

# Bits & Bytes

Arkansas' Premier Computer Club



## August 2020

**Bella Vista Computer Club - John Ruehle Center**

Highlands Crossing Center, 1801 Forest Hills Blvd Suite 208 (lower level), Bella Vista, AR 72715

Website: <http://BVComputerClub.org>

Email: [editor@bvcomputerclub.org](mailto:editor@bvcomputerclub.org)

### COVID-19 VIRUS ADJUSTMENTS

During normal times all meetings are on the lower level of the Highlands Crossing Center in Bella Vista. For the month of August we will continue to suspend in-person meetings and classes and conduct on-line meetings using Zoom over the Internet.

To attend a Zoom meeting or class, you need Internet access and a device with the Zoom application installed.

### MEETINGS

**(Online) Board Meeting:** August 10, 6pm, using Zoom

**(Online) General Meeting:** August 10, 7pm, "An Overview Of Home Automation". Also Election of BVCC officers for Sept 2020 – August 2021. Zoom meeting access information will be emailed to membership the weekend before. Visitors or Guests may contact our Membership Chair at [membership@bvcomputerclub.org](mailto:membership@bvcomputerclub.org) for details of the Zoom meeting.

**Genealogy SIG:** **CANCELED** for August. (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday).

### HELP CLINICS

No August Help Clinics at John Ruehle center

Members may request Remote Help on our website at <https://bvcomputerclub.org> at menu path Member Benefits ► Remote Help .

### MEMBERSHIP

Single membership is \$25; \$10 for each additional family member in the same household. Join by mailing an application (from the web site) with check, or complete an application and pay at any meeting.

It is now also possible to Join or Renew membership on line on our website at <https://bvcomputerclub.org> at menu path Get Involved ► Join/Renew . Payment may be by Credit Card, or, if you have a PayPal account, by whatever means you have defined on PayPal.

### CLASSES

**(Online) "Using Windows 10" – Joel Ewing, Tuesday, August 25, 9am - noon.**

Advance sign up required for each listed class: Contact Grace: email to [edu@bvcomputerclub.org](mailto:edu@bvcomputerclub.org), text 469-733-8395, call 479-270-1643, or sign up at the General Meeting. Classes are **free to Computer Club members**. Class access information will be emailed to those signed up for the class the day before class.

**Check the monthly calendar and announcements for any last minute schedule changes at <http://bvcomputerclub.org> .**

## **OFFICER CANDIDATES FOR NEXT YEAR**

The nominating committee has come up with a slate of candidates for the five elective positions for our next fiscal year that starts in September 2020. Those positions we need to elect at the August General Meeting are for the one year terms of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and the two-year Board position currently held by Barbara Maybury.

Even in normal times it is difficult to get people to volunteer to serve, and these are far from normal times. Most of the existing officer were OK with serving another term, and we have one new volunteer for Secretary. The list from our nominating committee is:

President - Joel Ewing

Vice President - Woody Ogden

Secretary – Lori Obrenovich

Treasurer – Ron Moffett

Board position (2022) – Barbara Maybury

Members may also be nominated from the floor at the August meeting, but the nominee must be present at the meeting and have agreed to serve.

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## **TRAINING CENTER IMPROVEMENTS**

It has been quite a few years since we have done any significant upgrades on the instructional computers in our Training Center. Over the last 8 years we have upgraded the monitors and some of the auxiliary equipment in the Training Center, but except for a few donated machines, all our computers that we use for instruction in the Training Center are now over 8 years old. They were all originally either Windows Vista or Windows 7 machines. While they are all able to run Windows 10, in some cases they are near the limits of their capability. Performance is marginal for the oldest computers, and that is reflected in the long time to boot, the time to start some applications, and the time to install Microsoft updates. As far as we know, Microsoft will continue to add feature upgrades to Windows 10 rather than replace the entire Operating System, but they do not promise that at some point a Feature Upgrade may require newer hardware than the current minimum requirements for Windows 10.

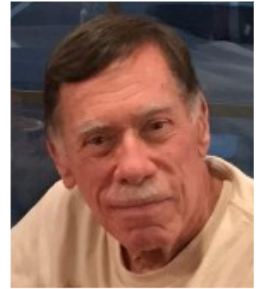
We have several members committed to donate toward a BVCC special projects fund (totaling over \$2,000) to be used at the discretion of the Board, provided a significant portion will be used to start replacing some of the oldest computers in the Training Center. We will be researching what processor configuration would best meet the Training Center needs.

While COVID-19 prevents using the Training Center for in-person classes at the moment, that will not last forever; and we need to keep the Training Center equipment in a functional state. Having even a few faster processors with gigabit network access will even speed up updates on the slower machines somewhat, as they will be able to download more updates from those newer machines over our gigabit local network rather than downloading all updates from Microsoft over our much slower Internet access.

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# MAKE WINDOWS 10 FASTER

By David Kretchmar, Computer Technician, Sun City Summerlin Computer Club  
April 2020 Gigabyte Gazette  
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Support for Windows 7 is now history. Support for Windows 8 will last for 3 more years. Windows 8 mostly consisted of intermediate steps (and missteps) toward Windows 10. In 2020 I can think of no reason for any user to be running Windows 8 instead of Windows 10, especially since Windows 10 is superior and is a free update to Windows 8. So, if you are one of the few users still running Windows 8 there is no better time than now to upgrade to Windows 10.



Most of us have used Windows 10 for a few years now; Windows lacks the flexibility of the flavors of Linux, and the slick user interface of Mac's Catalina, but is the operating system installed on the majority of home computers now.

Windows 10 is Microsoft's best operating system so far but is not perfect. However, it is virtually infinitely customizable and I'm going to make a few suggestions that will help you get the most out of your windows 10 system.

## Keep Windows Up to Date

Windows is issuing updates on a weekly basis and these are important not only for the operating system and peripheral issues corrected but also for keeping your security malware definitions current. Go to Update Settings and confirm that updates are current. Hit Check for Updates to verify this. This is also where you can learn if your system is running the latest update to Windows 10 (1909) and possibly complete this process (as is required in the dialogue box shown). Under Advanced Settings you can make sure auto-updates is checked.

### Windows Update



You're up to date  
Last checked: Yesterday, 9:55 PM

Check for updates

Feature update to Windows 10, version 1909

The next version of Windows is available with new features and security improvements. When you're ready for the update, select "Download and install."

[Download and install](#)

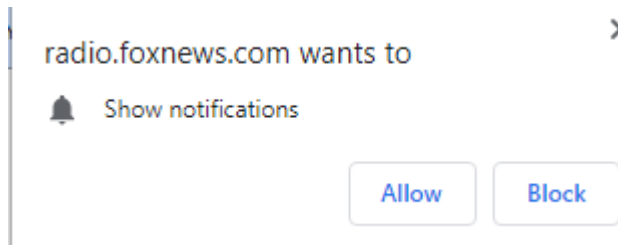
## Disable Cortana

She needs to just shut up. For most users, Cortana is just an annoyance built into Windows 10. She mostly gives users annoying pop-ups, she is constantly gathering data, and does little more than try to force us into Bing searches. In this day of actually useful voice assistants, such as Google or Alexa, Cortana seems oddly dumb. I have learned to disable Cortana during the installation of Windows but if you have not had this opportunity shutting her off is easy. Go to Cortana under Settings and toggle all sliders off.



Go back to the main Settings window and under Privacy Settings you can turn off the sliders for speech and inking and typing to reduce the amount of data Cortana gathers on your computer usage. You can also block Cortana from accessing your microphone and camera on the privacy page. This is also a good time to review all your privacy settings to make sure you are putting as little information as possible out there.

## Disable Notifications



Many users are unaware of why they are constantly getting popups from the Notifications icon on the lower right-hand corner of your Taskbar. These popups use system resources and can be a pain when they interfere with your computer use. Go to Settings, System, Notifications, and actions and toggle off Notifications. Like magic, they will no longer appear! You will still have

many web pages offering notifications, but you can just say "NO!" by hitting "Block" or "Don't Allow".

## Disable Startup Apps

Go to your Task Manager Startup tab and disable any programs you do not need running immediately every time you go into your operating system. Microsoft OneDrive and speech recognition are a couple of major resource hogs. Toggle off anything you do not need running all the time. Remember, you are not removing any programs and you are not preventing them from firing up when you need them.

## Log-in Faster



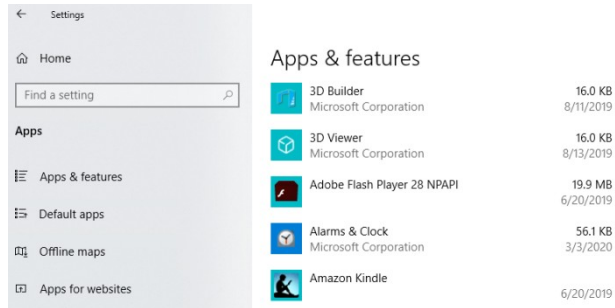
The Windows 10 log-in screen is an excellent example of a worthless "improvement". Having to swipe up or down or hit "Space" is a step Microsoft somehow felt was necessary; typing in your password takes even more time. Most users prefer to use a four-digit PIN; just enter 4 digits and there is no need to even hit Enter. To set a PIN go to Settings, then Sign-in options. Click on Windows Hello PIN and set your 4-digit PIN. Note that a little further down on this page you can disable the requirement for a sign-in after you've been away from your computer for a while.

If you want to *remove* the sign-in password requirement, type “NETPLWIZ” in the search box then use this application to disable the password requirement for your computer.

## Disable Background Apps

This is not necessary on a new powerful system, but if yours is older you might want to look at these under Privacy/Settings. With an older system performance might be improved by unchecking anything you don't need running.

## Uninstall Unneeded Programs



Talking about unnecessary stuff included with Windows 10, there is a ton of “Bloatware” included on most new store-bought systems you can just ditch. Right-click on Start and click on Apps and Features. Scroll through the list and you will see a lot of programs on your system that you never use. Games such as Candy Crush and security programs such as Norton or MacAfee are major offenders in this area. Here is where you can simply uninstall the unused applications, freeing up room on your hard drive,

and ensuring these programs will not try to load and take system resources in the future.