Meeting Timetable
Mitchelton Library Helios Parade Mitchelton

9:30am	Q&A	John Tacey
11pm	Microsoft office alternatives?	Keith
1:00pm	Lunch -- Report to the Club	
2:00pm	Linux Zorin / Mint; or other member topic	Keith

If you have a question that may need a bit of a look up, let me know before the meeting

Presentation can be done using Power Point and shared screens.

SIGNIFICANT BITS

the Journal of

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A Computer Club for users of

PC-type computers
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CLUB INFORMATION LINES

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The Members' Web Page

Meeting Days

16 April 2023

21 May 2023

18 June 2023

20 August 2023

Magazine

Editor
Chris Haydock

Proof-reader
John Tacey

Submission Deadline

Friday 6 May 2023

Please use e-mail if possible

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Hi All,

Nexus Android malware targets 450 financial applications an example of the spread of malware to the mobile platforms, they may now need more attention to stop attacks. We will have to see how Google and Apple respond to this.

Nexus malware runs on Android operating systems and has several functionalities of interest to cybercriminals.

I have spent a bit to time on loading up Zorin to see how it goes following Fred's advice of an issue with Secure Boot Bios. It has been tiring as I found various changes and then complete full stops. I have an Acer laptop, a bit later model, and with a i7 processor but still not a compatible one for Win 11, and to say I got strange responses, if an understatement.

I initially had Zorin up and running and thought that was OK. Having then tried to do a further install and it failed; that is it loaded and installed but when restarted and install media removed, it would not boot, failed to find a boot disk. Well that took me down some rabbit holes to despair.

I ended up with nothing being recognised including a USB boot. In fact, the computer was "locked" that I could not get into the BIOS. Eventually got it unstuck by using a Windows disk. I turned the secure boot off but to no avail.

I also found that the computer had both secure boot and tmp, so thought it should support Win 11 not so. Must be a version of the two services that is not compatible??

Anyhow I then tried to load Mint to see if it would load, end result NO.

Even when making a boot install USB for Mint I had trouble with it appearing to write and finish OK, but it did not work, so repeated it and tried other USBs same result and when looking at the USB when it was being written too could not see and tell-tail light to show it working????

I later used an older computer and used the Mint install USB and it worked!!

All for now

See you at the meeting

Keith

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Reports

Presentation and Education

Presentation:

Morning 11am. Do you need Window?

Afternoon 1pm: Alternative to Windows.

Membership Report - Gary Woodforth

We had 9 members at the February meeting.

What you have always wanted to know ---- Here it is

Aussie Computer Terminology - Getting ready for Broadband in the bush!!

A little bit of Aussie culcha.

LOGON: Adding wood to make the barbie hotter.

LOG OFF: Not adding any more wood to the barbie.

MONITOR: Keeping an eye on the barbie.

DOWNLOAD: Getting the firewood off the ute.

HARD DRIVE: Making the trip back home without any cold tinnies.

KEYBOARD: Where you hang the ute keys.

WINDOWS: What you shut when the weather's cold.

SCREEN: What you shut in the mozzie season..

BYTE: What mozzies do

MEGABYTE: What Townsville mozzies do.

CHIP: A pub snack.

MICROCHIP: What's left in the bag after you've eaten the chips.

MODEM: What you did to the lawns.

LAPTOP: Where the cat sleeps.

SOFTWARE: Plastic knives and forks you get at Red Rooster.

HARDWARE: Stainless steel knives and forks - from K-Mart.

MOUSE: The small rodent that eats the grain in the shed.

MAINFRAME: What holds the shed up.

WEB: What spiders make.

Treasurer's Report

WEBSITE: Usually in the shed or under the veranda.

SEARCH ENGINE: What you do when the ute won't go.

CURSOR: What you say when the ute won't go.

YAHOO: What you say when the ute does go.

UPGRADE: A steep hill.

SERVER: The person at the pub who brings out the counter lunch.

MAIL SERVER: The bloke at the pub who brings out the counter lunch.

USER: The neighbour who keeps borrowing things.

NETWORK: What you do when you need to repair the fishing net.

INTERNET: Where you want the fish to go.

NETSCAPE: What the fish do when they discover a hole in the net.

ONLINE: Where you hang the washing.

OFFLINE: Where the washing ends up when the pegs aren't strong enough.

So, now you know it all!

John's Jots
By John Tacey

Q&A - March meeting

Credit/Debit Card Protection

As these use RFID for operation they need to be shielded from scanning/skimming.

If they are in a leather case/wallet there are special cards (SkimGuard) which can be stored with them.

Another method is to use an aluminium case, which come in a number of capacities - small a couple of cards: larger 7 card capacity.

Car smart keys also need protection, a screened soft case is available.

Notebook PC Battery Condition?

If you are not reliant on extensive use on the battery this is not terribly important.

In a subsequent e-newsletter the following appeared.

How to Check the Health of Your Laptop's Battery in Windows

By Jason Cohen Mar 22, 2023

Whether you're still running Windows 10 or upgraded to Windows 11, a Windows battery report will help you keep tabs on the health of your laptop's battery.

https://au.pcmag.com/batteries-power/85991/how-to-check-your-laptops-battery-health-in-windows-10

Bootable USB Drive

Download the ISO file for the OS to use and a copy of Rufus or similar program to create the bootable USB Drive.

How to Make a Bootable USB Drive on Windows & macOS

Create the tools to repair and reinstall your operating system

Written by Travis Boylls

Last Updated: December 22, 2022

https://www.wikihow.com/Make-a-USB-Bootable

Rufus - Create bootable USB drives the easy way

Create bootable USB drives the easy way. Previous Next . Rufus is a utility that helps format and create bootable USB flash drives, such as USB keys/pendrives, memory sticks, etc. It can be especially useful for cases where: you need to create USB installation media from bootable ISOs (Windows, Linux, UEFI, etc.)

https://rufus.ie.en

IONOS - Create a bootable USB | Here's how to make a USB bootable - IONOS

Operation of the tool is simple: Open the program with a double-click. Select your USB drive in " Device ". Select "Create a bootable disk using" and the option

"ISO Image". Right-click on the CD-ROM symbol and select the ISO file. Under "New volume label", you can enter whatever name you like for your USB drive.

https://www.ionos.com/digitalguide/server/know-how/make-a-bootable-usb-drive/

Windows 10 & 11 provide such a facility.

https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-server-essentials/install/create-a-bootable-usb-flash-drive

T'bird Start New Message

There a number of ways to do this.

One is to open the Address Book > select the addressee > Right Click > from the pop up menu select Write and a new message window will appear with the address inserted.

Where a communication of standard format is sent regularly, a template to be modified, as required, can be used.

Android Phone Greyscale

My phone went to grayscale after selecting Flight Mode.

I have been unable to find a means of restoring the colour.

There is nothing wrong with the display as on boot the colour is present until the Home screen shows.

Gray-switch (free) is an app. to toggle between colour and grayscale.

I have downloaded it but, the installation and activation is a long winded process to be endured.

Late model Samsung phone has an icon to toggle On/Off.

Samsung TV Failed (manufacturer's Warranty 12 Mths)

https://www.samsung.com/au/support/warranty/

Didn't call retailer until a couple of days later, just after the warranty expired.

Retailer said effectively "bad luck dead duck or too bad" and was unhelpful.

Go back and tell them that you are invoking a claim under the Australian Consumer Law.

Australian Consumer Law: business.gov.au

1 Dec 2021

The ACL is a national law to protect consumers. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) alongside the state and territory consumer protection agencies jointly administer the ACL. ACL applies to anyone conducting business in Australia, this can include businesses that are overseas.

https://business.gov.au/legal/fair-trading/australian-consumer-law

Comment:- This is a lousy manufacturer's warranty from Samsung. My Metz (German Brand made in

China) TV has a manufacturer's warranty of Three Years.

TCL can only offer 3 years commercial warranty

https://www.tcl.com/au/en/warranty-information/tv-commercial-warranty

Office 365 & File Examiner

Office 365 was installed and now when a docx file is selected File Examiner starts and that's it.

The problem is the file association. File Examiner has been set to open when a DOCX file is selected.

Right click the file and on the presented menu select Open With, choose Office 365 Word and make it the default.

Find and open File Explorer - Microsoft Support

File Explorer in Windows 11 helps you get the files you need quickly and easily.

To check it out in Windows 11, select it on the taskbar or the Start menu, or press the Windows logo key + E on your keyboard.

To pin a folder to Quick access, right-click (or press and hold) the folder and select Pin to Quick access.

To share a file, select it, then select Share on the ribbon.

To move the location of a file or folder, select it and then select Cut on the ribbon. Navigate to the new location, then select Paste.

Note: For files and folders in Quick access, you'll need to right-click (or press and hold) and select Open before you can cut and paste.

See full list on support.microsoft.com

Digital Life & Wills

Do you own digital assets? Include them in your Will

Vincent Hoonings May. 2022

It is important to specify which digital assets you own in a provision for digital assets in your Will to ensure that they don't get lost in cyberspace after you die.

https://www.wills.com/articles/Provision-for-digital-assets-in-your-Will

What Are Digital Assets In A Will?

Wills.com Team Nov. 2021

https://www.wills.com/articles/What-Are-Digital-Assets-In-A-Will

It will also be necessary to provide all User Names and associated Passwords as well as any relevant file names to the Executor and/or Beneficiary.

Password Managers & Logins

Some web sites have different methods of entering the User Name &/or Password into the dialogue box.

The following are some of the ways that they may be added from the Password Manager:-

Paste, Ctrl "V", Autotype, Type using the Keyboard, Click in OnScreen Key Pad for numerics.

Note: This record of the Q&A session topics relies on my biological volatile memory (a.k.a. the 'forgettory').

Gleanings from e-newsletters and other sources.

Reviews

Stop Trackers Dead: The Best Private Browsers for 2023

By Michael Muchmore 28 Mar 2023, 2:07 a.m.

Online marketers mine your data and target you for sales. Foil their efforts with the tracking protection and privacy features offered by these secure browsers.

https://au.pcmag.com/browsers/88452/stop-trackers-dead-the-best-private-browsers-for-2021

The Best Encryption Software for 2023

By Neil J. Rubenking Dec 29, 2022

Just because you have antivirus software installed on your PC doesn't mean a zero-day Trojan can't steal your personal data. The best encryption software keeps you safe from malware (and the NSA).

https://au.pcmag.com/encryption/43284/the-best-encryption-software-for-2020

Dell MS900 Premier Rechargeable Mouse

By Eric Grevstad Mar 24, 2023

The second-best productivity mouse you can buy

https://au.pcmag.com/computer-mice/99355/dell-ms900-premier-rechargeable-mouse

Dell KB900 Premier Collaboration Keyboard

By Eric Grevstad Mar 24, 2023

Sorry, Microsoft Teams—this keyboard is made to Zoom

https://au.pcmag.com/keyboards/99356/dell-kb900-premier-collaboration-keyboard

The Best Laser Printers for 2023

By M. David Stone Mar 28, 2023

Why spring for a laser printer? The best ones deliver unparalleled speed, pristine text, and reliable paper handling. Find the best one for your home or office with our shopping tips and guide to the top-rated models we've tested.

https://au.pcmag.com/laser-printers/37075/the-best-laser-printers

The Best Backup Software and Services for 2023

By Michael Muchmore Mar 25, 2023

Protect your computers and mobile devices from data loss via ransomware, hard drive failure, natural disasters, and anything else. Our top-rated backup services make it easy to perform online and local backups.

https://au.pcmag.com/file-syncing-and-backup-1/9603/the-best-online-backup-services-for-2020

The Best Wireless Mice for 2023

By Mike Epstein Mar 23, 2023

Don't let cords trip up your work or play. Here's everything you need to know to buy the best wireless mouse, plus our top tested picks.

https://au.pcmag.com/spring_pc_buying_guide/66327/the-best-wireless-mice

ChatGPT vs. Google Bard vs. Bing: Which AI Chatbot Gives the Best Answers?

By Emily Dreibelbis Mar 24, 2023

We asked chatbots from OpenAI, Google, and Microsoft to answer the same set of six questions. Here's how they differed in performance, personality, and precision.

https://au.pcmag.com/news/99343/chatgpt-vs-google-bard-vs-bing-which-ai-chatbot-gives-the-best-answers

New Releases

Adobe Air

License: Freeware

File name: 32.0.0.116   File Size: 11 MB O/S: Windows

Publisher: Adobe Systems Inc

URL: http://www.adobe.com

Avast Free Antivirus

License: Freeware

File name: Avast_Free_Antivirus_v23.2.exe (web Installer)

File Size: 0.25 MB   O/S: Windows

Publisher: Avast Software s.r.o.

URL: https://www.avast.com/antivirus

Essential PIM 11.2.5

License: Free

File name: Essential PIM.exe

File Size: 68.7MB O/S: Windows

Publisher:

URL: https://www.essentialpim.com/pc-version

Glary Utilities 5

License: Freeware

File Name: Glary_Utilities_v5.203.0.232   20.14 MB.exe

File Size: 20.14 MB

Platform: Windows 8, 7, 2000, XP, Vista. 32/64bit version.

Publisher: Glarysoft Ltd

Languages: 44 Languages   [Help Translate]

URL: http://www.glaryutilities.com/

Release Notes:

Optimized Disk Cleaner: added support for 'Corel VideoStudio Pro x9' and 'SketchUp Make 2014'

Optimized Tracks Eraser: added support for 'Corel VideoStudio Pro x9' and 'SketchUp Make 2014'

Optimized Software Update: optimized the version comparison algorithm, and increase the comparison speed by 30%

Optimized Empty Folders Finder: add folder delete validation to prevent accidentally deletion of non-empty folder

Minor GUI improvements

Minor bug fixes

Glary Utilities is a freeware with registry and disk cleaning, privacy protection, performance accelerator and amazing multifunctional tools. It can fix dogged registry errors, wipe off clutters, optimise Internet speed, safeguard confidential files and maintain maximum performance.

It is designed for both novice and professionals. User-friendly interface shows clear & detailed directions. For novice, all work can be done with just 1 or 2 clicks, while for professionals, abundant options are available.

Key features:

Optimise, clean and boost the speed of your Windows.

Protect your privacy and security.

Block spyware, trojans, adware, etc.

Fix certain application errors.

Simple, fast and user friendly interface.

For private use only.

URL: http://www.glaryutilities.com/

Google Chrome (32bit) 111.0.5563.147

License: Freeware

File name: ChromeSetup.exe   File Size: 88.1MB

O/S: Windows

Publisher: Google

URL: https://www.google.com/chrome/

LibreOffice

License: Freeware

File name: LibreOffice_7.5.1_Win_x86.msi

File Size: 318MB O/S: Windows

Publisher: The Document Foundation

Comments: Contains the functions:-

Writer

PDF

Presentation

Spreadsheet

URL:
https://mirror.freedif.org/TDF/libreoffice/stable/6.2.0/win/x86/LibreOffice_6.2.0_Win_x86.msi

Mozilla Thunderbird

License: Freeware

File name: Thunderbird Setup 102.9.0(GB).exe

File Size: 51.6 MB O/S: Windows XP SP2 to 10

Publisher: Mozilla Corporation

URL: http://www.mozilla.org/en-GB/thunderbird/

NotePad++ (32bit)

License: Freeware

File name: NotePad_v8.5.exe

File Size: 4.17 MB O/S: Windows

Publisher: Notepad++

URL: https://notepad-plus-plus.org/

Want more? See the New Releases list:

http://ct.com.com/

Tips etc.

Microsoft PowerToys: 18 Ways to Enhance Windows 10 and Windows 11

By Lance Whitney Mar 24, 2023

Need to rename multiple files at once, find your mouse cursor, or quickly mute your audio during a virtual meeting? Microsoft's free PowerToys utility will give your operating system a boost.

https://au.pcmag.com/windows-xp/68059/7-unique-ways-to-enhance-windows-10-with-microsoft-powertoys

Redesigned Microsoft Teams Runs Faster, Uses Less Memory

By Stephanie Mlot Mar 29, 2023

Windows desktop users can now opt into the public preview.

https://au.pcmag.com/collaboration/99410/redesigned-microsoft-teams-runs-faster-uses-less-memory

Microsoft Issues Fixes for 'Acropalypse' Windows Screenshot Bug

By Marco Marcelline Mar 26, 2023

The patches fix Windows 10 and 11 security flaws that allowed malicious actors to reveal the unedited contents of cropped and publicly shared screenshots.

https://au.pcmag.com/security/99382/microsoft-issues-fixes-for-acropalypse-windows-screenshot-bug

How to Back Up and Restore Your PC With a Windows System File

By Lance Whitney Mar 25, 2023

Image file backups come in handy if your current Windows 10 or Windows 11 system ever fails.

https://au.pcmag.com/migrated-15175-windows-10/46936/how-to-back-up-and-restore-an-image-file-of-windows-10

Report: Intel Dominates in Client Sales, but AMD Threadripper Outsold Xeon by 20:1

By Josh Norem March 28, 2023

A custom PC builder shares its hardware sales for the past two years and provides a snapshot of how the two companies are faring.

https://www.extremetech.com/computing/report-intel-dominates-in-client-sales-but-amd-threadripper-outsold-xeon?zdee=gAAAAABjNL8ST42l80nl07cPB3qfRUi6ntgUgOTESELeSDlZFhs8z4qnmoLs_AknqwLVhZpQWW_ldjjcVkNAoSBZ5eIt2gM0-Tu64aKwciwXzXGx5QU6ZfE%3D

Which of Your Devices Is Most Likely to Injure You?

By Eric Griffith Mar 29, 2023

Here's a clue: It's not a rogue killer robot. In fact, it's probably the gadget you use the most.

https://au.pcmag.com/the-why-axis-serie/99424/which-of-your-devices-is-most-likely-to-injure-you

AI Programs Like ChatGPT Could Replace 7% of US Jobs, But Don't Worry Yet

by Michael Kan Mar 29, 2023

Researchers at Goldman Sachs project that in most cases, companies will simply tap AI programs to complement existing work, rather than completely replace jobs.

https://au.pcmag.com/news/99413/ai-programs-like-chatgpt-could-replace-7-of-us-jobs-but-dont-worry-yet

How to Check the Health of Your Laptop's Battery in Windows

By Jason Cohen Mar 22, 2023

Whether you're still running Windows 10 or upgraded to Windows 11, a Windows battery report will help you keep tabs on the health of your laptop's battery.

https://au.pcmag.com/batteries-power/85991/how-to-check-your-laptops-battery-health-in-windows-10

Hackers on Edge as FBI Reportedly Gains Access to BreachForums Database

By Michael Kan Mar 25, 2023

'It's clear the FBI has access to the database,' according to an admin for the hacking forum.

https://au.pcmag.com/security/99373/hackers-on-edge-as-fbi-reportedly-gains-access-to-breachforums-database

His Inventions Helped Create the Modern World: Remembering Gordon Moore

By Michael J. Miller Mar 26, 2023

Intel co-founder Gordon Moore passed away at age 94 this week. Here's why he's one of the most important figures in the history of semiconductors.

https://au.pcmag.com/processors/99377/his-inventions-helped-create-the-modern-world-remembering-gordon-moore

Save Your Stuff: How to Back Up and Restore Your Android Device

By Lance Whitney March 23, 2023

Afraid of losing everything on your Galaxy, Pixel, or other Android device? A backup of your phone or tablet is handy if you ever need to restore lost data.

https://www.pcmag.com/how-to/how-to-back-up-restore-your-android-device?zdee=gAAAAABjNL8ST42l80nl07cPB3qfRUi6ntgUgOTESELeSDlZFhs8z4qnmoLs_AknqwLVhZpQWW_ldjjcVkNAoSBZ5eIt2gM0-Tu64aKwciwXzXGx5QU6ZfE%3D

Refresh Your Inbox: How to Delete a Gmail Account

By Lance Whitney Mar 24, 2023

Whether you want to get rid of an old, inactive account or prefer a different email service, here's how to delete a Gmail account.

https://au.pcmag.com/productivity/99354/refresh-your-inbox-how-to-delete-a-gmail-account

10 Ways to Boost Your Wi-Fi Signal

By Whitson Gordon Mar 28, 2023

Check out these quick tips to boost your wireless signal from your router, extend and optimize your Wi-Fi coverage, and speed up your surfing.

https://au.pcmag.com/wireless-networking-1/10553/10-ways-to-boost-your-wi-fi-signal

Hey, Dr. Google: The Most Common Health Searches in Each State

By Emily Dreibelbis Mar 24, 2023

Colorado is curious whether it's concussed, while Connecticut cares most about calorie intake: What are your neighbors asking Dr. Google?

https://au.pcmag.com/the-why-axis-serie/99364/dr-google-these-are-the-most-common-health-searches-in-each-state

OpenAI: Sorry, ChatGPT Bug Leaked Payment Info to Other Users

By Michael Kan Mar 25, 2023

The glitch exposed the payment details of about 1.2% of ChatGPT Plus users, including their email addresses, payment addresses, and the last four digits of their credit card numbers.

And the Oscar Goes to, ChatGPT? Don't Bet on It, Writers Guild of America Says

By Stephanie Mlot Mar 24, 2023

The WGA seeks to regulate the use of AI to ensure writers' compensation, residuals, separated rights and credits are not undermined, but its use would not be banned outright.

https://au.pcmag.com/news/99344/and-the-oscar-goes-to-chatgpt-dont-bet-on-it-writers-guild-of-america-says

UK Sets Up Fake DDoS-for-Hire Sites to Trap Hackers

By Michael Kan Mar 25, 2023

'We will not reveal how many sites we have or for how long they have been running,' the UK's National Crime Agency says.

https://au.pcmag.com/security/99370/uk-sets-up-fake-ddos-for-hire-sites-to-trap-hackers

Here Endeth John's Jots

This month Scams – Be Careful out there

Chris Haydock

Everyday, I receive scam emails and often they look very legitimate. Some stating my virus software is due for renewal and to update my credit card all of which are not the software on my computer. Then there is the regular email that looks like it comes from my internet provider asking to confirm my payment details as my payment did not go through – I don't pay them by card.

Now we have the text messages. Once a week I get a message saying Mum I lost my phone this is my new number. I know if my children lost their phone they would not have a new number that quick.

This week I received an email from Afterpay stating that my account had been logged into in Nigeria. I immediately logged on to check and there was nothing concerning and I changed my password. I was still concerned so I emailed Afterpay and copied in the email I had received. They investigated and advised my account had not been accessed previously.

I always avoid road tolls because I don't like paying them money. However on Christmas Eve last year I took a wrong turn and ended up on the M7 so I had to pay a toll. I paid my toll but then coincidence or not I started getting text messages from Linkt to say I had not paid my toll and the cost was increasing and I needed to log in and pay it. I did believe it was a scam but was concerned after receiving the text message several times so eventually thought I should ring them to check. Yes it was a scam I owed them nothing.

I am sure you all have many other instances you can share. I just thought it is relevant to alert everyone to be careful and if in doubt ring the relevant authority and double check.

APCUG ARTICLES

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Where to Get E-Books

By Tom Burt, Vice President, Sun City Summerlin Computer Club.

https://www.scscc.club

tomburt89134@cox.net

A perennial challenge is to find suitable gifts for friends and family. Books have always been a popular choice. Now, with the maturing of the electronic book (e-book) format and industry, it should be easier than ever to find just the right title, purchase it and email a link for your gift to use to access and read the book. Of course, things aren't so simple in practice, so you may want to read on.

This article is based on a seminar I gave in December 2020 titled "E-Books and E-Readers." My seminar slides are at: https://www.scscc.club/smnr/E-Books_and_E-Readers_Seminar.pdf .

E-book formats

There are two main formats: Amazon Kindle and E-Pub. There are hardware and software readers for each. Both formats support digital rights management (copy protection) so that the purchaser of a book can't share it with more than a few others. Amazon mainly uses the Kindle format. E-Pub is used by Barnes and Noble and Kobo and for many self-published books. Adobe PDF and HTML are also often used for e-books. Apple's iBook format is a variation of E-Pub.

When buying an e-book, it's important to know what format it is in so you can be sure your reader device or program can read the book. A common problem for owners of Amazon's Kindle or Fire tablets is that they do not support the E-Pub format. The Amazon app store does not offer an E-Pub reader app. It's possible to "jailbreak" a Kindle or Fire tablet so that it can install Android apps from the Google play store, including Adobe's Digital Editions E-Pub reader. But that's a topic for another day.

E-Book Websites

Here's a list of e-book websites with links to each:

- **Amazon Kindle Store www.amazon.com**
- **Barnes & Noble http://www.barnesandnoble.com**
- **Google Play Store Books https://play.google.com/store/books**
- **Kobo www.kobo.com**
- **Las Vegas / Clark County Library (via OverDrive) http://lvccld.org**
- **Open Library https://openlibrary.org/**
- **Project Gutenberg (60,000 free ebooks) https://www.gutenberg.org/**

Let's look at a few of them in more depth.

Amazon Kindle

The Amazon bookstore is vast. You can buy books in hardcover, paperback, audio, and e-book format. As with all Amazon shopping, the search is very smart, and you can set filters to narrow choices. In addition, you can click on items in the search results to view details and, from there, add them to your shopping cart.

If buying for yourself, E-books are delivered (downloaded) to the reading device you specify. You can also specify you are buying for someone else and enter the giftee's information so they can receive the book.

You need an Amazon Kindle or Fire Reader tablet or Amazon's free Kindle Reader app to read Kindle books. There are versions for Windows, macOS, Linux, Android, and iOS.

If you subscribe to Amazon Prime, you have access to an extensive collection of e-books at no charge via the Prime Reading service. In addition, you can have free access to up to ten e-books for as long as you wish. Then, return or buy one of the ten you have when you want another.

The Amazon Fire HD 10 tablet with 32 GB of storage lists for $100.

Barnes and Noble

Barnes and Noble sells books in "Nook book" (E-Pub) format and paperback and hardcover. B&N also sells a family of Nook reader tablets and has a free reader app. In addition, you can set up an account on B&N and enjoy special pricing, free e-books, and other perks.

See the screenshot below to get a sense of their online store. The search window is very smart.

The Nook book reader is a 10-inch Android tablet (made by Lenovo) with 32 GB of storage, listing at $130. It has full access to the Google Play Store apps. This would include the free Amazon Kindle Reader app for Android. So, a Nook reader tablet could double as a Kindle Reader, allowing you to shop for books in either Nook or Kindle format.

Project Gutenberg

To check out a book, use the search by author, subject, or title to find the desired e-book, click the "Check Out" button, select your format (Kindle, E-Pub, OverDrive Read) and then click the Download button. For Kindle format, you get redirected to the Amazon bookstore to download the selected e-book. Amazon handles it as a sale for $0.00 that grants you 21-day reading privileges for that book. After 21 days, the book is automatically "returned," and you can no longer read it. You get an alert email after 18 days that your "loan" is about to expire. You can also return books early. It's polite to do that, as others are often waiting to borrow the book. The library has to pay for each lending license, so they often only license a few copies.

Hopefully, that helps you know more about e-books and how to get them. I love them because of the convenience and the ease of reading. And they take up zero space in the house.

President's Column. The View from the End of the Year.

By Greg Skalka, President, Under the Computer Hood User Group.

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2021 was filled with ups and downs. Better in many ways than 2020, which introduced us to the COVID-19 pandemic, but also worse in some, this last year has been a deceiver. At this time last year, when COVID disrupted the holidays, there was hope that 2021 would be better. Things did improve with vaccinations and boosters, and restrictions were decreased, but new variants of the virus have demonstrated this battle may never be over.

When the pandemic first started, our group could pivot almost immediately into virtual meetings. In just two weeks, we went from Bob G's in-person security presentation in March 2020, our last meeting at Wesley Palms, to our group's first Zoom meeting (our March board meeting). This was not without issues, effort, and consternation. Still, we held our first virtual general meeting two weeks after that, on April 1st (April Fool's Day!), with an APCUG Speakers Bureau presentation on 5G from Ron Brown.

Those early days of the pandemic were tough on everyone. We all had to figure out the new rules and how to cope. Our board did very well in adapting to the new normal of virtual meetings, and we held many Zoom training sessions for members to practice. Most members quickly learned how to use Zoom, but a few were not interested in virtual meetings or using that software. Fortunately, we found the online meetings opened our group up to a broader geographic audience. We welcomed members of other APCUG groups to our meetings. The virtual format benefited one particular UCHUG member who had moved out of the area but wanted to continue attending; this was now possible. Virtual meetings made sense for members with
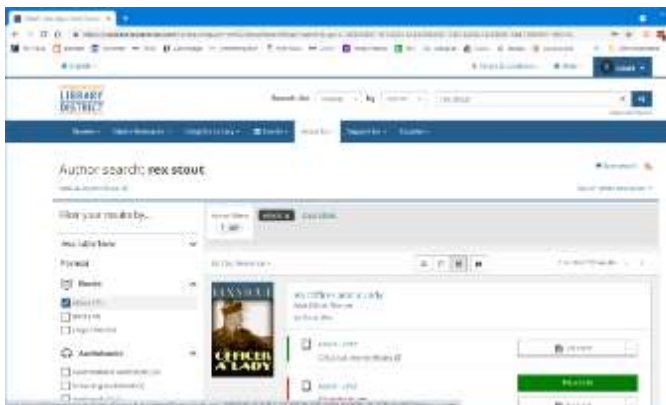
Project Gutenberg was founded by Michael Hart, who invented e-books in 1971. Its website claims to have 60,000 titles in its library. All these titles are completely free. Most are "classics" that are out of copyright. For example, I searched for Albert Einstein and found an English translation of his Special and General Relativity expositions.

I tried downloading a copy of Herman Melville's "Moby Dick" in Kindle format and read it using the free Calibre book reader app on my PC. But unfortunately, the Amazon Kindle Reader app wasn't able to open the book.

Las Vegas Clark County Public Library

The Las Vegas Clark County Library District website offers a rich collection of e-books and other e-media that you can borrow for up to 21 days. The only requirement is a library card number and an associated PIN. For APCUG readers, your public library very likely offers comparable services.

concerns about driving at night. It saved me travel time to and from meetings and the effort of lugging equipment and materials for them.

This abrupt change could easily have resulted in the demise of our group, but instead, we merely continued the slow decline in membership we had seen previously.

UCHUG's continued existence is due to the dedication and determination of our board and the help we received from APCUG. UCHUG has been a member of APCUG, the Association of Personal Computer User Groups, for almost two decades. It is an international association of technology and computer user groups that has helped us in many ways over the years, providing presentation speakers, conferences, and organizational guidance. The help that APCUG and our Regional Advisor, Judy Taylour, provided in that first COVID year was instrumental in keeping us going. They offered the use of a paid Zoom account for our meetings, many virtual Speakers Bureau presentations, Virtual Tech Conferences, and other online workshops for our members to participate in and lots of good advice.

We held things together pretty well that first year and had a lot of participation in our meetings. The most regrettable part was that we could not hold our two annual parties, the June member picnic and our December Cheer party meeting in 2020. We just had regular Zoom meetings for both, but per our tradition, we gave away a few electronic gift cards in a drawing for members attending the December meeting.

We continued the online formula of some Speakers Bureau presentations, some instructive videos suggested by members, and one or two homegrown presentations for our meetings in 2021. The Zoom process became routine. In March, Bob G. gave us his latest security presentation through Zoom and an update for National Cybersecurity Awareness Month in October. As the vaccine became available, everyone hoped that, with enough uptake, restrictions on gatherings could be reduced, and some in-person meetings could be held. We first set our sights on the picnic.

State and local officials held us back on an in-person picnic in June. Still, restrictions on outdoor gatherings

were loosened enough to allow it in July, which was better in Mission Bay weather. The group provided pizza and drinks, a few other board members brought items, and we had a good turnout. As even indoor restrictions were lifted for the fully vaccinated as case rates declined, we began planning for the possibility of an actual December meeting. Our contacts with the Seniors Group, which also met at Wesley Palms, indicated that our opportunity to meet there again may not come for a long time, if ever. Fortunately, our editor found his church in Poway would allow us to use one of their meeting rooms. On December 1, we were finally able to hold an in-person indoor meeting. It featured our member potluck and member prize giveaway, with an opportunity drawing for more prizes and an auction of donated items to raise funds for the group. We had good attendance, did better than break-even, and everyone seemed to enjoy it.

Unfortunately, the church is far from our prior meeting site, likely causing some members to skip it. Due to age, some probably were now more concerned about driving at night than before the pandemic. Some were concerned about the new Omicron variant and the likelihood of restrictions soon being reimposed and so opted out. Not long after, the state and county clamped down again. Our January 2022 meeting will once again be on Zoom.

So, where does this leave us?

I believe that 2022 is going to be a lot like 2021. The battle between new variants and vaccinations/boosters will continue. New virus variants will continue to emerge, so we can all look forward to reacquainting ourselves with the Greek alphabet. However, hopefully, vaccination rates will increase, boosters will be accepted if recommended, and COVID testing will become easier to obtain and less costly. Many folks tried (unsuccessfully) to get tested the last week ahead of the Christmas weekend, so they could more safely gather. In addition to COVID, there appear to be colds and flu circulating right now. In my extended family group, I know of one person who tested positive for COVID, while two others had similar symptoms but tested negative (all in separate households).

In some respects, I'm not too disappointed that we will have to go back to Zoom meetings, as it reduces my setup and travel time. The board has had some preliminary discussions about using the church meeting room for meetings in the future, which seems viable when health restrictions allow. The board is considering doing those as a hybrid meeting, where Zoom would be run on computers in the meeting room to broadcast to those that can't or won't travel in person. It will take some extra work to make sure the meeting works well for remote and local attendees, but it would give us the best of both worlds. We had a Zoom link set up at our last general meeting, and a couple of people watched for a bit, but the format of our December meeting doesn't

lend itself to remote participation. A standard meeting with presentations could work well as a hybrid meeting.

Happy 2022!

P.S. Where are our flying cars, robot maids, and space travel for everyone? When I was young, I thought we'd have these by 2022. Unfortunately, COVID and global warming are a poor trade. No matter what happens in 2022, I believe everyone will agree that 2021 was a year we won't soon forget.

The Other Side of the Bitcoin

By David Kretchmar, Computer Technician, Sun City Summerlin Computer Club

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In the April 2021 edition of the Gigabyte Gazette, I contributed an article titled "Bitcoin - the New Gold?". I stated that "Gold and Bitcoin, as different as they are, both have characteristics of good investment vehicles and sound money."

In the April article, I emphasized the positive aspects of Bitcoin (along with other cryptocurrencies). I concluded

by stating, "Bitcoin is becoming a valued currency not by force of government declaration or people's acquiescence, but by recognition and popular acceptance."

Yet any investment with tremendous past profits and massive future potential also necessarily has tremendous *downside* potential. In this article, I will discuss what I think could be the downfall of Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies.

Scarcity?

Under current protocols, the maximum number of Bitcoins that can ever be mined is 21 million. There are approximately 18.8 million bitcoins in circulation today. It is estimated the last bitcoin will be mined in 2040.

Many cryptocurrencies have a finite limit, and the speed at which they will be increased is largely unknown and not controlled by any authority. But the scarcity element exists only within some specific cryptocurrencies, such as Bitcoin, Cardano (45 billion limit, 32 billion in circulation), and Litecoin (84 billion limit, 24 billion in circulation).

Other cryptocurrencies, such as Ethereum and Dogecoin, have no limit. There are well over 1,000 cryptocurrencies in existence, with new ones being created seemingly weekly. The potential supply of cryptocurrencies is infinite, limited only by the human imagination and the willingness of individuals to fork over their cash. Cryptocurrencies are far from scarce.

Loss of Key

The key is the secret code required to access a cryptocurrency wallet. The loss of this code means the loss of all assets stored in the wallet. If the PC hard drive or flash drive fails or is accidentally discarded, this can happen. According to estimates, this is common; it has happened with up to 25% of crypto-wallet owners who have lost over 18 billion dollars' worth of digital currencies. Unfortunately, it is impossible to restore the code and recover the currency if lost.

Technical issues

Technical problems on the servers where cryptocurrency wallets are stored happen with disturbing frequency. Investors who have suffered losses cannot claim a refund regardless of whose fault it is. Usually, the problems are caused by hackers and occasionally by bugs in software or hardware, but no matter – when the money disappears, it is gone.

Government Intervention

Some governments seem willing to accept or at least accommodate cryptocurrencies, such as the US and Canada. However, other nations, such as Russia and China, have denounced or outlawed cryptocurrencies within their borders. In late September, the Chinese government expanded its ban on Chinese financial institutions providing crypto-related services. In addition, it restated its goal of forcing miners out of business. This announcement knocked 10% or more off of the values of many cryptocurrencies on 9/24/21 before a small recovery.

Governments lose the ability to use fiscal policies to control their economies when they allow the widespread adoption of digital currency. In addition, if cryptocurrencies were widely adopted, nations would lose the purpose and power of their national banking systems.

There are fears of rising cybercrime and other crime rates due to the increased ability to transfer value through untraceable financial transactions. In addition, some claim the rise of crypto-based payments could increase the ability of people to engage in illegal activities without leaving a trail, another reason many governments opposed the adoption of cryptocurrencies. However, I believe these fears are overstated since law enforcement has been able to trace and recover some cyber ransom proceeds, which would probably be impossible with cash.

Speculation Gone Wild?

On a Sunday afternoon in early September, my wife and

I almost accidentally wandered into a "cryptocurrency seminar" held in a small meeting room at DV here in Sun City. We soon discovered that we were in a multi-level marketing rally, including testimonies of several people stating they had made hundreds and thousands of dollars in seconds or minutes by using the system the presenters were promoting. Loud claps and cheers followed each testimony. They named several cryptocurrencies; most were unknown to me.

One MLM rally provides anecdotal evidence of probably nothing. However, I have to wonder how many other like-minded individuals worldwide have embraced the suspension of logic and critical thinking required to be swept up by the allure of quick profits in cryptocurrencies.

Conclusions

Many of us can remember the "dot com" boom at the end of the last century. Any company claiming to have an idea relating to providing anything through the then-new internet could issue stock and reach a substantial valuation. Many new companies had no earnings or revenues, yet they doubled in price the day they started trading. Investors knew these stocks had no intrinsic value, but no matter if they could sell them at a higher price than they paid. That sounds very much like most cryptocurrencies today.

When the crash came in 2000, even the few good internet companies such as Amazon and Priceline (Booking.com) saw the destruction of a substantial majority of their market value. This persisted for many years until they eventually recovered and went higher. Unfortunately, most of the dot com companies whose value soared astronomically came crashing back to earth, becoming worthless losing investors billions of dollars.

The current cryptocurrency craze exhibits many similarities to the dot com boom and echoes many speculative bubbles of the past. For example, the Dutch "tulip mania" in the 17th century is considered the first recorded speculative asset bubble. Prices for some rare tulip bulbs reached amazingly high levels, $750,000 in today's money, then dramatically collapsed to virtually nothing.

A $50k cryptocurrency investment has the potential to become a half-million dollars or more or to become worthless; you won't even be left with a beautiful flower. And remember, there exists no centralized exchange like there was with stocks and even for tulip bulbs. So, it could be very ugly. History never repeats, but it certainly rhymes.

Right-Click Your Mouse, Best Shortcut Ever!

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If you are not familiar with the power of RIGHT-clicking your mouse, you are in for a great Windows tip to help you in almost every place on your computer. First, of course, everyone should be familiar with LEFT-clicking the mouse to select things and options. Computer instructions say "click on" this or that, and it is understood that they mean LEFT click. But the RIGHT mouse button is a big help also, and instructions should always specify "RIGHT-click" when you are to use that button.

So, what does "right-clicking" your mouse do on Windows? Well -- and this is the core of this article -- **right-clicking your mouse on anything makes a menu of options appear for that item.** This works for almost anything you can see on your Windows monitor. So, let's look at a few examples for you to try to show you what a helpful shortcut this can be for you.

Place your mouse arrow (cursor) anywhere on your desktop screen (on an empty area, not an icon). Now right-click your mouse, and you will see a menu appear of choices or commands for what you can do with your desktop. For example, you will see choices such as "View," which allows you to change how you view your desktop. Or "Sort by," which gives you options for sorting what is on your desktop. If you don't know what a command or option does, ask Google.

For another example, place your mouse arrow on a BLANK area on your Taskbar at the bottom of your Windows desktop screen. Now right-click, and you will see options of what you can do with your Taskbar – such as locking or unlocking the Taskbar, arranging open windows on your screen, and more. You can even LEFT click on "Taskbar settings" to go directly to the Taskbar settings options. So have fun and TRY something! (Remember always to use a LEFT mouse click to select a menu option).

For a third example, let's say you are editing text in a document. First, drag your mouse over some text to highlight it (this is "selecting" the text you want to work with). Now right-click on the highlighted text, and viola, you see options of what you can do with that text. You can select "cut," "copy," or "paste," for example, or change the font or make it a new paragraph.

If you have not realized the power of right-clicking your mouse, then you should be saying a big "WOW, this is so cool!" Now you can have some fun trying right-clicks anywhere and everywhere. Try right-clicking on an icon, a cell in a spreadsheet, a file or folder name in File Explorer, or a photo on the internet. You do not have to select an option on the menu that appears; left click somewhere else, and the menu will disappear, and nothing will happen. So, you won't change a thing when you look and explore. Right-clicking is a great shortcut that will save you time searching for many options or choices. Most apps (applications, programs, etc.) will also provide right-click menus. So why not give it a try? You have nothing to lose but a click!

Recycling a PC

By Dick Maybach, Brookdale Computer User Group.
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There are two issues to address when you decide to discard an old PC (1) finding somebody who wants it and (2) removing your data from it. The first is more difficult for older units, but not impossible; our local

Goodwill was delighted to get an XP-era desktop with a keyboard and mouse but no display. I had replaced Windows XP with a current version of Linux to make it Internet-safe. I wouldn't have been comfortable donating a machine with an operating system that couldn't be kept current.

Your first step in selling a PC or giving it to a charity or a friend is to figure out what it is. For Windows 10, type "settings" in the search window, then go to Settings, to System, and finally to About to see the window is shown in Figure 1. (For the remainder of this article, I'll shorten such commands to "settings" > Settings > System > About.)
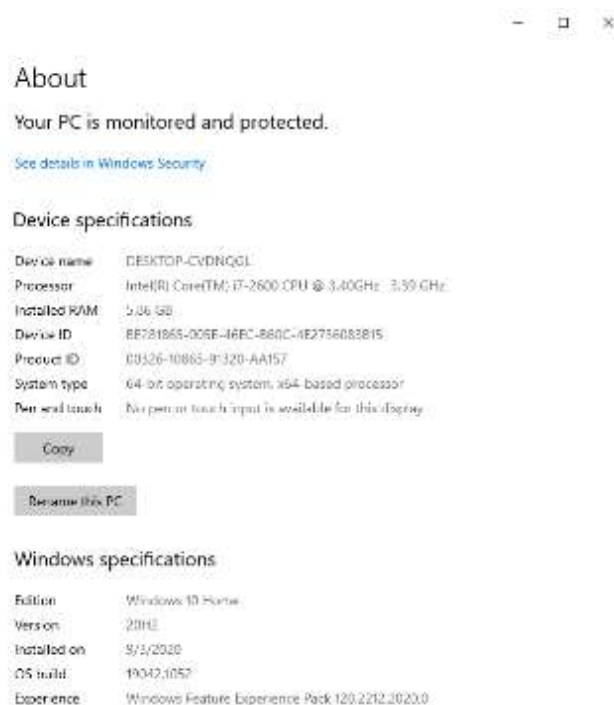

Figure 1. Windows 10 Device Specifications Screen.

Similar procedures work for other versions of Windows, see https://www.tenforums.com/tutorials/132836-check-what-processor-cpu-windows-pc.html. A key item here is whether the hardware is 32 or 64 bit. Although Microsoft still supports 32-bit processors, they are obsolete, and most Linux versions require 64-bit processors. Another key item is the version of Windows. You do nobody a favor by giving them a PC with an obsolete operating system, as it isn't safe to use on the Internet. The traditional remedy is to replace the OS with Linux, but it may take some searching to find one for a 32-bit CPU.

An alternative to the Windows tool is a live USB drive such as PartedMagic, available at https://partedmagic.com/ for $13, Figure 2. Unfortunately, you must be careful, as it's sold only as a subscription, and if you don't cancel it within three months, your credit card will be billed another $13. I'm disappointed that the supplier has decided to take this approach. If you choose to go ahead, be sure to

download both the current version (which runs only on 64-bit machines) and the old one, pmagic_2020_05_20.iso (which runs on 32-bit machines and all the 64-bit ones I've tried). Figure 2 is a screenshot of the latter.

Figure 2. PartedMagic Home Screen.

The information you need appears in the third line of text in the top right corner of the desktop, "CPU Details: x86_64, 3392 MHz" here. You can see more details by selecting the System Profiler icon on the desktop or bottom left icon, then System Information and exploring the Hardware Lister.

Is your PC worth recycling? A 64-bit one certainly is, and a 32-bit one maybe, if it isn't too old. One with Windows XP, a cathode-ray-tube display, and legacy accessory ports (PS-2 for its keyboard and mouse and VGA for display) is probably ready for the landfill, but do check with a local charity. With a solid-state display and USB ports, a more modern one is more likely to be usable. Windows 10 supports 32-bit machines for now, although there are signs that this may end. You can still find a few Linux distributions that do, https://www.makeuseof.com/linux-distros-with-32-bit-support/, even though most require 64 bits.

You should remove all your data before selling your old PC, giving it away, or disposing of it. Deleting files isn't enough, as these are easily recovered. They must be wiped; that is, over-written with unrelated data. This is especially convenient with recent versions of Windows, https://www.pcmag.com/how-to/how-to-wipe-your-hard-drive. For Windows 10, type "settings" > Settings> Update & Security > Recovery > Get started (under Reset this PC) to see Figure 3.
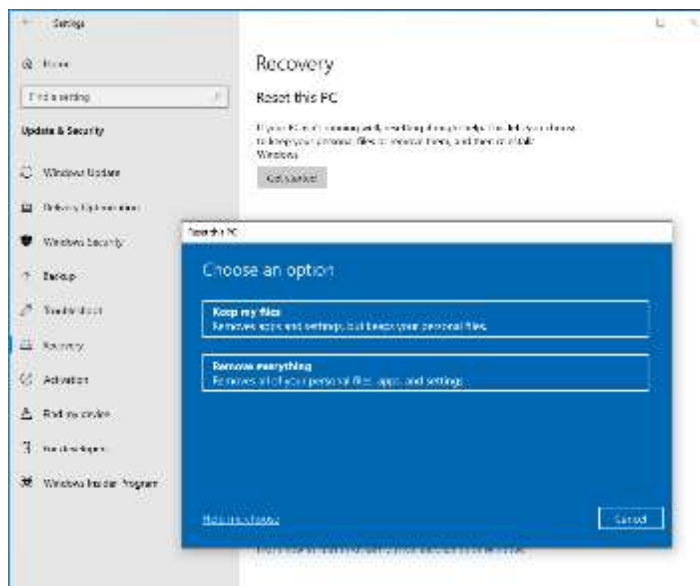

Figure 3. Windows 10 Reset Screen.

The "Remove everything" option will sanitize your PC but leave Windows 10 installed. Although similar options are available in older Windows versions, they are less useful since these are no longer supported. In such cases, my choice would be to wipe the disk of everything and install Linux, which results in an operable PC. But, of course, the operating system is immaterial for those who want to surf the Internet and exchange e-mail.

Disk wiping utilities are common, and one is included in PartedMagic, mentioned above. First, select Disk Cleaning on PartedMagic's home screen as shown in Figure 2, then select the Block Wiping tab to see Figure 43. (The options under the Secure Erase tab use utilities included on many hard disks.) I prefer Nwipe, a clone of DBAN, https://tiptopsecurity.com/how-to-securely-wipe-your-hard-drive-with-dban-erase-your-data-for-good/ and available separately.

Figure 4. PartedMagic Disk Eraser Windows.

The wipe process will probably take several hours, but it takes no supervision, so you can start it and walk away. If the process fails, the safe remedy is to remove the disk and physically destroy it by taking it to the curb and using a hammer. Do this even if your machine is headed for a landfill. You may be tempted to omit it, thinking you have nothing to hide. However, if you've ever used the PC to access the Internet, it has your browsing history, with the sites you've visited and perhaps their passwords, if you've used it for e-mail, it has your messages, and if you've used it to prepare your taxes, it has your old returns. How would you feel if such data were displayed on a website? By the way, that your PC isn't operable doesn't mean its disk can't be read. In this case, the only safe option is to remove the disk, give it the hammer treatment, and discard the PC separately.

Even though it requires some effort, PC recycling is worthwhile. One that you consider too old and slow to be useful can be valuable to a person or organization that doesn't have one.

Modern cell phones also contain sensitive data, which should be deleted before being discarded or traded in. Follow this procedure for Android phones. Start the Settings app, then System > Advanced > Reset Options > Erase all data (factory reset) and follow the instructions. You will have to answer several "Are you sure?" questions, and the process will take several minutes. This isn't long enough for a secure delete process, and I suspect that a determined hacker could recover the data, but at least it's protected from casual ones.