺

*Not Interesting (Cont. from page 6)*

In Short

### You're just not that interesting

Advertisers or hackers don't target individuals; they focus on large groups with common characteristics. Security is important, but anxiety about being personally targeted is misplaced. Stay secure, but don't get paranoid; most threats are completely random, not personal.

### Stuff happens

None of this is an argument to let your guard down. As I said, stuff happens. Security remains important.

What I'm trying to address here is the anxiety that results from feeling like "they" are after you *as an individual*.

I hear from too many people who are concerned that they, specifically, as individuals, are being tracked, traced, followed, and targeted.

They're not. The worry they feel, and often the extreme, limiting, and sometimes expensive steps they take are unnecessary.

### The big game

Imagine a big, important sporting event in your area. Perhaps it's the "superb owl", the final match in the World Cup, or something else that draws a crowd. Thousands of people show up in person at a stadium to watch this game. (I'll say 50,000, even though that's low for some events and high for others.)

Those thousands of people are interesting as a group. Attendance numbers might even make the news, it's so interesting.

Advertisers love the fact that they have thousands of more or less captive eyeballs in the venue. You'll see ads plastered around the venue: ads on the sidelines, ads on the big screen, and even sponsorships on drink cups and other disposable materials. Some percentage of that crowd will see and be influenced by those ads.

Do advertisers care if 40% of the crowd buys that special cup they've advertised? Very much. Do they care if you're one of them? *Not at all.*

And that's an important distinction: **while the crowd is very interesting to advertisers, you as an individual are not.** You could be replaced by someone else with no impact whatsoever. What matters is that you're one of the thousands (with a wallet in your pocket).

It's the *thousands* of people that are interesting in this topic. They're spending money on it and investing themselves in it, and *that* is extremely interesting to advertisers. They'll target ads to relate to the event, to things somehow relating to the event, and things that have proven to have some correlation with attending the event.

### The internet is a game

These same concepts apply to the internet and what you do on it.

Let's say you visit a shopping website and browse looking for something. Let's say you're in need of a coffee maker.

Advertisers don't care that *you* looked at a coffee maker. They care that thousands of people happened to as well. It's unlikely that they know or care who you are.

Advertisers may then choose to send ads to those thousands of people relating to what they're apparently interested in: coffee makers. Since you're one of those thousands, *and only because you're one of those thousands*, you see the ads as well. Those ads that "follow you" around the internet? They're following thousands of people, of which you just happen to be only one.

The same is true for hackers. They're not targeting *you*; they're targeting anyone willing to fall for their [phishing](#) attempts or open their malware-laden attachments. They don't know or care who you are; what's interesting to them is that if they send out thousands of emails, some percentage of people will fall into their trap.

It's nothing personal. You're at risk, exactly like everyone else.

### Stay secure

Assuming you have decent security in place, I don't want you to change a thing. (If you don't have decent security in place, well, there's [much you should change](#).)

**What I want you to do is to feel a little less paranoid. I want to reduce the anxiety you might feel. I want you to be less afraid.**

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## **Data Brokers are Selling Your Life. Here's How to Stop Them.**

*by Kim Komando at Komando.com (tip from 11/20/24)*

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The data broker industry is worth almost \$400 billion. Whether it's your Google Search history, movies you've streamed or a summary of your last doctor's visit, they're keeping tabs on your life.

Feel violated? You should. These brokers even sell your data to scammers so they can use it to target you. No wonder most people get overloaded with spam texts and calls every day.

You could spend the rest of your life trying to remove your data, but I [found the best way](#) to handle that for me. More on that below.

### **What data is collected?**

It's way beyond where you live and what you do. They track:

- 🏠 **Personal data:** Your name, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses are all up for grabs.
- 💰 **Financial data:** Think credit scores, purchase histories and your mortgage details.
- ❤️ 🩹 **Health data:** This can include your prescription records and even health conditions.
- 📱 **Behavioral data:** This covers your browsing history, social media activity and app usage.
- 📍 **Location data:** Your GPS coordinates and frequently visited places are no secret.
- 🏢 **Employment data:** Your current and former job titles, salary levels and employment history are all collected, too.

### **Not Interesting (Cont. from page 7)**

#### **Do this**

Do what's necessary to [stay secure](#). That's a given.

But don't feel like anyone is out to get *you* specifically.

Ads following you around the internet? It's not about you, it's about the thousands of people like you who happened to look at the same things. Seeing failed login attempts on your account? It's not about you, there are thousands of other people seeing the same thing. You're not that interesting. And, honestly, that's a good thing. ☺

They compile this info into an incredibly detailed profile about you. It's like they know your wants and needs before you do. Some of the info comes from data breaches and leaks. There's been no shortage of those.

### **2024 (dis)honorables mentions**

- A database of over **180 million emails** went up for sale on the Dark Web.
- A hack leaked **170 million people's info**, including Social Security numbers.
- A breach at Cisco exposed customers of **major banks and phone companies** like AT&T, T-Mobile, Verizon, Barclays and Bank of America.

### **Why are breaches so dangerous?**

It's all about the ripple effect. We're talking:

- **Identity theft:** Criminals buy sensitive info to commit fraud.
- **Stalking and harassment:** Access to your addresses and phone numbers makes it simple for them to get to you.
- **Financial loss:** Data brokers make credit card fraud and phishing scams so much easier.
- **Invasion of privacy:** You lose control over how your data is used or who accesses it.

It's a matter of *when* your info gets leaked, not *if* — unless you [take action](#), like I did.

### **Here's your best solution**

I started using Incogni before they became a sponsor, back when I couldn't scrub all my personal info off the web by myself. Here's how they've helped me:

- **Automated data removal:** After I set up an account, Incogni got to work, contacting data brokers to ask them to remove my info. [Over 600 sites and companies no longer](#) have my personal data.
- **Continuous monitoring:** Incogni keeps my data out of these databases over time so [these creeps can't just add me back](#).
- **Timesaving:** I wasted over 40 hours trying to opt out of everything, and most of my requests were ignored. Incogni keeps going until it's done.

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***Technology for Safe Holiday Travels***  
*Outlined by Ann Titus, P\*PCompAS, from a Tech for Senior Episode*

**A. Safety**

1. Sky Scanner (Booking.com). Compare prices.
2. Currency converter apps
3. Translation apps  
Google Translate
4. Health & Safety  
CDC travel help  
Covid 19 tracking app  
Vaccination health advisory
5. Weather apps
6. Safety apps  
Life 306 = location for family
7. Travel insurance apps
8. Navigation apps  
Google maps  
City maps
9. Dining  
Yelp  
Uber (for delivery of meals)
10. Fitness apps
11. Meditation apps
12. Travel journal apps

**B. Get Smart Phone Ready for Travel**

1. Download offline maps  
Google maps
2. Maps.me
3. Notify bank \* credit card companies about plans
4. Currency converter app
5. Trip-it
6. Use local SIM card at destination or use portable Wi-Fi hotspot

7. Messaging apps  
What's app  
Signal App  
Security app

**C. Digital Security Manager**

1. 2 Factor Authentication
2. VPN if connecting to public Wi-Fi

**D. Communication Tips:**

1. Don't use public WI-Fi to check finances etc.
2. Communicating with Home – use encrypted messaging apps like What's App, Signal, Telegram with 2 FA
3. Set up VPN on device.

**E. Health & Safety Apps**

1. First Aid App  
Red Cross First Aid App  
Pocket Doctor
2. Create Medical ID for your health problems
3. Research medical resources at your destination ☺

**Data Brokers (Cont. from page 8)**

They can help remove your data from hundreds of data brokers, too. I'm proud to say I have [no more spam phone calls or texts](#) annoying me.

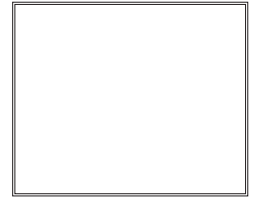
☑ **Don't let data brokers make a fortune off your personal information.** Take back control of your privacy with Incogni. [Use my link for an exclusive offer: 60% off.](#) Incogni also comes with a money-back guarantee if you're not completely satisfied.

**Tags:** [cybersecurity](#), [data brokers](#), [Incogni](#), [people-search sites](#), [personal data](#), [privacy](#)



From the Kim Komando newsletter with a hat tip to John Pearce

**P\*PCompAS Newsletter**  
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**Colorado Springs, CO 80920**  
**e-mail: [glenihan@comcast.net](mailto:glenihan@comcast.net)**



**Coming Events:**

**Next Membership Meeting:** 7 December beginning at 9 am (see directions below)

**Next Breakfast Meeting:** 21 December @ 8:00 am, Golden Corral, 1970 Waynoka Road

**Newsletter Deadline:** 21 December

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

