

# NEWSbits

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## DECEMBER : SANDHILLS - LEARNING THROUGH READING



**A**t our December meeting, the organization switched gears somewhat to host its holiday meeting at beautiful Nunez Community College's Arts and Technology auditorium off of Paris Road in Chalmette. Sandhills Publishing Marketing Representative, Amber Coffin presented to CCUG-PC for her company. Accompanied by two other reps, Amber delighted the audience with her speaking style. Amber and associates hailed from Lincoln, Nebraska where her publishing company conducts business at their home office.



Amber spoke about several of her publications while exhibiting her demonstration on a 10 ft. by 10 ft screen. Her presentation described several of their popular "In Plain English" publications which included, Smart Computing, an

easy to understand 110 page publication for PC users of novice upwards; CPU for the computer power users that covered hardware; PC Today, which has been around as long as the now defunct, PC Novice--and explains issues of the day, the operating systems, and more; CE Lifestyles for the person who uses electronic gadgets; and other seasonal and promotional magazines such as PC Troubleshooting and PC MOBOs.

Ms. Coffin Stressed that none of her publications include more than 16 advertisements in each issue, in order to maximize content and increase dissatisfaction by the reader as in most publications on the market today. That's a real plus to those that wish for more matter on subject material and less hype.

*(Snadhills, continued on page 9)*



### BenQ

**BenQ FP731 / 17-In.  
Auto Adjustment  
High Brightness  
D-Sub input quality  
True-Color Support**

Imagine this beautiful **BenQ LCD Monitor** on your desktop?!! Sleek, super-modern styling and a 1280dpi will make any gamer, photo-lover or user proud to own it. Go for it!!!

**Get your tickets today. Now—7 for \$10.00!**

## Windows XP Tips & Tricks

*with* **Margaret Wynn**

### February 12



You'll enjoy Margaret Wynn's approach to XP with her choices for Tips & Tricks. You'll learn great time-saving tips combined with

easily -explained ideas that can make your time at the computer more productive and effective!

## Computers from the Very Beginning—Monitors

By Charlie Paschal, Editor/Publisher, Palmetto Personal Computer Club, Columbia, SC. Columnist, *The (Columbia) State newspaper, SC*

Just as understanding computer memory can be confusing, so can understanding a computer display, one of the most important parts of a computer.

The display, which also can be called a monitor, is connected to a computer by a cable that attaches to a video card inside a computer. Troubles with a display can be traced to the cable, the card inside the computer, software that drives the card, the display itself or some piece of equipment nearby.

Monitors can be found in various sizes and shapes but even the best of monitors can be made to look bad if any of the other parts and pieces are not working correctly or of poor quality. A monitor is only as good as the video card in your computer and the software that runs that video card and monitor.

### *Let's focus first on the monitor.*

Of all the parts and pieces that make up a computer system, the monitor is one part that you shouldn't scrimp on. If you plan to have a computer for a long time, then buck up and spend the money for a good one. Although you may buy a new computer, you can always use your old monitor on it -- especially if you buy a good quality monitor.

### *In that purchase, there's a lot to consider.*

Although you can find monitors less than 17 inches in size, I don't recommend buying one. Since some very cheap systems come with smaller monitors, it's something you should guard against when looking at buying a system that comes with a monitor.

Resolution and dot pitch are very important when it comes to monitors. A computer screen is made up of dots and these are measured in dot pitch. In this case, you always go with the lowest number, with a cutoff of 28 dot pitch. Anything larger than that will give you a grainy display. More expensive models come with a dot pitch of 24.

Resolution is another measure of a monitor. Common resolutions include 640x480, 800x600,

1024x768 and 1280x1024. Even if your monitor can do higher resolutions, if your video card can't, then you won't be able to use them. Why should you care about resolution? By using higher resolutions, you can fit more on your screen. A Web page viewed at 640x480 displays very little information. By boosting your resolution to 800x600 or 1024x768, you can fit more pixels on the screen, thus increasing your viewing area.

Another feature to check before buying a monitor is its refresh rate. Although many makers claim their monitors are able to display higher resolutions, these are often delivered at a rate lower than 72Hz, meaning that your eyes will see flicker. This is hard on your eyes and will make your eyes tire quicker than a higher refresh rate.



In today's world, the hot item is a "flat panel" (as compared to a CRT "tubed flat screen") LCD monitor; but, just because it's hot and the salesmen are pushing it, doesn't mean you should buy it. Although many of us lust after a flat panel, there are drawbacks:

Small type often doesn't look good on one. If you're considering one, be sure to look at some small type faces in the store before you buy it. If a salesperson is handy, get them to start Wordpad (or Word) and make the type nine- or 10

*(Monitors, continues on page 8)*

# Back to BASICS

"Have you tried "Back to Basics?" "Back to Basics" is a very popular member benefit.



Long time board member & Member Representative Margaret Wynn as well as other members have devoted themselves to helping members & new guests with their questions and problems in a

semiprivate environment that is a quickly growing segment of our membership! *Meets from 9:30-10:20 A.M. monthly before the general meeting.*

Try it once, you'll instantly want to join the group at a low price membership of only \$25.00 per year...(Where else can you get so much information at about 2 bucks a month?) We're the "best kept secret in the whole Metro area" according to *WWL-TV's Jerry Serigni of Digital Gumbo!* Don't wait—join today and enjoy *all the member benefits!*



# PRESIDENT'S CORNER

## Hi CCUG-PC Members:

A new year. Another one. Each more quicker than the last. Each one filled with more promises of new technologies hoping to hit the market any day now.

After watching a recent 60 Minutes show, you have to wonder how "easy" our lives will be with the hottest in innovations. "Google plans some day to make surfing for information as easy as reaching for your cellphone and asking where anything is within your current surroundings. Scan something with your phone and get the answer: people, pets, objects, directions to products, etc. within a stone's throw. Our world will be getting much smaller and our knowledge wants to know where and how we can obtain that information.

Case in point. New to town and wish to know where to locate a pharmacy for a headache within a block or so? Ask for it by punching in Google's number and your zipcode. The result is a pharmacy a couple blocks away on 42nd Street. ...And that's not all.

In the future, you can pass a few mall stores and you'll be "spammed", counted, sized up or informed by the store. So, let's say you were looking for a specific product or holiday gift. You'll have that information available either punched in or biometrically (your body will be able to store information that can "tune into" search engines inwardly and outwardly) and that information will be sensed by the store that you're in the market for that product to alert/inform you that you're at the store/mall and where you can get the product along with pricing, comparison products by competing stores for better deals, etc. Science fiction? Remember nothing is that much of science fiction that cannot be the real deal within some period in time.

Expect more "personal" devices. Expect big things from small packages. Prices high at the onset, but newer, faster and state of the art will be the rule!

*Jerry Montalbano*



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### NOTICE MEETING DATES!!

#### Upcoming in 2005

<i>February 12</i>	<i>All dates</i>
<i>March 5</i>	<i>are subject</i>
<i>April 2</i>	<i>to change</i>
<i>May 7</i>	<i>with room</i>
<i>June 4</i>	<i>availability</i>
<i>July 9</i>	<i>permitted</i>

### ARTICLE CONTRIBUTIONS

**NEWSBITS** Newsletter is published monthly by CCUG-PC. Articles for publication *must* be submitted, typewritten and on disk to our newsletter staff by the **15th** of the month for publication. We welcome all articles of computing interest and we reserve the right to edit when appropriate. **SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH US.** If you have a tip or technique with a software program (or hardware), please enlighten us. All computer related articles are welcomed. Please submit your contributions to us in a file of any disk format or upload to [jerryccug@cox.net](mailto:jerryccug@cox.net) for our **Newsbits Newsletter** Staff. CCUG-PC would love to hear from you! Submissions from our members, or reprints from other publications are welcomed, but do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Board of Directors nor the membership. Reprints are granted when credit is given to the author. Submissions of any content, articles or materials become property of CCUG-PC for sole use and publication.

1996 Lotus  
Intergalactic  
Newsletter



CCUG-PC



## FROM THE DEALS GUY



by *Bob Click*, Greater  
Orlando Computer User Group



When working the Handicap show I was impressed with the technology I saw. There are computers with sensors capable of detecting even eyebrow or eye movement that can be used to control certain things. There is too much to go into detail, but it was sure interesting to see all the technology available for the handicapped. One product was a special computer in the \$8,000 range that has tremendous capabilities. Legislation exists concerning the provision of whatever technology would help a student if certain tests suggest that a technology is necessary to help them. To find out more about how this legislation works, try a search for "IDEA", better known as "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act." If you know anyone severely handicapped, a test and that legislation could help him or her.

I also noticed the Christopher Reeves Foundation booth there and hoped he and Dana might attend, but was told his health prevented it at that time. Sadly, news of his death came shortly after that show.



### *Disappearing Rebates*

I discovered a new problem concerning rebates. I've had good luck with **OfficeMax rebates** in the past, but the last two I sent in ended up with a follow-up phone call later by me only to be told that the check was sent on a certain date and cashed on a certain date; end of conversation. I gave them the benefit of the doubt for the first one, but when I got the same answer for the second one, I know I keep better records than that and we have no problem with mailboxes in our neighborhood. A \$10 rebate wasn't worth any further efforts, but that's making me more gun-shy of rebates.

### *Reminders*

I talked to Rich Henf at **Banner Badge** [<http://www.bannerbadge.com>] and if you have not ordered one of these fun gadgets yet they will still honor the DealsGuy offer. Call 1-772-571-9944. If you had problems contacting them during Florida's vicious storms, they apologize and urge you to try again. Peet Bros. (weather station) may have had similar problems. I'm not sure but you may still be able to get that special on the Ultimeter Weather Station [<http://www.peetbros.com>] by calling 1-321-206-6214. When I ordered a Big Weather Picture for my weather station I found it was backordered, but I now have it. Just a glance provides all the weather information. What a nice present for my wife and I, (mostly me).

*How About Helping Microsoft!*



My thanks to Joe Barth of Alamo PC Organization for sending this information. Joe says; "They are seeking people to participate in Microsoft product evaluations and get free software. Ever wanted to talk to Microsoft about that one feature you wished the company would change in a product, or on a Web site? The Usability Research Group at Microsoft is interested in talking to you! All participants will receive a software gift for participating in a study." Check [<http://www.microsoft.com/usability/jump1.htm>].



### *Time Is Of The Essence*

Here is a sophisticated time and data management software, **C-Organizer Professional**, which offers PC users a digital Planner, Event Scheduler, Calendar, Notebook, Address Book, Password and Bookmark managers, all packed up into one powerful and easy-to-use application. C-Organizer can bring out and help to cultivate time architect skills even in the most hopeless time prisoner. For further information, go to [<http://www.csoftlab.com>].

User Group people can get it for \$25.00 rather than the usual \$35.00 price by downloading (4.15 MB) at [<https://secure.element5.com/shareit/checkout.html?productid=167248&language=English&COUPON1=248QHM>] for the discounted price. I doubt there is any help for me and my scarcity of time. I'm supposed to be retired, but so far, I have only managed that part time, (mini-part-time).



### *How About A Great Relational Database!*

I called **Alpha Software** to order the new version of Alpha 5 on special, and while talking to the order-taker, he remembered me so we created a deal for my readers. Alpha Software has been offering their database for years and has continued to improve it. They have introduced Alpha 5 ver. 6 and user group members can get a deal on it. Remember that Alpha 5 is a relational database that has some exciting new features. Check their Web site at [<http://www.alphasoftware.com>] for full information. You can build Web-accessible database applications without any programming. You can access and work with your data no matter where it resides if you have an Internet Web Browser. Alpha 5 uses Genies, which are similar to Wizards, but they say Genies are better.

*(Bob Click, continues on next page 8)*

**Coming Very Soon to  
You: Electronic Newsbits**



## Tech-Lovers Corner—TLC SIG



CCUG-PC has just established a new special interest group (SIG). As we may not have a permanent name but can develop one upon the success of the group Let's just say that the intermediates and advanced users have sought such an ensemble for them—and we have listened.

Beginning today from 9:30-10:15 a.m., TLC attendees have a special spot to meet (a designated area of the general meeting room) where intermediate/advanced members can hold roundtable discussions each general meeting.

Roundtable discussions are informal group meetings where more advanced topics are discussed, such as computer hardware, technologies, and software fixes, patches—you name it, there's no limitations, but to the knowledge of those in attendance.

The TLC group has been organized to address many issues that might be too complex for less experienced users. Users who might feel topics too complex can attend the *Back to Basics SIG* group hosted by Margaret Wynn in the Complex Conference Room behind the meeting room staging area. Please join us as we wish to *kick your computer habit up a notch!!!*



## MOVIE STUDIOS SIGN UP WITH HD DVD

Future movies are going to be a lot clearer.

Currently, movies come in a format called DVD Video. These discs hold about 17 GB of data. But a new generation of discs, which use a violet—rather than red—laser, is on the way. They will hold much more data, making high definition DVDs possible. Two hours of high definition video takes about 25 gigabytes of space.

There are two violet-laser formats—Blu-ray and HD DVD. Sony, which has a movie studio, is backing the former. Toshiba is pushing HD DVD and signed up the four studios. Hopefully, one or the other of the standards will win. Otherwise, we'll continue to have mass confusion in DVD standards. But, one way or another, we're going to get high-definition DVDs. That's the message from this news.



## Regain That New Windows PC Performance

by *Kim Komando*

**E**ven the fastest computers get bogged down over time. Unnecessary files, never-used programs and programs running in the background consume valuable resources. But it takes just five easy steps to reclaim your once zippy Windows machine.

1. Lighten the load. No matter how big your hard drive, it will slow down once it reaches 90 percent capacity. Free up valuable space by removing unused programs. Click Start | Control Panel (in Windows 98/ME, Start | Settings | Control Panel). Double-click Add or Remove Programs.



If you have Windows XP, you'll see the size of the program, how often it's used and the date it was last used. It's helpful but shouldn't be used exclusively as a determining factor.

Click the program you want to remove and then click Change/Remove (In Windows 98/ME, Add/Remove).

When uninstalling programs, you may encounter a message asking if you want to remove a shared component. Select "no to all." These files are small and may be necessary for other programs to operate properly.

2. Clean it up. Disk Cleanup will delete downloaded program files, temporary Internet files, items in your Recycle Bin and temporary files. Windows XP's version of Disk Cleanup also deletes offline Web pages and compresses rarely used files.

Click Start | (All) Programs | Accessories | System Tools | Disk Cleanup. Select the drive you want to clean (probably C:) and click OK. Place a check mark next to the items you want deleted and click OK.

You can also remove Windows components that you don't use. Start Disk Cleanup and click the More Options tab. Click "Clean up" under Windows components. You can remove games, accessories and other non-essential Windows components.

The More Options tab allows Windows XP users to clear old restore points. These hog space over time. Just click the "Clean up" button under System Restore and then Yes.

3. Reduce the start-up. Instant messaging programs, media players and other programs weasel their way into automatically starting with Windows.

*(Komando, continues on page 7)*



## January, 2005

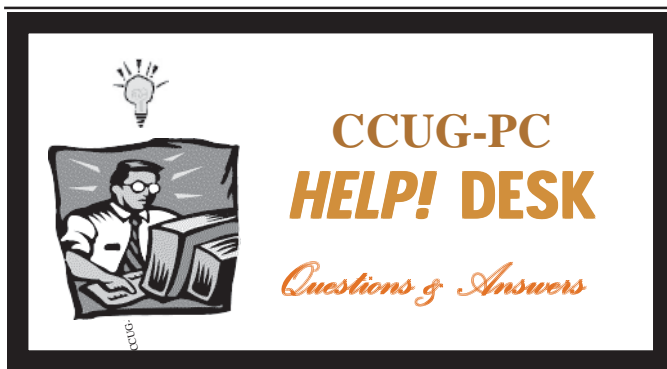
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>Jan 2</i> On Computers WODT AM 1280 12:05PM-3:00PM Web/CNet	<i>Jan 3</i> TechTV Daily-Mon-Fri The Screen Savers 6 PM Cox Ch.355	<i>Jan 4</i>	<i>Jan 5</i> <i>Can you write an article about a product you've tried?</i>	<i>Jan 6</i> <i>We can use your help! Just submit it to us. We'll do the rest!!</i>	<i>Jan 7</i>	<i>Jan 8</i> CCUG-PC Meets: 10AM Corel Corporation WordPerfect 12 CorelDraw 12
<i>Jan 9</i> On Computers WODT AM 1280 12:05PM-3:00PM Web/CNet	<i>Jan 10</i> TechTV Daily-Mon-Fri The Screen Savers 6 PM Cox Ch.355	<i>Jan 11</i>	<i>Jan 12</i>	<i>Jan 13</i>	<i>Jan 14</i>	<i>Jan 15</i> Living with Electronics 10.am Radio 690 am
<i>Jan 16</i> On Computers WODT AM 1280 12:05PM-3:00PM Web/CNet	<i>Jan 17</i> Newsbits Deadline MLK Day	<i>Jan 18</i>	<i>Jan 19</i>	<i>Jan 20</i>	<i>Jan 21</i>	<i>Jan 22</i> Living with Electronics 10.am Radio 690 am
<i>Jan 23</i> On Computers WODT AM 1280 12:05PM-3:00PM Web/CNet	<i>Jan 24</i> TechTV Daily-Mon-Fri The Screen Savers 6PM Cox Ch.355	<i>Jan 25</i> <b>CCUG-PC Board Meets</b> 	<i>Jan 26</i>	<i>Jan 27</i>	<i>Jan 28</i>	<i>Jan 29</i>
<i>Jan 30</i> On Computers WODT AM 1280 12:05PM-3:00PM Web/CNet	<i>Jan 31</i> TechTV Daily-Mon-Fri The Screen Savers 6PM Cox Ch.355	<i>Feb 1</i>	<i>Feb 2</i>	<i>Feb 3</i>	<i>Feb 4</i>	<i>Feb 5</i>  <b>Meeting on Feb 12th</b>
<i>Feb 6</i>	<i>Feb 7</i>	<i>Feb 8</i> Mardi Gras 	<i>Feb 9</i> Ash Wednesday	<i>Feb 10</i>	<i>Feb 11</i> ⇒ <b>NOTE:</b>	<i>Feb 12</i>  CCUG-PC Meets: 10AM Margaret Wynn XP Tips/Tricks

### CCUG-PC General Meeting

8201 W. Judge Perez (Gov't Complex Bldg.), Chalmette, LA.

### Board of Directors Meeting

Nunez Community College Library Conference Room 1-102



with Jerry Montalbano

**Q** I'm quite a novice and am wondering if those "F1-F12 keys serve any useful purpose. I believe they are referred to as "function keys" but would like to know more.

**A** Yes, those are function keys. In the old days of DOS, many programs used them for various functions. Hence, the name. Those were the days before mice, and everything was done with the keyboard.

Some programs still use function keys. Often, for instance, F1 brings up Help. In your computer's Setup section, function keys are used because the mouse does not work there. In Microsoft Word, you can use all of the function keys for common commands. Here they are:

- F1 - Get Help or the Office Assistant
- F2 - Move text or graphics
- F3 - Insert an AutoText entry (after Microsoft Word displays the entry)
- F4 - Repeat the last action
- F5 - Choose the Go To command (Edit menu)
- F6 - Go to the next pane or frame
- F7 - Choose the Spelling command (Tools menu)
- F8 - Extend a selection
- F9 - Update selected fields
- F10 - Activate the menu bar
- F11 - Go to the next field
- F12 - Choose the Save As command (File menu)

Function keys are also valuable in many games. You use them to load guns, blast aliens and cast spells, among other things.

Also, you should know that these function keys serve other purposes when used with the PC's ALT and CTRL keys. Knowing the keyboard basics help one's skills and computer performances when reaching for a mouse doesn't "cut it". For more info, check out the following links to assist you with more function keys "functions":

<http://www.compukiss.com/sandyclassroom/tutorials/article894.htm>

<http://www.help2go.com/article198.html>

*(Komando continued from page 5)*



They just slow down your boot time and guzzle system resources.

You can stop these programs by clicking Start | Run. Type "msconfig" without the quotes and click OK. Click the Startup tab.

You'll see a number of programs listed. Some names are easy to figure out. But the majority are difficult to decipher. You can find a list of entries and explanations here: <http://www.sysinfo.org/startuplist.php>

Clear the boxes for the programs you don't need. Click Apply | OK. You'll be prompted to restart your computer.

After restarting you'll receive a message stating that the System Configuration Utility is in Diagnostic or Selective Startup mode. Just check the box next to "don't show this message again" and click OK.

**4. Consolidate.** It's easy to have multiple copies of digital picture files, especially if you find yourself using them for different projects. A good photo organizer will help consolidate all of your pictures and remove duplicates.

There are a number of good organizers under \$50 from Adobe, Nero and Ulead. There's also a program called Picasa, (<http://www.picasa.com/picasa>). It has fewer extras than the others, but it's free.

**5. Search.** Find and remove inordinately large files through Windows' search function. Click Start | Search | All files and folders. Then click on the arrow next to "What size is it?" Click Large | Search.

You'll probably find forgotten video or music files. You also might find data files from games you no longer play. If you're unsure of the nature of a file, conduct an Internet search using the file name.

Computer housekeeping is really a snap. A little diligence will keep your computer clutter-free and speedy.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Komando'.

**Using is a computer** is unlike riding a bike perhaps. A bike only has a set of instructions for operating it—you steer, balance and peddle. With a computer, it's much tougher because you NEED to keep abreast of the technology and use it often if you wish to maintain your knowledge. CCUG-PC can help you with this, but you'll have to do the rest. Attend less meetings—and perhaps you'll find that's true!





(Sandhills, continued on page 1)



She explained that the magazine was designed as a user's subscription supported one.

In order to simplify what her publishing company was about, her PowerPoint presentation gave many details about the website's tech support (free!), back issues, and that almost all publications are available on-line to subscribers for viewing.

In her kit that she distributed to all attendees: a Smart Computing Pen and Calendar mousepad, an Ultimate Computing Resource Guide which describes the on-line tech support (24-48 hrs.), articles/achievements, definitions, and how to register and change subscription information are but some information given to subscribers to facilitate the on-line experience.

Rounding out the one hour presentation, Amber gave out two complimentary one-year subscriptions and an index folder of several complete magazine publications.

Our most sincere thanks for Amber Coffin and Sandhills Publishing for making their presentation to us a most enjoyable and informative one. The crowd was well-pleased--and that's good!! ❀

## Member of the Year Awarded



*Outgoing Treasurer, Judy Favalora was awarded CCUG-PC's 2004 Member of the Year at the group's December 4th General Meeting by President, Jerry Montalbano. Judy's outstanding efforts as Treasurer and Helpdesk facilitator easily qualified her for the group's prestigious title recognition. Along with a beautifully engraved wooden plaque, she received an Office Depot Gift Certificate for \$50. Thanks and congratulations to Judy from everyone at CCUG-PC!*

(Monitors, continued from page 2)



point. Be sure to check around the edges of the LCD to see if the image blurs on either side.

Often, an LCD is "fixed" to a certain resolution, such as 1024x768. Be sure that you like the way icons and type appears on screen before buying. If the type is too small (or too large), try another resolution. If the type appears jagged or blurry, then the LCD might look best at one resolution.

Color is not rendered sharply by less expensive LCD flat panels. If it's a bargain basement flat panel, the color on a normal CRT probably will be better. The availability of these flat panels mean that the CRT monitors -- the old style larger monitors -- are getting less expensive. About a year ago, I purchased a 21-inch Sony (almost top of the line) for less than \$500 off the Internet. It has beautiful color, is capable of rendering higher resolutions at a high refresh rate.

The push to flat panels also has opened up a huge market for used monitors since many people are replacing the older CRTs with this new style of monitor. Because of this, I've found used 17-inch monitors for less than \$80 and 19-inch monitors for about \$125.

**Bottom line:**

A good rule of thumb for monitors is at least a 1024x768 resolution at 72Hz, no dot pitch larger than 26 and no smaller than 17 inches. Unless you've got a space problem (CRTs are much larger than flat panel monitors), I'd stick with CRT monitors rather than a flat panel, which will cost less in the future as manufactures ramp up production of them. You can bet on that. ❀

(Bob Click, continues from page 4)



It offers action scripting with hundreds of predefined actions that can be used for building applications without writing one character of code. Alpha's Visual Report Writer will also impress you with its ease of use, and lets you accomplish custom layouts and many other tasks. As suggested above, it also works with HTML and supports Active X. Read more about it on their Web site and you will see that Alpha 5, ver. 6 is even more outstanding than ever. I've used Alpha Software's database for my own purposes for years and I'm no expert.

The retail price for Alpha 5 ver. 6 is \$349.00, but during January and February of 2005 you get a tremendous discount, just \$179.00 if you download it (24 megs). To do that, e-mail Brett Johnston at [brett@alphasoft.com] with the code "dealsguy" in the subject line to make arrangements



## About Your Dues!


—*Bob Fauxcheux, Membership Secretary*

*Uh..oh. Here we go!* We're going to talk about the dues. The alarm just went off--Houston we have a problem; *this is not going to be good.*

Well, maybe not, let's take a look. The board in its wisdom has decided to shake things up a bit. Firstly, in the past, for every new member you brought in you would get a \$5.00 credit when you renewed your dues. Now, for every new member you bring in, you will get a \$25.00 credit toward your dues. Yep, bring in one new member you have a \$25.00 credit; bring in a second new member and you will have a \$50.00 credit you can use to renew your dues. *That's the same as a two-year membership at no cost to you.* For now, we are going to give this idea a test run for one year; beginning April 1, 2004 through March 31, 2005.

Now, for the married folks in the group and any families that want to join. You can now be a member under the family plan. Here is how it works: For the cost of one membership you can have your whole family as a member of CCUG-PC. Everything is the same as if your family were a single member; one newsletter, one white ticket, one red ticket and one place to sign on the sign-in sheet. *But your whole family gets the benefit of being a member of the group.*

Hey!! So what about the married couples in the group that just renewed their dues? Well, any couples that have renewed their dues *since the first of this year will receive a credit for any amount above the cost of one membership.*

It's a good deal folks, take advantage of it and bring some friends to the meeting. They may like what they see and join, **and then everybody wins!** BF 



*(Bob Click, continues from page 8)*

for downloading. If you prefer to have it shipped, e-mail Brett with "dealsguy" in the subject line. You can also call Brett at 800-451-1018 Ext. 11. Shipping is \$12.00 in the US, \$30.00 to Canada.





### Working On Your Icons?

I received this announcement from Roman Rudnik, Marketing Communications Mgr. of ArcticLine Software, which produces Bee Icons. He states: "Bee Icons is an icon customization tool that allows you to change over 250 system icons in Windows 95/98/Me/2000/XP, individually or using icon themes. I think you will find our software interesting. Designed for Windows 95/98/Me/2000/XP, the application allows changing over 250 standard icons separately, one after another, or all together using one of the many Bee Icons

## Didya Notice??!!

### At the December Meeting



-  The projector we used was close to a huge 10 foot sq. screen that it had to be placed back 6 rows into the audience.
-  There were not one, but *three* representatives from SandHills Publishing. The speaker and two assistants.
-  A 40 lb. electric typewriter in the low-budget auction was won for \$1. We'd like to thank the donator, even though he had to break his back to carry it 1 1/2 blocks to the stage.
-  You may not have noticed but everyone else knew we were not at our traditional government complex for the December meeting but the Nunez Community College Technology Auditorium building. It was a very suitable (and beautiful) meeting venue for our general meeting!

Themes. Along with Desktop, Drive and Folder icons, the program can successfully change icons on the Windows XP Start Panel. (DealsGuy note: Check the product page: <http://www.beeicons.com/features.php>.)

"We offer 15% discount for user group members. If you are interested, please e-mail me at [roman@beeicons.com] and I will send you a Discount coupon code. This code should be entered during registration process to get the discount."



### Talk All Over The World

I was browsing a recent issue of Hewie's Favorites (his newsletter) and noticed something that might interest you. Information on their Web site is a bit vague so beware. Sounds like both parties must be on-line. Called "Free World Dialup (FWD)," it is located at [http://www.pulver.com/fwd/] and they claim you can make free phone calls over the Internet using your regular telephone and a computer program. I didn't try it. Maybe you could call your own phone with the computer and give your spouse hell, then hang up before they find out who is calling. Just a thought!

That's it for this month. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound.

**Bob (The Cheapskate)**

... Click!!!

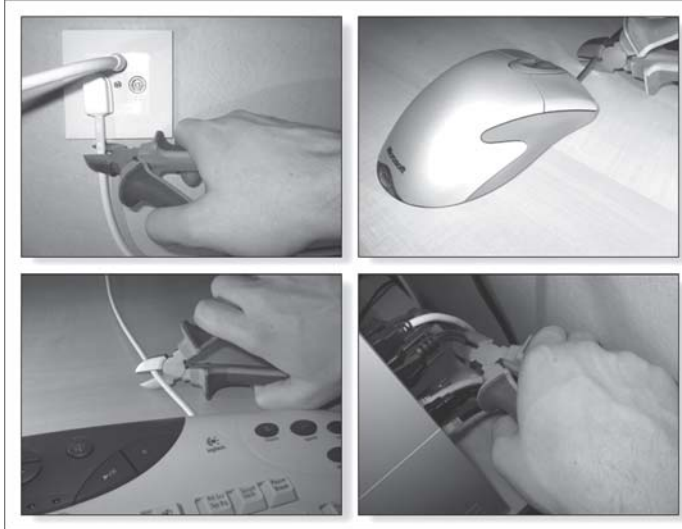




CCUG-PC  
Chuckles

Some computer folk's conception of going "wireless".

(ps. please do not try this at home, work or in solitary confinement <straightjacket or not>).



## January: Site of the Month



[www.aarp.org/learntech/computers](http://www.aarp.org/learntech/computers)



Were you aware that the AARP organization has a neat website for getting you over the computer technology "slump"?

Check out the computer news, How to Guides, hardware reviews, Video Quick Tips, Basic and Intermediate Web Lessons, message boards and a slew of handy, helpful information aimed at getting "Settled folk" to settle down and enjoy the technology more!

## Upcoming . .

➔ Windows XP Tips and Techniques

➔ Potpourri of great presentations!

## December's Election Results: December 4

In December, group members voted in the new Board of Directors for 2005. Although 6 of 7 members have elected to continue in some capacity on the board, many now are holding new positions after many years.

The new members and their positions are:

Jerry Montalbano, President  
Sue Wessing, Vice President  
Laura Brunies, Secretary  
Margaret Wynn, Membership Secretary  
Harry Cancienne, Treasurer  
Bob Faucheux, Member Representative  
Sheila McElroy, Programs Co-Ordinator

Congratulations to all and we truly wish them well as our new *Board of Directors for 2005!!*

## SHAREWARE PICK OF THE MONTH:

*(Try before you buy--smart software of all sorts...)*

DietOrganizer 1.3, to get you back into shape and build you a daily diet program that would help you toward your goal. [www.dietorganizer.com](http://www.dietorganizer.com)

Personal Training Workstation 6.0.1 can help you as a personal trainer and live-in chef in your quest for a healthy lifestyle of diet, exercise and motivation. [www.workoutware.com/index.shtml](http://www.workoutware.com/index.shtml)

Many shareware are available at [download.com](http://download.com), [cnet.com](http://cnet.com) and [shareware.com](http://shareware.com) or a net search can assist your success.

## Holiday Party a Huge Success!

Well, we did it again! Members brought many delicious dishes to our annual Holiday Celebration! We feasted on Seafood Gumbo, Mini Muffalettas, finger sandwiches, baked ham and pork, veggie dishes, spaghetti and meat and much more! Wonderful desserts rounded out this CCUG Restaurant of delightful treats!

Jerry held an informative Roundtable of Q & A, but the members got restless about 8:10PM because then the question was "When do we EAT?"

Sue, Judy and other members scrambled to get final touches on the two tables of delightful contributions.....Did ya notice Jerry wound up first in line? (a first!) We top ourselves each year! Sheila the wand passes to you for our next Holiday Party! —  
*2004 Programs Co-Ordinator, Sue Wessing.*



## Member Classifieds

### Selling?



Jerry Montalbano, Editor at 279-2761

Advertising Policy—Members are welcomed to place an advertisement for personal computer-related items in *Newsbits* at no cost. There could be limit-spacing on a first-come basis. Commercial ads from members and nonmembers are welcomed. ***Please notify us when sold or cancelled!***

## CLASSIFIEDS



Your Member Ad here!



Have you a tip for a great utility, a cool website, a cure for a PC problem a lot of people have, or any local technology new? Please have them send it to Jerry Seregini (jerry@wwltv.com). If Jerry uses it for a 'Digital Gumbo' segment, he will send them a token of his gratitude and give you credit on-air!

### Disclaimer

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### Membership Dues:

CCUG-PC's *annual membership dues* are **\$25.00**. Please keep abreast of your membership dues date. You can determine your expiration date by doing the following:

1. Check your *Newsbits* mailing address label.
2. Inquire at the membership table.
3. Remember your dues date from the time you joined.



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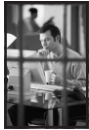
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