

Bits & Bytes

Arkansas' Premier Computer Club



September 2023 v2

The 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

MEETINGS

Board Meeting: September 11, 6pm, in John Ruehle Training Center, Highlands Crossing Center.

General Meeting: September 11, 7pm.
Program: "Password Managers", presented by Joel Ewing. One of the best ways to keep your on-line accounts secure is to use unique password for each account. Without appropriate tools to generate passwords and remember them, this is not practical. Password Managers are designed to perform that function.

We will meet in-person in Room 1001 on the lower level of The Highlands Crossing Center, 1801 Forest Hills Blvd, Bella Vista, or you may attend the meeting on-line via Zoom. Zoom access information is published on our website. Visitors or Guests are welcome.

Consider attending by Zoom if you are unable to attend in-person.

HELP CLINICS

September 2, 9am - noon at John Ruehle center

September 20, 9am - noon at John Ruehle center

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

Genealogy SIG: September 15, 1pm-3pm, Training Center

MEMBERSHIP

Single membership is \$30; \$15 for each additional family member in the same household.

Join on our website at <https://bvcomputerclub.org> at menu path Get Involved ► Join/Renew, by mailing an application (from the web site) with check, or complete an application and pay in person at any meeting.

CLASSES

(At BVCC Training Center)

Tuesday, September 19, 2pm-4pm, "Basic Computer Security, Part 2", with Justin Sell.

Thursday September 21, 1pm-3pm, "KeePassXC Password Manager", with Joel Ewing.

Tuesday, October 3, 9am-11am, "Recordings, Movies and More, Part 1", with Pete Opland.

Tuesday, October 17, 2pm-4pm, "Basic Computer Security, Part 1", with Justin Sell

Advance sign up required for each listed class: For reservations: email to edu@bvcomputerclub.org, or sign up at the General Meeting. Classes are **free to Computer Club members.**

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

NEW OR RETURNING BVCC MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome the following new members or members returning as BVCC members after an absence:

Ann Gray

Oran Morrow

Lanni Johnson

Debra Wilson

Lori Qualls

Randy Fry

Ed Hoeffler

BVCC OFFICERS FOR SEPTEMBER 2023 THRU AUGUST 2024

The following officers and board members were elected at the August 14 meeting:

President: Joel Ewing

Vice President: Woody Ogden

Secretary: Johnny Johnson

Treasurer: Russ Ogden

Board 2025, position 1: Geri Hoerner

Board 2025, position 2: Barbara Maybury

Board positions are for two years and are staggered. The third Board position term doesn't end until August 2024 and will continue to be held by Loretto Ostenso.

Grace Chang decided to step down as our Education Chair, and the Board has appointed Jill Doll as her replacement, effective September 1. Grace served as our Education Chair for five years, coordinating class reservations from September 2018 through August 2023. We thank her for her service.

Other appointive positions remain unchanged.

ANNUAL FISCAL YEAR REPORT

BVCC had been running a deficit every year for at least a decade, gradually depleting cash reserves from a time when we received significant funds from the Bella Vista Recycling Center for a large number of volunteer hours worked there by some of our members. With increasing rent for our Training Center and other projected costs it was clear that trend of deficits had to change or BVCC would be forced to close down in only a few more years.

We tried a combination of things this year and had our best year financially in a long time, with our first year in a decade with a positive cash flow.

We had a number of members participate last December in Walmart's promotion for their new Round-Up program for contributions to non-profit organizations, and as a result BVCC was able to qualify for and receive a \$1,000 grant from Walmart.

In January 2023 we increased the dues by \$5 for each member. That, plus some increased publicity efforts that has raised membership from 122 to 143, has increased the income from dues by about \$1,000.

The biggest increase, about \$4,300 in donations, was the result of some individual contributions and also by the February computer raffle for a computer enhanced by Pete Opland, and by additional donations received in exchange for still usable computers donated to BVCC that were enhanced and refurbished by Pete Opland and Woody Ogden.

It is hoped that this may be the start of a new trend.

End-of-Fiscal Year Report (Sep - Aug)

	Previous FY	FY 2022-23
Starting Balance	\$12,641.41	\$9,768.04
Income		
Dues	\$2,722.72	\$3,742.61
Donations	\$2,832.22	\$7,182.60
Grants	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Interest	\$5.65	\$142.47
Other	\$0.00	\$35.00
Total	\$5,560.59	\$12,102.68
Expenses		
Rent	\$5,250.00	\$5,520.00
Internet	\$1,110.00	\$1,049.34
Web hosting	\$75.35	\$224.90
Lab phone	\$61.00	\$65.62
Insurance	\$425.00	\$400.00
Safe Dep Box	\$28.00	\$28.00
Advertising	\$0.00	\$140.00
Equipment	\$966.61	\$1,705.59
Supplies	\$0.00	\$0.00
APCUG dues	\$50.00	\$50.00
Other	\$0.00	\$25.19
Total	\$8,433.96	\$9,208.64
Ending Balance	\$9,768.04	\$12,662.08
Net Gain/Loss	-\$2,873.37	\$2,894.04

BUYING A NEW COMPUTER

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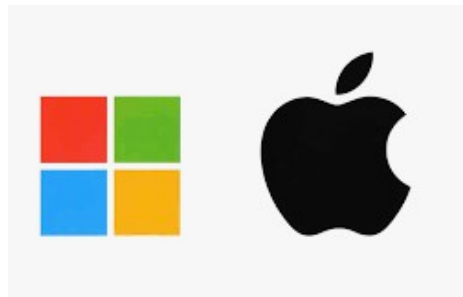
From time to time, every computer specialist is asked, "What computer should I buy?" The answer is usually, "What do you intend to do with it, and how much can you afford?" This article addresses the major decisions required if you are buying a new computer.

Apple or PC?

They will both do what you want, which is probably doing things on the internet.

Both systems run popular software, such as Office or Photoshop.

It can simplify life if you stick to one device operating system. For instance, an iPhone might be good if you have a Mac computer or an iPad with iOS. On the other hand, if you have a PC running a Windows operating system, then an Android phone will be the most compatible.



I use an iPhone and a PC together and have not had issues. I mostly transfer photos between my devices, usually using email, which allows me to transfer 8 – 10 pictures at a time. For mass transfers of photos, I use the Apple USB charger to connect my iPhone to my PC.

If you plan to do any action gaming, most games are at least initially written for a PC running Windows.

It's likely any PC you buy today will come with Windows 11, the latest manifestation of the Windows long-running operating system. A few vendors might still be selling old stock of Windows 10 computers, but it is a free and easy upgrade to Windows 11. Windows 11 is very similar to Windows 10; most users will notice that it now appears more like an Apple interface, and Windows 11 is more closely integrated with Microsoft's OneDrive.

Apple Macs are generally a little to a lot more expensive than comparable PCs. Still, they're less susceptible to viruses and other malware, mainly because 75% of all computers run Windows, making them a potentially more profitable target for hackers. The latest macOS version is 12.3 (Monterey), released in March 2022.

Desktop Computer or Laptop?

Desktops, aka tower computers, generally offer more performance for the same money as laptop or notebook computers and are easier and cheaper to repair or upgrade. However, desktop computers' price/performance advantage is not nearly as dramatic today as in the past, as computer designers and manufacturers devote more resources to miniaturizing components. In addition, desktops provide a more ergonomically correct working position, let you use a larger screen, and usually have better sound.

All-in-One Desktop

All-in-one desktop computers, also known as AIO systems, combine a computer and monitor into one slick-looking package. These AIO systems have become increasingly popular as people want to eliminate as many parts and wires as possible. However, the major downside of AIOs is that their components are tightly packed in the display, making them difficult to upgrade or repair.

Laptops

Naturally, laptop computers are infinitely more mobile than desktops since they are smaller and utilize a battery for power rather than requiring a wall socket. A laptop is a way to go if you plan on using your computer while traveling.



Some users combine the best of both worlds by using a desktop system at home and taking a tablet-style computer, such as an iPad or Kindle Fire, on the road.

Another laptop option is using a "docking station" in your home. You can easily attach a full-sized monitor, keyboard, mouse, and even speakers to a laptop to gain the ergonomic advantages of a desktop.

No matter what PC format you choose, some component options exist.

The Processor

Apple now manufactures its processors, and its weakest offering is the equivalent of an Intel core i5 processor. Multiple cores can process more data simultaneously, and most computers today come with multiple-core CPUs.



In a PC, you have multiple processors from which to choose. For a system that will perform well today and into the foreseeable future, I recommend Intel's 11th generation Core i5 CPU, an actual six-core processor alternately known as the Rocket Lake series. You will still see manufacturers selling 10th-generation Intel chips, but without your

budget, the 11th generation is 20% faster, making it a better value. In recent years the other major manufacturer of CPUs, AMD, has provided an excellent cost-effective alternative to Intel. Still, it appears that Intel has decided to compete in the personal PC space. The AMD Ryzen 5 series, at least 2600 speed, should be comparable to Intel's i5.

Any processor available today will be sufficient if you're shopping for a budget computer to browse the web, email, and maybe just work on documents.

Memory

Generally, the more memory a computer has, the faster it is, at least when you have multiple windows open. In 2022 8GB has become the standard, with 16GB or more found on more high-performance and future-proof devices.

Hard Drive

Go with an SSD (solid-state) drive. SSDs are a relatively new technology using flash memory that's 4 – 10 times faster than mechanical hard drives; there are no moving parts. As a result, an SSD is the single largest performance boost you can give a computer compared to one with a mechanical hard drive.

Optical Drives (CDs and DVDs)

Optical drives are going away from the ancient 3½-inch floppy disk. Virtually any software support needed is available online, and most users are now streaming music and other entertainment. If you need one, for instance, to install an old program or watch a DVD, you can buy an external USB optical drive that plugs into a USB port for around \$25.

Graphics Card

The graphics processing unit (GPU), or graphics card, is the hardware responsible for producing what appears on the screen. The GPUs can be integrated into the CPU or run on a separate, discrete piece of equipment.



Most computers sold today have integrated graphics, the cheaper, lower-performance option. Integrated graphics are OK for most of what you will be doing but not for things such as action gaming and video editing. On the other hand, photo editing and playing games such as Microsoft Solitaire work fine with integrated graphics.

Conclusions

If you talk to 5 different computer geeks, you can get ten or more opinions on any computer issue, such as those discussed above. I have provided my opinions on things you should consider when buying a new computer system, hopefully to make this less confusing. Buying a computer will ultimately be based on your needs and your budget.