MOTHERBOARD

A Publication of the Computer Users Group Of Redding, CA

Volume 2008, Number 01 http://cugr.apcug.org/ January 2009

YOUR C.U.G.R. PRESENTS

4th Tuesday, January 27, 2008

We will meet in the Computer Lab Room and be given an in-depth look at the Redding Library with Gabe Burke as our escort. He will give us a thorough tour, including areas not usually seen by folks. Then Fred Skill will tell more about the classes available to the community for free, which includes the free use of the computers in the Library's Computer Lab Room. This is good information we can all use for ourselves and our families and friends.

Door Prizes

Logictech Cordless Mini USB Mouse; 4-Port USB 2.0 Hub;
and **Kingston Data Traveler 1 Gig Jump Drive**

One free ticket to each member at the door!

Club Business and Program Presentation 6 PM, drinks available in Library Cafe.

Sign in at the Greeting Table and pick up your name tag *and please leave it in the Tag Box when the meeting is over. Also please stay and help to re-set the tables to the Library's original arrangement.*

General meetings are at the Redding Library, 100 Parkview Ave, off Cypress.

Official Website: **http://cugr.apcug.org/**

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

Future Presentation: To be announced.

However, we will be meeting in the usual conference room near the coffee shop.

CUGR Calendar

CUGR Board Meeting
1 PM Monday,February 2
at Jack-In-The-Box, Dana Drive

LINUX & MORE
10 AM, Saturday, February 7

MULTI-MEDIA
10 AM, Saturday, January 31

WINDOWS & MORE
11:30 AM, Wednesdays
January 21, 28, February 4,11

DTP SIG
2 PM, Wednesdays
January 21, 28, February 4,11

SEE BACK PAGE FOR MORE SIG INFO

In This Issue Of The Motherboard...

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
Belva Sullivent 2
CLUB PICS
December Meeting 3
COPYING INFO FROM YOUR SCREEN
Richard Kennon 4
ITS NOT JUST ENTERTAINMENT
Gene Komaromi 4
BITS AND PIECES
Rush Blodget 5
SURVIVING SWITCH TO DIGITAL TV
Andy Marken 5
MULTI-MEDIA DATE & TIME
Jane Quinn 6
LINUX & MORE SIG DATE & TIME
Colly Lord 6
MORE CHRISTMAS PARTY PHOTOS
CUG 7
PERFORMING BETTER SEARCHES
Sharon Housely 8
WHY SECURITY IS NECESSARY
CUGR OFFER 9
REVIEW MAGICJACK
Constance Brown 10

Club Information

Club Website: **http://cugr.apcug.org/**

Members volunteering to help members!

Club Mentors

New Users	**Bob Rice** 357-2143, Anytime ricerl@snowcrest.net	**MS Windows 98, ME, XP**	**Bill Ball** bcard9@charter.net
MS Windows Photo Delux	**Darold Wright** 222-1781 daroldlwright@yahoo.com	**Hardware, Software**	275-4632
New Users PaintShop Pro	**Dorothy Kirk** 246-9661, Anytime oscartaffy@yahoo.com	**DTP; Graphic Prgs Photo Editing**	**Judi Ball** 275-4632 jebed@charter.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 daroldlwright@yahoo.com	**Past President** 222-1781	**Bill Ball** bcard9@charter.net	**Director, SIG Leader** 275-4632
Mario Quinn gaucho7427@msn.com	**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 qjquinn7427@gmail.com	**Dir, Vendor Contact, SIG Leader** 365-0825	**Jane Quinn & Colly Lord** qjquinn7427@gmail.com johnclord@charter.net	**Website**

Motherboard Newsletter Staff

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

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.

President's Message

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

What a wonderful Christmas party we had in December! We all look forward to this every year, and find it a delicious way to wind up the past year, and get ready for a brand new computing experience in the year to come. Everyone ended up *stuffed*, from all the goodies brought by the various members. And, as always, we all benefited from the neat gifts obtained from the drawing. Did you know that Judi spends **months** gathering up the bounty of computer-related goodies from which we get to choose? All of them worth much more than the $5 that we pay for the mysterious envelopes, some of which contain surprise bonus gifts!

Now we can look forward to an exciting 2009, with so much to learn about computing. But we will be learning more than that! At the next general meeting, on January 27, we will get to meet Gabe Burke, who is the official Public Services Librarian, for Shasta County and the Redding Library. As we gather in the Computer Lab, in the North-East Corner of the second floor, Gabe will talk to us about our wonderful state-of-the-art Library, with its many computers (free for the use of members of our community). Then Gabe will give us a tour of the library, including places that most of us never see!

In addition, Fred Skill, a long-time CUGR member, as well as being a Library instructor, will be in attendance, to tell us about the free classes that are held in that same Computer Lab, covering many facets of computing that we might encounter. Many are aimed specifically at beginners, so no one need fear that they are unprepared! (One little tip to those who do take a class: bring your own USB jump/thumb/flash drive so that you can save any work you have done on a library computer, because the computer hard drives are locked to personal access for library security.)

Hope you can make this meeting, it sounds like one we should all be in on.

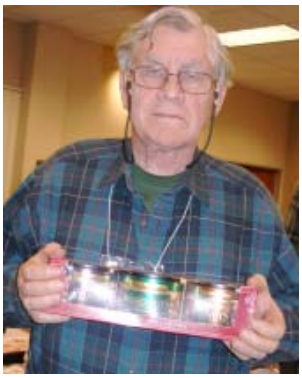
I sure am looking forward to seeing you there!

Belva

2008 CUGR Christmas Party

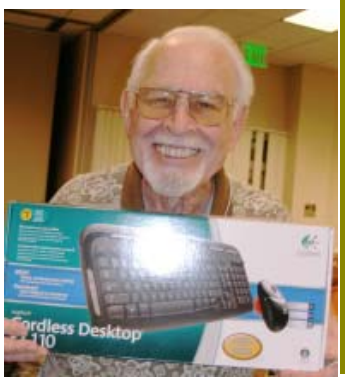
Some Of The Gifts Spread Out On The Table To Choose From

Santa was there!



Food, Gifts, and Fun. The time together can't be beat!

Folks brought wonderful treats to share, and share we did! Jane & Mario Quinn arranged for CUG to hire the library to furnish coffee, which was a great relief to those who have hauled the old coffee pots around in the past.



Copying Information From Your Screen

by Richard Kennon Member
Amador Computer UG, Jackson, CA
http://www.acug.net/
drtrdguy@volcano.net

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author.

Dick Carricato, member of the Tri County Computer User Group in Florida wrote a good article about copying pictures from your computer screen. Sometimes there are other things you may want to copy from your screen that may not lend themselves to the PrtScr method. This is especially true of lists in drop down boxes that require a scroll bar down the right side. PrtScr will only show the portion of the list that shows. For instance, I write a (almost) monthly newsletter on the web and usually include a bunch of pictures. I like to have a hard copy of the picture thumbnails at hand to remind me of things to say. This is always a scrolling window. Often I want a hardcopy of a menu, too.

I have found FastStone Capture to be a perfect answer to my needs. You can try it free by going to http://www.faststone.org/. Then, if you like it, as I do, you can purchase a lifetime license for $19.95.

You can capture and annotate anything on the screen including windows, objects, menus, full screen, rectangular/freehand regions and scrolling windows/web pages. Editing tools include annotating, resizing, cropping, sharpening, watermarking, edge effects and many more. Of course, you can transfer the image to any editor of choice. You can either print the copy or save it in one of eight different formats. I choose JPEG. Further, you can choose the resolution of the saved image. I don't know if it actually improves the resolution or just resizes to more pixels.

Of course, it features a bunch of hot key combinations but, with my memory, this is not useful. Instead I rely on the small box of choices at the bottom right of my screen. I find it extremely useful and use it almost every day.

It's Not Just Entertainment Any More

by Gene Komaromi
Computer Club of Green Valley, AZ,
http://gvcc.apcug.org/,
genek6@gmail.com

In the past, we've commonly thought of computer games, especially those played on game machine platforms, as pure entertainment. Times have changed and many games have become educational as well as physical training devices.

Learning has become fun for kids and adults. Here's some information that will keep you ahead of the digital gaming curve.

DS: Handheld Games for Senior Citizens: Nintendo has a hot selling hand held video game machine called the "DS" for "Double Screen." The device opens with two visible screens, one is a display screen and the other is a "Touch Screen" which serves as the controller interface. The DS has a series of games designed with "older" users in mind. They are Brain Age, Big Brain Academy and Flash Focus.

All three have been recommended by AARP, and Brain Age has been shown to improve mental performance in independent tests. Brain Age and Big Brain Academy have a series of games, practice exercises and tests that are designed to improve and evaluate cognitive skills, and best of all "they're fun." They chart and graph improvement and will keep records for several individuals.

Have you ever had a problem with that vision test on your driver's license exam? Then Flash Focus was made for you. It too has games and exercises, but instead of improving your brain they improve your eyes.

Wii Want to Play: The hottest new gaming console is the Wii, another product from Nintendo that has games designed for the older kids, real older kids. The game controller is a little motion sensitive device that straps on the user's wrist. Participants interact with the game by moving their arms.

In the Detroit area, aerobic classes and movies have been replaced by Wii in many senior citizen centers. "Bowling" seems to be one of the most popular games. I've played it, and yes, it's exactly like the real thing. The motion of your arm, as you approach a virtual bowling alley, allows you to curve the ball and add some spin. Wii bowling leagues are springing up all over the country. Nintendo is about to release an exercise program for the Wii that uses a floor pad as a controller.

Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

Welcome To Renewals

Roland Henry
Cozens/Whitlock
Dale Inman
Bill & Judi Ball
Marge Stewart
Ron Nilson
Eugenia Goodman
Alice Pringle
Shirley Parker
James Hughes
Richard Marx
Bernice Bennett
Phil Graham
Pat Carlile
Dick Franks
Walter Matthews
Dean Crumpacker

CUGR MEMBER WEBSITES

KITTYSTONE PERSIANS
Lynn Johanson
kittystone.com

MEXICAN-TOURS
www.mexican-tours.com
Lyle VanNorman
lyle@mexican-tours.com

Publicize Your WebSite Here for FREE!
(Members Only Please)

Bits And Pieces

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

Identity Theft Credit Card Scam Continued

Last month I told of receiving thirteen packages of green tea, diet pills, and cosmetics plus another 18 items charged to my credit card of which three were subscriptions or other purchases that I presumably might have made from uninvolved vendors, i.e. a subscription to the AARP Magazine and to Stamps .com. I received "Welcome New Member" letters from them. I had only two months ago renewed my subscription to AARP and was easily able to get this item credited back. They said, however, had I not recently renewed that they would have no record of how the order had come in. Stamps.com stated that the order had come in by a "G-mail" with my name, address, and credit card number.

At the end of December I received the statement showing a total of 31 charges of which four were payment for credit reports. One on the first day and one after thirteen days at the end of the charging spree and two more in the time between. I attempted to get the "free" credit reports promised to all identity theft victims but found obstacles. Equifax wanted the applicant to sign up for a monthly reporting service, but offered a free report for a "one dollar" service charge to be paid for by credit card. They also asked for a great deal more information than I was willing to input. Transunion and Experian were somewhat the same. Equifax offered a "free" report by mail after providing one's name and address. I opted for the latter and received a form asking for a photocopy of my driver's license, the deed to my home, or my birth certificate. At this point I realized that possibly what I thought was the web site for the three credit card companies might have been a "phishing" page and/or link from the real Equifax page that led to the false "phisher." I was finally able to get a credit report from Experian on January 20 which did not report any unusual charges to that date.

On accessing the home pages of the credit reporting services that the scammers used to access my credit report I found that it was only necessary to input my Social Security number, date of birth and mother's maiden name — all information that they could possibly obtain from Ancestry.com or from the genealogy files on my own hard drive which was found to harbor a Trojan.

The discovery that they accessed my credit standing before proceeding and at three additional times at intervals of several days now makes me wonder if they made some large purchases, i.e. an automobile, boat, etc. and used the packages and other trivia as a diversion.

Of possible significance in this latter regard is the fact that during this period I have had calls from both a loan company and an attorney's firm volunteering to help with my presumed heavy debt burden.

To be continued to conclusion. The police have rhe data.

Surviving The Switch To Digital TV

by Andy Marken, Marken Communications, www.markencom.com, andy@markencom.com

At the stroke of midnight on Feb. 17, 2009, the analog transmissions that have beamed free television over the air in the United States for over half a century will disappear for good. They will be replaced by digital signals, many of which are already broadcasting, in what will be the most significant change to television since the introduction of color.

The "digital switchover" brings with it higher image quality, better sound and a level of versatility and flexibility previously unattainable through free television.

It also brings with it a number of significant headaches, as confusion over exactly who will be affected is inspiring panic in viewers fearful of being left behind in a haze of snow and static as the rest of the country moves into the future. Many of those who will be affected know that the deadline is fast approaching, but are unsure of how to prepare for it. Thankfully, a solution is simple, easily attainable and won't cost you a dime.

There are two major reasons for the switch from analog TV broadcasts to digital TV. First, digital signals offer superior image quality and allow for the transmission of high-definition signals over the air. This means that a properly equipped HDTV can receive local high-definition broadcasts that will look about as good as what you'd get from cable or satellite television.

Second, switching from analog to digital frees up real estate on the broadcast spectrum for other uses, as digital signals are more efficient and take up less bandwidth. Telecommunications companies like Verizon and AT&T have spent nearly $20 billion to secure the rights to the frequencies that were previously occupied by channels 52 through 69, in the hopes of using that airspace to improve their wireless communication networks.

What the digital switchover is actually doing is changing the language that TV broadcasters use to communicate with your television. Since 1941, televisions in the U.S. have utilized a set of broadcast standards laid out by the National Television System Committee. Big broadcast towers sent out information over the air using these NTSC standards and were picked up by the television antenna in your living room. Inside your TV, an NTSC tuner interpreted the information and properly displayed it on screen.

The digital switchover is introducing a new language, a new set of broadcast standards, this one designed by the Advanced Television Systems Committee. On Feb. 17, those broadcast towers are going to stop speaking NTSC permanently and start speaking ATSC. But unfortunately, your old television set doesn't know how to translate ATSC into moving pictures and sound. Just about all televisions manufactured and sold after Mar. 1, 2007 feature ATSC tuners, but if you purchased a television

Continued on Page 6

Multi-Media SIG UpDate

by SIG Leader Jane Quinn, qjquinn7427@gmail.com

Weekly S.I.G. Group meetings are every Thursday at the Senior Center in Anderson from 1- 3 pm. Only members may use the club's laptop to burn their DVD movie projects.

Our next Multi-Media monthly SIG is on January 31, at my home from 10 am to noon. For directions contact me at qjquinn7427@gmail.com or phone 365-0825.

Linux & More SIG UpDate

by SIG Leader Colly Lord, johnclord@charter.net

I am going to do a little demonstration of digital TV in February. **February 7th - Fireside Reading Room; March 7th - Fireside Reading Room; April 4th - Computer Center. Come & check us out!**

DIGITAL TV

Continued from Page 5

any earlier than that, chances are your TV won't be able to pick up over-the-air broadcasts once the switchover occurs.

The solution: A digital converter box, essentially an external ATSC tuner that sits on top of your existing television and is linked between your antenna and your TV. The ATSC signals are grabbed by the same antenna you've always used, then passed to the digital converter box that translates the ATSC signals into something your NTSC television can understand. They are easy to hook up and available at a wide variety of stores, including big box stores like Best Buy, Wal-Mart and Target, as well as online retailers.

Digital converter boxes cost between $40 and $70 on average, but since the digital switchover is being forced upon consumers, Congress has stepped up and created the "TV Converter Box Coupon Program." Under this initiative, each American household is entitled to two $40 gift cards that can only be used to purchase a digital converter box. Individuals can apply at the official Web site for the DTV switch. You can apply for coupons until Mar. 31, 2009; they expire 90 days after they are issued. You might want to apply for them sooner rather than later because the government has allocated a finite amount of funding.

TV viewers who pay for cable or satellite service need not worry. The digital switchover only applies to over-the-air broadcasts, so consumers who get their television directly from Comcast or DirecTV will not be affected at all, and service will continue uninterrupted and unchanged as the DTV deadline comes and goes.

There is, however, a subtler, unrelated analog-to-digital switchover taking place among cable companies, one that could affect subscribers. It has usually been possible to view a small number of basic cable channels by plugging the coaxial cable directly into a television set, bypassing a cable box entirely.

This was a quick and easy way to bring cable TV to many rooms in a home without renting multiple cable boxes. Unfortunately, this may not be possible in the near future. Cable companies like Comcast and Time Warner are slowly phasing out their analog cable services in favor of digital. By switching over, they free up more space on their cable networks that can be allocated to new high-definition channels and interactive services like "On Demand." The down-side is that when all cable channels are converted to digital, renting a cable box will be required to see any channels at all.

Another point of confusion that retailers and manufacturers have been reluctant to clear up: consumers need not purchase an HDTV to weather the digital TV switchover.

In addition to the converter boxes, new standard-definition CRT televisions are still available, and they are required by law to include the necessary ATSC tuners. While an HDTV will allow viewers to take advantage of digital TV's high-definition potential, it's important to know that there is a lower-cost option available as well.

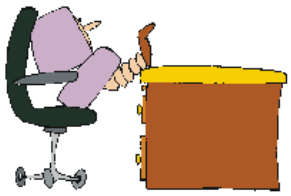
With the emergence of free, digital, over-the-air television that includes HD transmissions, it will be interesting to see if Americans, the majority of whom now pay for their television service via cable or satellite, might see the benefit of switching back to the old rabbit ears. While the selection of over-the-air broadcasts will never be as comprehensive as pay services, that same glut of content is often cited as an annoyance — lots of channels that subscribers will never watch.

Of course, all this will depend on how smoothly the digital switchover goes, and whether or not people are actually able to see the improvements on their screen. With just a few short months to go, having the right knowledge to make it through is absolutely crucial.

In Pictures: 10 Tips For Switching To Digital TV — http://tinyurl.com/5tj8wq

See Also: Ask This Before You Buy An HDTV — http://tinyurl.com/57jfbu

Put Your Computer To Work Using The Evaluations/ Review Program!



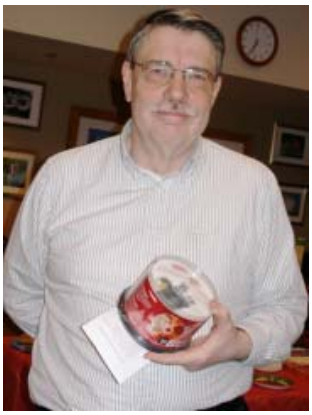
Don't forget to check out the Evaluations Program offered by this organization! If there is an application you would like to have, put your request in to Jane Quinn and she will contact the company/ vendor to see if the product is available for review. If it is, she will order it for you.

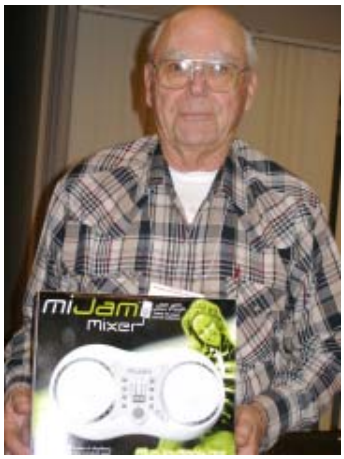
This could be a new program to you, or it could be the newest version of a program you already know.

When it comes in, Jane will let you know, and you will have at least three months to install the program, learn to use its most prominent features, then write a review that will be published in this newsletter and sent to the company to complete their requirements.

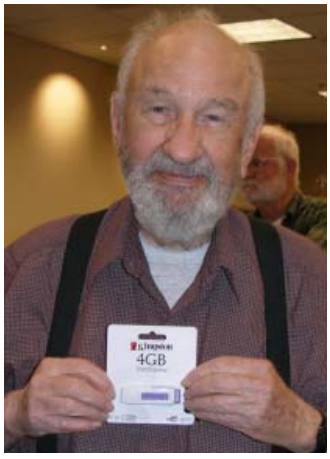
Evaluations Person, Jane Quinn
qjquinn@charter.net

More Christmas Party Photos





USB Jump drive or Harmonica?



Performing Better Searches

by Sharon Housley, VP, NotePage managing Marketing for FeedForAll, www.feedforall.com, Sharon@notepage.com

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

Performing and perfecting search engine results can save web surfers lots of time and energy. Understanding the nuances of searching allows researchers to immediately drill down and locate the information they are seeking, without having to wade through a myriad of irrelevant search results in the process. The increasing complexity of search engines has made understanding search engines a necessity for those who spend any amount of time online. The following search tips are standards that will work in most of the major search engines.

How To Find What You Are Looking For?

As the popularity of the Internet grows, more and more results are returned for even the most obscure search phrases. In order to save time, web surfers need to increase their search relevancy. It is advisable to use multiple search terms to produce better search results. Searchers should use specific words and phrases to find what they're are looking for, while filtering out irrelevant and unwanted results.

In searching, more usually means less. Using more keywords in a search will help qualify the search and make it more specific to what you are looking for. It is all about striking a balance; more search terms will reduce the number of search results, but those results will be more accurate. Remember that you can always refine the search further if there are too many results returned in the initial search.

Capitalization Is Irrelevant

The major search engines ignore capitalization. Upper and lower case search phrases will deliver the same results.

Order Matters

Keep in mind that the order in which the terms are entered into the search box will affect the search results. The most important terms should appear first in the list of search words.

Word Stemming

Major search engines will provide results that use word stemming. Word stemming includes variants of the terms that were searched for. For example, searching on the term fish in a major search engine will generate organic search results that also contain the terms fishing, fishes, and fisher.

Exact

Using quotations around a search phrase will generate search results that contain only that specific search phrase, exactly as it was entered. For example, searching on the exact phrase "rocking horse" in a major search engine will only generate search results that contain the phrase rocking horse. The results will not include any results that contain "horse rocking" — even though both terms appear, they do not appear in the proper order for an exact match.

Do Not Include

Adding a (-) negative/minus sign before a search term will filter the results so that they contain the first term but not the negated word. For example, entering the search phrase horses -rocking into a major search engine will return search results about horses but not about rocking horses.

Must Include

If you want search results that only include a specific word, just type a (+) plus sign in front of a search term. The results produced will always contain that term. For example, conducting a search horse + carousel will result in all search results that contain carousel, and may include horse as well.

Similar Words

Adding a (~) tilde character in front of a search word will generate search results that not only include the specified search term, but will also include all words considered to be related to the original search term. For example, using the search term ~soda will result in organic search engine results that not only include soda, but also include pepsi, pop, cola, coke, bottle, and soft drink.

Either Or

Adding an OR parameter between two search terms will result in search listings that include either the first or the second word in the search results. For example, searching on the terms soda OR bottle will generate search results that may contain both terms soda bottle or it will produce results that contain either soda or bottle but not both in the same search listings.

Advanced Searches And Segmented Searches

Many search engines allow you to specify the type of content you wish to search in. For example, you can often search just news articles, just blogs, or just images. If you are looking for a specific type of media, segmenting your search can be helpful. Searches can be conducted to locate webpages that contain a specific language, or a specific file type (ie. pdf, rss, etc). Simply use the search engine's advanced search option and select the content, language, file type, etc to filter your search results.

Search Meta Words

Meta keyword searches give search engines special instructions. When the meta search words are used, a specific type of search is conducted. Here are some of the most common meta search terms...

define: When define: is used at the beginning of a search word or phrase, the search engine results will be a definition of the word or phrase.

site: When site: is entered in the search box, followed by a domain, the search engine locates all documents within a specific domain and all of its subdomains. This is an easy way to get a rough idea of the number of pages indexed on a domain.

link: When link: is used and followed by a URL, the search results will include all the web pages that are indexed by the search engine which contain links to the specified URL.

inurl: When inurl: is used, followed by a keyword or phrase, the search results will include links to web pages that contain the specific keyword or phrase in the urls themselves.

intitle: When intitle: is searched on in conjunction with a keyword or phrase, the search engine locates search results that contain the specified keyword or phrase in the web page title.

Web surfers can save large amounts of time and energy by optimizing their search techniques with these helpful tips.

Sharon Housley manages marketing for FeedForAll http://www.feedforall.com

Continued on Page 9

Why Security Precautions Are Necessary

by Bob de Violini. a member of the Channel Islands PCUG, CA, www.cipcug.org, rjddev@gmail.com

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

First off for the holidays, there's a story that illustrates just why you should always enable encryption on your wireless router (for those who use one) AND why you should be leery of any public computer for Web sites you need a password to access. A college student in Kentucky has been charged with identity theft, among other crimes, for planting malware on computers in his school's library. The malware was a keystroke logger that captured user-names and passwords for any pages fellow students logged into. He then used this information to access their e-mail accounts and send out e-mails attempting to extort these same fellow students. He also used an unsecured wireless router to access these accounts, making it look as if someone else were actually sending the e-mails. The attempted extortion took the form of a threat to divulge personal information the thief had stolen from the compromised e-mail accounts. That leads me to our next item, WPA encryption.

As of the beginning of November, a pair of computer security researchers in Europe disclosed a technique they'd developed to partially hack WPA encryption used by a great number of wireless routers today. Before anyone thinks the sky is falling, rest assured it isn't. Their hack involves only the traffic being sent from the router to a computer and only a small number of data packets can be cracked before the router resets its encryption. However, it is enough to be able to send just enough rogue data to a computer to compromise it with any number of known vulnerabilities. Specifically, it involves the TKIP protocol that WPA and WPA2 are allowed to use. The specifics of just how this trick is accomplished have been made available to hackers in many areas of the Internet, so it's just a matter of time before it begins spreading. TKIP and AES encryption are selectable by the user in many wireless router configurations, and some have WPA with TKIP selected by default. I strongly recommend you check your wireless router's encryption configuration, and if it's set to use WPA with TKIP, you switch to WPA2 with AES if at all possible. This is especially important if you use a wireless router to run a network for a business. I have my Linksys wireless router set to use WPA2 with AES encryption. AES is significantly harder to crack than the older TKIP protocol. One final note on this, however, for AES encryption to work, both the router and the network adapter in the computer must be able to use it. Some older hardware may not support AES encryption, so an upgrade may be needed. If you'd like some more information, please drop me a line at the e-mail address at the top of this article, and I'll gladly send you a link or two.

Scare of the Month Department

Even though Halloween has already passed, we have the Scare of the Month Department chiming in with some news. There is a new phishing e-mail making the rounds disguised as a warning from the U.S. Federal Reserve. The message bears the usual dire warning of a scam and contains links for readers to follow to get more information. However, there are a few clues that give the message away as a hoax, the biggest one being poor grammar. The links in the e-mail lead unsuspecting readers to a fake site that will redirect them to a search page for porn, which will download a PDF file with malware to their computer. The malware comes in various forms, including one that attempts to make your computer a member of a botnet. A brief notice can be had here, courtesy of USCERT: http://tinyurl.com/66lzv9. The link does go to the US-CERT site; I just used TinyURL to shorten the URL's length.

Patches Galore Department

As I mentioned above, there have been some exploits on the loose for a bit for Adobe Acrobat, and the full program and the reader have been updated as a result. The latest versions are 8.1.3 and 9.0. Adobe has also updated its Flash player, standard fare in most browser installations, to version 10.0.12.36 to patch publicly reported vulnerabilities last month as well. Not to be outdone, Mozilla has also issued a patch for its Firefox browser and Thunderbird e-mail client. These patches address several bugs that have been brought to light in the past month to month and a half. The latest iterations of Firefox are 2.0.0.18 and 3.0.0.4. The latest version of Thunderbird is 2.0.0.18. I have read reports of some problems with version 3.0.0.4 and 2.0.0.18 of Firefox, with most of the reports being about version 3.0.0.4. The solution for those having problems after upgrading to 3.0.0.4 has been to go back to 3.0.0.3. I have updated my version to 2.0.0.18 and have had no problems. Some patches take longer than others to develop and test, however. One of the patches issued by Microsoft on November's Patch Tuesday took them seven years to develop and test. The bug it patched was first reported by a security researcher in March 2001. Microsoft claims that it tried patching it when it was first reported but wound up killing off most networking applications with the patches when they underwent testing. However, they didn't give up and finally found a way to patch the vulnerability earlier this year.

While we're speaking of Microsoft, it has announced plans to abandon its One Care concept of computer protection service and develop free anti malware applications for release in 2009. The new concept is code named "Morro." As usual, folks are coming down on both sides of pro and con when it comes to this development. Microsoft hasn't given a firm release date for the new software, but has said that One Care will come to an end on June 30. Well, that's all for now. Here's wishing everyone a joyous Holiday season and a Happy New Year! Always practice safe computing by keeping your applications and your anti-malware applications fully up to date. Make sure to run your anti-malware scanner(s) once a week, even if they don't flag anything in between scans.

PERFORMING BETTER SEARCHES

Continued from Page 8

software for creating, editing, publishing RSS feeds and podcasts. In addition Sharon manages marketing for RecordForAll http://www.recordforall.com audio recording and editing software.

Review - magicJack

by Constance Brown, President, Canton Alliance Massillon Users Group, OH, www.camug.org, constance@mystepco.com

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

Do any of you recall the poem by Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benet stating that no place on earth is more than 60 hours away? The authors were awed by the idea that distance was no longer measured in months but in hours. What would they think now that people have circled the world in spaceships and repaired orbiting space stations? On the other hand, my friends who boarded the plane last month found that it can take 60 hours and more to arrive at a destination in our own hemisphere — if it happens to be Bolivia!

What does travel have to do with computers? Most trips begin with a call to a travel agent or visiting a travel web site to check prices and availability of flights. Then a flight is booked and paid online either by the purchaser or an agent. An e-ticket is sent to the traveler who then checks in via a computer terminal at the airport. Computerized controls are used to guide the plane.

Computers, computers everywhere. Great when they work. Annoying when they don't! They are here to stay and will be performing more and more of our communications. Wouldn't it be wonderful if you could travel internationally and communicate with folk back home without paying those ridiculous inter-national calling fees! How about staying in touch with friends who do not live in the USA? Guess what! You CAN!!

Several of us in CAMUG have phone service using VOIP (voice over Internet Protocol). Last week I ordered something immediately after hearing about it. I have been eagerly awaiting the opportunity to test it and now I can hardly wait to share it. Perhaps some of you have seen the ads for the magicJack. What is it? Well, let me quote from PC Magazine online: "So simple it's almost perfect, the magicJack is the best home voice-over-IP gadget I've seen to date. Excellent call quality, a workable set of calling features, and an amazing price make this little box the VoIP wonder to beat."

Yes, in two minutes a little USB device about 2 inches by 1 inch by 5/8 inches that I plugged into the powered hub that I run through my USB port was giving me the capability of placing my calls via the Internet. I called Canada and Colorado, spending about 1/12 hours on the phone.

It worked well except when I looked up information on the internet at the same time.

I talked to customer service and they said I can connect to the powered hub that runs directly to my router. I will have to restart the modem, most likely. That means that I don't have to have the computer turned on to make calls, just like my current VoIP service. This is great.

What do I like about the magicJack?

- The price. The gadget is $40, and that includes one year of service! The renewal service price is $20! Not $200. Just $20. In fact, we paid $60 for five years!
- The price. Calls are free to US & Canada and reasonable to other parts of the world. Bolivia ranges from 12-14 cents. Guatemala was a little less. I didn't check farther.
- The price. Register your magicJack with a US phone number and travel anywhere in the world. Place calls back to the US or Canada and the call is free! Purchase a magicJack and register it with a number in the USA, send it to your friends elsewhere in the world, and they can call to any place in the US or Canada for free — almost. Remember, you receive one year of service with the device.
- Convenience. You can use the magic-Jack with any computer, not just the one you registered.
- Convenience. The magicJack is so small that it will travel extremely easily.
- Convenience. You can use the magic-Jack to place calls over Wi-Fi, cable, or DSL. Even light high speed is fine as it requires only 80 kbps of bandwidth.
- Services. You get all of them: voice-mail delivered to you via email and also available by calling your number and entering your pass code, conference calling, 3-way calling, caller ID, do not disturb – have I forgotten anything?
- Quality. The quality compares with other VoIP services. The calls pass over a private network.
- Customer Service. Customer service was good, but busy. The online chat took a little time as the service person moved between customers. But it was good. He didn't have time to tell me about the Outlook add-on, so I am still waiting to discover what that is. Customer service apparently is improving, based on evaluations I read.

The US News and World Report had an interesting article online dated September 27 about the magicJack. Here is a part of it.

"The colorful and wealthy Borislow, who also raises, races, and wagers on race-horses, has launched magic-Jack fast out of the gate. The startup has sold more than 400,000 devices just six months after its official unveiling. It's selling about 7,000 a day, the company says, adding twice as many net new accounts over the period as Vonage, an Internet phoning pioneer. MagicJack's appeal is not only the price, which falls to just $20 for a second year of calls, but sound quality that's consistently good. And it's flat simple to install and use."

Who is the inventor behind the magic-Jack? Dan Borislow. Here is informa-tion about him taken directly from the magic-Jack web site.

- Dan Borislow is the founder of YMAX Communications Corporation, a mod-ern phone company with the largest competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC) network in the U.S, and inventor of the magicJack™.
- Borislow has been in the telecom-munications industry for over twenty years and is recognized in the industry for pioneering the development of break-through technologies. He previously held the position of CEO and founder of publicly-held Tel-Save, Inc. At Tel-Save, Borislow revolutionized low-cost long-distance for more than four million America Online (AOL) customers. While with Tel-Save, he saved custo-mers over 40% on their phone bills and also received the prestigious J.D. Power and Associates Award for Customer Satis-faction. After a brief attempt at retirement, Borislow returned to the telecom industry and invented the magicJack. By elimin-ating the expense of local and long distance phone charges — and saving the average customer around $1000 a year — magicJack is positioned to be the fastest growing telecom company in the world; Borislow likes to call it .Telecom Revolution Part II.
- Borislow received his Bachelor of Arts degree and honorary doctorate degrees from Widener University. He is an avid soccer player, dedicated deep sea fisherman, enjoys watching sports and has a Thoroughbred Horse Breeding Business.

Crown Camera

Imaging Experts

Digital Cameras
Photo & Printer Supplies

M-F 8:30 - 5:30
Sat. 9 - 5

www.crowncamerashop.com

530-243-8333 or 800-655-4256
FAX: 530-243-4978

1365 Market Street
Redding, CA 96001

"We Toss'em, They're Awesome"®
PIZZA FACTORY®

Greg Rogers & Gale Vaughn, Owners

530-275-4455

4432 Shasta Dam Blvd. • Shasta Lake, CA 96019

SnowCrest Inc.
"Northern California's Finest and First Internet Provider"

UNLIMITED INTERNET ACCESS
Starting at $15/month!
DSL & Wireless Access, Web Design
& Hosting Services
www.snowcrest.net
(530) 245-4698 / (530) 926-6888

BLACK OAK RESTAURANT

4161 Front Street
Shasta Lake City
(530) 275-4448

Breakfast & Lunch Daily
Opened Every Friday Until 9 PM
Different specials every week!

ADVANCED INKJET SOLUTIONS
providing all your cartridge needs

Stop throwing away your inkjet cartridges!
Let us refill them and save up to 60%
We also offer services for toner cartridges

2521 Hilltop Drive (Across from Big 5) Redding, CA 96002
Phone 530-222-INKS (4657)

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

IBMPC Users Group Of Redding
Membership Application

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: ___

Home Phone: _____ Business Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____ ____

Date: _____

$25.00
DUES PER YEAR

- ☐ New
- ☐ Renewal
- ☐ Cash
- ☐ Check

MAIL TO: IBM/PC Users Group of Redding,
P.O. Box 494778, Redding, CA 96049
(For general information call any Officer or Director listed on Page 2)

Not A Renewal Reminder

Multi-Media SIG

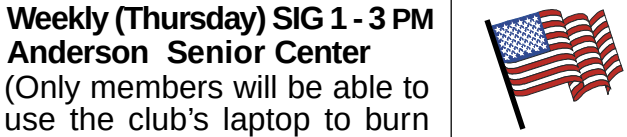
Includes Digital Cameras, Burning Music CDs, and DVD Movie Making

Weekly (Thursday) SIG 1 - 3 PM
Anderson Senior Center
(Only members will be able to use the club's laptop to burn their DVD movies.)

Saturday — 10 AM, January 31
At Jane Quinn's Home, contact following for information:

Jane Quinn, 365-0825
qjquinn@charter.net

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



Linux & More SIG

Linux, the Other Operating System

Saturday — 10 AM, February 7
Redding Library, Computer Lab, upstairs

Colly Lord, 530-224-1633
johnclord@charter.net
Please include "**SIG**" in the subject line.

Meetings are at
The Redding Library

1100 Parkview Ave.,

off Cypress to the west of City Hall.

We will be in the Community Room, which is to the left of the main library door.

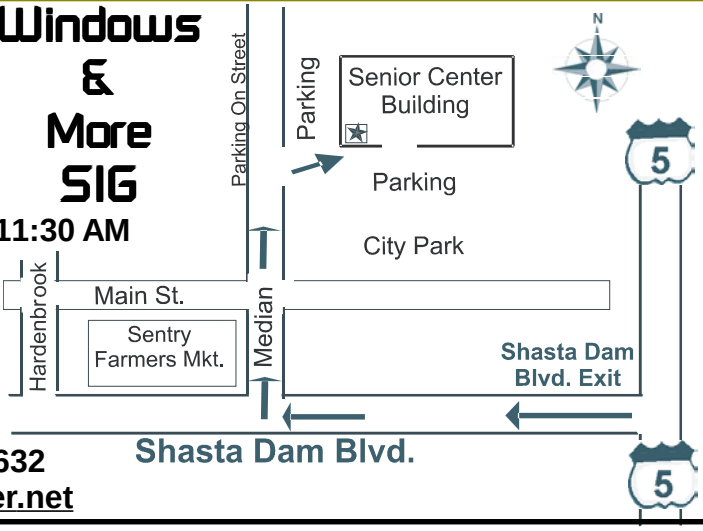
A variety of drinks is available at the Cafe just outside the meeting room on the left.

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.**

Windows & More SIG

Wednesday — 11:30 AM
January 21, 28
February 4, 11



Bill Ball, 275-4632
bcard9@charter.net

DTP and Graphics Art SIG

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

Basic knowledge of *copy* and *paste* is a must.

Wednesday — 2 PM
January 21, 28; February 4, 11

See map to left for meeting site.

Judi Ball 275-4632
jebed@charter.net