

COMPUTER NEWS



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The Napa Valley Personal Computer Users Group will meet Wednesday, Apr 20th, 7:00-9:00 P.M.

At the Napa Senior Activity Center,
1500 Jefferson Street, Napa, California



The meeting begins with Random Access, an open-floor question-and-answer period during which attendees can ask questions about computers and computer-related problems and receive helpful information from other meeting attendees. Questions may be submitted before the meeting by emailing them to Random Access moderator **Jerry Brown** at Questions@nvpcug.org.



The April 20, 2011 Computer Tutor topic will be: member **Jeff Solomon** will be talking about What is Cloud Computing? How does Cloud Computing work? (&) What does Cloud Computing mean to PC Users like us. If you have an idea or question that the Computer Tutor **Jeff Solomon** at tutor@nvpcug.org.



This month **Susy Ball** will show us how we can create simple digital scrapbook pages. With the aid of your computer, the elements needed to create interesting pages and a color printer, you can make your own pages that can be distributed as printed media or via email. If you have a suggestion on which feature and topics should discuss in the future, please contact **Susy Ball** at susyball@aol.com. See ya all at the meeting. *

Could you use some practical information that would help you make better use of your computer? Come to this meeting! Guests are always welcome. Admission is always free.

Interested in becoming a member? See page 24 for application information.

NVPCUG SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS & Mac GROUP

In SIG meetings you can learn about a subject in greater detail than is feasible at NVPCUG general meetings. SIG meetings are open to everyone. Meeting times and locations occasionally change, so for current meeting information, see our Web site, www.nvpcug.org, or contact the SIG leaders.

Investors SIG

Meets: Monthly, second Monday
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Jerry Brown's home,
23 Skipping Rock Way, Napa

Leader: Jerry Brown
(707) 254-9607
bqandjbb@sbcglobal.net

Napa Valley Mac User Group

Meets: Monthly, second Thursday
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Napa Senior Activity Center
1500 Jefferson St., Napa

Leader: Ron Rogers
(707) 226-5352
ronrogersnapamug@gmail.com

Sonoma Computer Group

Meets: Monthly, fourth Saturday,
except Mar 2011
10:00 - 11:30 a.m..
DeLong room
Sonoma Library, Sonoma, CA

Leader: Beth Pickering
bethpick@emailx.net



Lou Schirm 1920-2011

Louis Schirm III was born March 30, 1920, in San Diego, to Louis Schirm Jr. and Harriet Virginia (Hartz) Blake Schirm. He grew up in southern California, where he graduated from Burbank High School and attended Notre Dame University for two years before joining the Army to serve as an officer in Europe during World War II. Lou was a captain in the 17th Port, in charge of transportation in Ghent, Belgium, where he met the love of his life and wife of over 50 years, Henriette ("Yette") Scribe. His duties included teaching young men how to drive all kinds of machinery, servicing the motors and loading the boats, with all the supplies for the jeeps, tanks, etc. He was stationed in England, then Antwerp, and later in January of 1945, in Ghent, Belgium.

After the war, Louis and Yette settled in Burbank, and Louis completed his college education at Woodbury College in Los Angeles. Lou worked at Lockheed in Burbank, Magnasync, and later Avnet in Culver City, in the mechanical engineering fields. He finished his career working for his son Louie IV at a high-tech electronics company. He and wife Yette raised five children, first in Burbank and later Torrance. Louis was an active Boy Scout assistant scoutmaster, then later an active Sea Scout master when his daughters were in high school. Lou was recognized for 25 years of service to the Boy Scouts of America. Lou was an Eagle Scout himself. Lou also volunteered for many positions at the King Harbor Yacht Club, at his home parish, and for several nonprofit organizations over the years — usually related to computers or helping to provide computers to schools and families who needed the new technology. In 1993, Lou and Yette moved to Napa to live close to daughter, Nicky and her husband, Tom, and Lou continued his tradition of volunteer service and community involvement along with Yette, which included: Napa Valley PC users group, Choix De Vie (later called Rainbow House), Cybermill Clubhouse, Riverpark Homeowners Association, Napa Valley Yacht Club, Native Sons and several local veterans groups and associations. He also volunteered at Mount George Grade School on occasion in the early 1990s.

Lou is survived by his brother and sister-in-law, Mike and Kathy Schirm; brother-in-law and his wife, Rene and Phillis Scribe; son, Louis Schirm IV; daughter, Nicky (Schirm) Suard; daughter, Lorette (Schirm) Harnsberger; grandchildren, Phillip Harnsberger, Rachael (Harnsberger) van Gorp, Ryan Harnsberger, Kelli Schirm, Lisa (Schirm) Aulick, Bonnie (Brierley) Hanson, Sean Brierley, Kyle Brierley, Brigitte Brierley, Tyler Suard, Cory Suard, Carrie (Caldwell) Johnson; great-grandchildren, Emily Johnson, Tucker Johnson and "pending" Hanson; and cousins, in-laws or other family members, Linda, Fritz, Tom, Casey, Johan, Tina, Ricky, Bobby, Evan, all the Santa Barbara Bohnette, Wehe and King clans and many others! Lou's wife, Yette, and daughters, Jill Brierley and Micheline Caldwell, predeceased Lou.

Memorial services will be held Monday, March 21, 2011, at 11 a.m. at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in Napa, with interment immediately thereafter at Tulocay. There will also be a celebration of life luncheon afterwards at the Napa Valley Yacht Club. There will also be a rosary on Sunday, March 20, 2011, at 7 p.m. at Tulocay with visitation starting at 5 p.m.

This obituary was taken from the 2011 Napa Valley Register, <http://napavalleyregister.com>.

Posted: Monday, March 21, 2011 12:00 am

Napa Valley Personal Computer Users Group Contact Information

Officers for 2011

Board of Directors

President	Jim Gray	unlisted	President@nvpcug.org
Vice President	Ron Dack	unlisted	VicePresident@nvpcug.org
Secretary	Marcia Waddell	252-2060	Secretary@nvpcug.org
Treasurer	Roy Wagner	253-2721	Treasurer@nvpcug.org
Other Directors:	Susy Ball, Julie Jerome, Bernhard Krevet, Dick Peterson, Bob Simmerman, Raylene Thompson, Tom Uboldi and Dean Unruh		

Appointed Officers

Computer Tutor Coordinator	Jeff Solomon	553-2114	Tutor@nvpcug.org
Facility Arrangements Coordinator	Dianne Prior	252-1506	Facility@nvpcug.org
Greeter Coordinator	Raylene Thompson	unlisted	Greeter@nvpcug.org
Greeter Coordinator	Bob Simmerman	259-6113	Greeter2@nvpcug.org
Librarian	Dean Unruh	226-9164	Librarian@nvpcug.org
Membership Director	Bob Simmerman	259-6113	Membership@nvpcug.org
Newsletter Editor	Susy Ball	337-3998	Editor@nvpcug.org
Product Review CoCoordinator	Susy Ball	337-3998	Reviews@nvpcug.org
	Marcia Waddell	252-2060	Reviews2@nvpcug.org
Co-Programs Director	Bernhard Krevet	unlisted	Programs@nvpcug.org
	Susy Ball	337-3998	Programs@nvpcug.org
Publicity Director	VOLUNTEER NEEDED		
Random Access Moderator	Jerry Brown	254-9607	Questions@nvpcug.org
Webmaster	Ron Dack	unlisted	Webmaster@nvpcug.org

• All telephone numbers are in Area Code 707.

NVPCUG General Meetings
Held the third Wednesday of each month, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Napa Senior Activity Center,
1500 Jefferson Street, Napa

NVPCUG Computer News

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Image Resizer

By Lynn Page, Editor, Crystal River Users Group, Florida, December 2010 issue, CRUG newsletter, www.crug.com, newsletter@crug.com

If you upgraded from Windows XP to Vista or Windows 7 you may miss the XP Powertoy Image Resizer. It was great when you needed to quickly create different size images of a photo. Maybe you need a small image to email or a special size for desktop wallpaper. There are many reasons to create of a particular size image. Images can be resized in a photo editor. My choice is Corel Paint Shop Pro Photo. I use it to edit and size my digital photos. But then if I want a special size edited photo it is quicker to use Image Resizer. Download from imageresizer.codeplex.com.

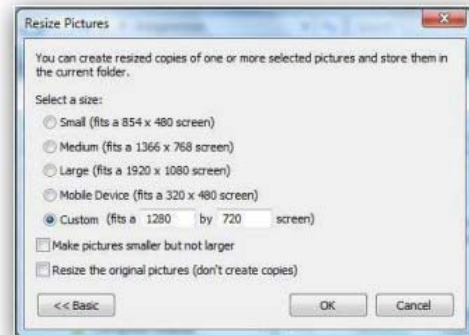
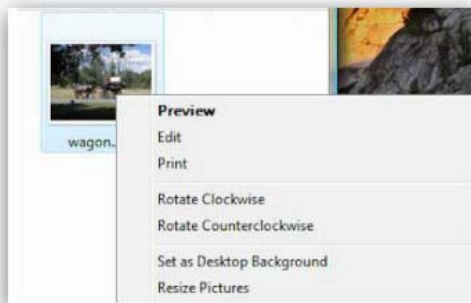
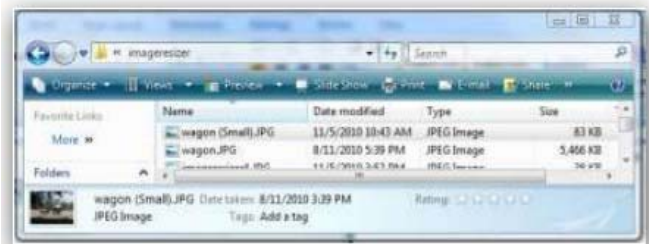


Image Resizer is a clone of the Image Resizer Powertoy for Windows XP. To use Image Resizer locate the photo or photos in Windows Explorer. Select the photos to resize and then right click on the selection.

In the resize Pictures dialog box select from the predefined sizes. To specify a custom size click the Advanced button. The advanced area also contains two other selections. Toggle them on or off. I recommend leaving the Resize the original pictures unchecked. You don't want to inadvertently resize a large image to 854 x 480.

The new images are saved indicating a size. *



NVPCUG Calendar

Apr 20	7:00-9:00 p.m.	NVPCUG General Meeting, + A
Apr 23	10:00-11:30 a.m..	Sonoma Computer Group + E
May 7	10:00-11:30 am.	Board of Directors meeting + D
May 9	5:30-7:30 p.m.	Investors SIG meeting + C
May 12	6:30-8:30 p.m.	Napa Valley Mac User Group + A
May 18	7:00-9:00 p.m.	NVPCUG General Meeting, + A
May 23	10:00-11:30 a.m..	Sonoma Computer Group + E
Jun 9	6:30-8:30 p.m.	Napa Valley Mac User Group + A
Jun 13	5:30-7:30 p.m.	Investors SIG meeting + C
Jun 15	7:00-9:00 p.m.	NVPCUG General Meeting, + A
Jun 25	10:00-11:30 a.m..	Sonoma Computer Group + E
Jul 11	5:30-7:30 p.m.	Investors SIG meeting + C
Jul 14	6:30-8:30 p.m.	Napa Valley Mac User Group + A
Jul 20	7:00-9:00 p.m.	NVPCUG General Meeting, +A
Jul 23	10:00-11:30 a.m..	Sonoma Computer Group + E

Meeting Locations

- A** - Napa Senior Activity Center, 1500 Jefferson Street, Napa
- B** - Piner's Nursing Home, 1800 Pueblo Ave., Napa
- C** - Jerry Brown's home, 23 Skipping Rock Way, Napa
- D** - Peterson's Family Christmas Tree Farm, 1120 Darms Lane, Napa.
- E** - DeLong Room, Sonoma Library, Sonoma, CA

Panoramas using GIMP

By Cal Esneault, President and leader of many Open Source Workshops & SIGs, Cajun Clickers Computer Club, Louisiana, February 2011 issue, *Cajun Clickers Computer News*, www.clickers.org/, <http://cccclinuxsig.pbwiki.com>, cjesne@bellsouth.net

Small point-and-shoot cameras are great to carry around on vacation. However, due to the smaller geometry and limited angular response of digital sensors, wide-angle shots are limited. One solution is to take slightly overlapping shots and combine them during post-processing into a single scene. Below are two photos I took from a hill overlooking a scenic harbor. Even at the widest setting, I was not able to capture the whole scene.



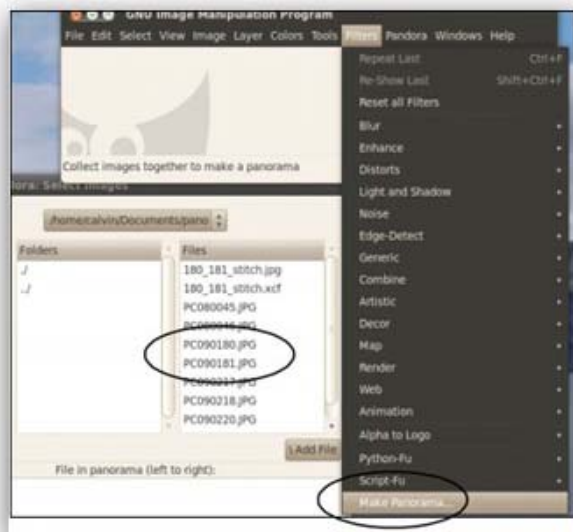
The recommended procedure for panoramas is to determine the exposure, match this exposure in manual mode, and then take all pictures at the same setting. Unfortunately, my simpler camera didn't allow for this, so the auto-exposure for each picture was slightly different. Any exposure variance is readily seen when the pictures are super imposed. Using the GIMP brightness control for one of the layers, I could easily adjust the picture to have uniform exposure for both layers.

GIMP saves pictures in a native “.xcf” format. Prior to exporting this image to the more conventional “.jpg” format, I had to Merge the Layers and Flatten the image.

Then, using Save As, I gave the picture a name with the jpg suffix (a conversion tool is embedded in the program, and you can adjust the picture quality for saving).

Below is the final panorama shot showing the much broader view. Making panoramas is a good way to get these wide shots without having to carry around a much heavier DSLR. It takes a little practice, but the technique is within the scope of most users. *

GIMP is a sophisticated open-source photo editing tool which is available as a free download for most operating systems (Windows, Linux, Mac OS). To create panoramas, however, you have to download a plug-in called Pandora. Once you have it installed, you find it as the last item in the Filters menu (see screenshot). Clicking on this item will open an image loading dialog from which you select the pictures you want to merge (the two pictures I selected are circled). Upon opening the image files, you will find that they are on multiple layers, and Pandora has automatically shifted the images so that they are aligned. This is not always perfect, so you may have to select one of the images and shift it using the Move tool.



For The Busy Parent

If you're a parent who finds herself always on the go, ensure your iPod is protected by investing in a good case. Cases come in an endless variety of styles, colors, and materials, but they'll all help keep your iPod safe. For example, the Jam Jacket from DLO (\$19⁹⁹; www.dlo.com) is a silicone case that includes a place to store your earbuds and comes in models for the iPod classic, nano, touch, and iPod with video.

For those long family outings, an FM transmitter, such as the Griffin RoadTrip (\$89⁹⁹; www.griffintechnology.com), can charge your dockable iPod while letting you enjoy your iPod's music collection through your car's stereo system.

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The Seventh Son of Windows

Customizing the Notification Area

By Lee Reynolds, Contributing Editor, Boca Raton Computer Society, FL, February 2011 issue, Boca Bits, www.bracs.org, leetutor@exploringwindows.com

Introduction

The “Notification Area” is that area on the right-hand side of the Taskbar where your system clock resides, and probably a large number of other icons. It used to be called, prior to Windows XP, the “system tray.” Programs just love to install an icon there, to supposedly speed up access to their features. You doubtless have a lot of not very useful icons there, which can sometimes be removed by selecting an option or preference from the menus of the associated program. And in XP and Vista, you can right click the Taskbar, select Properties from the context menu that scrolls out, click on the Notification Area tab, and then perform various operations in order to “hide inactive icons.”

Windows 7

DEFAULT

This situation has improved a lot in Windows 7. By default, there are only four icons that will appear in your Windows 7 taskbar notification area:

- The Sound icon (so you can adjust the volume of your speakers or mute them)
- The Network icon (so you can perform maintenance tasks concerning your network connection)
- The Battery icon (if you’re running Windows 7 on a laptop) to tell you how much charge is remaining to your pc’s battery or whether it’s charging if you are running your laptop plugged into a wall outlet
- An icon connected with a new Control Panel applet called Action Center

ADDITIONAL

If you have any other icons in the Notification Area (such as one for your antivirus program, for example), they will usually be found by clicking the little upward-pointing carat to the left of the Action Center icon, which causes a small popup window to be shown. If you want to see any of those icons in this popup window in your Notification Area instead, you can just drag them down there.

Windows 7 Action Center

The Action Center icon will normally handle all those notification messages coming from the system when some program thinks you need to take an action of some kind.

For example: download important updates from Microsoft Update, or perform a scan with Windows Defender, or download the most recent antivirus data, etc.

In Windows 7 there is now a new Control Panel applet called Notification Area Icons, which takes the place of the corresponding tab of Taskbar Properties in Windows Vista, XP, and previous versions.

When you go to that Control Panel applet, you will be shown a list of each of the Notification Area icons, and for each one you can use the “list box” next to it to choose one of three possible settings:

- Show icon and notifications
- Hide icon and notifications
- Show only notifications *

Should You Print The Pic?

Many of us take our digital pics to photo printing stores, and we generally get good-quality prints at a reasonable price. That price inflates sharply when you’re asking for an 8 x 10, however. You might be able to print your own for less money and make it pretty enough so that no one will know the difference. If your inkjet printer is good at making photos, buy some matte-finish photo inkjet paper specifically made for your brand of printer. (We’ve found that brand-specific paper usually resists smearing and fading the best.) Print your pic at the highest quality setting. Note that some inkjets provide two extra inks, photo magenta and photo cyan, that make people’s skin look better in photos. Other printers can make “archival” prints, meaning they may last for decades under glass without fading.

Paper Size & Thickness

When shopping for photo paper, bear in mind what paper sizes are available. Photo paper with traditional finishes, such as matte or glossy, are readily available in sizes ranging from 4 x 6 inches to 8.5 x 11 inches. If you want to print on fine art paper, it’s generally tough to find small sizes; mostly, you’ll find papers from 8 x 10 inches to 13 x 19 inches.

Keep in mind what size of paper your printer can handle. Although small, portable printers may produce a fine image, they’ll usually only handle paper up to 4 x 6 inches. You’ll need a larger format printer for those 8- x 10-inch and 13- x 19-inch prints.

Paper thickness is also something to watch out for; some of that fine art paper can be too much for some printers to handle. For example, your printer needs a straight feed tray to print on thick paper that won’t make it through the printer rolls. Check your printer’s users manual to see what types of paper it can handle.

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Access 2010 The Missing Manual

By George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society, AZ, March 2011 issue, TCS eJournal, www.aztcs.org,

georgehardingsbd@earthlink.net

The Missing Manual series now totals almost 60 books! The reason the series is so popular is because software/hardware makers don't include the hefty manual they used to, but buyers need more than the Quick Reference Guide that now replaces the manual that used to be. It's published by O'Reilly – Pogue Press .

The book is written by Matthew MacDonald but there is a team behind him that supports a colossal project such as writing a book. All examples have to be tested by actual example. The illustrations in the book, likewise, have to be reproduced.

The book is pretty hefty, consisting of 812 pages, of which 17 are the all-important index and one Appendix. The book is divided into seven parts with 23 chapters, each covering a broad topic.

The Introduction is, in contrast to some, very valuable. It tells what's new in the 2010 version of Access and how to use some of these features. One of the valuable items is the "missing" CD-ROM. You can download it at the web site. It has all the examples used in the book, so you can see how to do any of them.

Access has four main parts: tables, queries, forms and reports. The latter three all depend on tables.

Part One of the book deals with creating tables, accessing the data contained in them, making sure the data is useful and valid, and relationships between tables. This is probably the most important section, because if the table isn't built correctly, the queries, forms and reports may not work properly.

Part Two covers queries, including the basic select type, as well as update, append and update types. Since many forms and reports use queries as the source for information, learning how to create and use them is important. Frankly, though, creating select queries is really easy and the other

forms are not often useful.

Part Three deals with creating and printing reports.

Part Four covers forms, including using a special type of form as a user interface. Simple forms, though, are easy to create and are most useful for those who are not very familiar with Access.

That covers the four basic tools in Access, but there's more. Access has built in an extensive programming system and **Part Five** covers several aspects of it. These include macros and Visual Basic. With these two tools, one can develop a database system that is useful, but whose insides aren't visible to the user.

Part Six, the last one, covers new aspects of Access, namely, multi-user databases, import/export, connecting Access to SQL Server and SharePoint, as well as building a web database.

This is both a top-notch reference book and a helpful learning tool. I highly recommend it. *

About: Access 2010 The Missing Manual

Author: Matthew MacDonald

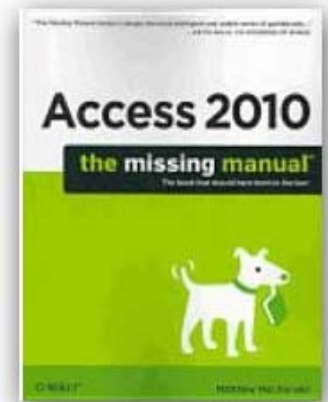
Vendor: O'Reilly-Pogue Press

www.missingmanuals.com

ISBN-10: 1449382371

ISBN-13: 978-1449382377

Price: \$39⁹⁹, \$24⁵⁵ @ Amazon



Protect Your PC From Dust

You'll notice that after a while, dust builds up inside your PC. In order to minimize that accumulation of dust, think about using a thin screen in front of the intake fans in your computer to limit ingestion of foreign debris. The screen might limit airflow to a small degree, but the trade-off is generally worthwhile.

The Fine Arts

To add an artistic touch to photos you print at home, consider some fine art paper such as photo rag,

museum etching, or watercolor paper.

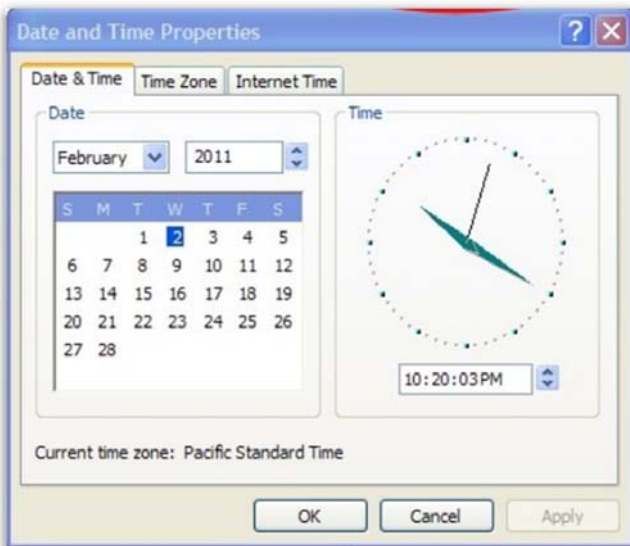
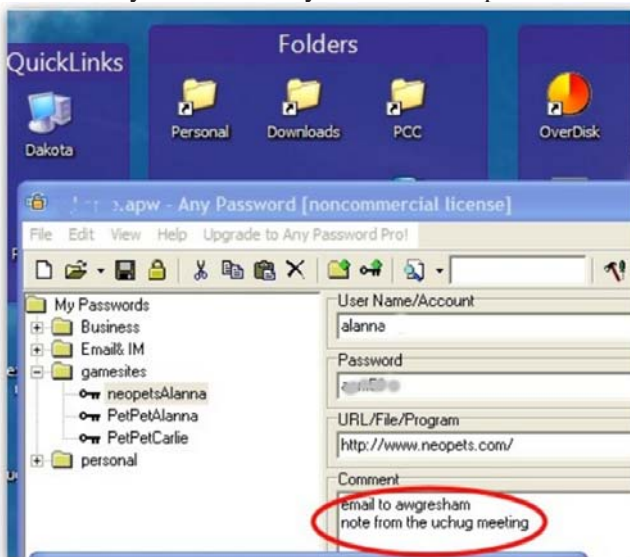
Rag papers have a high cotton fiber content, which helps preserve the prints. Museum etching paper is thick with a flat finish and a slightly rough texture, and watercolor paper has a rough texture that will make your prints look like oil paintings. Canon makes a selection of fine art papers, such as Photo Rag Fine Art Paper (\$29⁹⁹ for 20 13x19 sheets) and Museum Etching Fine Art Paper (\$39⁹⁹ for 20 13x19 sheets).

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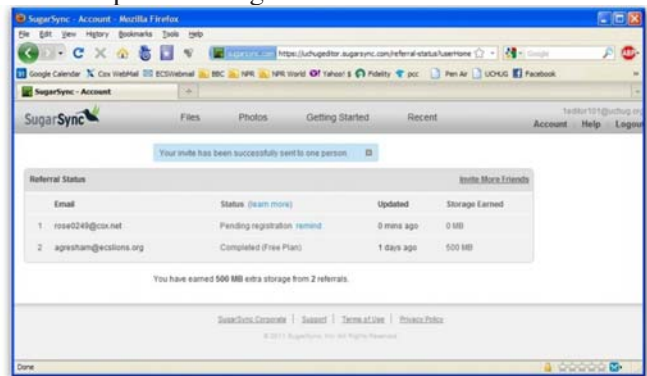
Keeping it all in “Sync”- a Sweet Synchronization Idea

By Art Gresham, Editor, UCHUG (Under the Computer Hood User Group), California, March 2011 issue, UCHUG Drive Light, www.uchug.org, 1editor101@uchug.org

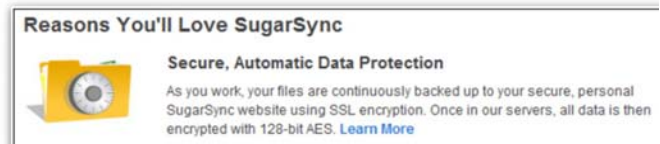
At the February 2nd, 2011 meeting of the UCHUG during our discussions about Computer Health, I talked about how to automate some of the processes that can keep your system running well. I mentioned that I had long been searching for a way to keep my passwords safe, while still being able to access them from computers at different locations. The program I use on my primary home desktop system is called AnyPassword (v1.44). It keeps the information in an encrypted, password protected file, but if I want the current updated copy on my system at work I have to email or transfer it by some other means manually each time I want it refreshed. I know there are other programs that do a good job of handling your passwords, and some for very minimal cost, but I like AnyPassword and only needed a way to solve this synchronization problem.



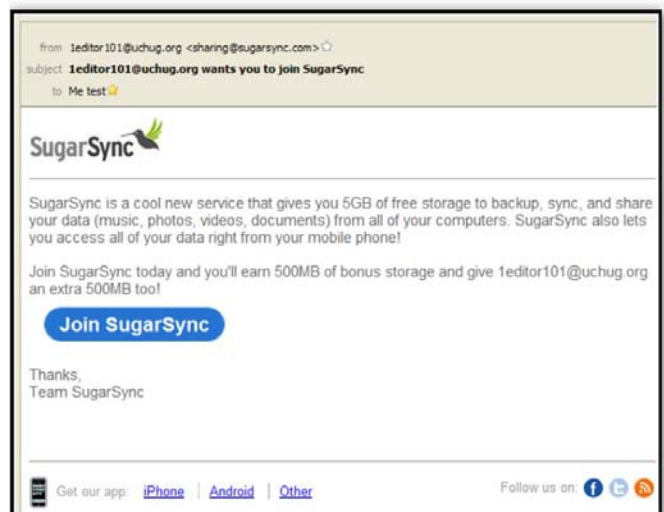
I believe I have found a simple, and free way to handle this, and any similar file-sync or sharing problems. The Cloud service I am using is called SugarSync. It is free and has a large space allocation (5 GB) that suits my needs. I have placed the data file for my password program in the folder that I setup for sharing.

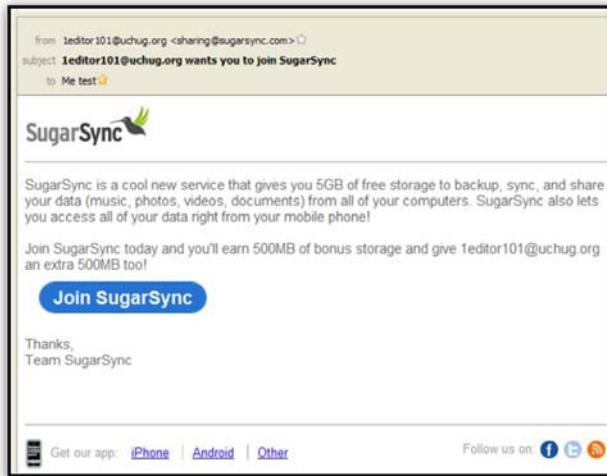


I opened the AnyPassWord program with my laptop. There I showed the basic structure of the password program, and opened a sample key (this is a game-site, not any critical data here). I made a simple change to the free text comment section. I then clicked save.



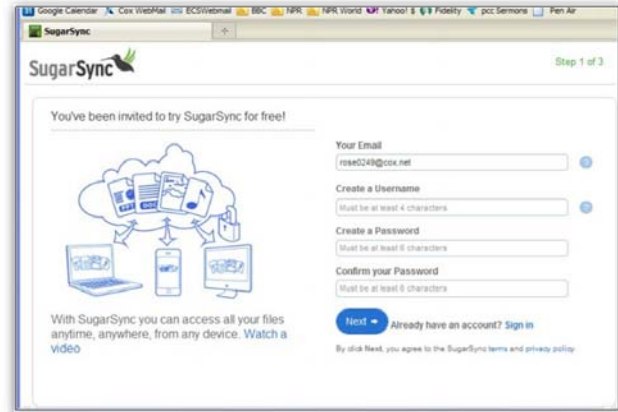
I explained that that within a few moments that this very file, with the change, would be resident on my desktop computer (named 'Dakota') at home, which I had left running before coming to the meeting.





So as soon as I got home I opened the password program, and went to that key. The result is shown here. As you can see the comment section has the text ‘note from the uchug meeting.’ This was the text I typed in at the meeting, and without any physical action on my part the data ‘magically’ is present on the hard drive, in my shared folder on Dakota.

You can set up an account for yourself and get the free 5 GB of space. Then if you invite a friend you are credited with an additional 500 MB of storage space.



Above you see that the uchugeditor sent an email invitation to two ‘Friends’ (actually my other computer, and my work computer!) The friend can join by downloading and installing the SugarSync application and you will have the basic 5GB plus the bonus 500MB. Your friend will receive an email that explains the service and lets them link right to the site to signup. *

A Happier, Longer Life? Volunteer!

By Sr. Dorothy Robinson, Editor, Olympia Microcomputer Users Group, WA, December 2010
OMUG News, www.olybug.org/newsletter@olybug.org

Although there may be some situations where volunteering would not necessarily get you a longer, happier life (any veteran could fill you in on that), there are now studies showing that people who volunteer at least two hours a week do in fact receive health benefits from volunteering.

According to an article by Adam Voiland at <http://health.usnews.com> a 2007 report which drew on the results of 30 studies said volunteering can indeed be good for your health. Voiland says the report indicates that “people who volunteer enjoy longer lives, higher functional ability, and lower rates of depression and heart disease.”

Volunteering keeps a person active and interested, as well as helping stay connected with other people.

Voiland quoted Steven Post, director of a research group at Case Western Reserve University that focuses on the “scientific study of altruism, compassion, and service,” as saying, “The helping impulse is very fundamental. When it is locked off we do not flourish.”

If we look around, there are friends, neighbors, and family who could use a helping hand now and then. There are also nonprofit organizations whose mission is to help people. You may belong to one. In fact, if you’re reading this newsletter, chances are you belong to The Olympia Microcomputer Users Group.

Any group needs leadership, and OMUG is no exception. All our officers and key members are volunteers, and if

you talk to any of them, my guess is that you’ll find they enjoy taking an active part in our computer users group, keeping it alive to fulfill its mission.

OMUG’s purpose, according to our Bylaws, “shall be to provide a non-profit, educational, self-help organization for personal computer users; to cultivate cooperative relationships among computer users in our community; and to promote knowledgeable use of personal computer hardware and software.”

Think about why you joined OMUG, and why you keep renewing your membership each year. Maybe you have computer expertise to offer and you enjoy helping others. Maybe you don’t know a lot about computers and are looking for help. Whatever your reason, computer expertise, or lack of it, is irrelevant to participating in leadership of our group. People with many different lives, leisure and work experiences have served as OMUG officers. You can, too. *

Get Help Quickly

Get help with the press of a button. Pressing the F1 key while in most applications will open the Help files associated with the application.

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Powermat

By George Harding, Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society, AZ, March 2011 issue, TCS eJournal, www.aztcs.org, georgehardingsbd@earthlink.net

You probably carry at least one portable device, a mobile phone. To keep it charged, you need a charger for a home outlet or one for the car. When you travel, either locally or away from home, you must remember to carry one or both of these chargers. It's cumbersome, but that's the price of a mobile device.

Or maybe not! Powermat has a solution for any of your mobile devices, and it doesn't require a charging cord. How do they do this? You charge a Powermat unit, then carry it with you wherever you might be.

Just set your mobile device on one of the panels of the Powermat and your device is charged wirelessly by induction. What does that mean? You don't need to know. It just works.

I received a Powermat for evaluation. It is a small 3" X 3" tri-fold device. It unfolds into three connected panels, two of which are charging panels. The third section is the storage battery that allows the device to be used wirelessly.

You first charge the Powermat with a wall outlet. Then fit your mobile phone or other device with a receiver tailored for your specific type of device. Then simply place the mobile device on the Powermat. You'll hear a beep to indicate that connection is made and that your mobile device is charging. Another beep sounds when your device is removed.

The tri-fold Powermat I received is one of several styles available. Some are smaller, some come with a Power Cube, a unit that connects to your mobile device and is what is placed on the Powermat.

I tried out my wife's Blackberry on the Powermat. The unit comes with a Power Cube which you connect to the Blackberry, then place it on the Powermat to charge. The Power Cube is about one and a half inches square and has a white, smooth surface.

One corner of it has a wire attached with a connector with adaptable heads for almost any receptacle available today.

The wire fits neatly into a groove around the edge of the Power Cube when not in use.

I also received a receiver for my iPhone. A receiver is a shell into which the iPhone fits. It has a compatible plug in its base and a unit on its back similar in function to a Power in function to a Power Cube. Once the iPhone is in the receiver, you need only place it on the Powermat to charge it.

Powermat announced at CES an agreement that will provide wireless charging capabilities in airports, through the installation of Powermat units in terminal seating.

Airports are difficult environments in which to obtain recharges. This solution will benefit the many travelers with mobile devices that need charging in an airport. In addition, Powermat will be working with GM to incorporate in their cars, starting with the Chevy Volt, a charging solution for most mobile devices, without the use of wires. *



About: Powermat

Vendor: Powermat

www.powermat.com

Price: tri-fold \$130, receiver \$40

Armbands For Your iPod

One of the main perks of owning an iPod shuffle or nano is having a loyal workout companion. Lanyards suffice for mild exercise, but when it's time to really get things moving, you'll want to slide your player into a secure armband so you don't have to mess with tangled cords or worry about dropping your player. The one-size-fits-all DLO Action Jacket is available for the 2G shuffle (\$19.⁹⁹), nano (\$29.⁹⁹), and 5G iPod (\$29.⁹⁹). The shuffle and nano designs have a clear vinyl window to protect the player from dirt and sweat. We also like Griffin's Tempo for the iPod and iPod nano (\$24.⁹⁹). This armband has an external headphone jack for easy access and features reflective strips of material that'll come in handy during those sunset jogs.

Clean A Keyboard

The only possible fix to a keyboard full of spilled coffee or pop takes some time and work. If you act quickly, you might be able to rescue the keyboard. Power down the PC, detach the keyboard cable, and flip the keyboard upside down to let the liquid drain out. Dismantle the keyboard. Drain any residual fluid and wipe the plastic pieces with ordinary dish soap and water. Wash off the electronics by flushing the keys and printed circuit board with a mix of demineralized water and isopropyl alcohol. Allow everything to dry; then, reassemble the keyboard, reattach it to the PC, and see if it works. If trouble develops with your keys, simply replace the keyboard. Of course, if you don't want to tinker with your keyboard, new keyboards cost less than \$30.

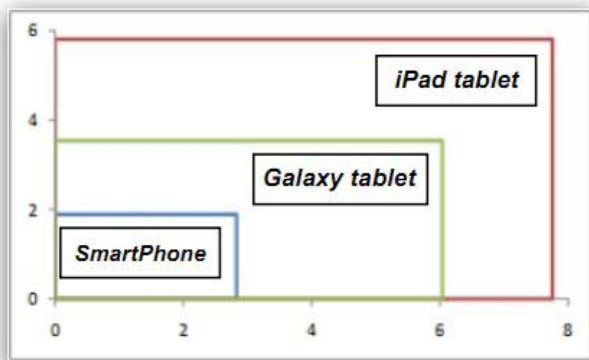
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Android 3.0 for Tablets

By Cal Esneault, President of CCCC (Cajun Clickers Computer Club) and leader of many Open Source Workshops & SIGs, March 2011 issue, Cajun Clickers Computer News, www.clickers.org, <http://cccclinuxsig.pbwiki.com>, ccnewsletter@net

Android® is an operating system for mobile devices based on the Linux kernel. In 2005 Google bought the company that developed it, and then released this operating system (OS) as open source to members in the Open Handset Alliance. It has become extremely popular with many phone makers and service providers as an alternative to the Apple iPhone® smartphones. Improved Android OS versions are frequently issued: 1.6 (Donut), 2.0 (Eclair), 2.2 (Froyo), and 2.3 (Gingerbread). Smartphones are really cell phones combined with a small personal computer. With processors of speeds around 1 GHz and 2 – 16 GB of onboard storage, smartphones can access the Internet, take digital photographs, provide GPS information, and much more.

Smartphones have gained enormous popularity due to mobility with excellent graphics. To keep power consumption low for longer battery life, manufacturers have used newer technologies – RISC chips (reduced instruction set), small displays, use of “sleep” mode, etc. After using these smartphones more and more, consumers became ready for larger displays while maintaining form factors and weights below those of desktops. Apple broke into this market last year with the 9.7 inch (diagonal) iPad® tablet. Android OS products have lagged behind since this system was originally optimized for the smaller handset devices. So far, only the 7 inch (diagonal) Samsung Galaxy® tablet with Android 2.2 has been introduced as a serious contender.



Relative Size of Smartphones vs. Tablets (inches)

The Galaxy intermediate size has been criticized for being a little too small for rapid typing and for having an OS which has limited features from a tablet perspective.

At the January 2011 Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas, Android 3.0 (Honeycomb) was introduced as a new OS designed with the tablet device in mind.

Several manufacturers also announced at the CES their intention to ship new Android-based tablets in 2011.

Motorola introduced its candidate Xoom® which was given the Best in Show award. Among its features are a 10" display (1280 x 600 pixels), front & rear facing cameras, and ability to play Flash videos. Shipping is planned for later in 1st quarter of 2011.

The proliferation of new mobile computing devices is interesting for the early-adopter and confusing for the general user. Add to this the fact the Google has been developing a Chrome® OS which is targeted for instant-on, internet-centric devices (such as a tablet PC). Typical predictions are that this class of devices will eventually specialize (business, video, rugged with long battery life, etc.) and that only the best will survive the competitive market place. 2011 will certainly be an exciting year in the mobile computing space.



Motorola Xoom Tablet

Be sure to review products carefully and ask around before you purchase any device to get the best match between capability and your specific needs. In any event, open source computing is in the game and proceeding with vigor to increase choice. *

Movie Mode

A compact camera's movie mode is hard to beat for convenience, but it will lag behind a camcorder for performance. If you're remotely serious about home video, then a camcorder is the way to go. It will provide far better video quality and many more options to control your shooting than a still camera.

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eBook Readers Compared

By Constance Brown, President, Canton/Alliance/Massillon User Group, Ohio, February 2011
issue, The Memory Map, www.camug.org, president@camug.org

Technology with new capabilities and applications is constantly available. It can be difficult to stay focused on what will be most suitable for our requirements when we are constantly wowed by the latest innovations. Suppose you wish to read eBooks and listen to music. How many pieces of equipment will allow you to do this?

Here are a few:

- computer
- web book
- a variety of phones
- iPad
- some mp3 players
- some GPS devices
- some eBook readers

The cross application of many of these devices is amazing and sometimes confusing. In January we heard a presentation from the Stark County District Library about eBooks and eAudio books and were introduced to a variety of devices that can be used to check out these Books. The library has a links to lists of compatible and incompatible devices at <http://www.overdrive.com/Resources/DRC/Default.aspx>.



During the presentation, I became interested in the comparison between Apple's iPad and Barnes and Nobles Nookcolor. Both of them have one disadvantage when compared to other readers such as other Nook products, Sony, Kobo or Kindle: the screen is not E Ink or E Paper.



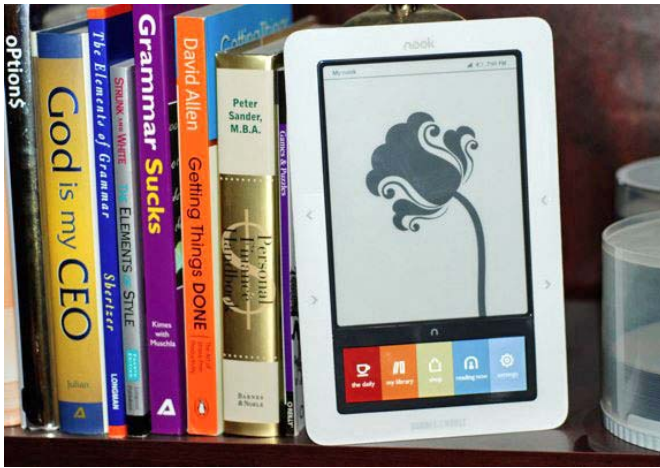
That means the battery is being drained when it is in use and that it will be more tiring to the eyes and perhaps impossible to read in bright light. However, Nookcolor lets you read books and a magazine in full color and works both in Wi-Fi and 3G networks. It has 8 Gig of internal memory, enough to hold 6,000 books, and is expandable to 32 Gig. Over 2 million book titles are available, and it has internal support for Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint.



Additional features include resizable text and graphics with AliveTouch™, audio, Read to Me, Keep your last page, read between devices, LendMe™ technology, borrowing, and you can share updates on Social sites like Facebook® and Twitter®. It runs with the Android™ Operating System. The price tag is \$249. More information is available at <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/nook/index.asp>. Here the comparison stops. Nookcolor was not designed for Internet browsing or communicating via email.



Apple's iPad comes with 16 Gig to 64 Gig of internal memory. Some iPads are Wi-Fi only and others are either 3G or Wi-Fi. The price tag varies from \$499-\$829. The iPad is much more than an eBook reader. It offers Internet access and applications. It is still awaiting an app to be released that will let the reader view eBooks full screen. You can page through websites, write an email, flick through photos, or watch a movie with just the touch of a finger. The 3G data plan is through ATT and starts at \$14.⁹⁹ per month. It has many computer capabilities, especially when it comes to browsing the Internet and reading email.



When it comes to comparing eBook readers that use E ink and E paper, it is a bit more difficult to make a selection. The Kindle is great, but doesn't allow for you to check out eBooks from the library at this time. Kobo from Borders does not allow you to listen to EAudio and requires that books be loaded from a computer. Sony and Nook have their own trade-offs with weight, bulkiness, and a screen that is sometimes difficult to read in sunlight in the case of the Sony. So if an E Reader is in your future, you will have to select what best meets your needs. Having an eReader certainly beats having to carry heavy, bulky books through the airport in order to satiate your reading appetite as you wait for your next flight! *

Go Biometric

One way to physically secure your laptop is with a biometric fingerprint reader, which lets you require a valid fingerprint swipe to start Windows or access individual files and folders on the computer. Some laptops, such as Lenovo's T61 line, integrate a fingerprint reader into the case, but you can also purchase an add-on fingerprint reader that attaches to a free USB port.

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NoiseHush N525 Edge Bluetooth Headset

By Terry Currier, President, WINNERS (WInDows UsERS Group), CA, February Issue, the Notepad, www.windowsusers.org, winnersug@aol.com

The unit is slender and very light weight. It comes with two USB chargers: one for use with a PC, and one you can use with the AC charger they include. You can also purchase a Travel Charger or Auto Charger — \$7.95 each. Specifications:

- Talk Time: Up to 5 Hours
- Standby Time: Up to 100 Hours
- Charging Time: 2 to 3 Hours
- Dimensions (mm): 53.5 (L) X 13.5 (W) X 6 (T)
- Weight: 6.6 g
- Operating Distance: Up to 30 feet (10 meters)
- Bluetooth Version: v2.1 + EDR
- Range of Frequency: 2.4 MHz to 2.4835 MHz

Unique in that it comes already charged, but I still charged it fully. Pairing it to my phone was not hard; it understood my commands well and when connected I could hear good and my voice was said to be coming through clear. However the unit's ear pad sticks into the ear and to me was uncomfortable. I would have liked it to be bigger and softer.



Everything is done by pressing the multifunction button including turning it off, on, or answering a call. The problem is it presses into the ear; I learned to hold on to it when I pressed the button.

When pressing it to make a call, or answer one there was a slight humming noise in the background. It went away after being connected. There is no volume button on the unit itself; you will have to make such changes on the phone.

It does work and the price is not bad at \$39.⁹⁹, but you want it to be comfortable to wear, or you won't use it. *

<http://noisehush.com/n525-bluetooth>

Digital Asset Management Software

By Mike Morris, Editor, Front Range PC Users Group, CO, February 2011 issue, k-Byte™ newsletter, <http://www.frpcug.org>, twriterext@gmail.com

What is interesting to me is that many of today's digital imaging software applications offer both image editing and what is called "Digital Asset Management" (DAM) capabilities.

In the not-so-distant past, the only image software choice was what image editor to use (Photoshop or something else). But with the "explosion" of digital camera use, keeping track of all the images (and protecting intellectual property rights) has clearly become a significant issue. While this is certainly an issue especially for professional photographers, with digital cameras, even the most casual photographer will soon find hundreds, if not thousands of photos on their computer.

Perhaps you are thinking, as you read this, that you don't need image management of any kind, because your digital camera provides all the necessary information.

Actually, that is NOT the case. The camera provides information about camera settings (including date and time of the photo). But not included in that data is information such as the event (e.g., parent's 50th wedding anniversary), or the names of the people in the photo. Yes, you may have an excellent memory, but your children and grandchildren probably won't remember or know the names of all the people in the photos of those special events (I can verify that from personal experience).



That is why image management software is so helpful—it allows you to capture that information. You have a wide range of software choices for this application:

1. DigiKam (<http://www.digikam.org/>), an image management application claimed to be designed by photographers, and is open source and therefore free. This application offers both DAM and image editing capabilities (which are significant, although not equivalent to the editing features of Photoshop or GIMP). For Windows users, you can download the Windows version from <http://bit.ly/hWfFrT>.
2. DigitalPro (<http://bit.ly/faHwgJ>), also claimed to be designed by photographers, and is proprietary (\$179). This application is primarily for image management (and primarily for professional or advanced amateur photographers),

not image editing.

3. BibbleLabs (<http://biblelabs.com/>) Pro (and Lite). This proprietary application (\$199⁹⁵) offers both editing and DAM features. One major claim on their website is that this application is faster than any other. For a list of editing tools this application provides, connect to features (<http://bit.ly/82JzsV>).
4. Adobe CS3 (and later) applications. The Adobe Bridge program is bundled with the CSx (the latest release is CS5) series of Adobe products. In my case, I received it when I purchased Adobe InDesign CS3. Adobe Bridge brings DAM features to the Adobe products, all of which, as I am sure you know, are very expensive applications (full retail price for Photoshop CS5 is \$699). They are, however, designed for professional/business use, originally commercial printing, but now expanded into electronic publishing as well. The Adobe products (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign among others), despite the many competitors, are still considered industry "standards." For more information on these products, connect to Adobe (<http://www.adobe.com>).
5. Adobe Lightroom. From Wikipedia (<http://bit.ly/3wnGqF>) is this description: Lightroom is an application "...designed to assist professional photographers in managing thousands of digital images and doing post production work. It is not a file browser like Adobe Bridge, but rather an image management application database which helps in viewing, editing, and managing digital photos, the same way photographers used to do in the non-digital world." Connect to Lightroom (<http://adobe.ly/6dBiz>) for a list of features. Full retail price is \$299.
6. For the casual computer user/casual photographer, there is Google Picasa (<http://picasa.google.com/>). It offers simple image organizing features and a few simple editing features. It is free, and "automatic." After you download and install the program, it will, when you first launch it, catalog virtually all the images (with a few minor exceptions) on your computer.
7. Most, if not all major camera makers provide some software with their cameras that include some basic image organization and image editing features.

There are many other choices, some of which you can find in the Wikipedia comparisons at: image viewers (<http://bit.ly/asWUi>), image organizers (<http://bit.ly/asWUi>),

bit.ly/CNnwr), and graphics editors (<http://bit.ly/10xtOU>).

I ended up with Adobe Bridge “by default.” Since I make no claim to being a professional photographer, or even (yet) a knowledgeable amateur, I would very probably have picked a free application (such as DigiKam) for “Digital Asset Management” if I didn’t already have Bridge.



For me, Picasa does not have enough features. However, I expect it will be sufficient for many digital camera users.

I have not tried to compare in detail either editing features or DAM capabilities of these programs. I have, however, scanned through the DigiKam manual (<http://bit.ly/hZaFX9>). My conclusion is that if you download and install DigiKam and GIMP, you will have a very powerful, very feature-rich set of image editing and image management tools. *

Thanks to FRPCUG member Bert Broekstra for his comments on DigiKam, and for finding the DigiKam PDF manual link.



Best iPad Apps, The Guide for Discriminating Downloaders

By Peter Meyers, O'Reilly Media Inc., Review: by Gregory West, Member of the Computer Operators of Marysville and Port Huron, MI, and Sarnia Computer User Group, Canada, prospector16@gmail.com

Everyone now owns an iPad. Well maybe not everyone, however the number of sales are far reaching into the millions. If you look at a graph depicting the sales of Apple's iPad you will see a line that looks like the path of the Space Shuttle taking off. The iPad has taken off with a huge explosion of sales. There is a good reason: Apps.

Apple announces the iPad has “thousands of apps...available in every category”, which is mind numbing to say the least. How does one sift through such numbers to find the top notch apps and not get stuck with one that, well let's just say stuck with an app that is not the best? How does one find the best of the best in iPad apps?

Well you need to look no further. Peter Meyers' book offers the easy solution to such a complex issue of sorting through thousands of iPad apps to make sense, with precise reviews on each one.

Meyers says that “this book helps do some serious chaff snuffing” in that he has gone through the thousands of apps to bring us the best. The book is sequenced with seven color coded chapters, making referencing easy. Each chapter takes us to a new use for the iPad: At Work - At Leisure - Creative Corner - At Play - At Home - Out and About - For Your Health. Browsing through these chapters is fun to see what you can really do with your iPad.

For instance, in Chapter 6, “Out and About”, you will find numerous apps that cover “Finding (and booking) a Restaurant”, “Finding Cheap Airfares”, to “Driving Instructions in Your Car”. For the more serious users you

can get one for your “Health” such as:

“Portable First Aid Reference”, “Dieting and Weight Loss”, and even “Bird Watching”. Games were not left behind, not at all. Meyers offers Chapter 6: “At Play”. Here you get to read about the best apps for “Arcade Games”, “Puzzles”, “Racing”, “Combat” and many more.

Each App review page lists the price, the version, and short synopsis about the App. The review page also includes a graphic and an explanation of how it works. From reading sheet music to drawing to gaming to buying online, Meyers book has it all covered and then some.

Best iPad Apps:

The Guide for Discriminating Downloaders

By Peter Meyers

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USA: \$21⁹⁹ / CDA: \$25⁹⁹

oreilly.com

Gregory West is a Mac Computer Instructor at Lambton College, Ontario. He is also a crew member for TVCogeco. In his spare time he runs a free computer “drop-in” centre that assists people who want to learn about technology. <http://goo.gl/1oKGW>. For more tips visit his Blog: <http://gregorywest.wordpress.com>



SmartPhone = PDA + Phone, Part 1

By Phil Sorrentino, President, Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., FL, January 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, president@spcug.org

Smartphones can be seen all around. Notice the phone being used on your favorite TV show; next time, odds are that it'll be a smartphone. A year or two ago it was a flip phone (do you remember Jack Bauer on 24 using his?), but no more. Now the phone of choice seems to be the smartphone. Apple, and more recently, Google, have really changed the mobile phone landscape. The iPhone, with its iOS Operating System available only on the iPhone, released in 2009, really started the whole movement. Google, with its Android Operating System (provided for free to hardware phone manufacturers), has come on very strong in the past few months so that iPhones and Android phones now have about the same market share - about 35% each, which only leaves 30% to be shared by Blackberry, Nokia, and Microsoft.

The Smartphone equality, as stated in the title, suggests that the smartphone is equal, in functionality anyway, to a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) and a standard mobile phone. PDAs have been a popular way of allowing one to have many of the computer files, pictures, videos and music, available on the go - remember the Palm Pilot. A phone was another necessity for someone who was always on the go. So for someone who had to be mobile and needed access their computer files, a phone and a PDA became a good combination. I carried a PDA for many years and more recently, a PDA and a flip phone. Now I can carry only one device, a smartphone. And, as a welcome side effect, now I only have to make sure one device is charged nightly.

The smartphone is made possible by a number of technologies. Among them are: Capacitive touch-screens; 3G (soon to be 4G) wireless telephone networks; Wi-Fi; GPS; Micro-miniature processors, memory and components; Digital Cameras; and Phone oriented Operating Systems. Some of these technologies are used in phones - like touch screens, networks, small components, Digital cameras, and operating systems. And some are used in PDAs - like touch screens, Wi-Fi, small components, and operating systems. As you can see there is a good bit of overlap, so putting it all together was just a natural. But it took the genius of Apple to put it all together and make it work and make it practical and make it cool. And now with the help of Google it has become more practical and popular.

All of the technology for replacing the mobile phone and the PDA is included in the smartphone, and then some. (I didn't have a good camera in my mobile phone, before.) But, it does take some planning and forethought to make the smartphone do everything. Some of the things to be concerned with are: Contacts, (which are phone numbers, addresses, e-mail addresses, and related notes); Calendar events; E-mail; Memos, (which are lists of important things); Documents; Spreadsheets; Pictures,

Videos, Music; and Browsers. Before you can consider using any of these things there has to be an "App" (Application) installed on your smartphone. (I am using a Motorola Droid2 as an example, but most of what I am referring to will be very similar on another Android smartphone, and even similar for an Apple iPhone.) There are Apps for all of these tasks. In fact there are over 100,000 Apps for Android phones and over 240,000 Apps for iPhones.



So, the first thing to do is to identify an App to handle each task you want accomplished. Your smartphone probably came with a basic collection of Apps. Basic things like Contacts, Pictures, Videos, Music, and Camera will probably be covered by these Apps that were installed at the factory. If not, you can go to the "Market" for Android Apps, or the Apple Store for iPhone Apps, and find one that fits your needs. Many of the Apps at these stores (websites) are free or have a nominal cost, most under \$10. Things like Word or PDF Documents, or Excel spreadsheets may have to be handled by an App from one of these stores. Once you get to the App store, you will find a myriad of App titles. You can typically search for "All Apps", or limit your search to only free ones. You can even search for Games that will run on your smartphone. When you find an App that you want, you will pay for it (via a credit card account that was previously set up) if it is not free, and then it will be downloaded right onto your smartphone. The download is completely controlled from the Market and there is no further action on your part needed. After the App is downloaded and installed, you will receive a message that it is complete. It couldn't be any easier.

Once an App has been downloaded, it can be placed on the home screen. Actually, one of the home screens. The Droid2 has 7 home screens. Multiple home screens make it easy for you to organize your Apps. Apps that you think work together can be collected on a particular home screen. You could have a home screen for entertainment, one for work, one for family, another for sports. Any organization of Apps that makes sense to you would be appropriate.

Once you've organized your home screens and downloaded the Apps needed, I'm sure you'll see that the smartphone is a very useful device for someone on the go. Future articles will concentrate on some of the new ways of interacting with the touch sensitive screen and some of the smartphone's more interesting features, but I think you will now agree that: Smartphone = PDA + (not so smart) phone. *

Smartphones (Part 2)

Control and Interaction

By Phil Sorrentino, President, Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., FL, March 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, president@spcug.org

The smartphone doesn't have a mouse to let you push a pointer around the screen, so then, how do you control the interaction? The smartphone has a touch-sensitive screen which interprets movement of a finger (or fingers) on the screen. A whole new set of "gestures" or touch controls have been developed. Some of the new gestures are the "flick," and the "pinch". The flick is done with one finger and its quick movement indicates the intended operation, like turning a page. A pinch is done with two fingers and is typically used to enlarge or shrink something on the screen. Mostly, you use your finger to point to things that you want done. Another gesture or interaction is to "Select an Icon" for movement. To do this, you Touch and Hold the Icon. After holding it for a second or two, the App will be selected and you will receive feedback. On the Droid2, the feedback is called haptic feedback, which means you get a slight vibration on the touch-sensitive screen. On the iPhone, the icons on the page begin to wiggle.

Applications or Apps are what you use to get things done. Some common and very useful Apps are Contacts, Calendar, Places, Maps, Mail (Yahoo or Google), Notes, Time & Date, and Browser. There are also Apps for YouTube, Skype and Kindle. The Kindle App turns your smartphone into a reader that has access to the Kindle (Amazon) library of books, many of which are free.

There seems to be an App for almost anything that you would like to do with your smartphone. (If you don't find an App for something you want to do with your phone, maybe you can invent one. There is always some software programmer willing to take on an interesting challenge.) In addition to Apps, there are a myriad of games available for the smartphone, many of which are free. For android devices, Apps and games are found at the Android Market. (iTunes is used by the iPhone.)

The Market is an App that comes with the phone. To get something from the Android Market, just touch the Market App Icon and you will immediately be at the front door of the Market. Here you can choose from Apps or Games or a selection that is presented on the opening screen. If you choose Apps, you can then choose to review all Apps or only the Free Apps. (The same is true for Games.) Once you find an App or game you are interested in you just touch it and if it is free, it will be downloaded to your smartphone. If there is a cost, you will have to set up an account so that your credit card can be charged. Most of the Apps that are not free are under \$10.

All of the Apps on your smartphone are installed and

available in an All Apps area, which slides out onto the current home screen. (Android devices have multiple homescreens.) On the Droid2 this area is accessed by pressing an Icon at the lower-center of the display screen.

So after you have decided how to use your home screens, you can put an App there by finding it in the All Apps area and then Touch and Hold the desired App icon. When the App is selected and ready to be placed, you will get feedback and the App will appear on the home screen that was below the All Apps area. Apps can be moved between home screens by Touch and Hold-ing the App and waiting for the feedback, then moving the App in the direction of the home screen that will be the new home screen for the App. On Android phones, an App can be deleted from a home screen, but not from the All Apps area, by Touch and Holding the Icon and then moving it to a red trash can that appears at the bottom center of the display.

When you want to use an App, you just touch it and it starts to perform. You will see the Icon spring into action, attempting to provide its functionality. Once started, other options may be available from a menu by touching the Menu button. (On the Droid2, the Menu is in the lower left, below the display screen). For example, if you touch a Contacts App, it will display your list of contacts. When you find the contact of interest, a touch will display all the information relating to that contact. Touching the Menu button gives you options to Delete or Edit the contact.

With all these Apps and a pretty small screen it would be nice to be able to organize your Apps; so, unlike most computers, the Droid2 has 7 home (display) screens, arranged horizontally. You expose another home screen by flicking your finger on the touch-sensitive home screen in the direction of the screen desired. For example if you are on home screen #4, the middle home screen, and you want to go to home screen #3, you would flick to the right. To go to home screen #5, you would flick to the left. Multiple home screens make it easy for you to organize your Apps. Apps that you think work together can be collected on a particular home screen. You could have a home screen for entertainment, one for work, one for family, another for sports. Any organization of Apps that makes sense to you would be appropriate.

This only scratches the surface of the features, interface techniques, and usefulness of a smartphone. Future articles will concentrate on some of the more interesting features, but I think you will now agree that:

Smartphone == PDA + (not so smart) phone. *

Excel 2007 Tips

By Constance Brown, President, Canton/Alliance/Massillon User Group, Ohio, March 2011 issue, The Memory Map, www.camug.org, president@camug.org

One of the first frustrations of moving to Excel 2007 or 2010 from an earlier version is caused by the new **xlsx** extension that has replaced the **xls** extension that Excel spreadsheets used for many years. This change does not allow users of earlier versions of Excel to open the spreadsheets created in the new versions unless they have downloaded a compatibility viewer. If you are using a new version of Excel and need to share a spreadsheet with someone in an office that has not yet updated their version of Excel, you can choose to save the new spreadsheet in an earlier format.

To do this, it is best to save the spreadsheet first of all in the new format. Click on the Office button (2007) or File > Save (2010) and Save as an Excel Workbook. Then save the spreadsheet once again, using the drop-down menu to select Save as Excel 97-2003 Workbook. At this point you have other choices as well. Perhaps you wish to save it to be opened in the free Open Office suite.

If so, select Open Document Spreadsheet. You can also choose to have the file saved as a pdf which can be viewed, though not manipulated, in Adobe Acrobat Reader or any number of other free pdf readers.

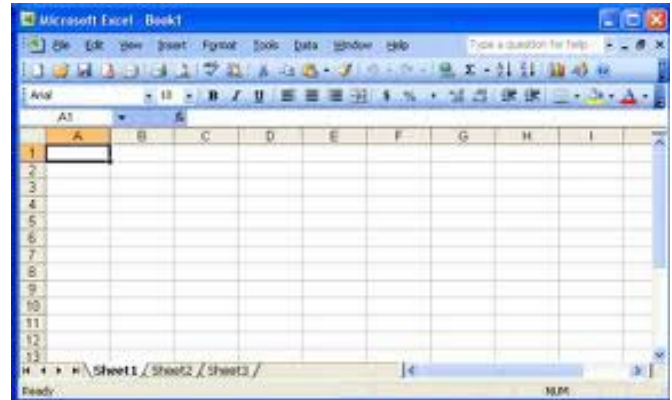
Have you ever wanted to copy a spreadsheet to another worksheet in the same or a new workbook?

The slickest way to do so is to R click on the tab at the bottom of the worksheet and select Move or Copy. A window opens asking where you wish to move or copy the selected sheets. If you wish to Copy, be sure to click on the box in front of the words Create a Copy. All your information PLUS formatting and formulas will be preserved.

By the way, you can rename tabs and assign colors to tabs by right clicking on them. And you can drag tabs to change the order. You can also delete tabs by R Clicking and you can also insert worksheets from other workbooks through choices offered through R clicking. To insert additional worksheets in the existing workbook, click on the icon with a starburst to the right of your existing group of tabs.

Suppose you are looking at a spreadsheet that shows all the companies that have purchased products from you and how much you have profited from the sales. You wish to know what the average profit is, as well as the least and greatest amount of profit. And certainly you want to know how much you total profit is. Did you know you can find out all these answers and more without writing any formulas? First we will R click on the Status Bar, an open area to the left of the zoom slider bar, and make sure that all the items we want are checked. Next we will click on the column header above the column title of Profits to highlight the entire Profits column. Voila! The Status Bar displays all the

information we wanted to see!



Now let's suppose that we wish to call attention to the profits that are above average. We do this through Conditional Formatting. With the entire Profits column highlighted, we will go to the Styles command group on the Home tab. We will select Top/Bottom Rules and then Above Average and select the color scheme we wish to apply to the cells displaying the above average profits. We can add icon indicators as well. Freezing Panes offers a way to view column and/or row headers while scrolling. Click on the tab titled View. Click on a cell on a row below the header and then on Freeze Panes / Freeze Top Row. To freeze both a row and a header, click on the cell immediately to the right of the row you wish to freeze and below the header.

That would often be cell B2. Then click on Freeze Panes / Freeze Panes.

Let's look at one more way to examine our data. This time we will use filters. We access filters from the tab titled View. You will see the filter under the command group titled Sort and Filter. Click on the filter. Each column header will then display a button with a down arrow. Suppose we are still working with our spreadsheet that shows profits from various companies in the regions of the country where we sell products. We can go to the Regions header and click on the down arrow of the filter and remove the checkmarks from all except the West. Now we can look carefully at all the companies that have purchased from us in the West. We can additionally filter on companies and or products to discover what products and companies are most successful in the region we have selected.

Excel is a powerful program with many user friendly tools hiding in the Ribbon. Don't let the new look of Excel intimidate you. There are many more powerful features and additional ones that have been released in Excel 2010.

Go exploring and see what nuggets you can discover to share with others! *

Cell Phone Lingo

By Wil Wakely, President, Seniors Computer Group, CA, March 2011 issue, Bits and Bytes, The Official Electronic Newsletter of the Seniors Computer Group, www.SCGsd.org, wilw@adnc.com

When it's time to buy or upgrade to a new cell phone, are you as confused as I am with all the fancy terms and acronyms in the sales pitch? They make my head spin. Some of the terms you will encounter refer to the technology generation of the phone, as in G0 to G5. About every 10 years the next larger G (generation) number appears denoting a major improvement in cell phone technology. Each generation improves the speed, security, power usage, range and reliability of cell phones.

G0 refers to the original mobile telephone, a large unit stored in the car trunk with a hand-set between the driver and passenger seat. Remember those? Essentially it was a souped-up short-wave radio. These first made the scene via Motorola and Bell Telephone in the 50's.

Next came G1 using GMS tech (see below) which also was analog, first introduced in Japan in 1979 and later in the USA in 1983. In 1992, G2 was a major improvement using digital technology vs. analog that was used in G1. So what's the difference? Analog is a continuous smooth signal like whistling a tune. Digital rapidly samples the song and converts each small time segment into a series of ones and zeros, or digits. Through some clever complex calculations, these digits are converted back to the original sound tone and volume. The advantages of digital are that the data can be compressed and encoded for security and no information is lost as long as the 1/0 signal can be detected, even from a lot of accompanying noise.

In 2001, 3G was introduced using a new technology called CDMA (code division multiple access) developed by our local Qualcomm company. This is a very complex encoding that allows many more users on the same channel at the same time. G3 is probably the most common system in use today.

G4 arrived in 2006 and allows 1 Gbt/s (one gigabit per second) downloads from a fixed location or 100 mbt/s (megabits per second) from a moving vehicle. These high speeds allow streaming high-definition video (HD movies) on your cell phone. Also, connections to the Internet are faster and better. G5 is still in the lab and promises even more features, but may not arrive before 2020.

The cell phone field is rampant with 3, 4, and 5 letter acronyms. Here are a few that a salesman may try to impress you with:

- GMS (global mobile system): still widely used in older phones.

- TDMA (time domain multiple access): sharing the airwave in small time slots.
- FDMA (frequency domain multiple access): sharing the airwave in different frequencies.
- CDMA (see above).

An analogy to the problem of multiple access is a room (channel) in which people wish to talk to each other simultaneously. To avoid confusion, people could take turns speaking (time division), speak at different pitches (frequency division), or speak in different languages (code division). Other terms you may encounter are LTE (long term evolution), OTDMA (orthogonal TDMA) and WiMax (similar to WiFi). These are fancy names for some of the latest improvements in the field. So the best strategy for buying a new cell phone is to read the reviews and then find a salesman you can trust. Some of the above information may help you understand his pitch and also impress him with your knowledge. *

Overheating: What To Watch For

Any component inside your computer can overheat under the right circumstances, but due to their nature, there are several pieces of hardware that are at high risk for heat damage. At the top of the list is the computer's CPU. Whenever you launch a program on your computer or use an application that's already running, the CPU must work a little harder to keep up. Eventually, the CPU is forced to operate at the peak of its abilities, and that's when it consumes the most electricity and generates the most heat. When the CPU overheats, programs that typically run fine may generate error messages, or the entire computer may crash. Some CPUs are designed to reduce their speed when they overheat, so if you experience severe slowdowns in programs after a certain amount of time has passed, heat is the likely culprit. Video cards are the second most likely type of hardware to overheat, especially if you use the computer to play graphics-intensive 3D games. Most video cards contain their own memory and CPU, and when the memory overheats, it tends to cause white "sparkles" to appear randomly on-screen, where-as heat problems resulting from the card's CPU generally cause the game to slow down or crash.

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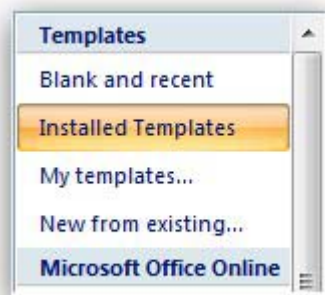
Word Templates Can Simplify Your Life

By Nancy DeMarte, Columnist, Office Talk, Sarasota PCUG, Inc., FL, January 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor, www.spcug.org, ndemarte@Verizon.net

Templates have been a feature of Microsoft Word since the early versions. These pre-formatted documents are offered as time-savers to users who need a quick business letter, resume, agenda, or other document. Each template includes placeholders with instructions for what should be typed there, such as “recipient name.” The user fills in the required information and the document is complete.

I was never a fan of templates. They were too restrictive; I am the do-it-myself type. There was never the right kind of document for my task among the limited choices. And if I could remember to save the template as a document, I was never exactly sure where it was being saved on my computer. With the greatly enhanced improvements to templates in Word 2007 and 2010, I have changed my mind. The template choices now have been expanded to include hundreds of document types, and they are much easier to find and save. Word 2007/2010 users can even edit templates or create their own templates from personal documents.

Using a Template



Word 2007 provides templates from two sources: installed within the Word program and online at the Microsoft website. To view the installed templates, click the Office button (or File button in Word 2010), then New, and then Installed Templates. Here you will find thirty letters, fax cover pages, resumes, and agendas formatted with the new themes of Word 2007. Click one to see its preview, and then click “Create new,” which opens it as a document, leaving the original template intact in its original location. After replacing the placeholder text with your own, save this document to a folder of your choice. Often the placeholder body text includes tips for changing the formatting using the new style and theme galleries in Word 2007.

The online templates offer an impressive number and variety of document types. Accessing these couldn't be simpler. Click the Office button, then New. Under the heading Microsoft Office Online in the left column, select the category of template you want. Besides the standard

letters and resumes, you will find interesting new categories such as calendars, greeting cards, and stationery, which are colorful and professionally formatted. To use the category “Lists” as an example, under the subheading Home are various shopping lists, emergency contacts list, and a travel checklist, to name a few. Other types of lists include Medical (family medical history, medicines and vitamins, etc.) and Menus (illustrated templates for menus to celebrate all kinds of occasions). Merely reading through the forty categories of online templates should inspire anyone to try some.

Once you have chosen a specific template from the online selections, click it to see the preview. Some of these templates have been created by Microsoft; others have been submitted by users. In the preview window you will see the template's rating (1 – 5 stars) based on user feedback, the file size and estimated download time. If it is a user-created template, it will include license agreement and terms of use links, although these templates have been thoroughly screened. To get an online template, click Download. Almost immediately the template will appear on your screen as a document, with the template stored in My Templates (Office button – New – My Templates) for future use.

An interesting feature of online templates is that many of them contain usable content rather than just formatting suggestions. For example, under the Letters category, the “Apology for Poor Service” letter is an actual apology which could be sent by a business in response to a complaint from a customer. Another letter from the travel letters subheading is “Complaint about Lost Luggage.” For those of us who want to write this letter, but aren't sure how to word it, this template could save the day.

Customizing a Template

Of course, anything in a template can be modified, even the template itself. To edit an installed template, bring it up in the preview window. Next to “Create new,” select Template instead of Document so that it opens as a template. To edit an online template, download it first, and then save it as a template file type (.dotx). Now you can delete placeholders and replace them with text that will not change, such as your name and address. You can change the font or font size or any other formatting aspect of the template. When done, save it as a template file type with a name that clearly identifies it, such as “Median letter template revised” and be sure it gets stored with other templates in the My Templates folder. In the “Save As” dialog box, choose “Templates” as the saving location. You can always delete templates from the My Templates folder the same way you delete any file.

Create a Template with the Hidden Tab

I have often wished I could create a template from a document that I use regularly. It's easy with Word 2007. To do this, you will need to reveal a hidden tab on the Ribbon: the Developer tab. Click the Office button, then Word Options. Put a check mark next to "Show Developer tab in the ribbon" and click OK.

First open or create a document that you wish to be the basis for a template. For illustration, let's say it is a meeting agenda. Decide which areas of the template will change in subsequent uses, such as the date or agenda items. In the Developer tab, you can add a Date Picker from the Controls group. It's the second icon in the bottom row. This

will add a drop down calendar to the template from which to choose a date and gives options for formatting the date. To add a placeholder for a text item, the Controls group includes a Rich Text command (Aa) which will add a placeholder. You can then use the Properties command to add text which describes what should be typed there, such as "Agenda Item 1." Save your creation as a template (.dotx or .dot) in My Templates as described above. It will be readily available when you need it.

Templates can help us do a variety of tasks with Word without the tedium of creating all our documents from scratch. Explore the template choices, and you will surely find some that meet your needs. *

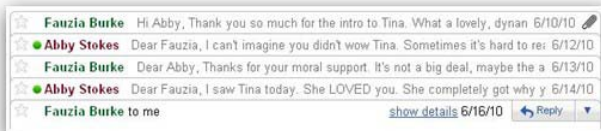
Geez - Gmail

By Abby Stokes, Author, *Is This Thing On?*, www.abbyandme.com, abbystokes@yahoo.com

When I'm asked what free web-based e-mail I recommend it is **NOT** Gmail <www.gmail.google.com/> I know, I know, your kids and grand kids are all over you to use Gmail instead of AOL. I agree that AOL is inconsistent and not as compatible with many handheld devices, but Gmail's design is not particularly "user-friendly" (a misnomer when referring to anything computer). I would suggest Yahoo <<https://login.yahoo.com/>> over Gmail, but I understand that your family has more influence over your decisions that I do.

So, if you're going to take the plunge and use Gmail, let's make it as "friendly" as we can by customizing it to meet your needs.

My first criticism is that e-mails stack on top of one another:



For a newbie what you see above can be conceptually confusing and, for those that have dexterity issues, this format is difficult to manipulate - it requires very good aim.

I hear you daughter snapping back that one could click on **Expand All** in the right sidebar. The problem with this option is that Google then presents the oldest e-mail on top and the most recent must be scrolled down to - not an optimal choice for someone just learning to scroll or who has memory issues. Rather than debate the good, bad, and ugly of Gmail, let me offer you a way to reformat the Inbox. This stacking is referred to as "conversation view."

To turn conversation view off:

- 1) Click on **Settings** (top right)
- 2) Scroll down until you see **Conversation View**:

3) Click in the circle (aka radio dial) to the left of **Conversation view off**

4) **MOST IMPORTANT** - Scroll all the way to the bottom and click on **Save Changes**

I am asked regularly "How can I change the font to be larger on all of my outgoing e-mails?" This is a courtesy to the reader that most older users are more apt to opt for. It is an elusive option with Gmail, but it does exist.

To enable change font style:

- 1) Click **Settings** (top right)
- 2) Click the **Labs** tab (far right)
- 3) Scroll down to **Default Text Styling**
- 4) Click in the circle to the left of **Enable**
- 5) **MOST IMPORTANT** - Scroll all the way to the bottom and click on **Save Changes**

While you're visiting Settings or the Lab tab, take a look around and see what else you might want to customize. Make a note of the original setting - in case you don't like the change you've made, you can revert back to what it was.

For those teaching Gmail to a new user, be sure to really hit home that the arrow to the right of Reply 2 is where the most common actions will be hidden - Forward, Print, Reply All, etc. Why did Gmail choose to hide these features? Mine is not to wonder why. Mine is just to show you how.



You're capable of learning anything - well-designed or not. Just keep in mind when you think the problem is you, it's more likely a thoughtless design choice.

Take a deep breath and rise above it! *

Circuit Writer Version 8.4

By Jim Scheef, Director, Danbury Area Computer Society, CT, January 2011 Issue, DACS.doc
– A Computer & Technology Newsletter, www.dacs.org, jscheef@dacs.org

Last month, I mentioned that Christie's would feature an Apple-1 in an auction that included some other interesting artifacts. Well the Apple-1 sold for \$213,000. Now that Christie's has shown interest, vintage computer collecting will never be the same. Read more on CNN (tinyurl.com/2uu7e6a).

Killing the Web

Remember when email was new and it was cool to have an email address on your business card? Some people had more than one; in the early-90's I had four. My primary email was on CompuServe but of course not everyone was on CS, so on the back of the card I had the X.400 addressing needed to reach me on CS from forward-thinking companies that had gateways, plus my BIX address, and one other I can't remember right now. Why would anyone print all this on business cards? Because back then, few email systems were connected. The offer "Send me an email" was always followed by "Which email do you use?" Of course all that changed when Congress opened up the "acceptable use" policy for the group of government-sponsored networks that became the Internet.

Unfortunately, the openness of the Internet as well as the universality of email is being threatened by the islands of communication we call social networks. Just like the pre-Internet email on CS, messages sent on Facebook must be retrieved (there are exceptions to this) on Facebook. More importantly, to continue the conversation, one must return to Facebook and send your reply there. Now Facebook is extending Facebook messaging to include an email address that will be @facebook.com. According to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg, "This is not an e-mail killer." (Which means he thinks it is.) He continued, "This is a messaging system that includes e-mail as one part of it." The new email offering will be an extension of the existing Messages facility and is not available yet as far as I can determine. Read more on Information Week (tinyurl.com/23ghv7f). A scary part of Facebook email is a new Messages API that will allow applications access to messages. We know how well that has worked in the past.

This is just one of the many reasons Google is worried about Facebook. Another reason is that Google and other search sites cannot search and index the content on Facebook. If you want to search Facebook, you must log on Facebook and use their search facility. From the outside Facebook is a black hole in the web that leaks only what it wants to let out. You can see how these social networking "features" create a walled garden around the user community. Balkanizing the Internet is a facet of net neutrality from the other side of the stone.

WikiLeaks

Is free speech conservative or liberal? It shouldn't even be a question, yet interpreting the First Amendment consumes an awful lot of speech. Wikipedia has this warning at the top of the article on WikiLeaks: "This article may be affected by the following current event: United States diplomatic cables leak. Information in this article may change rapidly as the event progresses." Well, the article, (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikileaks) with its 289 footnotes, did not change while I was perusing it.

Then again, is the current WikiLeaks issue one of free speech? Some say it is, but maybe not. The current coverage on some news media would have you believe that Julian Assange, generally described as the founder or director of the organization, masterminded the whole thing, whatever that might be. Assuming you still have an open mind on this issue, I urge you to read the Wikipedia article and review the list of "leaks". The best summary of the current controversy I have found is Steven Colbert's December 9 interview of Daniel Ellsberg (tinyurl.com/2b3ay3d). No one could better understand this situation than Daniel Ellsberg (source of the Pentagon Papers) and he gives fabulously relevant answers to Colbert's questions. Also pay close attention to the people threatening Assange's life in the lead-in to the interview.

So far it looks like we will hang (figuratively if not literally) PFC Bradley Manning, the US Army intelligence analyst to whom the current leaks are attributed. Right now this guy has to be Assange's biggest fan because the manhunt and legal issues in Great Britain have diverted media attention from PFC Manning. Soon enough the media's Eye of Sauron will return its gaze to the presumed source of the material and how he was able to replicate the copyrighted graphics on a Lady Gaga CD.

I wish I had some clear lucid observations on the WikiLeaks issue. Assange can't be tried as a traitor because he is not an American. WikiLeaks did not publish the leaked materials, the New York Times, and other newspapers did. Chew on that for a while.

Last Column

I have asked for a sabbatical from my column. My request was granted because, well, what else could they say? My rationale is to devote more time to several related projects that are not making sufficient progress. One of these projects is the conversion of the DACS website to Drupal; another is a website for my high school class reunion coming in 2013. I hope to return to writing in these pages in a few months. In the meantime, be kind to whoever fills this space in DACS.doc! *

Microsoft program stores all types of data

By John Weigle, Editor, Channel Islands PCUG, California, January 2011 issue,
The Outer Edge, www.cipcug.org, jweigle@vcnet.com

Microsoft's OneNote was one of the subjects discussed by Toby Scott, Channel Islands PCUG Technical Advisor, at their December 2010 program in December.

OneNote has been compared to a three-ring binder as a place to store all types of information in a searchable form. But it's far more useful than just a binder full of paper, as Scott showed in the demonstration.

OneNote first appeared in the Microsoft Office suite in 2003, but not in all versions, he said. It was in most of the versions of Office 2007 and is in all of the 2010 versions, including Home and Student. It is also available as a stand-alone purchase for about \$75.

OneNote is the perfect place to store "a tremendous amount of random stuff" in notebooks that can all be examined with a single search, Scott said. Each notebook can have tabs to further divide the information.

Notebooks are listed on the left, and the tabs for a notebook run across the top of the program. Pages can also have sub-pages.

"I probably have 10,000 notes of one kind or another I'd like to be able to get to and some of them I can't find anymore," Scott said. OneNote becomes a central depository for this kind of information, he said.

A notebook could cover plans for a trip, he said. When the trip is over and you don't need it anymore, you can delete it with a right click.

The program is quite flexible, he said, because "you can enter data into OneNote almost any way you can get information into a computer." You can cut and paste information, import Word and Excel documents and copy and paste text from an image (for example, a screen shot). Text in an image is searchable.

OneNote wants to tie into SkyDrive, Microsoft's "to the clouds," he said. It gives you 25 Gig of storage but you cannot store files larger than 50 Meg. Stored items can be personal (private) or shared. Users who put information in a shared folder are immediately asked if they want to send e-mails to notify people that the information is there. Anyone can see the shared files, but they can be password-protected to limit access, he said.

It's also possible to copy entire Web sites, and, while the format of the page does not remain, all links remain live. Those who put data in a shared file can give users permission to edit it, but they, not those who visit the shared folder, have the power to limit and grant access permissions.

The cloud version of Office, which includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint and OneNote, can be used from SkyDrive.

Information entered in OneNote is saved immediately so users don't have to remember to save before closing the program.

A search in OneNote looks through all notebooks, lists where the term is found and highlights it in the opened notebook.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of templates are available for OneNote users, including ones for home, school and business. But, Scott noted, "Not all free template downloads are useful."

Text can be saved from many pictures, such as a screen shot of a DOS box, and copied to another spot in OneNote. A search will find the information in the image whether you've copied it out to text or not (the highlight was hard to see on the DOS screen shot, however). This does not work on heavily artistic graphics, like the CIPCUG logo on the society's Web page, however. "There are limits on what you can pick up," he said.

OneNote also defeats attempts to make copying a Web page impossible, Scott noted. In Vista and Windows 7, you can use the clipping tool to mark the portion of the Web page you want and paste it into OneNote, where it's instantly searchable.

Scott also showed a notebook for work where he stores information on problems that are repetitive but don't come up often enough so fixing them becomes automatic. He stores fix-it information in the notebook and can then search for words matching the problem. He can store registry fixes and similar information, keeping the links live all the time.

Another use, he said, is to gather pricing information from a variety of websites for airline tickets and so on, paste it into OneNote and compare all the data in one place. OneNote also adds a "Pasted from ..." tag with information you paste from a website.

OneNote does not pick up CSS formatting and the background images on a Web page so it won't display the information the way you see it on the Web page. Information can also be copied from a PDF file, he said.

Spreadsheets imported from websites are readable, but they don't necessarily import in a spreadsheet format. Scott said that if he wants material from a spreadsheet to be imported into a different spreadsheet, he copies the material into Note Tab Pro. He then does a search for two spaces and replaces them with a tab. He then pastes that material into a spreadsheet, and Excel uses the tabs to create new columns. *

