

MOTHERBOARD

A Publication of the Computer Users Group Of Redding, CA

Volume 2007, Number 02

<http://users.snowcrest.net/ibmpcugr>

February 2007

YOUR C.U.G. PRESENTS

Tuesday, February 20, 2006

David B. Whittle



Author of "Cyberspace: The Human Dimension" and named by *Working Woman Magazine* as "one of America's most original technological thinkers," will be giving a presentation on

"Whittle's Picks for the Digital Home – Only the Best, Not All the Rest."

Mr. Whittle will demonstrate or introduce products of general appeal to computer users, including hidden gems from companies around the world with outstanding, innovative technologies, including muvee™, Lenovo, Zip*Linq, and Invisus.



His group will be sponsoring a question and answer period, as well as door prizes and special product offers.



Club Business and Program Presentation 7 PM, coffee and tea available

Check at the Greeting Table for your name tag and please leave it in the Tag Box when the meeting is over.

General meetings are at the Palo Cedro Church Of Christ, 21895 St. Francis Way, Palo Cedro, CA.

Official Website: <http://users.snowcrest.net/ibmpcugr>

For more information call any Board member listed on Page 2.

Future Presentation:

March - Bill Ball Presenting Acronis

April - Jane Quinn Previews Microsoft's Vista Operating System



CUG Calendar

CUG Board Meeting

1 PM Monday, Feb. 26
at Jack-In-The-Box, Dana Drive

MULTI-MEDIA

10 AM, Saturday, Feb. 17

WINDOWS & MORE

11:30 AM, Wednesdays
Feb. 14, 21, 28, Mar. 7

DTP SIG

2 PM, Wednesdays
Feb. 14, 21, 28, Mar. 7

SEE BACK PAGE FOR MORE SIG INFO

In This Issue Of The Motherboard...

EDITOR'S CORNER

Judi Ball 2

CLUB PICS

January Meeting 3

SURFBOARD

Mary Montague 4

BITS AND PIECES

Rush Blodget 5

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mario Quinn 5

ALL ABOUT BURNING CDS & DVDS
(NAPSA) Naps World Info 5

DAVID WHITTLE'S PRESENTATION

Promo Information 6

MULTI MEDIA SIG UPDATE & TIP

Jane Quinn 6

ACRONISTRUE IMAGE 10

Bill Ball 7

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Jane Quinn 7

PRACTICE GOOD "NETIQUETTE"

Ira Wilsker 8

ACCESSORIES FOR NEW COMPUTER

Ira Wilsker 9

BUYING AN HDTV?

Bob Elgines 10

WELCOME RENEWALS

CUG Of Redding 10

Club Information

Club Website: <http://users.snowcrest.net/ibmpcugr>

Members volunteering to help members!

Club Mentors

New Users	Bob Rice 357-2143, Anytime ricerl@snowcrest.net	MS Windows 98, ME, XP Hardware, Software	Bill Ball bcard9@charter.net 275-4632
MS Windows Photo Delux	Darold Wright 222-1781 daroldwright@yahoo.com	DTP; Graphic Prgs Photo Editing	Judi Ball 275-4632 jebed@charter.net
New Users PaintShop Pro	Dorothy Kirk 246-9661, Anytime dak75@sbcglobal.net	MS Word, PowerPoint Movie, Maker 2, DVD Prgs. Digital Image Pro	Jane Quinn 365-0825 qjquinn@charter.net

Board of Officers and Directors

Belva Sullivent belvas@charter.net	President, Greeter, Name Tag Manager 241-9926	Eugenia Goodman euggoodman@snowcrest.net	Director, Membership Chairman 221-7723
Bruce Roth baroth@prodigy.net	Vice Pres, Director 247-7306	Anna Lee Horton alhorton@sbcglobal.net	Director 222-5521
Darold L. Wright daroldwright@yahoo.com	Past President 222-1781	Bill Ball bcard9@charter.net	Director, SIG Leader 275-4632
Mario Quinn gaucho7427@charter.net	Treasurer 365-0825	Judi Ball jebed@charter.net	Editor, Director, SIG Leader 275-4632
Margaret Martinovich mjmartin56@sbcglobal.net	Secretary, Director, Membership 241-6378	Lyle VanNorman kb6dow@arrl.net	Director 242-0925
Jane Quinn qjquinn@charter.net	Dir, Vendor Contact, SIG Leader 365-0825	Bob Rice ricerl@snowcrest.net	Website 357-2143

Motherboard Newsletter Staff

Judith E. Ball jebed@charter.net	Editor 275-4632	Mary Montague montaguemc@sbcglobal.net	Proofreader 365-6414
Rush Blodget rmaxmisc@charter.net	Bits And Pieces 241-4754	Anna Lee Horton alhorton@sbcglobal.net	Proofreader 222-5521
Mary Montague montaguemc@sbcglobal.net	Surfboard 365-6414		

Motherboard Newsletter Policies and Deadlines

The *Motherboard* newsletter is published monthly by the Computer Users Group of Redding, PO Box 494778, Redding, CA 96049-4778. The CUG is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Subscriptions are included in the \$25 annual membership fee. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform members of upcoming events and provide information about the use of IBM compatible computers.

Disclaimer: Neither the CUG, its Officers, the Editor, nor the newsletter contributors assume any liability for damages incurred due to the use of information provided in this publication.

Reprints: Articles from this newsletter may be reprinted by other user groups if credit is given to both the author, CUG and the *Motherboard*. Mail a copy of the newsletter where the article is reprinted

to the Editor at the address in the first paragraph of this text.

Personal Ads For Members:

Requirements are:

1. Advertiser must be a member.
2. The item must be computer-related.
3. The ad must be received by editor J. Ball by the *monthly date of the board meeting*. Sorry, no exceptions.

Other terms must be approved by the club's Board of Officers and Directors.

Article Submissions: All articles and reviews must be submitted to J. Ball by the *Monday of the monthly Board meeting (see Page 1 for date.)* Sorry, no exceptions.

Motherboard Editor reserves the right to make corrections and deletions in all articles in the interest of grammar, style, and space.

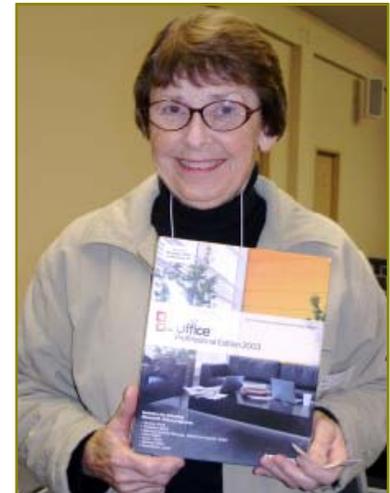
Editor's Corner

It's your club. Your input is of value to us...

It amazes me at the talent we have right in the midst of our own people! Here is Fred Skill, friendly, but at the same time unassuming. Yet he brought an evening of information that seemed to cross the path of each person in the audience and did it with a humor that made the time fly!

We invited him to come to center stage again in the future, and we are doing it here, in print to make that invitation official. You're welcomed back anytime, Fred.

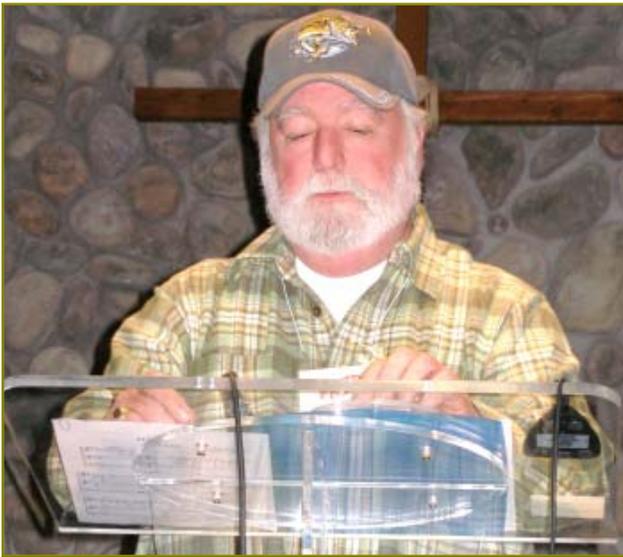
Congratulations Winners



Vivian Cherry won the full Microsoft's OfficeSuite 2003!



Ed Beulac won a 50-pack of CD-Rs!



Fred Skill speaking on a number of topics



Smiles!



Newest members, Chuck & Ginny Wall, enjoying Fred's humorous presentation.



Such a happy and thoughtful audience!



Dick Yoder won a Leather Case that holds 228 CD/DVDs!



This member brought a friend! Friends and family are always welcomed!

In Memory Of

Betty Cox

One of the first couples Bill and I met during a CUG summer social was Dave and Betty. And although Dave has always been a regular at our general meetings, Betty was not the computer enthusiast he is, yet she was always gracious to open her home to the Cybernaughts' meetings during the late 80s and early 90s. (This group repaired old pcs for handicapped folks and then went to their homes and taught them how to use the pc.) Betty put up with stacks of pcs and parts and people quite often back then.

She was a registered surgical nurse and retired from the Veteran's Administration Hospitals.

Betty and Dave were married 58 years and have 1 daughter, 2 grandchildren, and 1 greatgrandchild.

She died of pancreatic cancer on December 3, 2006.

Betty was one of those sweet, gentle people you feel blessed to have known, if only for a little while.

IBM/PCUG MEMBER WEBSITES

DAVE & BECKY HEMP

www.c-zone.net/dochemp/

JACK McAULIFFE

Real Estate Broker

www.realtyphoto.com

KITTYSTONE PERSIANS

Lynn Johanson

kittystone.com

MEXICAN-TOURS

www.mexican-tours.com

Lyle VanNorman

lyle@mexican-tours.com

QUESTIONED DOCUMENT EXAMINATION

Mary Ann Czermak

www.documents-examiner.com

REDDING REAL ESTATE

Rick Goates

www.reddingrealestate.net

RON COLE JR.

www.houseofspecialtygifts.com

Publicize Your WebSite

Here for FREE!

(Members Only Please)

The Surfboard

by Mary Montague, twinsgranny228@aol.com

WEATHER. Somebody once said, "Everybody talks about it, but nobody does anything about it." It must be an important topic, as one TV channel is about nothing but weather. It affects us whether we like it or not. And sometimes, perhaps more often than not, the weather somewhere else can have an impact on us. It can be important if we are planning anything from a picnic, to a wedding, a sporting event or just about anything that gets us out of the house. As I write this piece, I am planning a trip to Antarctica, and we all know how important weather is to flying. But travel planning involves packing also, and in my case I have to have two different wardrobes, for hot and humid Buenos Aires and cool, windy, and possibly wet, Antarctica. So I have been searching for weather information all over the net as I check daily temperatures in both Buenos Aires and Ushuaia, at the tip of Argentina. (Actually, Ushuaia at this time of year is very similar to Redding even though the seasons are reversed.)

At <http://weather.yahoo.com>, I found current weather conditions in Ushuaia (55°, wet and cloudy) with links giving information on attractions, accommodations, tours, car rentals, etc. I was able to check out the hotel that the tour company had booked me into and was relieved to see that it got good reviews, plus a comparison of various tours embarking from there to the Antarctic Peninsula, again finding that the ship I am booked on was highly recommended.

Since I am an avid gardener, the weather is always important to me, and I keep a journal in which I keep track of daily highs and lows in this area for year-to-year comparisons. For that information, I count on <http://weather.weatherbug.com> which is a free download. It provides current information all day long, plus alerts and warnings for any area. I like to check weather where my daughter lives, so I just enter her zip code to get the current conditions there. It also has a blog link for those who really like to talk about the weather, at <http://blog.weatherbug.com/backyard/>.

The site called accuweather.com, one of my favorites, is more for serious weather watchers and gives hourly forecasts and more detailed information for the meteorologist professional as well as for the weather watcher in us ordinary folks. In addition to the regular data, it has a "Weather for your Health" section with information on air quality, an arthritis index, cold index, and flu index. Another feature I like is "Past

Weather Check," providing data for the past 24 hours, past month and typical weather. And there is a chart showing record highs and lows for each day. A month's weather at a glance is shown in graph form as well. This comes in handy for me when I fail to record the info in my journal when I am away or just forgetful. This is a rich site to visit not only for detailed weather data, but for educational and entertaining links. There are Photo Gallery, America's Wittiest Weatherman, and more blogs and articles about newsworthy weather from all over.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov> allows you to type in a city or zip code and brings you "Forecast at a Glance." I typed in my zip code, 96007, and up popped a forecast and current information for Shasta Dam. A very interesting feature of this site is a map of the surrounding area, and when you click anywhere on the map it brings up conditions for that particular spot, such as "3.4 miles NW of Central Valley" (I guess the feds haven't heard about the name change!), or "2.9 miles SW of Montague," etc., wherever you move the cursor and stop. This site also links to highway department "Weather Cams" aimed at various points along I-5, for example, "I-5 at Siskiyou summit facing north, milepost 4.00, elevation 4310, temp 41.6, wind N @9mph," complete with picture and time taken.

"Curious about average snowfall in Aspen? Want to know if you'll have good beach weather in Crete?..." is the teaser for <http://weatherbase.com>. This site claims comprehensive information for 16,439 cities worldwide. It links also to www.weatherwarehouse.com for archived weather data and several other specialized sites, some offering weather surveys for a fee, which might be helpful for someone planning a relocation to a far away spot, for example.

And in case you don't think weather is funny, I recommend the following site: <http://www.theweatherprediction.com/humor/phrases/> which, among other things, offers the following aid to understanding meteorological lingo:

"6-sided crystalline aggregates are being gravitationally forced to the surface. Translation: It is snowing."



Bits And Pieces

by Rush Blodget; IMB/PCUG of Redding, rblodget@snowcrest.net



EXTENDED WARRANTIES

David Einstein, the San Francisco Chronicle's computer column editor comments that there is a great variation in the price of extended warranties from store to store for the same electronic products. Most warranties do not cover accidents or normal "wear and tear." The retailer frequently receives approximately half of the warranty's price. The extended warranty also does not commence until the basic manufacturer's warranty expires. Quite frequently credit cards provide for an extension of the manufacturer's warranty. Consumers' Reports is quoted as stating that 31% of desktop computers and 43% of laptop computers break down within the first three to four years of ownership. Circuit City's 2006 sales were stated to be composed 3.8% from the sale of warranties.

From the data it would seem that warranties are still worthwhile on expensive and more fragile items. I had a printer give trouble several years ago and was quoted a repair price far in excess of the cost of replacement. I did not have it repaired. I purchased a warranty, however, on the replaced printer. This new printer gave trouble when it was barely into the

warranted period. On calling the warranty agency I was told to box it up and send it to them. I protested that it seemed to be a simple problem that a competent technician would be able to fix. They replied again that if I would ship them the printer that they would reimburse me for the purchase price on receipt, but not the \$40 shipping charge. They sent a check promptly as promised. I am told that they have their own technicians and refurbish the items. Problems with a warranty may be directed to The California Bureaus of Electronic and Appliance Repair at (880) 062-5210 or <http://www.bear.ca.gov>.

AUTOMATIC RENEWALS

James Derk, the writer of a syndicated column, warns against ordering or renewing security software on-line in view of the fact that the vendor may use your credit card number to renew your subscription and send you an e-mail that it was done for your convenience. He advises the use of the AVG Free Edition version 7.5 and suggests that if you do decide to buy the proprietary software that you buy the retail store version rather buying or renewing on-line.

All About CD & DVD Burning

(NAPSA)— If your computer, digital camera and camcorder are getting overloaded with digital files—photos, movies, music and data—now's the time to buy software that will let you creatively "burn" everything onto CDs and DVDs. You may have heard about this type of software, but aren't exactly sure what it does. Here are answers to some of the most frequently asked questions:

What does "burning" a CD or DVD mean?

Burning is just a technical term for "copying." Today's software products let you burn digital files that are on your computer, your digital camera and camcorder—and even VHS tapes—and make personalized CDs and DVDs that you can play anywhere.

Why should I burn copies of my digital files?

It's important to make backup copies of all your digital files in case anything happens to the originals.

Today's photo, music and movie files need more storage space, which can only be found on CDs and DVDs.

What does the software let me do?

CD and DVD burning software, such as DVD MovieFactory Disc Creator from Ulead, doesn't just make copies of your files—it also lets you add creative elements before you copy everything onto a CD or DVD disc. Here's a look at what you can use the software for:

- **Movies.** Is that vacation or wedding movie a bit too long or boring? Use the software to trim unwanted scenes, add in creative titles to highlight a special moment, add Hollywood-style transition effects between scenes and insert some voice-overs and music. Then burn copies to share with (and impress) your friends and family.
- **Music.** With this software, you can burn your music collections and create your own "greatest hits" CDs with all types of audio, including MP3 and WAV.
- **Photos and Slideshows.** Use the software to store your photos, or make them come to life in a fast-moving slideshow. Add motion menus, transitions between photos, titles and music, before burning to a DVD disc.

To make things really easy, look for one of the new versions of software from companies like Ulead (www.ulead.com) that let you drag files to the quick-drop icons on your desktop without having to fully launch the software.

Last Monthly Treasury Report

by Treasurer Mario Quinn

December 2006, Reported on January 22, 2007

Beginning Balance		\$2272.92
Income:		
Membership Dues	\$ 225.00	
Door Prize Ticket Donations	145.00	
Total November Income	\$370.00	+370.00
New November Income Balance		\$2642.92
Outlay:		
PO Box Rent	\$ 46.00	
Doorprizes (Dec & 2007)	260.08	
Motherboard Printing (Nov/Dec)	183.20	
Church Rent (Nov/Dec)	\$ 120.00	
Total November/December Outlay	\$ 609.28	-609.28
Bank statement agreement: 1/22/07		\$2033.64
CD at North Valley Bank		3,073.09
Total Liquid Assets		\$5106.73

The membership dues for springtime (in general) are the highest as most dues are paid during this time of year. This income drastically falls off through the rest of the year as our monthly expenses will be more than we take in.

Also, the total assets, including the CD, are to be understood as the club's backup for all equipment used at the general meetings and for the use of the SIGs, such as the screen, laptop, projector (\$2-3000), projector lamps, etc. This backup is necessary, as property insurance is too expensive and these items need replacing periodically to keep up with the ever-changing technology.

David B. Whittle's February Visit To CUG Of Redding

Enjoy "Whittle's Picks For The Digital Home – Only The Best, Not All The Rest"

Are you enjoying the digital revolution that is transforming your home? In the ideal digital home, PCs and consumer electronic devices are not only protected against Internet security threats, but work together to deliver digital media such as pictures, video and music to the parts of your home where you want it. Enabled by innovation's rapid pace, you can re-invent your lifestyle, waste less time, and have more fun. The possibilities for managing your own digital content and entertainment are more engaging than ever before. You can now take pictures and videos with digital cameras and camcorders, add your choice of background music, and moments later share them with family and friends via e-mail or CD or even by DVD, displayed on our television sets in "home theaters."

This month David is presenting a brief look at the latest gadgets, goodies, software, and services available for the digital home, demonstrating software that takes your digital photos and video footage and almost magically transforms it into a movie on DVD or CD that is a surprising delight to watch. And if you are in the market for a laptop and want to know what to buy and why, he has ideas for that too, as well as showing us how to handle cable clutter, charger confusion, and tangles.

But most importantly, he asks if you ever feel as if there is more to know about Internet security than you're being told? Are you tired of being your own Internet security expert? Would you be interested in a service that brings you, for a very reasonable monthly fee, comprehensive Internet security to your PC and identity theft insurance and peace of mind? If you answered yes to any of these security questions, then you won't want to miss Dave's presentation on the 20th!

Dave will introduce some of his favorite technologies, products, and services that solve real problems for real people and can help make life a little bit or a lot better for each of us. "Whittle's Picks" are hidden gems from companies large and small, old and new, with outstanding, innovative offerings, including muvee™ Technologies (www.muvee.com), Lenovo (formerly IBM) Thinkpad (www.thinkpad.com), Zip*Linq (www.ziplinq.com), and the Invisus PC Security Solution (myinvisusdirect.com/usergroups). See exciting new possibilities from these companies and learn how the digital revolution can enhance your life. You will come away from this meeting entertained and informed. Dave will provide time for questions and will bring valuable door prizes, informative handouts, and actual product for sale at significantly discounted prices arranged exclusively for user groups. If you'd like to take advantage of these special prices at the meeting and take product home with you, remember to bring cash, check, or a credit card. See you then!

Dave Whittle has been involved in personal computers since 1979, including 12 years with IBM, where he was a nationally recognized online pioneer. He is the author of Cyberspace: The Human Dimension and is a contributing writer for Smart Computing Magazine. Working Woman Magazine recognized Dave as one of "America's most original technological thinkers." The father of 6 children, he currently lives in Springville, Utah, with his wife Kathy.



Weekly SIG meetings are every Thursday at the Senior Center in Anderson from 1 – 3 pm. In February there are only two meetings on the 15th and 22nd.

In February the Multi-Media SIG will meet on the 17th. Only members will be able to use the club's laptop to burn their DVD movie projects.

You missed a good time if you didn't come to January Multi-Media SIG meeting. Thanks to all who contributed ideas, food, and good discussion about Vista. Member Dick Mark said he recommends Microsoft's One Care service over Defender. He found the paid One Care service to be extremely reliable in maintaining and controlling computer viruses.

MEDIA PLAYER 11

We love this new simpler version of Media Player! There's no mystery to finding the tools because there's only one constant tool bar. All you need to remember is the heart of the controls is in the Library Options panel. It's a great improvement and a long time in coming. Now you can

Multi-Media SIG UpDate

by Jane Quinn

manage not only music, but your photos, videos and television recordings. We discovered Urge, the music internet service. It's just like the others, Yahoo Music Engine or Buy Rhapsody Music Store. However, this one is tied to Media Player 11. Also, it has a tab to SYNC a digital removable device. We like the new simple drag and drop method to building a Play List. This version is far less complicated than any earlier versions. I highly recommend upgrading now!

WINDOWS MEETING SPACES

Both Windows (Spaces.Live.Com.) and Office Live meeting (www.office.live.com) are on-line services to help people communicate and collaborate for all purposes. As a home user or a small business person, you can create a webspace for no cost or a nominal fee depending on you choice of service. We discussed the pros and cons of the new Spaces.Live.Com website. One important note is you need to establish a Passport.Net ID to use some of these new services. In the



meantime, you can visit the Microsoft website and see how others have constructed theirs. It is easy to create, and you can make it private to share only with your contact list. It is similar to creating a website on [My family.com](http://Myfamily.com) or Myspace.com. Our new electronic board will be this site, <http://multimediasig.spaces.live.com>. I intend to collect information related to our S.I.G. topics. This site can teach us more about software discoveries and finding solutions to common problems, new gadgets, etc. under the [Blog section](#). No names or e-mails will be exchanged or posted. If you would like to add an idea, problem, or solution, or a new Web Site Discovery, gadget technology, updates, etc., just e-mail or phone me with your input.

We also discussed E-Bay, of all things. One member brought his new Sony Handi-Cam 505 camera. Thanks Burl for sharing. It was great to have a

Continued on Page 7

Acronis True Image 10 Home Edition

by Billy Ball, CUG of Redding, bcard9@charter.net



I have suffered several times in the past with the loss of my hard drive, by severe crashes and also the attack of a dreaded virus. On each occasion it took me many hours to get my computer back to the way it was before the mishap. Some of the files could never be recovered. I have always been faithful about backing up my data reasonably often. So this didn't cause much of a problem, other than the time it took to restore it. I have tried several backup and drive image utilities with little success. They were either complicated or just didn't work as advertised. One day I received an ad from a software distributor that I have done business with promoting Acronis True Image 9. The advertisement sounded like it would fit my needs perfectly. I ordered the download and gave it a try. The program was easy to use and fit my needs as advertised.

MULTI-MEDIA

Continued

live demonstration in a realistic environment. We were able to play with the device, connect it to our computer and learn from the experience without spending a dime. It was bought at a bargain price from EBay.

After the EBay statement we switched the discussion to purchasing items via EBay. I learned a few things. The first was to insist the seller *insure* an expensive item. If you have more questions about EBay's site, I can give you some qualified resources from this group.

See you next month, same place, same time on Feb 17: at which time I will have handouts on Windows Media Center, Windows Photo Gallery, and Burning CDs and DVDs. Don't forget to visit Microsoft's website for Vista information and upgrade to IE7 for new experiences.

Jane Quinn qjquinn@charter.net, check website for the latest S.I.G. meeting notes at <http://multimediasig.spaces.live.com>

Being extremely pleased with Acronis True Image 9, I kept in contact with Acronis through their web page (<http://www.acronis.com>) checking for updates. With the new release of Acronis True Image 10, I ordered and installed it.

Acronis True Image 10 provides the tools you need to ensure that you are protected and can recover from unforeseen events such as viruses, and hard drive failures. You can create an exact copy of your entire PC, including the operating system, applications, user settings, and all data. In the event of a system or disk crash, virus attack or other fatal failure you can restore your entire PC in minutes. After replacing or reformatting the failed hard drive and restoring your back-up, booting up will return your computer to the exact way it was when you backed it up.

It is recommended that you use an external hard drive as your backup medium. Externals are almost as fast as the internal hard drives, large enough to hold many backups, and they are easily removable for safe storage. You can use either USB2 or firewire drives.

Acronis True Image offers three types of images, a full backup, which contains all the files of the hard drive, incremental backups, and differential backups. Incremental backups contain only files that have changed since the last backup and you can have many incremental backups to support the first full backup to keep your backups up to date. The differential backup only contains files that have changed since the last backup also, but you only have one differential backup with the full backup to form a set. Incremental and differential backups are faster than doing a full backup, but in my case I do a full backup about every two weeks and don't feel the need for the updates offered with the other two methods. I have about 24GB of used space on one partition of my main drive and 4GB on a second partition and it takes only about 14 minutes to make a full backup of my entire drive. Since I keep all of my data in the My Documents folder, I backup the Documents and Settings folder every three or four days, depending on how much work I have done. This keeps a pretty up to date back-

Volunteers Needed!



The Anderson (Frontier) Senior Center is looking for a few generous and kind folks to teach seniors the basics of computing and/or the Internet. The classroom has a projector, XP on the classroom computers, high speed Internet access, and plenty of resource materials at your disposal. *Any length of time* you could possibly volunteer would be very appreciated by seniors wanting to learn about computing.

If you are interested, please contact Jane Quinn, 365-0825 the coordinator for computer classes at the center.

REMEMBER:

"We Are Never Really Happy Until We Try To Brighten The Lives Of Others." – Helen Keller 1880-1968

up of my data, My Favorites, Address Book, and other such files. With Acronis True Image you can restore individual files without restoring the whole hard drive. You can restore lost or corrupted files by using True Image Mount (Plug) Image Function creating a virtual hard drive of your image. It assigns a drive letter to access the virtual drive using Windows Explorer to show and copy your files.

When you first install True Image you should create a Rescue CD. This is a boot disk with a Linux version of True Image on it. Should you have a hard drive failure, you can easily replace the hard drive. Place the Rescue CD in your CD player and turn on your computer. Plug in your external hard drive with the backup on it. Your computer will boot up running True Image. Select Recovery to restore your main drive and follow the program's instructions. When complete, remove your CD and re-boot your computer. You will be up and running just as you were when you made the backup. The restore process takes about the same time as the backup did. This is truly simple and sure can save a lot of headaches.

Acronis True Image 10 Supports Microsoft Vista.

I highly recommend this program.

(List Price: \$50) User Group Price (on CD): \$29+S&H; or download for \$29.

<http://www.ugr.com/backup.html>

Practice Good “Netiquette” – Be A Good “Netizen”

by Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director; columnist, *The Examiner*, Beaumont TX; radio & talk show host; lwilsker@apcug.net

WEBSITES:

www.snopes.com
www.papercut.biz/e-mailStripper.htm
www.irfanview.com

There are many unwritten etiquette rules that apply to internet usage. These etiquette rules are commonly referred to as “netiquette.” Likewise, there are rules of being a good online citizen, often given the moniker “netizen.” If more people practiced good netiquette, and were better netizens, we would likely have more online satisfaction, and improve our through-put while on the net.

E-mails are a common source of irritation. While there is little that we as individuals can do to stop the torrent of spam e-mails which typically come from unknown sources, we can ask our known e-mail correspondents to practice good netiquette when sending us e-mails.

Despite repeated protestations from me, I still receive several hoaxes and urban legends daily, all sent by some well intentioned friends who desire to warn me about some potential pseudo-threat, or to solicit my assistance in forwarding e-mails for some sham charitable purpose or imaginary sick kid. According to the urban legend busting website, Snopes (www.snopes.com), no one is really putting leaflets on rear windows of cars at the mall parking lot, carjacking the car when the driver stops to remove the paper. The Make-A-Wish Foundation is not paying seven cents for each e-mail forwarded about some terminally ill child. For the thousandth time, Marshall Fields is not charging \$250 for its chocolate chip cookie recipe. A father did not really foil the attempted abduction of his son at a local movie rental store, despite the allegations in the widely circulated e-mail. Hillary Clinton was not named after famed mountain climber Sir Edmund Hillary. The artificial sweetener aspartame was not originally developed as an ant poison. Entering your PIN number in reverse order at the ATM machine will not really summon the police. These and countless other e-mails, all typically containing wording that it is imperative to forward to everyone in your address book, are commonly circulated hoaxes and urban legends.

Good netiquette demands that the potential forwarder of these reports should check them out first by doing a search on any of the major urban legend websites, such as Snopes. Avoid the embarrassment of being connected with hoaxes by checking these things out before sending. By not forwarding hoaxes and urban legends you may also be contributing to public safety, as there are a handful of cases where the urban legend actually incited the act to occur. What might not be such good netiquette, is a practice I have been known to participate in, which is clicking the “reply to all” icon, and sending the sender and his victims the truth about the hoaxes, in a hope to put an end to one tentacle of this spreading mass of lies. Someone has to step in to halt this waste of bandwidth; conserving bandwidth by minimizing the hoaxes and urban legends being forwarded en-mass is good netizenship.

Since the topic of the moment includes forwarding e-mails, whether hoaxes and urban legends, or the often more common jokes or prayer requests, good netiquette demands proper behavior in e-mail forwarding. It is a waste of bandwidth and space to receive an e-mail that contains multiple headers. This occurs when multiple senders forward the same e-mail without editing out the headers. This results in an e-mail that may be a spammer’s delight if received by a miscreant, in that it may contain hundreds of valid e-mail addresses. It is also an irritant to have to scroll down pages of useless headers just to get to the message. If forwarding an e-mail, strip off the useless headers by painting them (hold down left mouse button and drag over the useless headers, then “delete” or “cut”). Now if forwarded, just the body of the message will be sent. This is *good* netiquette.

Another common faux pas is the fact that many e-mail programs add the “>” (greater-than) symbol to the first character of each line in a forwarded e-mail. If this e-mail is forwarded, and forwarded again several times, each line will begin with something like “>>>>” which makes reading the now poorly formatted e-mail difficult. Fortunately, there is a free utility available, e-mailStripper, which can be

downloaded from www.papercut.biz/e-mailStripper.htm. This small utility is very easy to use. Simply copy the body of the e-mail by painting it (hold down left mouse button and drag over the text), then “copy” it (right click on the painted area and click “copy,” or press CTRL-C); then open e-mailStripper, and paste (CTRL-V) the message body in the window. Click on the “Strip it!” button, and all of the “>” symbols will be instantly deleted, and the message may then be restored to its original formatting. Finally, click on the “Copy” button, and paste back into the e-mail program for sending, with the “greater-than” symbols all removed. This is *good* netiquette.

Now that digital cameras are nearly universal, we are taking billions of digital photos. Just because a digital camera has a maximum resolution of several megapixels does not mean that all photos should be taken in that high resolution, unless they are to be printed in a larger than snapshot format. I sometimes appreciate receiving photos of cute kids, cats, dogs, and family photos, but please do not send me photos taken in multi-megapixel resolution that have not been resized, or otherwise cropped and edited to make them smaller. Consider that a one megapixel digital photo will totally fill the screen on a 1024x768 resolution monitor, and be about a megabyte in file size. A four megapixel image will typically be 2048x1536 pixels in display size, meaning that only a corner of the image, consisting of one-fourth of the image, will appear on my monitor. This means that I have to do a lot of scrolling to view the image, as it is four times the maximum image size that my monitor can display, and be about four megabytes in file size. Please save me and your other correspondents the download time and inconvenience of trying to view an oversized image by either taking the image in a more reasonable resolution (such as one megapixel), or using imaging editing software to reduce the size of the image, and crop if necessary. Almost all image editing software included with most digital cameras can easily perform the task of resizing

Continued on Page 9

And a second article by Ira Wilsker, because both articles are so appropriate.

Accessories For That New Christmas Computer

by Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director; columnist, *The Examiner*, Beaumont TX; radio & talk show host; lwilsker@apcug.net

WEBSITES:

AVG Free Antivirus Software <http://free.grisoft.com>

Zone Alarm Free (and commercial) Firewall <http://www.zonelabs.com>

– Spybot Search & Destroy <http://www.safer-networking.org>

OpenOffice Free Office Suite <http://www.openoffice.org>

This Christmas season Santa delivered countless new desktop and notebook computers to good boys and good girls of all ages. Many also received gift cards as welcomed presents, which will allow the recipient to purchase whatever he/she wishes.

While almost all new computers will run out of the box, these same new computers are often the epitome of vulnerability as they often lack appropriate protective security software. While many new computers come with some software and utilities, there are still several items which would make good last minute Christmas gifts, or an appropriate utilization of a gift card.

New computers are generally very vulnerable to a variety of attacks from hackers, crackers, viruses, spyware, and other virtual threats. I would strongly suggest that the new computer be accompanied by any one of the many readily

available security suites. Under the premise that something is better than nothing, any of the commonly available comprehensive software security suites will do a reasonable job of protecting the computer. Brands of security suites from such well-known companies as Trend Micro, Symantec (Norton), McAfee, Kaspersky, Panda, CA (Computer Associates), and Zone Alarm, will all do a satisfactory job protecting the computer from attack. All of these brands, as well as most others, recently released the 2007 dated suites which include the latest in features, including antivirus, firewall, anti-spyware, and other utilities.

Those who will be using the computer with broadband access may decide to forgo the gift card and utilize the free security software offered by the broadband companies. Alternatively, free protective software from such companies as Grisoft's AVG Free Antivirus software, (free.grisoft.com) if used along with a free firewall such as the free version of Zone Alarm (www.zonelabs.com — under the "Quick Links" heading on the bottom left of the page) will provide reasonably effective security. Since spyware of various types is now considered by many as a greater threat than viruses, anti-spyware software is a necessity. The above suites all include anti-spyware software, but those who want free anti-spyware can get the free and excellent Spybot Search and Destroy from www.safer-networking.org.

Regardless if a commercial or free product is selected, it must be immediately installed on that new computer, updated and configured (the default configurations are good enough for the common user), as computers are subject to immediate attack the instant they go online, and new computers lacking appropriate protective software are prime and juicy targets for miscreants and purveyors of malware.

Another very useful device that can be utilized with that new computer is one or more USB flash drives (also called thumb or pen drives). Since very few new computers come with floppy disc drives anymore, the user will need some easy and efficient way to move data between

computers. USB flash drives are ideal for this purpose. The prices of these small drives have plunged in recent months, and capacities have soared. For reasonable prices these drives can be purchased at any computer store, electronics store, discount store, or warehouse club.

Many of us do much more with our computers than surf the net. We will likely need some productivity software that has a word processor, spreadsheet, and other utilities. Microsoft's Office Suites (the MS Office 2007 Suite is just coming on the market) are arguably the most popular productivity suites on the market, but they are quite pricey, even if purchased as a student edition. Alternatively, there is an excellent suite published by Corel which continues the WordPerfect tradition with its Corel WordPerfect Office X3. Since many of us find that our finances may be a little tight following the holiday season, a free office suite may meet our needs. OpenOffice is an outstanding and comprehensive office suite consisting of a word processor, spreadsheet, presentation program, database, and other office utilities, and is available for free download from www.openoffice.org.

A new computer is often accompanied by a new monitor, printer, and other peripherals, most of which have demands for clean electrical power. A good surge suppressor type of power strip is a necessary but somewhat inexpensive adjunct to the new computer, in order to protect it from power surges and spikes that could "fry" sensitive electrical components. Surge suppressors should have a UL label showing that it meets the standards of UL1449. The ability to resist power spikes and surges is measured in joules, and generally the more joules listed on the label the better. It should also be noted that most surge suppressors can and do wear out, so it would be a good practice to include a new one with that new computer, or as soon as practical after Christmas. If the budget or capacity of the gift card will allow it, a good "UPS" (Uninterruptible Power Supply) may be

Continued on Page 10

"NETIQUETTE"

Continued from Page 8

the image. Alternatively, use the free image utility Irfan-View, my personal favorite, available for download from www.irfanview.com. If you do not want to alter the original image, simply save the edited or reduced image under a different file name. The smaller image size will relate to a smaller file size, meaning faster uploads and downloads. This is good netiquette.

These are but a few tips that can contribute much to being a good netizen. Practice good netiquette.

The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.

Buying An HDTV?

by Bob Elgines, Editor, Colorado River Computer Club, AZ, <http://www.crcgaz.com/>, Elginesz@rraz.net



There are three things necessary for true High Definition (HD) Television (TV): an HDTV, HD receiver (or tuner) and HD programming. All TV stations will be capable of HD by 2007.

New HDTVs are here and will be required starting in 2009; but, of course, there will be converters available. The standard for Antilog TV was 525 lines per frame vertically. The old mandates of FCC requirements were first 2004, and then 2007. There are many HDTV models out there and some of the description of their characteristics are confusing. Hopefully I can clear up a few items of concern.

First let us consider the three **types** of TV screens or TV monitors:

1. **LCD** — Cheaper in price. They can be wall mounted; 37" weighs about 50 to 60 pounds; Sizes up to 52"; 4" to 5" thick; 160 degree view angle (with decreasing contrast); Lasts 10 to 20 years; The thinnest, lightest sets and have minimum reflection of lights in the room.
2. **PLASMA** — Moderate in price. They can be wall mounted; 42" weighs about 85 to 90 pounds; Sizes 42" and up; 4" to 5" thick; 170 degree view angle (contrast good throughout); Lasts 10 to 20 years; Better color accuracy and displaying the deepest black, but screen's shiny surface can produce reflections of lights in the room and static images can "burn-in" and produce a ghost image.
3. **DLP** — (digital light processing). Mod-

erate in price for size; Not wall mounted; 42" weighs about 45 to 60 pounds; Sizes 42" and up; 8" to 15" thick; 160 degree view angle (contrast good throughout); Lasts 8 to 10 years (bulb or lamp); A "rainbow effect" that some viewers may notice on the edges of bright objects on the screen. DLP is used in most new projectors.

Second, let's discuss **Resolution** (pixels are the number of dots per line), the higher the resolution the better the picture, or higher quality. The old Standard Digital TV format is 720 (Horizontal) x 480 (Vertical). The new HDTV formats are 720 and 1080, but most HDTVs also allow using the 480 standard. There are not many things out there for the 1080 "i or p" format. Where "p"= Progressive — draws lines on screen from top to bottom, and is considered the best for high speed movement without blur. Whereas "i"= Interlace — draws odd lines from top to bottom then even lines from top to bottom.

1024 x 768 pixels, 1366 x 768 pixels, and 1780 x 720 pixels all fall under the 720p format and many 720p-HDTVs accept the 1080i format.

1920 x 1080s fall under either the 1080i or 1080p format and most accept the 720p format.

Screen size is measured diagonally. Therefore, if you now have a 32" TV, you will most likely want a 37" to 42" for your replacement. That way you will have basically the same height, but of

course it will be wider.

Third, let's discuss other concerns such as inputs and outputs (most sets come with stereo sound speaker systems):

1. **HDMI** — latest version is 1.3, a connector that requires a special cable and is not usually included with your TV. This could be used for 5.1 or 7.1 surround sound systems, video games such as X-Box, HD-Cable boxes, HD-DVD players, etc.
2. **Component** — One to three inputs are provided, used to connect DVD Players, games, etc.
3. **Cable Slot** — latest version is 2.0, used for Cable Simm Cards. Most cable companies are not interested, but new FCC mandates starting next year, 2007, may change this. Also some companies are considering including the Cable Card internally.
4. **Tuners** — Usually two tuners are included, one NTSC (we are now using Antilog & Digital TV, also called Standard TV) and one ATSC (this is the new HD digital TV tuner, required for HDTV). Stay away from a TV listed as "HD-ready," it does not have an ATSC tuner.

Summary. It boils down to what you think looks and operates the best for your situation. Ask questions and check out the specification of the unit you wish to buy. If you are upgrading your cable or satellite service to HDTV, be sure to ask for "hi-def," not digital. Good luck!

ACCESSORIES

Continued from Page 9

better than a surge suppressor. As a caution read the package label carefully to verify that the selected UPS has the battery capacity to power the computer and monitor (other peripherals need not be connected to the battery side of the UPS) in the event of a power flicker or failure. If the power fails and an appropriate UPS has been installed, the user will have time to safely shut the computer down. If A UPS is selected look for features like "AVR" (Automatic Voltage Regulation) which will provide clean power to the computer in the event of surges or brownouts.

There are a lot of other useful periph-

erals and software which should be considered, such as media (blank CDs and DVDs), web cameras, digital cameras, backup software and hardware, and other helpful and necessary items.

Whatever you do with that new Christmas computer, be sure that it is

always properly and adequately protected from a variety of threats.

The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.

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Also, if you have or know of a local business that would like to advertise in the Motherboard, please give them the editor's phone number for the details of becoming a Contributor.

Editor, Judi Ball 275-4632
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(For general information call any Officer or Director listed on Page 2)

Not A Renewal Reminder

Multi-Media SIG

Includes Digital Cameras, Burning Music CDs, and DVD Movie Making

Weekly SIG 1 - 3 PM, Anderson Sr Center, Feb 15 & 22. No Mar meet

(Only members will be able to use the club's laptop to burn their DVD movie projects.)

**Saturday — 10 AM
Feb 17th**

At Jane Quinn's Home, contact following for information:

Jane Quinn, 365-0825
jqquinn@charter.net



DTP and Graphics Art SIG

Do you have an interest in creating Desktop Publishing projects, such as flyers, business cards, logos, newsletters, etc., or art and photo editing and manipulation? We have an informal forum, so bring a question, problem, project and we'll all work together to solve it.

Basic Windows knowledge of copy and paste is a must.

Wednesday — 2 PM

Feb. 14, 21, 28, Mar. 7

See map below for meeting place.

Judi Ball 275-4632
jebed@charter.net



Windows & More SIG

**Wednesday — 11:30 AM
Feb. 14, 21, 28, Mar. 7**

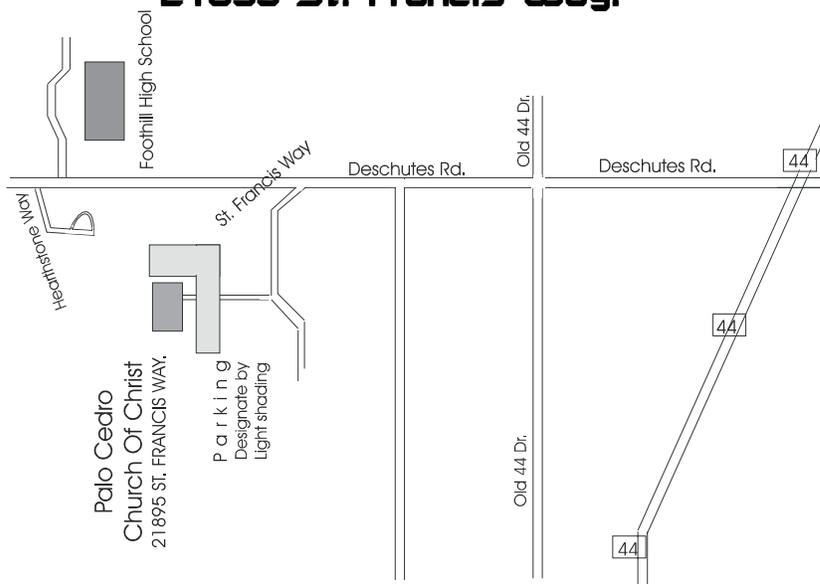


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bcard9@charter.net

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BUG'S MEETING PLACE Palo Cedro Church Of Christ 21895 St. Francis Way.



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1. Benefit from a common interest in a personal (and costly) investment: Your business or personal computer.
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3. Share tips and tricks, as well as new and old ideas.
4. Become exposed to a variety of new hardware and software without sales pressure.
5. Receive an informative monthly newsletter.
6. Have access to various club functions and all Special Interest Groups (SIGs).
7. Find out that no one needs to be alone and helpless with today's computer technology.