



# THE COMPUTER CONNECTION

## SAUK COMPUTER USER GROUP

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### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**THE ENDING OF  
WINDOWS 10** 2-3

**REFLECTIONS ON  
THE PC  
ENVIRONMENT** 4-6

**ALWAYS STARTING  
WITH A BLANK  
DOCUMENT** 7

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## May Meeting Notes May 10, 2025

### Open Meeting: by Neal

As of May 5<sup>th</sup> Microsoft has discontinued support of Skype app. Recommends using the Teams app that is part of Windows now.

May 7<sup>th</sup> was the deadline for needing to have a "Real ID" for flying. Curious that was also National Tourism Day.

I have found there are differences in the various pdf reader apps in how they handle printing. The way the page exits may be reversed from another and could have troubles with tight margins. Besides Adobe Reader, all the browsers have pdf capability but could try a different one if you have concerns printing.

Latest updates for 11 have a new look in the Settings>System>About area. More graphical style info.

Mentioned that 4K Video downloader has discounts from time to time. Check site periodically.

Neal had a service call to a

friend that has a Telikin brand computer. This is advertised as being designed for seniors but working on the owners concerns found that it may not be a good choice. Limited apps, only one printer model supported, not recognized OS when setting up G-mail, and high cost of unit.

Can have better search results from Google by selecting 'Web' from top of screen menu which filters out advertising. Some members mentioned good outcomes using Duck Duck Go browser and phone app.

Presented 2 videos from Tech for Senior from their AI series.

Next month will wrap programs for AI with bring some questions to ask AI and we will test them on a couple various ones to see results.

*(Secretaries not at meeting)*

## BOARD MEETING MINUTES FOR MAY 14, 2025

Meeting was called to order by: Neal

Attending the meeting were: Neal, Joe1, Lorraine, Cheryl and Joe2

Treasurer's report was presented by: Joe1

Discussion Highlights:

Future Programs: Neal will do AI tips and how to pose questions.

Please bring some question that you would like to ask AI.

Our July meeting will be at Pizza Ranch, a \$2 reservation which will cover the tip, please pay at June meeting.

Adjournment: Motion by Cheryl, seconded by Lorraine.

Respectfully submitted  
by Joe Fornero for  
Nancy Rich



# The End of Window 10

by Sven Krumrey

Page 2

It's standard practice for Microsoft to phase out its operating systems after 10 years. There have always been complaints, but this time I expect nothing less than a storm of outrage. Because 2025 changes everything: Many computers that still run Windows 10 perfectly well are, according to Microsoft, not compatible with Windows 11. And we're not talking about outdated junkers wheezing through boot-up with noisy fans—we're talking about powerful machines. At the same time, Windows 11 is far from dominating the market—roughly 30% use it, while nearly two-thirds are still on Windows 10. Windows 11's new security concept will separate the wheat from the chaff—and there's no solution in sight!

## A special case

New operating systems have always been a challenge for people and machines alike, often coming with some drawbacks. Vista, for example, overwhelmed many systems with its performance demands. Still, this time, it's a different kind of problem. It's not system performance, but security features of built-in hardware that tip the scale. In the past, it felt natural to retire aging devices and see a new version of Windows as a welcome excuse to upgrade. But this time, many PCs that are still considered powerful by today's standards aren't eligible for Windows 11. In recent years, major performance jumps in PC hardware have become rare, so devices stay relevant longer. The result: Many machines run Windows 10 smoothly and could easily handle Windows 11—just not officially.

## What happens in October?

Of course, Windows 10 won't vanish in a puff of smoke when support ends—it'll still run just like before, while current browsers and antivirus software will continue to help fend off many threats. But the real issue goes deeper:

Never before have hackers had such a massive and tempting target. Critical security vulnerabilities will likely become as valuable as gold—and cybercriminals are surely already preparing for a hot fall. I wrote about zero-day exploits seven years ago—they are “a vulnerability or security hole in a computer system unknown to its owners, developers or anyone capable of mitigating it”—and there's lively underground trade around them. There are likely still many in Windows 10, but in this case, Microsoft won't be patching those holes anymore. So processing any personal data with these systems is becoming increasingly risky.

## Sustainability? Tough call.

These days, every company tries to show its green credentials, often with a symbolic daisy pinned to its logo. Microsoft even publishes a detailed sustainability report, proudly celebrating its environmental wins. Yet an estimated 2.17 billion PCs (!) still run Windows 10, and many of them won't up-

grade to Windows 11. We're talking about a gigantic amount of perfectly functional hardware slowly drifting toward e-waste—unthinkable! Refurbished PC dealers already report full warehouses with unsellable machines. People just want future-proof devices.

### HIGH PERFORMANCE, HEADED FOR RE- TIREMENT

Even my personal collection of computers is affected. As a tech editor, I need to work on the latest OS—I have to stay on the cutting edge. When I found out that my work laptop wasn't Windows 11-compatible, I bought it myself and kept it as a backup or travel machine. With a 7th-gen i7 quad-core CPU, 16 GB RAM, and a NVIDIA 1060 GPU, it was way too good to be shelved. I was hoping Microsoft would come up with a user-friendly workaround—but so far (as of now), no luck. My wife's laptop, from the same generation and much more modest in specs, was surprisingly deemed worthy and now remains her main device for browsing and office work.

### MY PERSONAL TAKE

I still can't quite believe that Microsoft would coldly force millions of customers to choose between buying a new PC or continuing to work with an increasingly vulnerable system—or switching to a different OS that definitely isn't Windows. If I proposed something like that to my bosses, I'd probably end up with a lot more free time. But Microsoft hasn't budged. The current Windows 11 system requirements are said to be essential for Windows 11's security model. To keep billions of PCs supported, Microsoft would have to rewrite key parts of Windows 11—or release a sort of light version. This doesn't just affect Windows users, but also those using MS Office, Azure, or Edge—customers Microsoft obviously wants to keep. It'll be interesting to see what the Redmond giant comes up with in the coming months. I expect mounting pressure—from users (remember Windows XP?), environmental groups, even politicians. Maybe Microsoft wants to take a

hardline approach here—as a clean break and tech reboot! I'll personally stick with Windows as my main OS, but I'll install a cozy little Linux distro on that one affected machine. I haven't decided which one yet—maybe I'll even blog about it!

Here is a [compatibility check for Windows 11](#) for you. To answer all your questions about this complex topic, we've put together a dedicated page [you can find here](#). All facts should be up to date, though things might still change before October—and honestly, I'm hoping they will!

*By Sven Krumrey  
Ashampoo Blog  
April 2025*

By Dick Maybach

The PC world was far simpler when I began writing PC tech columns in 1992. Many of us relied on diskettes for storage; if we had a hard disk, it held only a few hundred megabytes. Software was distributed on diskettes, and its box usually contained a manual. Windows 3.1 appeared that year, and it was the first version that was really practical, but many continued to use DOS. Significantly, Windows required a hard disk; when we used DOS, two diskette drives provided adequate storage. The PC was undergoing a transition from an experimental and educational toy to an essential information appliance. The Internet was available only to governments and large corporations, although some exchanged messages through software bulletin boards, which they accessed (slowly) over telephone lines using dial-up modems—even simple configuration changes required opening the system case to access jumpers and expansion cards. There were frequent PC shows where dozens of vendors sold hardware and software.

Bookstores had extensive collections of PC books and magazines. It was an exciting time for us.

The situation is far different today. Most PC users, excluding those reading articles like this, have no interest in what goes on inside the box. They would no more open a PC case than a dishwasher cabinet. As a result, PC books, magazines, and parts vendors have largely disappeared. This is good for most folks who want to communicate with friends and family, surf the Internet, and prepare taxes. But it can be frustrating for those of us who see the larger potential of the PC. However, the barriers are superficial, and the experimental and educational world is still alive, well, and accessible on the PC. We must exercise more care while experimenting with our PCs than we did years ago because it's become a vital tool in our lives and holds valuable information we have to protect. Let's look at some of the opportunities.

For years, I took pictures with a 35-mm camera, and film and processing cost about a

dollar a click. Editing required a darkroom, expensive equipment, and smelly chemicals, and few did it. Today, we don't use film; bytes are free, and image processing software costs vary from reasonable to free. Any imaging program can do things that darkroom users couldn't even imagine. When you've finished the processing, you can send the results anywhere in the world for free or, if you have a suitable printer, commit it to paper.

Image editing can be complex, and it takes some effort to learn, but there are very few photos that can't be improved, many substantially. I use the GNU Image Manipulation Program (GIMP), <https://www.gimp.org/>, to retouch JPEG image files. Your camera compresses images to produce JPEG files and discards information in the process. You can often recover this by working with images before they are compressed, using RawTherapee, <http://>

## Reflections on the PC Environment (cont.)

[rawtherapee.com/](http://rawtherapee.com/), or [darktable, https://www.darktable.org/](https://darktable.org/). These are complex programs that require some effort to master.

Early PCs limited your programming to BASIC, which, as its name implies, has quite limited potential. However, we have a much wider choice today, including Python, <https://www.python.org/>, which provides an accessible start to programming and includes widespread features among all programming languages.

In addition, the required software is free, and although some support tools are not, they aren't really necessary.

Experimenting with operating systems does require care, as what seems like a simple configuration change can wreak havoc and sometimes require re-installation. (Ask me how I know.) For this, I prefer using a virtual machine, such as one managed by Virtual-Box, <https://www.virtualbox.org/>, for this. In the past, I

used dual-booting to install an alternative OS, but this requires re-partitioning the hard disk, which is risky, *Gazette May 2025* [www.PPCUGinc.com](http://www.PPCUGinc.com) Page 5 and the UEFI BIOS in modern PCs has features to protect the installed OS. Working around these requires non-trivial expertise. Your OS views each virtual machine as an application, which avoids all this risk and complexity. If you want to experiment with Windows, you'll have to buy the software, as the virtual machine is legally a different machine. Of course, you can experiment with Linux for free.

Arduino, <https://www.arduino.cc/>, provides an inexpensive way to experiment with both hardware and software. This microprocessor on a small board plugs into a USB port on your PC, which supplies the power for the board and communicates with it. You program in a variant of C++, which you compile on your PC and download to the Arduino. It's easy to connect the board to external circuits, so this provides a way of learning circuit design and

programming. Since all the action takes place off your PC, the risk is minimal.

The Raspberry Pi, <https://www.raspberrypi.com/>, provides a considerably more complex environment than the Arduino. This is a complete PC on a circuit board about the size of a playing card. While the Arduino is a controller that runs only a single program at a time, the Pi is a complete computer running Linux. You'll need a display, mouse, and keyboard to get started, making this more difficult than an Arduino.

However, you can use its peripherals if you have a desktop system. (You might use a USB hub to consolidate the keyboard, mouse, and printer cables. Then you could switch between your PC and the Pi by swapping just two cables, the USB from the hub and the HDMI from the display.) After configuring the Pi, you can connect it to your home network and access it using remote desktop software on a PC;

## Reflections on the PC Environment (cont.)

it won't need dedicated peripherals until you install a new OS on the Pi. Fabricating objects used to require a shop and tools, but now it can be done with only a 3D printer, about the size of your existing one. You design an object using CAD software, transfer the file to the printer, and (perhaps some hours later) return to find the completed object sitting in the printer. This is an emerging technology and presently is quite limited. Printing is slow, set-up is fussy, and the material is usually plastic, but things are rapidly improving. For example, I recently saw a device, <https://snapmaker.com/>, that could also machine aluminum and cut sheet material and create with plastic. Currently, the projects are limited to small enclosures, key fobs, game tokens, or similar small objects, but this will surely improve. To learn about electronics, instead of acquiring

a collection of tools, parts, and instruments, you can run experiments with a circuit simulator, such as KiCad, <https://www.kicad.org/>. It lets you build circuits with simulated resistors, capacitors, inductors, transistors, and integrated circuits, then test the result. The next step would be to use an Arduino with a prototype board into which you plug physical components to build circuits you've simulated. Kits that facilitate this are available from such vendors as Adafruit, <https://www.adafruit.com/>. Because you are using Arduino to generate signals and detect the result, this approach limits you to low frequencies. If you play a musical instrument, you probably have a collection of scores, some of which are barely legible. However, you could input them into a score composing program such as MuseScore, <https://musescore.org/en>, to make corrections, transpose them to a new key, or just clean up the appearance.

These examples reflect my

interests and my preference to use open-source software; your interests and preferences are undoubtedly different, but perhaps these examples will inspire you to search for some that would help you. In the past, we relied on PC magazines to suggest areas to explore. There are many more interesting and useful tools today, but it takes more effort to find them without magazines. Don't let your PC become just an appliance; it can be a wonderful tool to help you enjoy life.

I've been writing these articles for a long time, have about run out of things to say, and it's time to retire. Thank you for your attention over the years.

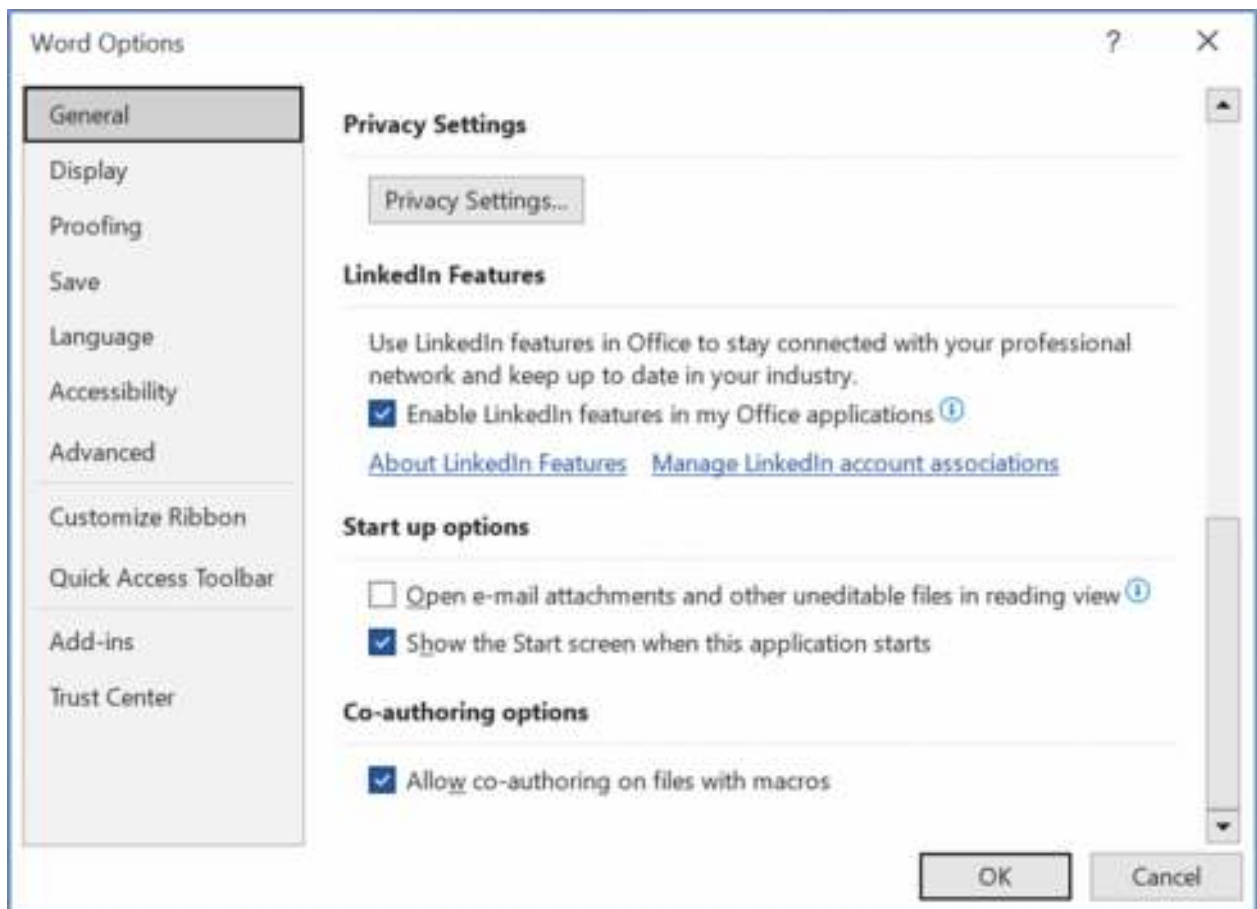
*By Dick Maybach, Brookdale  
Computer User Group  
[www.bcug.com](http://www.bcug.com)  
n2nd (at) att.net*

### Always Starting with a Blank Document

When Steven opens Word, he sees a number of choices for either creating a blank document or using various templates as a basis for a new document. He always chooses to create a blank document. He wonders if there is a way to skip this opening palette of choices and simply go to a blank document from the get-go.

The behavior that Steven describes was introduced in Word 2013 and is called the Start screen. This feature can be controlled in Word in the following manner:

1. Display the File tab of the ribbon.
2. Click the Options button. Word displays the Word Options dialog box.
3. At the left side of the dialog box, make sure General is selected. (It should be selected by default.) Scroll down, if necessary, until you see the Start Up Options section. (See Figure 1.)



**Figure 1.** The General options of the Word Options dialog box.

1. Clear the Show Start Screen when this Application Starts check box. Click on OK.

Now, the next time you start Word, you won't be shown the Start screen. Instead, you'll see a blank document, the same as in earlier versions of Word.

Written by Allen Wyatt (last updated November 18, 2023)

## Zoom Sessions

Neal is hosting a weekly evening Zoom; (Each Friday) @ 7:30 PM Central Time

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3975898877?pwd=RjF5ZTM3R25qNXhHRjdWRVZzQ1M2ZzO9>

Meeting ID: 397 589 8877    Passcode: 4ukxAh

Phone users:

Dial by your location    +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 397 589 8877    Passcode: 936460

*You're welcome to check in and visit, or ask a question, maybe even get an answer.*



Scanning this QR code should take you to our web page.

There will be a Question & Answer. Bring any questions you have about your computer or problems you may be having.

It will be conducted by:

**Neal Shipley**

The next meeting of the Sauk  
Computer User Group will be

June 14, 2025

Question & Answer : 1 PM

Presentation: 2 PM

Business Meeting : 3 PM

Place: **Whiteside Senior Center**

**1207 West 9th Street**

**Sterling, Illinois 61081**

**NEAL WILL BE PRESENTING ON AI. PLEASE BRING  
QUESTIONS YOU WOULD LIKE TO ASK AI**