MOTHERBOARD

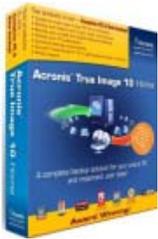## A Publication of the Computer Users Group Of Redding, CA

YOUR C.U.G. PRESENTS

Tuesday, April 17, 2007
Acronis True Image Version 10
Presented by
Bill Ball

The Acronis is a hard drive backup and restore program that has proven to be exceptional in its ease of use on a variety of computers.

$130 Value!

Door Prizes Are

$130 Value!

4 in 1 Bino-Camera! 8x22 Binoculars with a Digital Camera!
and
A 50 pack of CD-Rs, plus an MS Canvas Bag & CD Carrier!

One free ticket to each member at the door!
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: May
Jim Ballard will introduce a new recycling service in Redding. Afterward we will have a panel to address questions.
Between now and May's meeting please post all questions to our website at http://users.snowcrest.net/ibmpcugr

CUG Calendar

CUG Board Meeting
1 PM Monday, April 23
at Jack-In-The-Box, Dana Drive

DTP SIG
2 PM, Wednesdays
April 11, 18, 25, May 2, 9

MULTI-MEDIA
10 AM, Saturday, April 21

WINDOWS & MORE
11:30 AM, Wednesdays
April 11, 18, 25, May 2, 9

SEE BACK PAGE FOR MORE SIG INFO

In This Issue Of The Motherboard...

Club Information

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

Members volunteering to help members!

Club Mentors

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

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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.

PRESENTATION REVIEW

Quotes from a member:

"You did a great job of presenting Vista yesterday. You presented a balanced case and it was well thought out. You must have put a lot of work into it. Great Job. I had to leave right after the meeting to pack so I could not give my congratulations then."

The presentation, if you missed it, was answers to questions members asked: What are people saying about Vista; What's so great about it? What's the difference in the versions? How can I tell if my software will work on Vista? and How do I get on-going support and news about Vista?

We covered a lot of ground that night. If you want to see the presentation, it's on the Website in Adobe Reader form. Basically, at Microsoft's Website you can actually see Vista in operation. Watch the video and see the visual differences between Premium and the Basic version of Vista. If you are a true gadget enthusiast you will want to purchase the Premium version to take full advantage of the multimedia tools. Of course, this translates to a high performance computer with lots of video graphics capability.

Jane Quinn

Good Answers?

1. When computing, whatever happens, behave as though you meant it to happen.
2. When you get to the point where you really understand your computer, it's probably obsolete.
3. The first place to look for information is in the section of the manual where you'd least expect to find it.
4. When the going gets tough, upgrade.
5. For every action, there is an equal and opposite malfunction.
6. To err is human...to blame your computer for your mistakes is even more human, it's downright natural.
7. He who laughs last, probably has a back-up.
8. The number one cause of computer problems is computer solutions.
9. A complex system that doesn't work is invariably found to have evolved from a simpler system that worked just fine.
10. A computer program will always do what you tell it to do, but rarely what you want it to do.
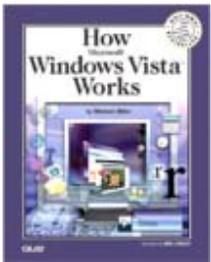
March Meeting

Jane Quinn introduced and presented the new Microsoft Vista Operating Program.

Bernice Bennett & Marge Stewart ran the door prize booth this month. Terrific job, Ladies! Thank you.

President & Greeter, Belva Sullivent and Membership Chairperson, Eugenia Goodman.

Congratulations Winners!

Jane Quinn won Microsoft Office Suite 2003!

Elaine Blanco won muvee™, V. 5!

Linda Mahaffey won a year's subscription to Smart Computing Magazine!

Welcome To New Member

John Antilla

And Renewals

Dee Butler

Harry & Nancy Detwiler

Dean Ellison

Linda Mahaffey

Ronald & Beatrice Nevins

Diane Otto

Ralph & Shirley Schroeder

Sharon L. Sterni

Richard Yoder

Artistry Through Technology Digital Photo Contest, June 1

ELIGIBILITY

· All conference attendees are invited to enter the Digital Photo contest.
· A user group with at least one member in attendance at SW may also enter their Digital Photo Contest 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners.

CATEGORIES

· People
· Nature (including animals)
· Other (abstract, still life, cityscape, objects, etc.)

PHOTO FORMAT

· Entries must be taken with a digital camera
· Printed size may be 4x6 to 8-1/2 x 11, maximum
· Color or black and white
· Do not add borders or frames to the photograph.

CONTEST RULES

· The photo may only be entered in one category; one entry per person in each category.
· The photographer's name, user group and category must be noted on the back of the photo.
· Four copies of the entered photo must be received at the below address by **June 1:**

Judy Taylour
18727 Nadal Street
Canyon Country CA 91351

· A JPEG (not larger than 4 MB) of each photo submitted for the contest should be sent to swugconf@socal.rr.com (by June 1) to be displayed on the conference Web Site – post-conference.
· Photos will not be returned.
· Copyright photos will not be accepted.

JUDGING

Photos will be judged on the following criteria by the judges:

· Composition (5 points)
· Technical Skill (5 points)
· Visual Impact (10 points)

AWARDS

· 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place will be awarded in each category
· People's Choice will be awarded to the photograph that receives the most 1st place votes from the conference attendees

About The Surfboard

Mary Montague has taken a month off with the Surfboard, but will be back with an interesting subject next month.

From Pics To Bank Records: Protecting Heirloom Data

(NAPSA) North American Precis Sydicate

According to a recent survey, 91 percent of computer users store "heirloom data" on their computers. Heirloom data includes those priceless memories that have personal meaning, such as videos and photos of weddings, baby's first steps, graduations, birthdays and holidays. It also includes important record-keeping documents such as tax returns, bank statements and personal contact information—much of which is now stored in electronic files on local hard drives.

The survey also revealed that 43 percent of those who store personal information on their computers do not take any measures to back up the data, so it's no surprise that as many as one in four consumers has lost personal data stored on his computer in the past six months.

Most often, data loss is a result of a computer system crash or failure. You also risk losing vital digital data if your personal or laptop computer is lost or stolen. Sometimes, heirloom data can be lost as a result of unavoidable causes outside your control, such as a natural disaster, flooding or fire. Even events that seem trivial—like a power outage—can compromise data stored on computers. Imagine this—you can be your own cause of data loss through accidental deletion of electronic documents and files!

"Home computer users, especially families, store a wide range of important information on their PCs," said Jon Kies, senior product marketing manager from Symantec, a leading Internet security company and the group that commissioned the survey, which was conducted by Harris Interactive. "But many people do not take adequate measures to protect their digital treasures."

Heirloom data does not need to be lost forever.

The most important thing you can do to safeguard important files stored on your computer is to use a backup software solution—it's like insurance for your digital valuables. Norton Save & Restore, one of the leading programs available today, offers quick and simple ways to save those files using such technology as predefined backups of common folders and file types. The software also performs scheduled, on-demand or event-driven backups to a wide range of media. It even gives you the option to create an exact image of your entire hard drive without leaving the operating system or rebooting. Finding a backup solution that meets your needs can be easy.

Check out online editorial reviews of various software programs or visit the software section of an area retailer to get answers to your specific questions and to find a product that works for you. For more tips on protecting your heirloom data, visit www.symantec.com.

It's important to back up family photos and other "heirloom data."

Bits And Pieces

by Rush Blodget; IMB/PCUG of Redding, rmaxtwo@charter.net

HD DVD VERSUS BLU-RAY

Reminiscent of the war between Betamax and VHS, a coalition promoting Blu-ray consisting of Philips, Samsung, and Panasonic is led by Sony and is competing with another group led by Toshiba that includes Microsoft and Intel that are backing HD DVD.

Both formats are still quite "high-priced" although HD DVD is less expensive and may ultimately win the price competition due to a manufacturing capability in China. Despite the availability of "dual-format" players" there is reluctance by the public to definitely commit to one format or the other. The dual format players are quite expensive (currently $1,200 for one sold by LG Electronics).

Time Warner is stated to have plans to release a disk with Blu-ray on one side and HD DVD on the other. Blu-ray has the greater market penetration with 1.5 million players in the homes of consumers compared to 300,000 or more for HD DVD. It also has the support of the majority of the major studios which includes Walt Disney, 20th Century Fox, Sony Pictures Entertainment, MGM, and Lions Gate Entertainment. Universal Studios supports HD DVD.

Although the cheapest HD DVD player is now approximately $500 and the cheapest Blu-ray is in the neighborhood of $600 it is predicted that intense price competition may reduce prices to the $300 level by Christmas.

By mid-year Time Warner will release disks with Blu-ray on one side and HD DVD on the other.

Universal Studios plans to release DVD *combo* disks with both the regular and HD DVD versions of a movie on the same disk at no increase in price; these will play on a regular DVD player and can be used later with a high definition DVD player whenever the purchaser decides to buy one.

There are advantages to both types of disk. The Blu-ray will hold 50 GB of video whereas the HD DVD will only hold 30 GB, Blu-ray has an installed base of 1.5 million sets versus several hundred thousand for HD DVD. The HD DVD may have an edge due its possible ability to sell for a lower price due to a difference in manufacturing capability and alleged better interactivity and sound quality. This information was abstracted from the *Investors Business Daily for* March 23, 2007.
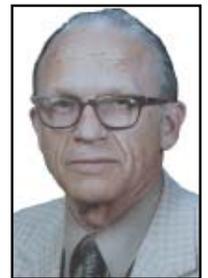
Multi-Media SIG UpDate

by Jane Quinn

Weekly S.I.G. Group meetings are every Thursday at the Senior Center in Anderson from 1 – 3 pm. Meetings this month are on April 12, 19, 26, May 3, 10. Only members will be able to use the club's laptop to burn their DVD movie projects.

Our next Multi-Media monthly meeting is on April 21 at my home from 10 am to noon. For directions contact Jane Quinn qjquinn7427@gmail.com or phone 365 0825.

E- MAIL

Spam problems started the meeting's conversation. Several members had input to solutions and /or work around solutions. The source of the problem came from Outlook Express. Our member with the problem had become exhausted tracking the numerous e-mail addresses that accumulated daily as spam. The problem started after he was shopping on the internet.

Several solutions were offered. The first suggestion all made was to establish a yahoo id or something similar that would mask your identity when on the internet. Another answer was to log in to your e-mail through your ISP's home page and screen the e-mail before opening Outlook Express. For example, Charter is my ISP provider, so I first log on to their internet site at www.charter.net, then log into my mailbox and delete unwanted mail. There's also a feature that you can report to when you know it is SPAM. Over time this has virtually eliminated junk e-mail for me. A possible source of SPAM, one member pointed out, is the e-mail addresses included in "forwarded e-mail jokes sent to you." Dick Marx gave the group an informative document on the etiquette of e-mailing. One important note was not to forward addresses of others. Use Blind Copy (BCC whenever possible). When using Outlook Express the Blind Copy option does not appear until you first click on To or the CC (Carbon Copy) features.

We continued our discussion of e-mail problems with the subject of sending pictures. Two members (Donna and Josie) had just returned from a European trip with 500 + photos that they wanted to share with family and friends. They shared their photos with us from Donna's laptop. They had tried sharing their images with friends by attaching them to their in e-mail, but got complaints that the pictures were too large to receive. They also made copies of their images on a CD for friends. We offered some solutions. First, if the person is receiving the images in html format through e-mail, he could set Internet Explorer to easily resize a picture automatically. Those settings are in the Multimedia Section in the Advanced IE screen. Another answer was use to use the RESIZER tool from Microsoft which is a free download from the Power Toys section. But we quickly discovered this tool didn't reduce the images to our satisfaction, mostly because the images were 8 MB and they only reduced to 2 MB. But they did reduce to 54 KB in tools in the My Pictures folder section of XP, if you use Outlook Express and not another IMApping e-mail program, such as JUNO (which is a problem) or AOL. However, it is possible to resolve this. You would need to re-adjust the account in Outlook Express to work with the IMApping program. The solution can be found in the " community" portion of Microsoft's support and from me if you let me know. The last option was to set up an Easy Sharing Free Photo Album Account on the many available Internet websites starting without local sources, such as CROWNCAMERA.COM, Kodakgallery.Com, Snapfish.Com, Shutterfly.Com, and Costco.com, to mention a few. Member Mike Doyle is currently using the Costco.com photo Center with much success. Dick Marx has started posting his school mates' photos to share. It's a great source to share photos of your trip with family and friends also. They can quickly see a slideshow (all 500 photos if you choose), print their choice photos and have them mailed to themselves, and you can post them as you travel, as well. A really great resource for gifts too, Crown Camera offers photo blankets (like the other sources), mugs, published photo books, and many other items.

Well It was a fun session. Amusingly we were re-awakened to much we once knew. And, as we know, we realized again that there are many solutions to every computer problem. Hope to see you next month at the Quinn's household.

Five Tips For Successfully Selling Products Online

(NAPSA) North American Precis Sydicate

Did you know that online retail sales grew 25 percent at the end of 2006, the biggest jump in fourth-quarter sales since 2002? With more than 650,000 sole proprietorships selling $13 billion of merchandise, small retailers are playing a key role in the growth of e-commerce, according to Forrester Research, Inc. Whether you are selling products for the first time or expanding your existing brick-and-mortar store to the Internet, getting started in e-commerce has never been easier or more profitable.

Here are five tips for getting your online storefront off to a good start:

Choose product names to help search engines.

Selecting the popular keywords will help search engines give higher ranks to your product pages when customers perform relevant searches. For example, if you are selling a line of dining tables called "Belleville" that has a "Cherry" finish, be sure to select a search engine-friendly name such as "Belleville Dining Table-Cherry."

Free shipping sells!

In a recent ForeSee Results survey, 41 percent of the consumers surveyed cited free shipping as the primary factor in their holiday purchase decisions. Seventy-nine percent said free shipping influenced them to choose one site over another. Free shipping is becoming very popular among online stores, so you may be at a disadvantage if you do not offer free shipping.

Site policies increase customer confidence.

Making potential buyers more comfortable on your Web site is one of the best ways to increase sales. There is a lot of focus right now on improving site security with important tools such as security

Fun In The Sun & Computers, Too!

14th Annual Southwest User Group Conference
San Diego CA – July 13 - 15, 2007
www.swugconf.org or www.swugc.blogspot.com

User Group Workshops! Personal Productivity Workshops! Vendor Presentations and Meals! Vendor Faire! Hospitality Suite! Door Prize Drawings! Networking! T-shirts and Welcome Bags! As well as up close and personal time can be found at the 14th Annual Southwest User Group Conference. User groupies will have an opportunity to interface and network with user group leaders and members who have similar interests to share ideas and experiences, as well as solutions to problems.

The conference begins on Friday evening, July 13 and continues through Sunday, July 15 at the Town and Country Resort & Conference Center in San Diego.

The conference registration (form attached) fee is $50 per person, if postmarked by June 22. If your registration is postmarked by June 29, the fee is $60; June 30 through the conference date the fee is $75. Your conference registration fee includes admittance to all workshops, the Vendor Faire, meals and vendor presentations, a Welcome Bag and T-shirt. To ensure that attendees receive their choice of T-shirt size, registration must be received by June 22. Attendees registering after that date will receive an XL T-shirt.

The conference will be held at the Town and Country Resort & Convention Center, 500 Hotel Circle North, San Diego. Town and Country is offering attendees a special group rate of $114.00, single or double occupancy. To make your reservations, call their toll-free reservation number (800-77-ATLAS) by June 29 and identify yourself as attending the Southwest User Group Conference.

Stay at the host hotel and you are automatically entered into a drawing to receive one of your conference nights FREE!

All conference attendees are invited to enter the Digital Photo contest. A user group with at least one member in attendance at SW may also enter their Digital Photo Contest 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners. Contest guidelines are attached.

Judy Taylour & Patricia Hill
Conference Co-chairs

FIVE TIPS
Continued from Page 6

certificates that protect and encrypt consumer information on online storefronts. However, don't overlook the basics. Clearly state your policies for returns, exchanges, shipping and privacy. A 100 percent satisfaction guarantee is a great way to show that you stand behind your products.

Offer multiple payment options.

Customers like choice when it comes to purchasing online, so give it to them. Credit cards are the most popular method, but other forms of payment such as PayPal, Google Checkout, checks and money orders are also widely used. Retailers offering three or more payment options experienced an average increase of 14 percent in their online sales, according to a Cybersource survey. Make sure the shopping cart in your e-commerce package supports multiple forms of payment to provide this convenience to your customers.

Make it easy to navigate your site.

Customers can't buy your products if they can't find them. You can help your customers by providing well-designed site navigation and sitewide search functionality. Design your Web site so that shoppers can browse by product category, price and manufacturer or search for these in a search box that is easy to find. Avoid presenting too many choices in the navigation hierarchy—a good rule of thumb is five to eight items for each level.

Follow these tips to join the ranks of successful small businesses online. For more information on e-commerce software, visit www.networksolutions.com/e-commerce.

Soft Hardware From Otterbox!
by Judy Lococo, Program Director, Kentucky-Indiana PCUG, Kentucky, www.kipcug.org, programs@kipcug.org

Fort Collins, Colorado, is a charming college town. I know, I've been there, done that and have the t-shirt. You would not expect to find a lot of businesses prospering in this relatively quiet town that wasn't geared toward students and faculty. However, I have discovered one that is worth further investigation, as they have some products that seem to be extremely useful in today's global mentality.

After having been awarded a new 8700 Blackberry by Ziff Davis for participating in a webinar, I finally found the time to switch the cell phone to this device, and

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Windows XP Upgrade To Vista

by Vinny LaBash, a member of the Sarasota PCUG, Fl, www.spcug.org, labash(at)spcug.org

Previous versions of Windows always accepted an installation disk as proof you had a legitimate copy of Windows. This entitled you to install the upgrade version of the latest release of the operating system. Vista doesn't work the same way. The only thing it will recognize is a copy of Windows already installed on a hard drive. Why Microsoft did this remains a mystery, but perhaps there really are things that mere mortals are not meant to know.

Don't go out and splurge on a full version of Vista. Read on and save some money. There are four primary versions of Vista:

Vista Home Basic
Vista Home Premium
Vista Business
Vista Ultimate

The difference between the full and upgrade versions of each variation of Vista ranges between $72 and $155. Even though Vista is a big improvement over XP, why spend the extra money for a full version if you don't have to?

If you're attempting to upgrade from a version of XP or Windows 2000 that's already installed on your hard drive, the upgrade version of Vista will install as soon as it recognizes the older version of Windows on your system. However, if you've formatted your hard drive, Vista refuses to accept an installation disk from a previous version of Windows as evidence that you do indeed own a legitimate copy of Microsoft's flagship product.

Fortunately, there is a legitimate method to work around this otherwise severe and unnecessary restriction. There is an undocumented procedure that allows you to do a full clean install of Vista to a physical hard drive without a previous version of the operating system installed.

The setup program in the Vista upgrade is the tool that lets you perform a full clean install of the product. In addition to XP and Windows 2000, Vista will recognize a copy of itself that has not yet been activated. What if we install Vista twice? We are going to install Vista, and then "upgrade" to Vista. Before you do **_anything_**, please read the following entire 20-step procedure first. I'll wait while you do this. OK, let's get started.

1. Boot your PC from the Vista DVD.
2. In the dialog box that comes up select "**Install Now.**" **DO NOT** enter the product key at this time. You'll do that later.
3. Turn off the option that says **Automatically activate Windows when I'm online**.
4. Another dialog box comes up. Confirm the Vista installation without the product key.
5. Tell the installation program what version of Vista you're installing. Don't fib about this.
6. This step is important. Select the "**Custom (Advanced)**" install, **NOT** the "Upgrade" install.
7. Wait for the install program to copy files. Your system will probably reboot several times. Don't touch anything. Let the install complete.
8. Eject the installation DVD **_without_** activating Vista.
9. Reboot to make sure everything is working OK.
10. Reinsert the Vista installation diskette and run setup again.
11. Click "**Install Now.**"
12. Select **Do not get the latest updates for installation**. You can do that later.
13. Enter the product key.
14. Turn off the option to **Automatically activate Windows when I'm online**.
15. Now select "**Upgrade**," not "Custom (Advanced)." This is where you do the actual "upgrade" to Vista.
16. **Pay attention!** Don't do anything while the setup program copies files and does a reboot.
17. At some point the system will ask if you would like to boot from the DVD. Decline the invitation.
18. No matter what happens on the screen, leave the keyboard and mouse alone. Resist the urge to do something. Vista setup is making all the right choices for you automatically.
19. The Thank You dialog box will eventually appear. Click Start.
20. Vista's login screen will come up shortly. Enter the user name and password you created during the first installation.

Congratulations! You're finished upgrading to Vista, but you still have a house-keeping chore to perform. You have to activate Vista within 30 days of installation or it will cease to work properly.

To activate Vista:

1. Reboot your machine.
2. The Welcome Center appears.
3. Click **Show more details**.
4. Click **Activate Windows** now.
5. Activation will now take place automatically over the internet.

It is unknown why Microsoft programmed this procedure into the setup program. My conjecture is that the procedure was implemented for the convenience of programmers while testing the product and someone decided that it was too much trouble to remove. Another possibility is that when Microsoft management gave the order to stop development and concentrate on fixing bugs, there was no time to remove the feature before product release. Whatever the case may be, let's use Microsoft's perhaps unintentional gift to save a few bucks.

This article has been provided to APCUG by the author solely for publication by APCUG member groups. All other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

SOFT HARDWARE
Continued from Page 7

synchronize it with all the contacts, calendar appointments, tasks, etc. that have glommed onto me from years of Outlook usage. But the holster that came with it seemed to always dial home, whether I needed to or not. It seems that unless the keypad was locked when inserted into the holster, some of the keys along the side of the keypad were depressed, thus ET was phoning home without realizing.

Enter Otterbox, www.otterbox.com, from Fort Collins! They have cases for a lot of different toys we now consider indispensable. They have products for the Blackberry, for the Treo, for the iPod Nano, for laptops, etc., so it would behoove all y'all (I had to do that at least once...) to see what is available for your gadget du jour. Not only do these cases stop the phone home syndrome (poetic, isn't it?),

Review Of Spin It Again

by Rod Rakes, APCUG Advisor; President & Editor, Gwinnett SeniorNet PCUG, GA; Editor & Webmaster, Huntsville PCUG, AL

Convert vinyl records and cassette tapes to MP3's and CD's.

WHAT IS IT? *Spin It Again* by *Acoustica* (www. Acoustica.com) is a software program that will make it easy to convert your collection of cassettes, 33's ,45's and even 78's to MP3/WMA/WAV files or directly to CDs. Some folks have even used the program to rip 8-Tracks. Remember those?

COST? $34.95 retail, but $27.96 for User Group members. This 20% discount is available online from the link above. You must use the code "CLUB 2007." You will receive a registration code via e-mail. But, you can try it 3 times for free. (3 albums)

WHERE DO I GET IT AND/OR READ MORE? **http://www.Acoustica.com** The program is an 8+ MB download.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS: If you have a Windows computer with a soundcard you're ready to use the software!

RECOMMENDED? YES!

How GOOD IS IT? *Really good*! First off, I was impressed by the voice instructions when the program starts. There is a Hook-up Wizard with photos of how to connect to your amplifier, cassette player or turntable. Songs are automatically divided into files based on the lull between songs. A Level Wizard sets the volume level automatically based on playing a portion of your loudest song in an album.

You can save the files as MP3, OGG, WMA or WAV files. A variety of choices is available to clean up the recordings, e.g., Damaged Record, Damaged Tape, Tape clean with Equalizer, Tape Noise Begone, Warped record, even a No-pre-amp blues setting, etc. Someone referred to this as a Mikey cereal eater that eats Snap, Crackle and Pop. Accept the defaults and it's very easy work.

I recorded three record albums and two cassette tapes of music using a stereo amplifier, cassette player and turntable. The result was free of any clicks, pops and hiss of the original recordings, at least to my ears. The only "problem" I had was a song by Judy Collins that had long silent passages which fooled the software into thinking there were several songs. But, it was easily fixed with the Merge options. (Be sure to read the tutorial.) I chose to save the songs in MP3 format and gave each a name in the chart before actually hitting the Save/Convert button. You can embed in the files the Artist, Title, Genre, Year and add comments. On the last test I chose to record an album directly to CD using the Spin It Again software. It worked like a charm with no need to make a later recording from the MP3's using Nero, Roxio, etc.

I had a priceless cassette tape of family nonsense that had been re-recorded from reel to reel tapes from long ago when my children were small. The volume varied greatly. I placed the cassette tape in a small inexpensive hand held player (Walkman type) and connected a cable between the speaker jack and the Line In jack in the back of my computer. This meant I could adjust the sound during the low and high volume sections of the tape by using the player's volume control. That worked satisfactorily since the tape was not perfection in the first place. The recording was even better than the original with little or no hiss and a more consistent volume level! There is an option for auto-leveling the volume for a given song to eliminate distortion on high peaks.

An MP3 file of LaPaloma had a loud click at the 51-second mark that could not be cleaned properly even with the special peak click filtering after manually isolating the click. I was finally able to eliminate the click, but each side of the original click had a warble that was worse than the click. The Help file said if this happens, try to make a better recording somehow. Since it was only one click, I would guess there was a spot of something on the vinyl surface or a pin point gouge. You can't make a purse out of a sow's ear, huh?

One of the fun and useful features is the ability to adjust the speed of a recording. I recorded several old 78 RPM records using the 45 RPM speed of my turntable and increased the speed accordingly using the drop-down menu until it sounded normal. I'm trying to find my 78 RPM copy of Roy Acuff's "Sixteen Chickens in a Frying Pan." Everybody needs to hear that.

For the tinkering types out there, many tweaks are available including a change in sampling rates, sensitivity of track detection, recording levels, etc.

Highly recommended.

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.

SOFT HARDWARE
Continued from Page 9

but they are also shock-resistant, water-resistant, dust-resistant, scratch-resistant, and offer protection against extreme elements. The most significant discovery I have found is that you can use all the Blackberry features while it's fully encased in the Otterbox, such as the track wheel, the keypad, the escape key, etc! And when you need to recharge the unit itself, a small plug removes from the side of the case to allow access, so you don't even have to remove the case for this veritably essential chore.

The company is very user-friendly, and seems to be perfectly accommodating, to ensure that you are satisfied with their products. The black and gray color isn't the most flamboyant scheme, but it will go with almost any wardrobe choices you have, and doesn't call attention to what you are doing. The molded rubber and o-ring seals are a bit on the bulky side, but really do provide an unbelievable amount of protection, and transform a fairly delicate instrument into something a lot more usable and carefree. The Blackberry itself is not skinny, so just a little more girth doesn't deter me from believing this is an extremely essential accessory, especially for less than $130.00 US.

I am one of those people who think hardware is boring, as all it does is just sit there & blindly obey. But these superb soft hardware enhancements, that actually do what they purport to, without a lot of glitz and hype, aren't at all boring. They are practically a necessity.

Now, if they could only find a way to protect you from leaving it on the seat in the taxi!

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THINGS, THINGLETS & THINGASSOS

by S. Jack Lewtschuk, Monterey Bay Users' Group-PC Columnist, www.mbug.org/blacklion(at)royal.net

WORDS OF WISDOM

If builders built houses the way programmers build computer programs, the first woodpecker to come along would destroy civilization!

KEEPING TRACK OF MULTIPLE PASSWORDS

Passwords are a part of our everyday life: we use them for e-mail, online banking, stock trading, shopping, blogging, etc. For good security, you should have a different password for each website you enter. But how can you remember so many passwords?

A password manager is a great way to consolidate all your passwords without compromising security. Generally, a password manager is a program that stores all of your passwords for you. All of your passwords are kept secure with—you guessed it—a password.

The key advantage to using a password manager is that you only have to remember one password. That's not too bad. Then you can retain unique passwords for each of your various accounts without taxing your memory.

There are several pay programs that work this way. Before buying one, try Kee-Pass(*http://keepass.sourceforge.net/*), a simple, *free* password manager. It can help you organize your passwords and also enter them into log-in forms.

HOW DOES KEEPASS WORK?

After you download and install it, there are several easy steps to setting it up. The first time you open it, you have to create the file that will store your pass-words. Click the "New" button at the top left of the window which will prompt you for a "Master Key." Make it one that you can easily remember, but which someone else can't easily guess (your birth date, your spouse/child's/pet's name), because it's the password you'll use from now on to unlock all your other passwords.

KeePass includes categories for online functions such as e-mail, home banking and others. To put a password into KeePass, select a category and then click the "Add Entry" button. You'll be able to enter a title for the password, which will help you easily identify where the password is used.

Let's take Hotmail as an example—

an effective title for a Hotmail password could be simply "Hotmail." You could also enter the web address where the password is required. KeePass automatically fills the password box with a random password. Chances are that it's stronger than the password you already use for Hotmail, but to make it work, you have to log into your account and change it to match KeePass.

If you want to keep things simple, erase the pre-filled box and put in the password that you already use and click "OK." Do the same steps for all of your everyday passwords and take a load off your memory. You can drag and drop pass-words directly from KeePass. Click the password you need from KeePass and move it to the blank form on a Web page. The password will appear in the blank.

KeePass keeps your entire password file encrypted. The only way to open or read it is with your master password, so don't lose it!

In addition to Windows, "switch-hitters" can download versions of KeePass for Macintosh, PocketPC, Palm and Linux. You can also take KeePass with you on a thumb drive by copying two files onto your thumb drive. One is the KeePass program (KeePass.exe), and the other is the file containing your passwords (the default is called Database.kdb).

BACKING UP *OUTLOOK* CONTACTS

Outlook stores all data in a single file called a ".PST file". This file contains your contacts, e-mail, calendar items and tasks. It's easy to back up your entire Outlook .PST file—just locate it and copy it as you would any other file. Backing up individual folders within Outlook is also easy, so you can export your entire "Contacts" list. Simply highlight "Contacts" in your Outlook folders list. Then click "File," and "Import and Export" to open the "Import and Export Wizard." Select "Export to a file" and click "Next," to choose from a list of options (I recommend Microsoft Excel as the best one to choose in order to export all your contacts into a nicely ordered spreadsheet). After making your selection, click "Next." You'll be given the option again to select the folder you want to export. Highlight it, click "Next," and specify the name and location

where you would like to save your file (use the "Browse" button if needed), click "Next" and then click "Finish."

You can use the same procedure with other items in the Outlook folder list. This is handy if you only want to export certain parts of your Outlook data file. You can use the files with other programs such as a "Database." You can also use it to share information with other people. Say you want to share your contacts with friends or coworkers: just export them, and others can import your list into their Outlook program.

To import a file, click "File," and "Import and Export." Select "Import from another program or file," click "Next," and select the type of file from which you're importing. In this case, select "Microsoft Excel" and click "Next." Click "Browse" to locate the file you wish to import, and then select your import options. You may want to allow duplicates, or you may wish to replace duplicates with imported items. You can also specify that duplicates not be imported. Click "Next," select the destination folder, click "Next" again, and finally, click "Finish."

NOVICE CORNER

Starting Your Computer in "Safe Mode"

At some point in time you may need to start your computer in "safe mode." You should print these instructions before continuing as they will not be available after you shut your computer down in step two.

Click "Start," click "Shut Down," and then in the drop-down list click "Shut down." In the shut down window dialog box, click "Restart," and then click "OK." When you see the message "Please select the operating system to start" or "Windows" appears on the screen, press the "F8" key several times. Use your arrow keys to highlight the appropriate "safe mode" option, and then press "ENTER." If you have a dual-boot or multiple-boot system, choose the installation that you need to access using the arrow keys, and then press "ENTER?"

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.

Motherboard Newsletter Contributors..

Our local contributors help tremendously to pay for the functioning of our club. As club members please do what you can to support their businesses. Visit or call their businesses, be a patron if possible, and tell them you saw their business card in the club's newsletter.

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
jebed@charter.net

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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
Jan 18, 25, Feb 1, 8, 15

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

Saturday — 10 AM, April 21

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

Jane Quinn, 365-0825
qjquinn@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
April 11, 18, 25, May 2, 9
See map below for meeting place.
Judi Ball 275-4632
jebed@charter.net

Windows & More SIG

Wednesday — 11:30 AM
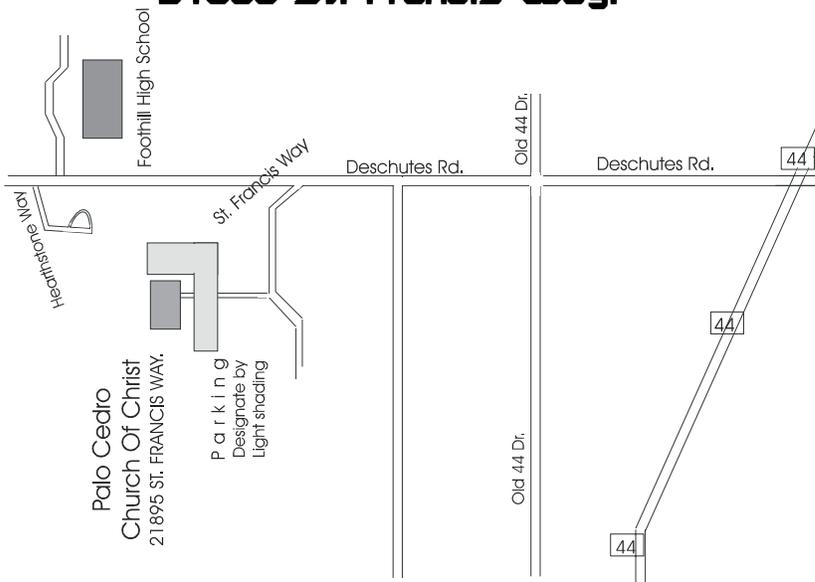**April 11, 18, 25, May 2, 9**

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IBM/PC Users Group of Redding
P.O. Box 494778
Redding, CA
96049-4778

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

Foothill High School
Old 44 Dr.
St. Francis Way
Deschutes Rd.
Deschutes Rd.
44
Heathstone Way
44
Palo Cedro Church Of Christ
21895 ST. FRANCIS WAY.
Parking
Designate by light shading
Old 44 Dr.
44

Parking On Street
Parking
Senior Center Building
Parking
City Park
Main St.
Hardenbrook
Median
Sentry Farmers Mkt.
Shasta Dam Blvd. Exit
Shasta Dam Blvd.
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Why Join A Computer Group?

1. **Benefit from a common interest in a personal (and costly) investment: Your business or personal computer.**
2. **Enjoy more of that investment by learning more about it.**
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 func-tions and all Special Interest Groups (SIGs).**
7. **Find out that no one needs to be alone and helpless with today's computer technology.**