The Data Byte

Newsletter of the Computer Users Group of Lincolnton

March 2016

End of Life Support from Microsoft for Windows XP, Windows Vista, and Windows 7.

If you are using one of these operating systems, it is high time you get a new computer with a new operating system. Microsoft support for Windows XP has expired completely, it is vulnerable to any exploits that have not been patched. Microsoft support for Windows Vista is due to completely expire in April 2017. It will be in the same boat as Windows XP and older operating systems. Many software companies are pulling support from these operating systems also. Goggle is pulling support of Chrome web browser for Windows XP and Windows Vista. Mainstream Support for Windows 7 has expired, meaning Microsoft will not release any more patches for performance issues and provide no telephone, email or chat support. Microsoft will continue to release security patches for Windows 7 till January 2020.

If you don't know what you are doing now with simple computing skills, you should NOT be using these old operating systems. You can learn and transition to a new operating system and new computer. There are plenty of tutorials, videos, books and helpful people that can help you learn the new operating system. You could try switching your older computer to an alternate operating system like Linux Mint or Ubuntu. New windows computers are getting cheaper out there, go buy a new computer with Windows 8 or Windows 10. You could switch to using an Android Tablet for your simple Internet needs. You could clean install Windows 7 on your old computer, if it can handle it. Run the Windows 7 upgrade advisor from Microsoft and then buy a fresh box of Windows 7 OS from an online store. You could try a Chromebook, if you have simple needs and limited budget.

If you insist on using XP or Vista, you need to learn how to stay safe using the Internet on these older operating systems. You should have a computer that has better stats like a dual core or better CPU and system RAM with 2 to 4 gigabytes. You should not use the Internet Explorer or Goggle Chrome web browser, you should set Firefox as your Default browser. You need to load and use Mozila Firefox and Opera web browser. You need to load a Firewall program and learn how to use it effectively, like Comodo Internet Security. You need to load a good anti-malware program like Avast Free Anti-Virus and have several other on-demand anti-malware scanners as a backup. You need to follow safe web surfing practices and backup your important data. Otherwise, if you cannot do this, you will be at the mercy of cyber criminals. If you don't have a computer with these old operating systems connected to the Internet, then you can relax your guard. Or use this old computer for video games and entertainment purposes only. Just don't complain, when it is taken over by malware.

Next meeting is on: 2 April 2016 at 10 am. In the Charles Jonas Public Library.

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Web Links

http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/lifecycle

http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/help/what-does-end-of-support-mean

http://arstechnica.com/gadgets/2015/11/chrome-to-end-support-for-windows-xp-vista-and-os-x-10-8-on-april-2016/

https://support.mozilla.org/en-US/questions/1055075

http://home.bt.com/tech-gadgets/computing/windows-xp-vista-upgrade-browser-stay-safe-internet-explorer-firefox-opera-lunascape-google-chrome-11364034422157

https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/lifecycle?C2=14019

http://www.tomsguide.com/us/running-windows-xp-how-to,news-18270.html

http://www.pcworld.com/article/2102606/how-to-keep-your-pc-secure-when-microsoft-ends-windows-xp-support.html

http://www.howtogeek.com/172243/windows-xp-users-here-are-your-upgrade-options/