

# PLATEAU PC USERS GROUP, INC GAZETTE



# **March 2024**

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This Month's General Meeting Tuesday, March 12, 2024 will start at 3:00 P.M. @ FFG Christ Lutheran Church

## March 12<sup>th</sup> Presentation @ 3:00 P.M.

## **OneDrive!**

This month's program will be given by our President George Sengstock.

Recently a lot of users are encountering something called OneDrive, iCloud or Google drive.

This month we will discuss the different ways to use these services and avoid some pitfalls associated with "cloud storage".

In many cases you may find you are already using this by accident and would like to get a better handle on the situation.





## Sunday, March 17, 2024

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Please Note: All Meetings will now be on the second Tuesday of each month. Starting at 3:00 P.M. Location: Christ Lutheran Church

481 Snead Drive, Fairfield Glade TN

## Join the Club!

Anyone interested to attend the general meeting or any of the SIG meetings as a guest will be charged \$3.00 per person for any or all meetings in that month. Afterwards, you are encouraged to become a member of the Plateau PC Users Group. Our Club cannot exist without you, the members.

#### Membership Dues

Our annual dues are now payable July 1<sup>st</sup>. of each year. Annual dues are \$24 per single person / \$30 per family. Persons/families joining during the fiscal year have dues payable as follows:

<u>Join In</u>	<u>July -</u> <u>Sept</u>	<u>Oct -</u> Dec	<u>Jan -</u> Mar	<u>Apr -</u> June
Single	<b>\$24</b>	\$18	\$12	\$6
Family	\$30	\$22	\$15	\$7

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS DISCLAIMER

All members of the Plateau PC Users Group are willing to help one another in the area of advice and tutorial instruction over the phone. If you should require more involved services or instruction, we have a few members who are very knowledgeable in several areas. As a responsible

consumer, it is up to you to discuss, before retaining a member, any and ALL charges for repair services and time consuming tutorial activities.

It is not the desire of this Board of Directors to set fees for individuals for services rendered, nor the responsibility to intervene between members who enter into a contract among themselves.

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## Cool Tips

## Make Your Batteries Last Longer

By Kurt Jefferson, Editor, Central Kentucky Computer Society https://ckcs.org/

lextown2 \*\* gmail.com

When the battery was first invented, no one could imagine that we'd rely so heavily on them in the 21st century.

Wikipedia.org notes, "Experimentation with lithium batteries began in 1912 under American physical chemist Gilbert N. Lewis, but commercial lithium batteries did not come to market until the 1970s in the form of the lithium-ion battery."

Batteries operate our cell phones, tablets, laptops, landline phones, flashlights, wireless mice, trackballs and some trackpads, and many more items. They even power our EV (electric) cars. Batteries are everywhere.

But as all of us know-batteries die. They need to be continually charged. There are steps you can take to extend your batteries' lives. The Cliff Notes version is here: keep them away from heat. Don't leave them in a hot car. Don't leave them sitting in the sun or lying-in front of a heat register in your home in the winter.

The How-to-Geek website explains: "You can't fully stop batteries from discharging, but you can do one simple thing across all battery types to lower the discharge rate: keep them cool."

Don't put your devices in the freezer. How to Geek says, this causes condensation that can wreck the electronics as you constantly take the devices in and out of the freezer.

On the other hand, keep battery–powered devices in a cool spot. "You might consider charging and storing your power tool batteries in your cool basement instead of leaving them in your sweltering detached garage. You'll also want to keep electronics out of hot cars and store them in the coolest part of your home if they aren't in use for a while," adds How to Geek.

"If your batteries are discharging rapidly enough that you practically need to leave them on the charger to ensure they are ready to use when you need them, then it's time to replace them. Batteries degrade over time, even with the best care, and if a battery is no longer properly holding a charge, it should be recycled and replaced." writes the website.

## \*\* Visit the PPCUG Website \*\*

*At: www.PPCUGinc.com.*Read all about our club activities and scheduled monthly meetings, also current and past issues of the Gazette Newsletter. Links also to the Meeting Handouts on past presentations. Send your comments and suggestions to the PPCUG Webmaster, Alan Baker @ jackal33980@gmail.com (931) 239-0877

## How to Check Free Disk Space on Windows 10

#### BYBENJ EDWARDSANDNICK LEWIS

Running out of room? Here's how to check your free disk space on Windows 10. Jason Fitzpatrick / How-To Geek

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Use File Explorer to check your free disk space by opening it and clicking on "This PC" to see the amount of free disk space.
- You can also check your free space in the Settings app. Open Settings, navigate to System > Storage, and then click "View Storage on Other Drives."

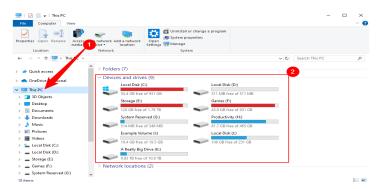
Sometimes it feels like you never have enough free disk space. Every app you install takes up valuable room on your main drive, and you might eventually run out. Here's how to check how much you have left.

#### **Check Your Free Space Using File Explorer**

First, open File Explorer. To do so quickly, press Windows+E. Or click the folder icon in your taskbar if File Explorer is pinned there. You'll also find File Explorer in your Start menu.



Click "This PC" in the left column. Under "Devices and Drives," you'll see your main system volume (C:) and any other drives in the computer. Windows shows the amount of free disk space on the drive directly below the drive's name.



In general, Windows needs at least a few gigabytes of free storage space to perform optimally. For example, it uses this to cache important programs and virtual memory to disk, which speeds up the operation of Windows.

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#### **Check Free Space in the Settings App**

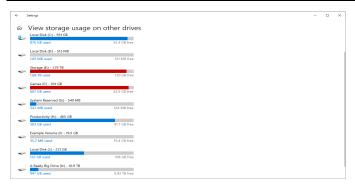
To check how much free space you have using the Settings app, open the Settings app and navigate to System > Storage. Alternatively, search for "Storage" in the Start menu or taskbar search and click "Storage Settings."

Best match			
Storage settings     System settings			
Settings		Storage settings	
Storage usage on other drives	>	System settings	
Turn on Storage Sense	>		
Manage Storage Spaces	>	□* Open	
Change how Storage Sense frees up space	>		
Device performance & health	>		
Default save locations	>		
Folders (1+)			
Documents (14+)			

Scroll down a bit in the Storage window and click "View Storage on Other Drives" under More Storage Settings.

Settings	- 🗆 ×
€ Home Find a setting	Show fewer categories
<ul> <li>Power &amp; sleep</li> <li>Storage</li> <li>Tablet</li> </ul>	More storage settings View storage usage on other drives Change where new content is saved Manage Storage Spaces
Multitasking   Projecting to this PC   Shared experiences	Optimize Drives View backup options
X     Shared experiences     I       Image: Displayer Components     Image: Displayer Components       Image: Displayer Component Componen	Keep clutter off your PC When Storage sense is turned on. It'll free up space only when your PC is low on space. To clean up unused files now, select Configure Storage Sense or run it now > Clean now.

## You'll see a list of every storage device attached to your PC—internal and external.



If you're running low on space, consider freeing up storage by uninstalling programs you no longer use. Also, Windows 10 includes a handy "Free Up Space" tool that helps you clean up your hard drive.

## Missing a Drive Letter? – This might help

By Phil Sorrentino, Secretary and APCUG Rep Sun City Center Computer Club, FL https://www.scccomputerclub.org/ philsorr \*\* yahoo.com

When you plug a portable or external drive into a computer USB port, you expect the drive to be immediately available.

You may hear a few familiar sounds at first, but eventually, you expect to see an indication that the drive is usable. First, you should see the new drive in File Explorer with a new drive letter. The drive letter will typically be the next available letter in the alphabet. (Drives installed on your system start at the beginning of the alphabet with the exceptions that A: and B: are reserved for floppy drives (I wonder how many of us ever had a B: drive), and C: is reserved for the main drive, where the OS is located. So added drives can start at D: unless you have other mechanical, electrical, or optical drives.) So, in a typical laptop with a C: and D: drive, it will be assigned the E: drive letter when you add a USB drive.

Just as an aside, if you have a network of local computers, drive letters may also be assigned by the "map a network drive" feature. These drives typically start from the end of the alphabet, so the first will be Z, followed by Y, and so on. To map a network drive, open File Explorer and click "This PC." Click on the Computer tab, click "Map network drive, " browse, and select the network drive from the list. (To be on the list, the drive must have been shared on the computer it is attached to.)

While we're talking about temporarily added drives, when you are finished with the drive, it is always a good idea to eject the drive in the prescribed way by first clicking the "Safely Remove Hardware and Eject Media" icon. It should be in the notification area on the right side of the taskbar. If you don't see it, you may have a taskbar setting chosen to not display the icon in the notification area, or there may be too many notifications chosen. If you don't see it and you see an up-pointing caret (^), click the caret, and the "Safely Remove Hardware and Eject Media" icon should show up.

F1,

## Safely Remove the Hardware and Eject Media Icon

Yesterday, I had a house full of friends and relatives I had invited over to see some movies that I created from some family and friend activities over the past few years. Knowing this, I connected the portable drive with the movies to my computer in the living room, where everyone could comfortably enjoy the pictures and movies on the connected big-screen TV. Unfortunately, the drive never showed up, though I did hear the familiar sounds. And I could tell the computer knew a drive was there because the "Safely Remove Hardware and Eject Media" icon was in the notification area, but no new drive appeared in File Explorer.

I couldn't show any of the movies on the new drive. So, what's up? I was anxious to show the movies on the new drive to a large group of friends and relatives, so I postponed trying to solve the immediate problem. Fortunately, the living room computer is on a network, so I removed the new drive from the living room computer, the safe way, and brought it to another computer on the network. When I plugged it into the kitchen computer, the installation went as expected, and the new drive showed up

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#### (Continued from page 6)

as the E: drive in File Explorer. Now all I had to do was share the E: drive on the kitchen computer and then go to the living room computer and map the shared kitchen E: drive. All this went as expected, and we could watch all of the movies and pictures from the new E: drive, which was on the kitchen computer and the living room computer/TV; the party was saved. Everyone enjoyed the movies, but at the end of the day, I was still stuck with the problem of the missing drive letter.

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- (Disk 0 partition 3)	Simple	Basic		Healthy (R	560 MB	560 MB	100 %		
- DRIVE 1 (D:)	Simple	Basic		Healthy (L		325.26 GB	92 %		
Elements (E:)	Simple	Basic		Healthy (P		79.92 GB	11 %		
- OS_DRIVE 1 (C:)	Simple	Basic		Healthy (B		42.49 GB	35 %		
System Reserved	Simple	Basic	NTFS	Healthy (S	579 MB	546 MB	94 %		
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#### **Disk Management**

So, before I head to the Computer Lab, I always take a little time to try to solve the problem, or at least try to narrow the problem down using Google to look for a solution. I tried "no drive letter for USB device, " pointing me to a few possibilities. One Google hint showed me that related areas could be found with a right-click of the start button. "Disk Management" is one of those areas. (Be very careful if you go into this area, you can easily turn your computer into a brick with a few short commands, and then you'll have no choice but to go and see "Bob.") When you click "Disk Management," you see the disk drives on your computer and their assigned letters.

After I plugged in the USB drive and got into "Disk Management" on the living room computer, I clicked on the newly added USB disk to select it. I noted that the USB drive was "Disk 1" and a "Healthy Primary Partition," all good indications, but no drive letter was assigned. So the next step was to click on the "Action" menu and then click "All Tasks," where "Change Drive Letter and Path" was found. Again, no drive letter was assigned, so I clicked "Add" to assign an unused letter, in my case, E. After I assigned E: to the USB drive, I could see the drive and its contents in File Explorer, as expected. When I removed and reconnected the drive, it connected as expected and had the E: drive letter.

Epilog: Unfortunately, when I used a different portable drive, it reacted the same way; it showed up without a drive letter. So, now I know how to get around the problem, but I should think that any portable USB drive connected should show up with the next unused letter. So, I may still have something amiss.



## THE TOP 7 PC TIPS EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW



Computers are an essential part of our daily lives. But are you using yours to its full potential? These top seven PC tips will help improve your device's performance and optimize your experience.

## TOP PC TIPS AND TRICKS FOR BETTER PERFORMANCE

Want to increase productivity and make time spent using your computer more enjoyable? Here are a few computer tips and tricks to freshen up your tech game.

## **1. KEEP YOUR PC CLEAN**

Not only is dirt unsightly, but it can also cause damage. Dust and debris can accumulate on the inside and outside of your PC, on your keyboard, and even inside your mouse. This can lead to overheating, impairment, and other issues.

Liquids are especially dangerous and can easily damage important internal components, so it's important to clean your computer regularly. This can be done with a soft brush or a compressed air canister.

## 2. USE KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS

Instead of navigating menus and links, keyboard shortcuts allow you to execute tasks with the click of a few buttons. This saves time and effort, especially for tasks you frequently perform.



Some of the most popular shortcuts include:

- · Ctrl+C (copy)
- · Ctrl+V (paste)
- · Alt+Tab (switch between open windows)

(Continued on page 9)

- Ctrl + Shift + Esc (open task manager)
- Ctrl + Alt + Delete (opens a menu to lock your computer, switch users, etc.)

If you don't use them already, they're worth exploring. They can help you use your PC with more comfort and ease, and you can even create your own.

## **3. BACK UP YOUR DATA**

Make sure to back up your computer regularly and complete operating system updates as soon as possible. This will protect your data and save you time and money in case anything goes wrong. You can use external hard drives or cloud storage services like Google Drive, Dropbox, or OneDrive.

## 4. STAY ORGANIZED

Having files scattered around your computer with no management system makes it challenging to find what you need, especially if you need to do so quickly. You can avoid this by organizing your files into folders and using clear, descriptive file names. This will also help you avoid accidentally deleting or overwriting important files.

Having multiple monitors, especially for your work setup, is also a great way to stay organized and create more space. They vary in price depending on desired features, but finding an affordable option that fits your needs and budget is relatively easy.

## **5. INSTALL ANTIVIRUS SOFTWARE**

Viruses, malware, and other malicious programs can be detrimental. Antivirus software can regularly scan and alert you of these threats. It can also block risky websites and downloads. Some popular antivirus programs include Windows Defender, McAfee, Bitdefender, and Norton.

## 6. PERSONALIZE YOUR DESKTOP

Your PC doesn't have to be all work and no play. Customizing your desktop can make your computer feel more personal and comfortable. You can change the background, add widgets, like a clock or weather display, arrange icons, and more. Small changes like these can make a big difference in your workflow, creating better function, organization, and visual appeal.

## 7. STAY ON TOP OF UPDATES

It's easy to push off updates for a later time, but you should perform them as soon as possible to minimize the risk of a security breach or malware infection. Software updates often include security patches and bug fixes essential to your computer's security and performance.

Computers are a part of our everyday lives, so when a problem arises, it's important to fix it ASAP. Computer Troubleshooters has a team of tech experts specializing in residential and business computer repair, ready to fix your PC issues for an affordable price. Find a location near you to get started!

## **<u>Right-Click Your Mouse, Best Shortcut Ever!</u>**

By Jim Cerny, Forums Coordinator, and Class Instructor https://thestug.org/ jimcerny123 (at )gmail.com

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.

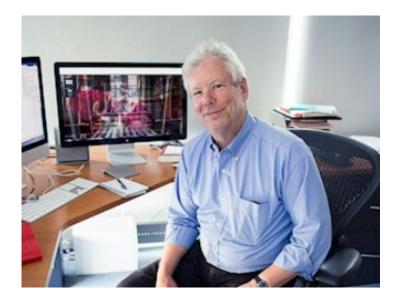
If you have not realized the power of right-clicking your mouse, then you should be saying a big "WOW, this is so cool!" Now you can have some fun trying right-clicks anywhere and everywhere. Try right-clicking on an icon, a cell in a spreadsheet, a file or folder name in File Explorer, or a photo on 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!



## **The Sunk Cost Fallacy**

By David Kretchmar, Hardware Technician Sun City Summerlin Computer Club https://www.scscc.club dkretch (at) gmail.com

In 2017, Richard Thaler, a professor at the University of Chicago, was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences for his contributions to behavioral economics.



One of Thaler's main themes is that market-based economic models are incomplete; he is quoted as saying, "conventional economics assumes that people are highly-rational —super-rational— and unemotional; they can calculate like a computer and have no self-control problems. But, in reality, we all are susceptible to a wide array of routine biases that can lead to an equally wide array of embarrassing blunders in education, personal finance, health care, mortgages and credit cards, happiness, and even the planet itself."

A **sunk cost** is any cost that has already been paid and cannot be recovered. The sunk cost fallacy reasoning states that further investments or commitments are justified because the invested resources will be lost otherwise. Therefore, the sunk cost fallacy is a mistake in reasoning in which the sunk costs of an activity are considered when deciding whether to continue with the activity. This is also known as "throwing good money after bad."

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The sunk cost mistake is often made for the worst possible reasons. People hate to admit that they have made a mistake and will go to great lengths to avoid that admission, even when they have ample evidence that not admitting a mistake will lead to even more significant losses. Politicians highly paid corporation executives, and others in the public eye do not like to admit they made poor decisions.

#### The Concord Fallacy



The Concorde fallacy has routinely been cited as a perfect example of the sunk cost fallacy. The Concord fallacy refers to both the British and French governments continued funding of the project even as they knew there was no economic case for the aircraft. They knew it was a commercial and environmental disaster, but political decisions made it impossible for either government to pull out.

I don't feel this example is cut and dried because of other factors such as possible harm to Anglo-French relations, the loss of tens of thousands of jobs when the world's economy was weak, and consideration of "national pride." What appears to be a perfect example of the sunken cost fallacy today, in retrospect, looked very different in 1972.

## **Other Examples**

On a much smaller personal scale, have you ever over-eaten at a buffet, even if the food was not very good, because you had already paid for "all you can eat"? Have you seen someone refuse to quit a slot machine because of all of the money they had already "invested" in it? Have you held on to an investment for much longer than you originally intended because you were reluctant to sell at a loss? All are examples of sunk costs and the false belief that non-recoverable expenditures have some value, leading to poor decisions.

## The Old Computer



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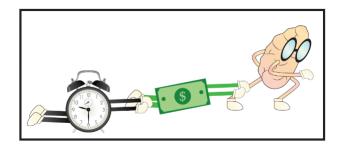
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In our everyday lives, the all too human tendency to place a value on something that has no value often leads to a poor decision. Some individuals use computers well beyond their expected useful life, which is about six years. Some computers, especially if they were originally above-average systems, can provide good service for over six years. However, time takes its toll on electronics just like it does on people. Computers tend to get slower with age, and with age, computer users will get more and more "Not responding" popups and other annoyances.

Rather than replace a computer, it is amazing how much slowness and other problems some users will endure. After a computer reaches a certain age, even significant upgrades, like replacing a mechanical hard drive with an SSD, will only delay the inevitable. Even after installing a new SSD, the system's other components are still old and nearing the end of their life. The wise course is for the user to bite the bullet and buy an adequate new computer.

## Conclusions

Any time you allow the sunk cost fallacy to influence decisions, you're going to make it harder and harder on yourself to let go in the future. So essentially, falling victim to sunk cost bias not only means you're making a poor decision now but increases the chance you'll continue to make a wrong decision in the future because, at that point, you'll be even more invested.



Are you spending time or money on something because of the time or money you already have invested? If so, I urge you to step back from what you're doing and evaluate the situation logically by asking yourself, "Is this the best use of my time or money at the present moment?"

This is a bigger problem than many of us realize, and it's negatively impacting our lives. Sunk cost fallacy leads to poor decisions, which leads to sub-optimal results, which leads to decreased long-term happiness.



## The Russians are Coming

David Kretchmar, Hardware Technician Sun City Summerlin Computer Club https://www.scscc.club dkretch \*\* gmail.com

As Russia's invasion of Ukraine grinds on, it becomes increasingly likely that Russia will intensify cyberattacks on perceived enemies, especially the United States. As a result, at least one major federal agency is no longer allowing employees to use any USB devices on their government computers. The ability to read/write optical media, CDs, and DVDs, has been completely cut off.



Ironically, the federal government is addressing the least likely avenue a cyber attacker is likely to use to install malware on their systems. The threat is most likely to manifest via an email containing a link to a site that will download a virus to an unsuspecting user's computer. The U.S. government does attach a warning to each email received outside the government domain. These warnings are unnecessary on your home computer, not because the threat is not real, but because ALL of the emails you receive comes from outside of your system. And it is almost certain this is the vector hackers will try to use to infect your system. Based on experience, I can safely predict that an infected email arriving in your Inbox will appear to be either from a trusted friend or a business entity with which you might have had some business.

Here is an example; this is an email I received recently:



For at least 20 years, I have not run Norton Antivirus on any computer I have owned; this email was obviously a fake and most likely attempt to compromise my system. An obvious clue is the sending address: "info@transcendentalmediate.be." In addition to the not-very-professional sounding name, the sender is obviously based out of Belgium (.be is the internet country code top-level domain (ccTLD) for Belgium.) I happen to know that Norton is based in Mountain View, California. Another term for the activity represented by this type of email is phishing. Phishing is still the world's most common cyber threat. It is estimated three billion fraudulent emails are sent out every day in an attempt to compromise sensitive information. In 2022, according to CyberTalk.org, 30% of phishing email recipients clicked on the malicious link.

This was easy for me to spot since I do not use ID.me. However, this was a more sophisticated attempt since the ID.me sending address was spoofed. I could see this was not the actual sending address by hovering my mouse cursor over the address, NOT CLICKING.

You are most likely to be fooled by an email that appears to be sent from a trusted friend, as I was several years ago. My friend's computer had been compromised, and the virus perpetuated itself by invading my friend's contact list and sending infected emails to all his contacts. Be aware that the risk you will be exposed to malware infection is higher than it has ever been before. If you have any doubts about clicking on a link in any email message, don't do it.



Plateau PC Users Group, Inc.



Application for Membership for 2024

----- New Member

----- Renewing Member

Return this application with a check for annual dues payable to "PLATEAU PC USERS GROUP" Return to the club Treasurer during our meeting or mail to "PPCUG Treasurer. 215 Highland Sq. PMB 11, Crossville TN 38555"

Our annual dues are now payable July 1<sup>st</sup>. of each fiscal year.

Persons// families joining during the fiscal year have dues payable as follows:

<u>Join In</u>	<u>July - Sept</u>	Oct - Dec	<u>Jan - Mar</u>	<u>Apr - June</u>	
Single	<b>\$24</b>	\$18	\$12	\$6	
Family	\$30	\$22	\$15	\$7	
Date:	Amou	unt Paid: \$	by Ca	sh , or Check (# )	
Last Name		First Name		ily Member (if family membership)	
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I have belong	ged to a Comput	er Club before	:: Yes	No	
I have used P	C's since (year)	):			
I have knowl	edge in the follo	owing areas that	at I would be v	villing to share with club members:	



# April 2024



<u>S</u>	un <u>Mon</u>	<u>Tue</u>	<u>Wed</u>	<u>Thu</u>	<u>Fri</u>	<u>Sat</u>
	1 * April, FOOLS DAY	2	<b>3 10:00 A.M.</b> PPCUG Board Meeting	4	5	6
7	8	<b>9 3:00 P.M.</b> General Mtg. Presentation. Followed by Q&A Session	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				