MOTHERBOARD

A Publication of the Computer Users Group Of Redding, CA

YOUR C.U.G.R. PRESENTS

4th Tuesday, February 28, 2012
Colly Lord Will Discuss Wireless Networking.

The discussion will cover the differences between a dial-up modem, a DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) modem, a Cable Modem, and a Router. He will also cover wireless B, G, and N, and their differences, methods of **securing** your home LAN, and various issues and problems people encounter. If you have questions specifically related to home networking and security that you wish to have covered during this talk, please email Colly (johnclord@hotmail.com) before February 21st so that he will have time to research your question.

Door Prizes

1. Cross-Cut Shredder

2. 8 Gig HP Jump Drive

3. Microsoft Wireless Optical Mouse

Lucky Ticket!

One free ticket to each member at the door!

6 PM Club Business & Presentation

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 reset the tables to the Library's original arrangement.

Future Presentation For March 27
Frank Tona will show us how to prepare for photo contests at Crown Camera and beyond.

CUGR Calendar

CUGR Board Meeting
1 PM Monday, Mar 5, 2012
at Redding Library in the
Foundation Reading Room

MULTI-MEDIA
10 AM, Saturday, Feb. 25
Jane Quinn SIG Leader
Digital Devices, usage of free software for Movie Creation, Photo Projects, Music Projects, and Social Networking, and more.
See back page
for more SIG information

General Meeting Agenda

1. Club business from the Board about time changes
2. Response and interest from the floor
3. Any other business a member may want to discuss
4. Evening's presentation

In This Issue

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Electronic Recycling For Charitable Situations:
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(no microwaves or large appliances)

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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.

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

Our 2011 CUGR President Mike Doyle had an accident about six weeks ago and has been hospitalized with a punctured lung and head injury since. He is in ICU as this is being written. We know little else, but will keep you posted.

And of course, we are all so wishing Mike a full recovery soon.

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But this unfortunate situation with Mike brings to mind the circumstances surrounding any member who lives alone, or perhaps has not told those closest to them to contact someone in our organization should something happen to them. We in the club become fairly close, but not so much that we always know each others relatives and friends away from the club. In Mike's situation, Jane and I have been asking around and calling about Mike since before Christmas. It wasn't until this week that Jane finally reached Mike's brother and discovered what had happened to him. So please, tell someone in your family or a friend to contact one of our club members should something like this happens to you.

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From The Board

We are going to try something new this year in April and May.

Mario Quinn has reserved the Library's meeting room for April 24 and May 22 at 3pm to 5pm on a trial bases to accommodate members who have night driving discomfort, as this will keep the meetings in the daylight hours particularly during winter and hopefully easier for all members to attend.

Be sure to let anyone on the Board know how this suits you and if it should be permanent.

Also, members in need of a ride to any general meeting, please call a board member and we will see that you have a ride to and from the monthly meetings.

Another subject we discussed at the last board meeting had to do with the Kindle raffle we held at Christmas. The raffle was received well and it more than paid for the Kindle. So we are going to
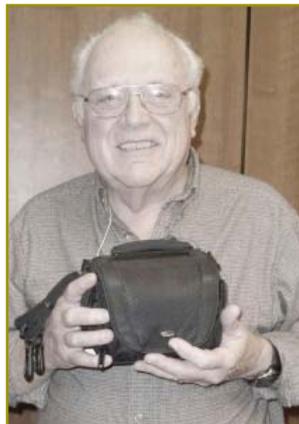
January Meeting

Congratulations To Our Winners!

Chuck Wall won a Media Combo Keyboard & Mouse!

Dick Marx (our 2012 Vice President) won a CamCorder/ Camera Case!

Margaret Martinovvich won an LCD Weather-Alarm Clock

Welcome New Member

Jeanie Pedersen

Welcome Renewals

Eugenia Woodman

Bernice Bennett

& Walt Matthews

Phil Araham

EDITOR'S CORNER

Continued From Page 2

do such a raffle of something over and above the average door prize through-out the year on a quarterly bases. We have also decided to add a couple of smaller items to the raffle list, so more than one person will receive a goodie from the drawings. But the cost of the tickets will depend on the main raffle item, the other goodies will be "thrown in" for fun.

In the meantime, we are still continuing the regular door prizes on the months that there is no raffle.

Don't miss our new President's bio on Page 5. It is quite informative and funny!

Also check out Colly's two articles, one on Page 6 and the second on Page 10. Both are very important and informative, especially Page 10 in preparation for this coming meeting.

Bill and I will be heading to Yuma this month, and Bernice will be handling the normal door prizes listed on Page 1 at the February meeting. We will be back in March for Frank Tona's presentation.

Be sure to attend this February meeting.

Judi Ball

CUGR
MEMBER WEBSITES

MEXICAN-TOURS
www.mexican-tours.com
Lyle VanNorman
bbcreelmx@yahoo.com

Publicize Your Website

Here for FREE!

(Members Only Please)

Election Of Officers For 2012

President	Fred Skill
Vice President	Dick Marx
Treasurer	Mario Quinn
Secretary	Jeanie Richardson

Voting took place at the beginning of the general meeting on January 24 by the attending membership.

Our organization needs a couple of members to join the Board. This would entail a once a month meeting at the Library for no more than an hour or two. It mainly consists of enough Board members to create a forum whereby we discuss club issues and decide by majority vote on the subject.

Please consider joining us, as we need your input and interest to operate the club.

Tooting Horns When Deserved

by Judi Ball, CUGR Of Redding, jebed@charter.net

Jane Quinn on Page 6 mentions the quality of Amazon's help base, and I would like to reiterate and expand on this. I have had to call them myself, as well as other club members have, and the experience was quick, patient, with the problem resolved to satisfaction.

My experience began with finding the "contact" link and requesting that Amazon call me right then. I barely got the request submitted when my phone rang and the lady from Amazon introduced herself and was prepared to work with me. Friendly and very patient.

Then too, let's not forget how their well designed and user friendly website is. Very easy to search for what-ever item is on your mind, and to scan through like items that their search engine picks up on. There is also the ease of setting up a personal shopping cart or wish list account.

Amazon's demand for honesty and satisfaction from their sellers on quality, information, delivery time, etc., makes the buyer's experience convenient and secure.

And they do a similar protection for the sellers, keeping track of buyers and payment histories.

This is not to discount other good on-line sites and reputations, and there are many. It's just nice to mention one when you find such a place consistently dependable.

Bits And Pieces

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

WINDOWS 8 AND USB 3

It would be wise to consider postponing purchase of a new computer inasmuch as the dealers will probably soon offer a free upgrade to Windows 8 (with the purchase of a Windows 7 computer) as was done with the advent of Windows 7 over Windows XP. Windows 8 was originally scheduled for release late in 2011 then postponed until this year The developer version of the beta edition is currently available free on the Internet. Microsoft last week released Windows 8 on its own newly offered tablet. Also, USB 3.0 has been around for a number of months now — available from the Internet vendors in the form of USB hard drives and storage devices as well as USB 3.0 two-port PCI cards. A USB 3.0 PCI card will at once upgrade a USB 2.0 computer to a USB 3.0 computer. They are available for approximately $30 either locally or on-line. The computer store newspaper insert-advertising on Sunday January 5, 2012 did not stress the availability of either of these valuable improvements to the computer users' arsenal although one store listed some high end USB 3.0 laptops and another listed a few USB 3.0 storage devices.
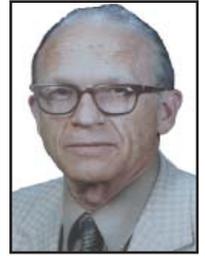
None of the stores listed either a desktop or a laptop with either of these two newer modalities with the exception of the high end laptops.

The USB 3.0 as discussed previously will transfer files at a speed 10x as fast as USB 2.0 and is backwardly compatible with it. Windows 8 seems to be a great improvement over Windows 7. I will not belabor you with details of either item as It is only necessary to enter the word Windows 8 or USB 3.0 in Google or in your favorite search engine and an abundance of information will become available.

The vendors will I am sure very shortly when their stock of computers with Windows 7 and USB 2.0 ports has been worked down a little more will come out with some strong advertising for these two very worthwhile products.

If you are, however, happy with Windows 7 and would only like to improve your ability to transfer and back-up files then the local computer stores (I only checked with one) have the USB 3.0 card in stock and will for a fee insert it for you. I am not sure whether not you would also need to replace your hard drive with one rated as 3.0 – the tech I spoke with did not bring it up.

President Fred Skill's Bio

Hi, I'm Fred Skill, I was born in Ventura, CA, unlike most of you that were born at a very early age, I was fifteen when I was born because we were poor and somebody had to go to work right away! We were so poor that we used to get care packages from Korea. The funny part was at the time we didn't know we were poor because we didn't lack for anything.

I worked for the Scripps Newspaper division starting in 1961 through July, 2002 when I retired. I don't know if you could call it 40 years of experience or one year's experience repeated 40 times. I worked at five different newspapers for the company and as everything from an advertising salesman to a publisher. I won't go into a run down of my career but the newspapers were all in California and the last one was the Record Searchlight in Redding, CA.

I am very married to my first wife Carol, and as she puts it also my last wife. We have two children a boy and a girl, both grown and on their own.

I seem to be a joiner as I'm a Rotarian, Mason, Scottish Rite, Shiner, SIR (Sons In Retirement), Moose, IBM Computer User's Group, Sons' of Italy, Writer's Guild and the Redding Grange. Oh yes, I ring the bell for the Salvation Army as pictured above. When did I have time for work!

My hobbies are PCs and 'that's a good thing' because I lead a PC Users Group for SIR. My other interests include wood working, handguns, cars, coins, writing stories and "Honey Do" projects. My wife has a unique way to get me to do a project. After mentioning it a few times, she will wait until I'm not particularly busy and ask me where such and such tool is located. I invariably ask, "What do you need that for?" "Oh, I'm going to (fill in the blank)." Right after I finish the project it dawns on me that I have been had again, but in such a pleasant way that I don't really mind. And the interesting thing is she is quite capable of doing whatever job she wants to do herself.

I enjoy writing and as my wife, Carol passes the computer room she will hear me chuckling and know that I am at it again. You see when I write I tickle myself and it is difficult to write and kiss the back of your hand at the same time, but I do find a way. Most of my writings are letters to my brother-in-law about the daily things that happen and to make them interesting I do try to add a little humor.

One of my other interests is cooking and since my retirement I've taken over the cooking and my wife is thrilled. While she is a good cook we do cook a bit differently, she follows a recipe and while I will read a recipe I don't normally follow one. I seem to be from the school of make it up as your go along and my wife is a great critique. She will say things like, "I like it." "You are real close to a winner with this one" But I know when I have a winner when she says, "This is a keeper!" I enjoy cooking with the crew at the Son's of Italy and I also cook for my Rotary Club functions.

Multi-Media SIG UpDate

by SIG Leader Jane Quinn, qjquinn7427@gmail.com

Weekly SIG Group meetings are every Thursday at the Anderson Senior Center from 1- 3 pm. For special projects or one on one assistance walk-in 3 - 4 pm. You can also connect to the classroom at high speed internet through SKYPE that ID is AAASCO2009.

Our monthly Multi-Media SIG is Saturday 25, at our home from 10 am to noon. For directions contact me via e-mail above or phone, 365-0825.

Our group has started the new year by rediscovering MS Movie maker.

Ironically we used this product years ago with XP. Today it's repackaged and bundled with MS suite of LIVE programs. Here is a helpful link to this product; http://explore.live.com/. Once you reach this website, click on the Movie Maker link. You will find all your questions answered here and a good start to using this product.

I'd like to share my last trouble-shooting problem with you. I have a Kindle Fire that I love. When I read I listen to the Pandora Internet music station. Somehow that feature quit working. To my knowledge I didn't do anything to cause it. To solve the problem I had to get an Amazon expert to assist me.

Prior to calling I did look at Pandora's forum solution for the Kindle Fire. No one seemed to have the same complaint, so I called for Amazon assistance. Annie, the person who came to my rescue, never heard of such a problem either. So, long story short, she did fix it and in the meantime I learned quite a lot about my Kindle.

Such as there are several features that are part of the basic setup with this device. One is the Pandora Internet music connection. I also discovered why the instructions I found on my own to solve the problem made no sense. I was looking in the wrong place to locate the "Device settings." Having Annie walk me through the panels and explaining how the device works was so helpful.

The Kindle has all the trappings of a new computer, but in addition is tangled with my Internet Amazon account settings. In the end, we had to reset my new device to it's initial settings. Pretty much like reformatting your hard drive.

It all worked out well and I am now listening to music and reading simultaneously. I will end this report to tell you Amazon's help is amazing. They are patient, responsive and truly dedicated to solving your problem. I am reminded once more why we meet as a group. It is comforting to know I have real local support to solving my problems. And it's great we all share our knowledge. So those of you with more Kindle expertise, step forward and let us hear your ideas.

Discovering Windows 7 — Part 22

by Neil Stahfest, Vice President, Tacoma Area PCUG, WA, Dec. 2011 issue, the Data Line, NCStahfest@msn.com. www.tapcug.org

The Windows operating system contains a number of built-in functions to display files, change display settings, change mouse settings, etc. Most of these functions can be accessed in more than one way. By pressing the Windows logo key (the key with the waving Windows flag — usually to the left of the space bar) either alone or in combination with another key enables you to work with Windows without using a mouse or other pointer device. For example, instead of clicking on the Windows Start Button to open the Start Menu, just press the Windows logo key. More examples follow:

File search - If you want to find a file you could click on the Windows Start button and then type the name of the file in the search box that appears above the Start button. This requires that you take one hand off the keyboard, grab the mouse, point at the button, left click and then take your hand off the mouse to enter the file name.

Using the Windows logo key, you can search without removing your fingers from the keyboard. All you have to do is simultaneously press the Windows logo key and the F key. When the search box appears, just enter the file name you are looking for.

Copying between folders — Do you ever need to move files from one folder to another? I frequently copy or move files to a flash drive. I also move pictures from my digital camera to my computer.

The usual way to copy or move files is to both folders at the same time so you can see the contents. To do this you open one folder, click to reduce the size of the folder to less than full screen, then move your mouse pointer to the top of the windows and click and drag the folder to the side until it "snaps" to file one side of the screen. Then you open the second folder, reduce the size, click and drag it to the other side of the screen. Then you click and drag to copy or move file from one folder to the other.

Using the Windows logo key method, you open one folder, hold down the Windows logo key and press the right arrow key to move it to one side of the screen. Next you open the second folder, hold down the Windows logo key and press the left arrow key to move it to the left side of the screen. Then you copy or move files from one folder to another in the usual manner.

Windows mobility center — Do you have a portable computer? Try pressing the Windows logo key and the X key. This opens the Windows Mobility Center. From this menu you can adjust screen brightness, check battery power and turn on or off your wireless network connection.

Connecting to multiple displays — Do you ever connect your computer to more than one display or a projector? Try pressing the Windows logo key and the P key. This brings up Windows projection controls. Use the arrow keys to switch between the choices available.

Windows properties — Do you know what your computer's system properties are? What version of Windows are you using? Is it 32-bit or 64-bit operating system? How much RAM (memory) is installed? What processor is installed in your computer? These are questions I frequently ask when I'm looking at someone else's computer. There are several ways to find this information but the easiest way is to simultaneously pressing the Windows logo key and the Pause key (you may have to scroll to see all the contents of this Window).

As you can see the Windows logo key can be pretty useful. It lets you directly access many Windows functions without going through the Windows Control Panel or using your mouse and provides a faster way to control Windows. To learn more, click on the Start button, select "Help and Support" and type "shortcut keys" in the search box.

Member Colly Lord Has Important Security Info You Should Know

by Colly Lord, CUGR Of Redding, CA, johnclord@charter.net

To All CUGR Club Members

This is long, but **you all need to read it.** If you think your PC is completely and effectively secured, think again. One wrong click by you can unravel it all instantly.

In the February, 4, Record Searchlight issue, I read about Facebook and its IPO (Initial Public Offering).

At the same time, I have been reading the following Snopes link about Facebook propagated malware.

http://www.snopes.com/computer/virus/fbi-facebook.asp

The warning is old (2008), but still very valid as my brother's entire collection of PC's got infected just this month and he's spent a lot of money (over $1000) and time (10+ hours) and has still only gotten two of his five PC's cleaned of the infection.

Also, I have spent the last three days working on cleaning off the infected PC of a friend of ours. Had she not misplaced her master installation DVD, I would have preferred to simply format and re-install her entire operating system as the most positive way of cleaning off the hard drive. As the DVD is missing, I am forced to spend many hours trying to track down and remove all the traces of infection from her PC.

My brother's PCs were infected by malware from Facebook, in spite of the protection software he had. In part, his letter reads:

"I'm not trying to disturb you, but I just spent over $1000 to fix my five computers via MSN as a result of worms, viruses, etc. that were positively traced by the FBI to Facebook, Twitter, and other associated social networking sites. (This may be particularly important to those of you involved in politics - they track every keystroke on your computer, obtain all your information, including your financial info on your computer, and were successful in disabling all of my protections (McAfee, Norton, MSN Security, etc — they just turned them off!)."

Our friend's PC infection was different, but also a cautionary tale. As she "only uses her PC to do online banking, check email, and play solitaire," she felt she'd be safe. She is a non-technically oriented person and tends to not worry about PC problems until they happen. As a result, she had a perfect storm waiting for infection to happen. Here's how:

Her PC is 12 years old or older and was upgraded from Windows ME to XP Pro, even though it only has 256mb RAM.

She was too, um, thrifty to buy antivirus software and keep it updated. She had a free antivirus program that only required annual registration to keep updated. It had lapsed February, 2011 and been ignored for the last entire year, so was completely out of date and probably not even running.

Her PC is so slow to do anything, that she leaves it booted up and running all the time. Now this is not necessarily a problem, but she is connected directly to the Internet with a DSL modem and has NO router or hardware firewall. The Windows XP Firewall was running, and easily lets many things around it.

She was admitted to the hospital for a few days last weekend and when she got home, she couldn't even play solitaire on her PC because it got locked up by the virus.

Her PC is now infected with the "Smart Protection 2012" virus which is known malware PRETENDING to be an antivirus scanner that alerts you to the many "viruses" on your PC after you run its "free scan."

Nothing offered, especially unsolicited, by the Internet as "free" should be trusted!

The only happy point in our friend's story is that she only pays bills on-line monthly on the third and the PC was running clean (we hope) until last weekend, so she had not yet logged into her banking web site with the infected PC which was undoubtedly key-logging and looking for such information as my brother also described. The only reason the PC locked up is because it hasn't got enough memory to run all the key logging and monitoring that the virus wants to perform! This month, she contacted the bank to get her balance and is paying bills with paper checks through the postal service. After this, I will be surprised if she ever wants to bank online again.

What can you do to protect yourself from all this mess?

1. Keep all your software up to date.
2. KNOW what you are clicking on, and even then, think twice (or three times, or call someone knowledgeable for advice) before clicking on it!
3. Remember, if you think you're safe, you're not worrying enough about security.

I have 100% of my software up to date. I know because I check it with Secunia's Personal Software Inspector and Belarc's Advisor. Even so, I keep checking. Windows Update does not install everything you need. Optional hardware driver updates need to be selected and performed manually.

I am constantly researching PC security and how hackers get around it — and just as constantly learning new things about how they do so.

I will be giving the talk on home networking at our February, 28 club meeting and I will also be discussing securing the home networks.

Take the cautionary warnings above, and spend some time checking your PC(s). Start with Secunia's Personal Software Inspector from http://secunia.com/vulnerability_scanning/personal/ or from the Secunia link provided on our club web site at the Security Links' page that I put together a while back. I would like to get email from EVERY club member about their scan results from Secunia's Personal Software Inspector. I will donate $1 to the club treasury for every CUGR club member who comes to the February, 28th club meeting with a printout showing that they have a 100% score by Secunia's Personal Software Inspector for their PC, indicating that all their software and patches are up to date. Secunia's Personal Software Inspector is **free** to use. In fact, my own copy is not even registered, but works just fine. (If you're seeing prices, you clicked down the wrong path!)

Keep your PC(s) safe. If you think they're just a convenience, and not a necessity, try shutting your PC down for a week and not borrowing someone else's. That's probably about how long our friend and my brother are going to be without some of their computers.

Too Many Choices

by Wil Wakely, President, Seniors CUG, CA, Dec 2011 issue, Bits and Bytes, *www.SCGsd.org, wilw31@gmail.com*

Choosing a computer used to be relatively easy: Do you want a desktop with a tower or a flat unit that fits under your monitor? This is no longer true. Now we have a plethora of choices: Desktop, Laptop, Notebook, Tablet, Smart Phone, and smart e-Book Reader. Perhaps I have missed a late comer; if so, forgive me. Let's review the features, pros and cons of each.

DESKTOP

For a fixed location, non-portable computer a Desktop is the best choice. It is the least expensive computer and can be easily customized to whatever your computing needs might be. It is a necessity for gamers and heavy-duty computing such as photo and video processing, CAD (computer-aided design), and data processing. There are wide choices of software and hardware which results in lower costs and greater availability of these items. Larger displays, multiple ones if desired, are available along with specialty multi-function keyboards and a variety of mice, all of which can be easily attached. More powerful computer chips, memory chips, video processors, large, multiple hard drives and powerful wireless adaptors are choices only available with Desktops.

The choice between proprietary brands such as Dell or HP vs. a "plain vanilla" custom machine depends upon your budget and how much technical support you may need.

LAPTOP

Portable laptop computers come in a variety of sizes, prices and features. Many of the more expensive ones rival some Desktop machines in capability. The display screens are smaller than Desktops and the keyboards with the integrated touchpad mouse are not as user friendly as those on Desktops. Newer models have built-in Wi-Fi for connection to the Internet, whereas older models required a USB Wi-Fi adapter. Most Laptops have a built-in video camera for video messaging with friends via Skype. For equivalent features, Laptops are always more expensive than Desktops as are any repairs or upgrades. However, if portability of a powerful computer is a requirement, a Laptop is a good choice. An auxiliary USB external hard drive or large thumb drive (flash drive) is useful for backup and storage for Laptops.

NOTEBOOK

The Notebook is just a smaller, lighter version of a Laptop with a smaller screen and keyboard. It is not recommended for heavy duty use, but is fine for travel and is less expensive than Laptops, Tablets or Smart Phones. Most of the Laptop features are also found in Notebooks. Some Notebooks come with electronic memory instead of hard drives. This memory is faster and lighter, but holds much less data than hard drives. The Chrome by Google is a Notebook that utilizes the Cloud for much of its power and capability.

TABLET

A Tablet has no external keyboard, but the screen is touch sensitive so a virtual keyboard on the screen is provided instead. However, the touchscreen eliminates much of the standard keyboard activity. The availability of software for Tablets is growing rapidly, but there is nowhere near the number of titles available for the computers described above. For casual use, Tablets are fine for email, Web browsing, limited word processing and spreadsheet work. Most Tablets are less expensive than Laptops, but often cost more than Notebooks. Tablets also have e-Book reading capability. They have no hard drive but Cloud storage via the Internet somewhat replaces this function. The iPad by Apple seems to be the leader in Tablets, but many competitors are coming on-line with similar features at lower prices.

SMART PHONE

There are two major varieties of Smart Phones: iPhone and Android. The iPhone is a proprietary operating system by Apple and is more expensive than other Smart Phones, but is claimed to be more user friendly. The Android phone is an "open source" operating system developed by Google and as such has many more Apps, (software applications). The major drawback to these phones is the small display screen. They have touch screens in lieu of a keyboard. However, they are cell phones, which none of the above are. They are also connected to the Internet for email and Web browsing and can play music and video. The phones can be quite inexpensive because the carriers (Verizon, ATT, etc.) require signing a two year contract for the reduced cost. Breaking the contract early can be very expensive. There is a basic cost for the phone service and an equivalent monthly charge for Internet service. There also can be an additional service charge for data usage. Look for unlimited data-use contracts, if available.

SMART E-BOOK

Older e-Book readers were just that — monochrome digital book readers, e.g., early models of the Amazon Kindle. Newer Readers such as the Amazon Fire and Barns & Noble Nook have full color touch screens with Wi-Fi along with their e-Book reader function. The Fire also has free Internet connectivity via Sprint. So the e-Books are now competing with the Tablets, having similar features but with a display size intermediate between Tablets and Smart Phones. Look for e-Book Readers to become even smarter in the near future.

So what's next? I predict expanded speech recognition and generation will soon be incorporated in most computers, as an alternate to touch-screen, mouse and keyboard. A larger selection of Apps will become available as software programmers jump on this lucrative bandwagon. Faster Internet connections are already available in selected locations and will come to your area soon. Look for LTE, 4G, 5G and even faster connections. Better displays that don't wash out in sunlight are being developed and we should see them soon. Lower prices and enhanced features due to competition favor the consumer and should happen very quickly. Decisions, decisions…

Stay tuned!

Windows Live SkyDrive: An Office In The Cloud

by Nancy DeMarte, a member of the Sarasota PCUG, FL, Dec 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, ndemarte@Verizon.net

A quiet, steady evolution is taking place in the data storage world. Soon CD's and external hard drives may be replaced by storage on the Internet, or, as we say, the "cloud." In this era of mobile devices like smart phones, laptops, and tablets, it is natural for us to want to have access to the files and photos on our base computer when we are in some remote location. SkyDrive is Microsoft's password-protected, free online storage area, complete with abbreviated versions of popular Microsoft Office programs for editing the stored files. It is also equipped for sharing files with others and is a convenient way to transfer files from an old computer to a new one. Microsoft Office users should get to know Windows Live SkyDrive as a solid option for online backup.

Online storage has been around for awhile, primarily purchased by businesses as a backup for large amounts of data. Carbonite, for example, is a well-respected online storage company popular with businesses which also offers a package for home clients. The home client pays an annual fee of about $60 per computer to upload user-created files to a secure spot. Free online storage is not as common, but Google and Microsoft are competing for the title of most popular free cloud storage. I have used Microsoft's SkyDrive for a couple of years and have found it to be a user friendly, flexible service with many good features and being updated all the time.

WINDOWS LIVE

Before we explore how SkyDrive works, let's take a minute to review the concept of "Windows Live," of which SkyDrive is a part. Microsoft has been reworking the "Live" idea since 2005. It is a group of online services and software downloads which complement Microsoft's operating systems. When Windows 7 was introduced, several applications which had been part of earlier Windows versions were removed, among them Windows Mail and Photo Gallery. Instead, Microsoft offered a suite of programs and services called Microsoft Live Essentials and made it available for free downloads, as long as the person joined the Live community with a username and password. (I have belonged for years and have not received spam as a result.) Users can choose the programs they want from a long list. Many of these are online services, such as SkyDrive and Hotmail. Others are downloadable programs, such as Windows Live Mail and Movie Maker. All are free. Microsoft has announced recently that Windows 8 will have the Live Essentials package included with the system.

SKYDRIVE: FREE STORAGE

SkyDrive lets a Microsoft Office user add Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, PowerPoint presentations, OneNote documents, and photos to a password-protected place on the Internet at skydrive.live.com. You can add a single file up to 100MB in size and can store a total of 25GB at no charge. These limits were recently raised, and the prediction is that storage space on SkyDrive may be unlimited very soon. Isn't competition great?

To add files to SkyDrive, you must first create a free Live account, then log on to SkyDrive and create folders to hold your files. You then select the files, including photos, from your computer and upload copies of them into these folders using an easy-to-follow wizard on the SkyDrive home page. You can even upload a whole folder at once as a local zip drive. Next you set permissions for each folder using a simple slider and folksy categories: Everyone (public), People I selected, People with a link, or Just me.

Once files are in SkyDrive, they can be deleted, organized, and renamed. Plus, they can be edited with the Office web apps, mini-versions of Office programs located on the SkyDrive home page, using any version of Office back to 2003. If you have Office 2010, you can open a file that you have stored in SkyDrive in the appropriate web app, and then click the "Open in …" button to open it with your full version of program on your computer. If you have an earlier version of Office, you can download a plug-in program from Microsoft that allows you to open a file with your full program. I tried this on my laptop with Word 2007, however, and found it cumbersome. I guess they want us to buy Office 2010. As a workaround, you can always download a file from SkyDrive to your computer for full editing capabilities.

SHARING FILES

If you want to share a file, whether an Office file for a photo, on SkyDrive with someone, you can either send him a link or set the permission so he can view and/or edit it. I experimented by sharing a Word 2007 document with a friend who is not a member of Windows Live. In SkyDrive, I highlighted the file I wanted to send. From the Sharing menu, I clicked 'Send a Link'. An email message opened ready to address. It contained a link to the file with a spot for me to type a message. My friend received the message with no problem and merely clicked the link to go directly to the folder on SkyDrive. She now has permission to view documents in that folder.

Currently, the only Office web app that allows for shared editing is Excel. This involves editing a spreadsheet in SkyDrive with selected people. Names of those working on the file at the same time show up in the toolbar.

SkyDrive is greatly improved from its predecessor, Windows Live Workspace. I would expect it to get even better as the competition heats up with its rival Google. The reviews show that although Google made a huge push a couple of years ago, with its array of services like Google Apps and Google Calendar, Microsoft is catching up. Its latest version of SkyDrive, plus two new related synchronization services, Live Sync and Live Mesh, are a good start. Microsoft now offers 25 GB of free storage compared with Google's 1 GB (although there is the option to purchase more). If you are a Microsoft Office fan, then you can't go wrong by giving SkyDrive a try.

Fred Skill's Tips
Control + Mouse Scroll

Is the type getting a bit too small to read comfortably? Try this: click in the message area and then hold down the Ctrl Key while moving your mouse scroll wheel and watch the type or object enlarge and reduce right before you eyes!

This will work in most document windows, and on the net. Of course there will be some programs that will not apply, but very useful for the ones that do, such as Microsoft Word, Corel Draw, Irfan View, and others.

Oddly, in Google Earth this trick will rotate the globe.

A Pre-Meeting Discussion About Modems, Routers, And Security

by Colly Lord, CUGR Of Redding, CA, johnclord@charter.net

Originally, the word modem stood for a Modulator-Demodulator which converts the analog signals coming in from the outside telephone line, to digital signals for use inside the home by the PC equipment. The term 'modem' stuck and is now also used with "DSL modem" and "cable modem" even though these devices actually handle digital signals on both sides.

All types of modems handle the 'handshaking' to establish connection to the Internet Service Provider and control the flow of data to and from the outside line.

HISTORICAL TIDBIT:

In the early days, before the Internet became so popular and available to the public, modems were used at both ends to connects PC's via dial-up connection to a data provider who had modems on incoming phone lines connected to one or more PC's configured with BBS (Bulleting Board Services) software to handle the calls. The TRS-80 computer I showed at the January meeting was configured as a host BBS for six months during 1981. It was running BBS software and could handle one incoming call at a time, as I only had one phone line and one modem. I had a menu of games on it that I, or friends, could run by calling the computer from other locations using either another PC or a dumb terminal with dial-out capability.

The Router can be thought of as a telephone switchboard (think Lily Tomlin's switchboard operator) where incoming signals get routed to the appropriate devices on the home LAN (Local Area Network). A router does MUCH more than just routing, but I'll get into that later.

There is a third, and less often used, type of device called a Network Hub. It allows you to connect multiple devices to one data source, either an incoming line from a modem or possibly a networking card from a PC. It does NOT contain the extra features that a router has, such as NAT (Natural Address Translation), Firewall, and Port Forwarding services. A "hub" is essentially nothing more than a sort of octopus connector for 10-BaseT (i.e. Ethernet) cables. You do NOT want to use a 'hub' to connect multiple computers to

the Internet, as it provides no security features.

A router is actually a special purpose mini-computer (with its own operating system, usually Linux) performing a multitude of very useful functions which will be discussed and demonstrated during the meeting. The router even includes a mini-web server which is used to access the functions it does. Knowing how to access the router's web server is critical to setting up a home LAN. Securing that same router's web server against outside access is equally important to keep outsiders from hacking into your home network, and WILL be discussed.

These are both very relevant questions, because without some kind of modem, you don't get connected to the Internet, and without some kind of router, you can only connect your PC directly to the modem.

"Blue-tooth" networking will be mentioned, as it is widely used in home applications for connecting mice, keyboards, speakers, and perhaps other devices, but I will NOT be discussing it beyond that because it could be a whole meeting itself and those devices generally configure themselves. Only, it IS important that the blue-tooth USB dongle transmitter/receiver must be connected to the PC for those devices to work.

Security (or lack thereof) in free WiFi hotspots will be discussed, as well. Basically, you should assume that anything you do on the Internet that is NOT on an encrypted web site (encrypted web sites URLs begin with "https", not "http") can be seen by hackers nearby. I watched a security professional (white hat) once demonstrate this at Yaks using his own laptop. Within 2 minutes, he had tricked the Yaks wi-fi router and some woman's laptop into both thinking that his laptop was the other device, essentially inserting his laptop into the data flow between them! He could see everything she did that was not on https web sites. He could identify what files she was downloading, view the text of her instant messenger chat, see what URL's she was visiting (the URL was visible, even if it WAS an https connection, though the data passing

from https connections appeared only as garbage.) It was freakin' scary to watch! This was very high-level hacking done with professional equipment and tools. His day job is testing security for companies and letting them know their weaknesses. His laptop was a high-end model made by Alienware that had me drooling and probably cost over five grand.

The two most important focal points of the talk will be setting up the home LAN and securing the home LAN as effectively as possible. I will make the point that securing it is possibly more important than setting it up, because if a neighbor uses your unsecured wi-fi network to do illegal downloads, the traffic will be traced only as far as your modem and IP address and the FBI can walk in and (with a warrant) simply confiscate every bit of computing equipment, CD's, DVD's, flash drives, etc from your house and you will be out of luck. If, after thorough investigation, they determine that you had absolutely no illegal photos, music, pornography, etc on any of your equipment, you might get it returned 6 months to a year later with all the data wiped. Forensic computer analysis is rough. I know someone this happened to. You won't be able to complain because the illegal data WAS traced and LOGGED as having been sent to your (unsecured) IP address. It would be like arguing against a red-light photo ticket, but worse, because even the red-light cameras sometimes make mistakes.

On a side note, downloading copyrighted movies or TV series for free from various sites using tools like BitTorrent can quickly get a person in trouble. BitTorrent is NOT anonymous, many of those movies are copyrighted and the copyright holders ARE tracking who downloads what with peer-to-peer services and will eventually get around to sending a cease-and-desist letter to the ISP to inform the violator that they will be shut down if they continue stealing movies. Most ISPs seem to handle these warnings on a 'three strikes, your out' basis, but that doesn't help the violator because, by the time the copyright holder starts sending the notices, they generally have logs showing more than three violations and will send multiple notices, so 'uh-oh' – don't do it.

ICE Your Cell Phone — Save Your Life

by Sandy Berger, CompuKISS, Sandy@compukiss.com, www.compukiss.com

You may have never heard of the ACEP, American College of Emergency Physicians, but their new consumer website is one you might want to visit. With the number of emergency room visits growing rapidly, this organization has put together a website where patients can access health information, share stories, and get involved in advocacy efforts. www.acep.org

Visits to the emergency department hit a new high in 2006. A record 119.2 million people, up from 115 million, were recorded by the Centers for Disease Control, with an average of 227 visits per minute. The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) predicts those numbers will only keep rising.

According to the report, age groups with the highest visit rates were infants under 12 months of age and those over the age of 75. In fact, people aged 65 and older are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. population and are the most likely to be admitted to the hospital of all emergency patients. Researchers conclude that visits for patients between 65 and 74 could nearly double from 64 million in 2003 to 111.7 million by 2013. Despite these numbers, emergency departments continue to close — causing delays for people with serious medical conditions like heart attacks.

In honor of its 40th anniversary, ACEP will be making available video clips featuring emergency medicine pioneers, vintage photographs and radio public service announcements. In addition, the organization is launching a new consumer website, EmergencyCareForYou.org, which features extensive public information. The year-

long campaign is sponsored in part by General Motors OnStar, Ultrasonix and ZOLL Medical Corporation.

The EmergencyCareForYou website is a comprehensive site that you will want to visit. It has information on everything from "how to tell if it is an emergency" to "family disaster preparedness."

One important section of this website talks about how "ICE" and Your Cell Phone Can Help Save Your Life.

The website states, "Emergency physicians are recommending that people with cellular phones add "ICE'" entries into their cell phone address books. This stands for "In Case of Emergency," and medical professionals are using it to notify the person's emergency contacts and to obtain critical medical information when a patient arrives unconscious or unable to answer questions."

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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 functions and all Special Interest Groups (SIGs).
7. Find out that no one needs to be alone and helpless with today's computer technology.

4th Tuesday

Monthly Meetings Are At
The Redding Library

1100 Parkview Ave.

off Cypress and to the right of City Hall.
We will be in the Community Room,
which is inside to the left of the main library door.

Multi-Media SIG

Saturday, 10 AM, Feb 25, 2011

At Jane Quinn's Home, for information contact:
Jane Quinn, 365-0825, **qjquinn7427@gmail.com**

Learn about Digital Devices, usage of free software for Movie Creation, Photo Projects, Music Projects, and Social Networking. Includes Microsoft Windows 7 basic Instruction.

Jane also conducts classes at the Anderson Senior Center (Frontier Center), Thursday 1-3 pm. You can connect to the classroom via high-speed internet to SKYPE, ID # AAASCO2009.

Walk-ins welcome between 3 and 4 pm for tutoring or special projects.