NEWSbits

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Celebrated 20th Anniversary!
1990-2010

CCUG-PC Banner

Are you "CyberRugged"?

by Elaine Pitre

Are you protecting yourself for the internet? Most of us know there is identity theft, fraud, hackers, and many more wanting to add havoc to our lives. They terrorize us and we don't know who they are. It is up to each of us to feel secure. We have locked doors and alarms in our homes. The same needs to be done on our computers.

Ray Paternostro gave an enlightening presentation on "Becoming CyberRugged". In what was meant to be a two hour presentation was cut short because of our time limitation at the library. He covered so many aspects of improving the way we use the internet. Briefly touching on his presentation, he explained the importance of securing your internet, through a router and using a unique password. While doing this, is a great help, there are other things to do on your computer. You should get an annual credit report. ***Experian, Equifax and TransUnion*** are the three credit bureaus. You can get a free credit report by using **www.ANNUALcreditreport.com**. This site will give all three at one time or use each bureau individually at a four month interval to keep everything up to date.

How much personal information do you keep on your computer? This too needs to be encrypted. This is information hackers and thieves are looking for. Your hard drive, specific folders and USB drives are prime examples of places to encrypt and use

(CyberRugged, continues on page 6)

Supporting Our Troops

PotPourri

Coming May 14!

RoundTable

Join the CCUG-PC guys and gals this Saturday, **May 14th at 10:30 AM** when we present the ever-popular ***CCUG-PC RoundTable.*** Discussions, discoveries and decisions–whatever shall we discuss? Well, everyone can be part of the group's popular "users helping users mission!"

Note: We may have to enter through the rear/left-side door as the library is currently undergoing carpet renovation! ***See everyone there!***

Where we meet . . .

St. Tammany Public Library (Slidell)

555 Robert Blvd. - (985-646-6470)

CCUG-PC will meet January 22nd in Slidell for this meeting event from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Meetings are open to the public and everyone is invited to participate. C'Ya!

The Transitioning of PC Power

by Jerry Montalbano

Could it be that the age of the desktop PC appears to be over? We are noticing more portable relatives, the laptop and handhelds, surging ahead. These portable units do so with consumers uttering for light-weight, information-communicative devices wrapped in novel and jazzy designs for use at home, in cafe/eatery shops or during transitioning. Ah, the portability.

Even online, year-round shoppers tend to be more focused toward smaller, handhelds with Internet all-in-one portability. They continue to expand their social-networking, texting, e-mail, oh yes, and obtain the news, facts or entertainment via these personal devices. They are more than just PDA's now.

Yet, another sign appears that the former dominance of desktop PCs is fading as wireless advances and lower prices make laptops/handhelds the preferred option for millions of PC users worldwide. On both price and performance, laptops for example, are so competitive now it's surprising they weren't able to catch up with desktops even earlier.

The ability to surf the Internet wirelessly at public places, the need to be able to take your office out with you when you travel, and an increasing range of notebook computers have all led to lower desktop sales with costs as low as $300. So, now there are fewer profit margins, it seems.

Laptops hit a late 2008 milestone, when desktop PC sales were surpassed for the first time with a majority of the market. With an entry level price of $300 for some basic models (low end for desktops), laptops/handhelds should climb even further in sales and appeal. They are forecast to take up even more of all computer shipments.

Many companies eagerly waiting the era of the laptop are in Taiwan (China), maker of about 80 percent of the world's laptop PCs and cores for U.S. firms, such as Acer. Noticeably, the globe's top two PC makers overall, Hewlett-Packard and Dell, have seen their shares shrink over this past decade. Motherboard manufacturers of bulky desktop PCs have already switched production to parts for other electronic doo-dads such as iPhone and hand gadgets, much of parts and accessories being cranked out abroad where lower costs and labor have taken jobs away from Americans to compete.

Years ago, laptops used to cost more than double that of a desktop with equivalent processing power. However, technology advances, and a weaker economy have reduced prices down so much that today, little price differentiation exists for most consumers looking for a daily PC usage.

The success of low-cost, fastest growing mini-notebooks and tablets could foreshadow desktops with domination in products offering wide ranges of prices and functions. Notebooks have a quite a few choices of models with many colors aside from former traditional gray and sold in assorted model sizes which range from 5-inch to 20-inch.

Companies technologically, are offering increasing range of specialized laptops in varying sizes and shapes, processing speeds, wireless capabilities and prices. Battery life is also coming into play competitively, with Dell and HP notebooks having broken the 24-hour barrier. (HP EliteBook 6930P and Dell Latitude E6400).

Some of the features of these portable units include faster boot-

(PCPower—Continues on Page 4)

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In Plain English

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Hi, CCUG-PC Members!

If you're the average computer user this past few years, you might have held on to the old clunker while traveling at light speed toward other technologies which could include, but not limited to digital phones, digital TV's, cable, DLS or satellite broadband technologies, handhelds, portables, and flashy gadgets. Just think: fewer dollars for desktops and more dollars for the high-tech or electronic components which now share our time with computer usage.

While desktops have dropped to ever-so-low pricing during the years, other technologies have risen. I can recall 1979 prices on my cable (no premium channels). It was $7.95! Now throw in the premium channels, accessories and converters for the 4 TVs (hey, somehow we all got along with 1 TV at one point!).

Cell usage (without the Internet) was $10! Now, the digital eye-candy can up your phone usage costs into the $50 range. Add family members and you're $70, $80 or more!

Ipods? Welcome to the world of portable music. Gone is the Sony Walkman; diminishing is the USB MP3 player; Out are CD players. They're all being replaced by digital downloadable music (which involves per song costs starting 10 years back with Napster's free downloads and evolving into pay-per-song and recently pay-per-movies! Pay-per-movies (although around about 12-15 years) has evolved from calling in to order with the cable, DSL or satellite company, to now high-tech sent to converters as PPV, On-Demand, or pay per movie. Amazingly, you can now get a movie rental for $1 at kiosks such as Wal-Mart. Or, you can spend more to download online from Amazon, NetFlix, Blockbuster, SonyPictures or Apple.com.

Speaking about Blockbuster, the days of brick-and-mortar rent stores are "going dinosaural"! Many are into bankruptcy or downsizing to be replaced online by the NetFlixes and net sites formally mentioned—hence, the escalating of costs for technology additionally with the computer. To make matters worse, this high-tech means of watching movies and listening to music via the downloadables is going to mean more outlay for speedier broadband/high-speed Internet service. The "Speed-Boosts" or "warp-speed" downloading of ever-so-huge-sized movies and audio files will dictate that you develop patience for these longer downloads OR you can buy their quicker, faster download speed service.

The "fiber-optic wired" techology for cable and DSL provides the current warped speed which is currently needed and even greater technologies now being developed in the wings. Newer, ideal tech stuff are now being introduced into communities. They may go by the name of NFinity (ComCast), AT&T's "UVerse", Cox's Whole Home converters service for movie enhancements, Satellite's WildBlue and others.

Which brings us back to "share-and-pay". Marveled, we get more involved into other high-tech stuff that sounds "favoloso". We want our clunker, yet having only one technology is simply not having it all. The days of having an do-it-all unit reminds me of my 50's Zenith TV-Stereo-Radio-Phonograph. It does remind me of a one-shop puchase. I only needed to pay for the unit and *records*. Today, I have to share larger costs with dozens of other high-tech gadgets Geez..

Jerry Montalbano

ARTICLE CONTRIBUTIONS

NEWSBITS Newsletter is currently published Quarterly by CCUG-PC. Articles for publication *must* be submitted, typewritten and on disk to our newsletter staff by the **15th** of the month before a meeting date for publication. We welcome all articles of computing interest and we reserve the newsletter.

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NOTICE!

Upcoming Date to Remember

Saturday, August 13, 2011
Meeting place: Slidell,
St. Tammany Public Library

(PCPower—Continued from Page 2)

up times with touch-screens as companies try to persuade former desktop users to portables and handhelds to build new markets and consumers worldwide.

So, what's next for desktop users? Some are questioning if there's any room left for desktop usage in the brave new era of laptops and handhelds. There are consumers who will continue undoubtedly, to keep buying desktops which will offer greater processing power for memory-intensive applications. Targeted purchasers will probably include gamer-addicts, geeks, graphics and video/memory-intensive software users. It is this elite grouping who has a greater need for top-speed or top-flight processing power. They indeed have huge appetites for large memory modules, high-speed, sate-of-the-art processors, along with bragging-rights and design lusting.

In summary, not everyone believes the desktop PC, which was first introduced in the late 1970s/early 1980's, will soon be tossed into junkyards or donated to Goodwill. After all, desktops can still offer substantial savings, especially for those who can handily use a non-magnetic screwdriver.

Finally, can a laptop, portable or handheld technological device compete with a desktop pricewise? It's quite possible that if there is a price consideration, laptops simply can't match on price with a group of people who buy desktop bargains. This also can be true if one can build a computer with bargain or discounted parts. In contrast, for example, are those who geeky use high-ended, branded parts inside.

So, again the question: "Is the desktop truly dead?"

Perhaps not currently, but trends do show that the newer generation of technology (under age 40) users are gravitating by the droves toward that direction of "personal and portable technologies." As time evolves, it is smaller, more efficient micro-technology and biotechnology devices that will send desktops to their demise. The handwriting: "Is it written on the wall?" If it is thus, then let it be written--for let it be done

Great Tips for Printing Terrific Photos

If you've tried your hand at printing your own photos and have been disappointed in the results, you may be making some mistakes that are easy to correct. Most inkjet and thermal dye printers today can print photos at drugstore quality or better with little or no work on your part. However, it sometimes helps to follow the 80-20 rule, although in this case it's more of a 90-10 rule: you can get 90 percent of the best possible photo for 10 percent of the effort it would take for the absolute best. Here's an overview of the most important things you need to know to get to 90 percent. (A companion article, Easy Photo Printing Tips and Tricks, is geared to beginners learning the different ways of printing: from PictBridge camera, USB key, direct from computer, etc.)

A word on printers. For a start, it helps to know what you can expect from your printer, which will also be worth thinking about before you buy your next printer. The most important issue is the printer's technology. There are only two printing technologies today that can print at true photo quality: inkjet and thermal dye (aka dye sublimation, although that's a misnomer).

Laser technology is getting better at printing photos, but it is well behind inkjets on that score, and only a few color lasers today even come close to true photo quality. ZINK technology, which is relatively new and improving quickly, may soon join inkjet and thermal dye as suitable for high-quality photos, but isn't quite there yet.

Most general-purpose inkjets, whether the manufacturer labels them photo inkjets or not, can print photos at about the same level of quality as you'd expect from a typical drugstore photo or online site. If that's more or less the quality of the photos you're printing, you're probably getting the most you can out of your printer.

Two categories of inkjets usually do better than drugstore-level quality: dedicated photo printers and near-dedicated photo printers. Dedicated photo printers, a category that also includes thermal dye printers, are limited to small-format photos, which usually means a maximum 4- by 6-inch photo size, although some print panoramic sizes and some print photos as large as 5-by-7. Printers in this category generally focus on ease of use along with photo quality. Most can print better-looking photos than you'd get from a typical drugstore, but if they're not printing at least at drugstore-quality level, you're probably doing something wrong.

Near-dedicated photo printers are aimed at serious photographers, both amateur and professional, and are among the most expensive inkjets you can buy. They're near-dedicated because they can typically print at sizes up to about 13 by 19 inches, which means they can print standard letter- and legal-size business documents. However, using them for such non-photo printing would be a waste of their talents (and ink).

Printers in this category almost always have a wide range of choices for photo paper—including several fine art papers meant for professionals—instead of the one or two choices typical for most inkjets. Their output quality is a match for the kind of photo lab a professional photographer would go to for custom prints. If you're not getting exceptional qual-

(PhotoTips, continued on page 5)

The Best Laptops for Grads

by Kim Komando

It's that time of year again. Millions of high school seniors are graduating. That also means parents will be buying new laptops for their college-bound kids.

Colleges and academic departments usually offer basic laptop specifications. Start there. Then, follow my recommendations for a laptop your favorite grad will truly love.

Laptops

Choosing a Windows machine is more complicated (*at least according to MacHeads*). You'll find a variety of form factors from many manufacturers. Specifications vary widely, and there are a few different versions of Windows. So shop carefully.

Go with Windows 7 Home Premium or Ultimate. I recommend a 64-bit version. You can use more RAM for speedier performance. The machine won't lag if you open several program simultaneously.

Select an Intel Core i5 or AMD Phenom processor, if possible. A dual-core model is fine for most students. Don't waste your money on a top-of-the-line processor. In fact, older Core 2 Duo or Turion II processors will satisfy general computing needs.

Go with 4GB of RAM for 64-bit Windows. More than 3GB of RAM won't be supported by 32-bit Windows; save your money. Storage space is important. Don't settle for a hard drive smaller than 250GB.

Wi-Fi and Ethernet connections should come standard. You also want plenty of USB ports and a DVD burner. Don't underestimate the importance of a large keyboard and screen. The laptop will be more comfortable to use. You'll need to balance this with weight. Anything over five pounds may be too heavy to lug.

A machine meeting these specifications starts around $500.

You'll still see netbooks on shelves. These low-priced machines have smaller screens and limited RAM. They mostly use Intel's Atom processor. Your student needs something more powerful. Stick with a real laptop.

Tablets

Your grad may want a tablet computer like the iPad. These are intended to be used in addition to a laptop. They really can't replace laptops due to design limitations. Screens range from seven to 10 inches. The processor and RAM will be fairly limited. Also, you'll need to add a keyboard; touch screens aren't conducive to serious typing.

Connections are also limited on tablets. Some don't have USB ports. Ethernet ports and disk drives are also absent.

The biggest drawback to tablets may be the software. You can't install full-fledged programs like Office. You can only use apps. Further, there's no file system. This limits how you can use files. Moving files between apps can be a chore.

Still, a tablet supplements a laptop nicely. Your student can use one for taking notes and reading e-books.

Don't forget to claim your educational discounts. You can save $100 or more on a laptop; discounts on software are even higher. For example, you can save $700 on Adobe Photoshop CS5 Extended.

Check the school's bookstore and manufacturers' sites for information on educational discounts. Also visit JourneyEd, AcademicSuperstore and Gradware. Discounts vary, so comparison shopping pays off. Be prepared to show proof of enrollment.

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(PhotoTips, continued from page 4)

ity with this class of printer, odds are you're doing something iucorrectly.

1. Choose between direct printing options. If your combination of printer and camera gives you a choice between printing directly from the camera and from memory—which includes cards and USB keys in this context—be sure to experiment with both. The two choices can yield significantly different output quality for the same file, with noticeably different colors and retention of detail based on shading in dark and light areas. It's well worth investing a little time and effort to print several photos both ways to see how great the differences are and which one you like better.

2. Get familiar with your printer's auto-fix feature. Most current dedicated photo printers, and some standard inkjets, include some variation of an automatic

(PhotoTips, continued on page 6)

(CyberRugged, continued from page 1)

passwords. Two free programs to help you with this is KeePass for passwords and Truecrypt for encrypt ions.

Please go to **http://cyberrugged.files.wordpress.com/2011/01/cyberrugged-v5-nola.ppt** to read this forty-two page presentation. It will help you immensely.

We also had a quick vote for elected officials for the coming year. The officers were elected by a show of hands.

Jerry Montalbano – *President/Editor*
Sue Wessing – *Vice President & Programs Co-ordinator*
Elaine Pitre – *Secretary & Membership Co-ordinator*
Harry Cancienne – *Treasurer*

Sue Wessing, Jerry Montalbano, Elaine Pitre and Harry Cancienne are the elected 2011 CCUG-PC Officers

Our regular drawings were held with Garland Hilton winning two Xbox 360 games, Leonard Middlebrooks winning Microsoft Digital Image and Rose Penney winning Camtasia Studio.

We had some new faces giving their email addresses for continued information from CCUG. They are, Nita Connor, Carolyn Cavalier, Roberta Stepan, and Juneann Edgett. We welcome you and hope to see you at our next meeting on Saturday, May 15, right here at the Slidell library. ***EP***

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(PhotoTips, continued from page 5)

fix feature that analyzes the image and may adjust several settings at once. These may include anything from contrast, brightness, and gamma (which changes contrast differently at different levels of brightness), to automatically deciding whether to apply red-eye reduction.

With most photos, these automatic fix features improve the final result, but in some cases they do more harm than good, or even undo an effect that you were trying for. Here again, if your printer includes an automatic fix option, it's worth investing a little time and effort printing an assortment of photos both with and without the feature turned on to get a feel for what it does and when you might want to turn it off.

3. *Preview photos for direct printing.* If your printer can print directly from memory cards, it may limit you to previewing photos by printing an index sheet or by looking at the images on a built in preview screen. If it gives you both choices however, keep in mind that there are advantages to each, and that you may want to use one or the other at any given time.

Using the preview screen is faster, since you don't have to print twice—once for the index sheet and once for the final print—and it costs less, since you don't have to pay for ink or paper to print the index sheet.

On the other hand, if you've taken several similar photos with minor variations in settings, for example—a trick professional photographers use to increase the odds that one of the shots has the right settings for the picture to look its best—an index sheet is the preferred approach for deciding which version to print at full size. The printed thumbnails will give you a better sense than the image of the preview screen of how colors will print in the final photo and how well details based on relatively small differences in shading will show.

4. Get familiar with your printer's *editing features.* Printers with preview screens often let you edit photos before printing. The editing choices may be limited to a few basics like cropping images or removing red-eye, or they may include options to adjust brightness and contrast, add graphics and frames that are stored in the printer, and more. The process is similar to using the kind of photo kiosk you can find in drugstores, and is almost always designed to be self-explanatory and easy to use. If your printer includes any editing features, they are certainly worth exploring.

(PhotoTips, continued on page 7)

Genealogy 2011

By Sue Wessing

St. Bernard Genealogical Society, Inc.

Happenings @ SBGS

St. Bernard Genealogical Society, Inc. featured as its April speaker, **Shirley Chaisson Bourquard**. She showed *deciphering the old handwriting of years past*, which many documents used. It's easy to make mistakes with the letters being formed differently than they are now in current script. Shirley also translated then transcribed some birth and marriage records from French, Spanish and Italian languages. She encouraged members to read the documents along with her. Great job Shirley!

www.Mocavo.com - The world's largest free genealogy search engine, Mocavo.com, provides genealogists access to the best free genealogy content on the web including billions of names, dates and places worldwide. Mocavo.com seeks to index and make searchable all of the world's free genealogy information. While Mocavo.com discovers new sites every day, some of the existing sites searchable on Mocavo.com include genealogy message boards, family trees, state and local historical societies, the Library of Congress, National Archives, Ellis Island, Find A Grave, the Internet Archive, various U.S. state archives, and many tens of thousands of genealogy sites built by individuals. Similar to other search engines, Mocavo.com honors site owners by linking directly to their content.

Search tip: When searching online or in a repository, remember to record your source of information for each document you find. There are many online. Our society has one on our website that you can use. Do not trust your memory, as you will quickly forget where that document or information came from. Many of us have notes from beginning genealogy that we'd like to refer back to, but cannot because we didn't record where the information originated! Better yet, put the information in your favorite genealogy program as soon as possible. Keep backups of your information on memory sticks in several locations. Computers often fail, and restoring your information can be expensive, if it even can be retrieved at all.

Please make special effort to attend our June 18, 2011 meeting. Jack Belsom will update us on what's available from the Archdiocesan Archives of the Catholic Church in New Orleans. (**http://www.archdiocese-no.org/archives/**) He will also give us information of the genealogy holdings at the main New Orleans library on Loyola Avenue. (**http://nutrias.org/~nopl/spec/speclist.htm**) Jack has a wonderful amount of New Orleans history and is a specialist on Opera in New Orleans. (**http://www.neworleansopera.org/our-history.html**).

Jack Belsom is the retired long term director of civil service for the City of New Orleans and professional genealogical coordinator for the archives of the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

The **June 18th** meeting will be at the Slidell Branch library at 555 Robert Blvd, Slidell, LA 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM. Members and guests are invited. Meetings are open to the public.

www.ccugpc.org/sbgs/sbgs.htm

Suzanne Doole Wessing

(PhotoTips, continued from page 6)

5. Don't fix photos before you see how they really look. Keep in mind that the colors and shading that you see on screen (whether your computer screen or the printer's preview screen) will almost never be an exact match—and are often not even close—to the printed version. (This is true for all sorts of reasons that are way beyond the scope of this article). For photos you care enough about to want the best possible photo with minimal work, it's generally a good idea to do any cropping that you want first, print the photo, and then make any manual adjustments you like based on what the printed version looks like. If the printer or the program you're printing from has an automatic fix option, you might want to try printing the photo both with and without the fix feature before making any manual changes.

6. Use paper that's appropriate for the task. Better-quality paper yields better-quality prints, but it costs more too. If you're printing a photo to frame and hang on a wall, by all means use the highest-quality paper available for the printer. If you're printing a photo to post on the office bulletin board or stick under a refrigerator magnet, however, consider using plain paper, inkjet paper, or a less expensive photo paper.—

7. Experiment with different papers. The glossy finish that you'll find on most drugstore prints and most photo paper is so common that most people don't even consider other possibilities, but there are other choices. Some printer manufacturers don't offer any other options, but you should check to see if there are any available for your printer. Many professional photographers prefer how photos look on matte paper, for example. You might want to try it as well.

Papers from other manufacturers are another possibility, but be aware that output quality—and colors in particular—will vary with the paper you use,

(PhotoTips, continues on page 8)

Microsoft: Windows 8 will support Intel, AMD, and ARM

Microsoft has announced that the next version of Windows will support System on a Chip (SoC) architectures from ARM-based systems designed by partners Nvidia, Qualcomm, and Texas Instruments. Microsoft's goal is of course to further increase the range of hardware it supports with Windows.

The company essentially confirmed rumors that it was working on an ARM-friendly Windows OS. In order to emphasize that the x86 architecture was not being replaced, however, Microsoft also confirmed that Intel and AMD were working on low-power SoC designs that fully support Windows, including support for native x86 applications.

Although Microsoft did not show off anything with AMD hardware, the company did demonstrate the next version of Windows running on new SoC platforms from Intel on x86 architecture and from Nvidia, Qualcomm, and Texas Instruments on ARM architecture. The technology demonstration included Windows client support of hardware-accelerated graphics and media playback, hardware-accelerated Web browsing with Internet Explorer, USB device support, printing, as well as Microsoft Office running natively on ARM.

It's important to note that Microsoft still did not explicitly say "Windows 8" during its presentation at CES 2011 (Consumer Electronics Show). Nevertheless, it did show a build number for a second that started with 6.2, which is the kernel version for Windows 7's successor.

"With today's announcement, we're showing the flexibility and resiliency of Windows through the power of software and a commitment to world-class engineering," Steven Sinofsky, president of the Windows and Windows Live Division at Microsoft, said in a statement. "We continue to evolve Windows to deliver the functionality customers demand across the widest variety of hardware platforms and form factors."

(PhotoTips, continued from page 7)

something you can prove easily enough by printing a photo on both photo paper and plain paper on almost any inkjet. Before you invest in a lot of third-party photo paper, thinking that it will save money, experiment with a few sheets to compare the output with the same photos on the printer manufacturer's own paper.

8. Make sure the printer is *set for the paper you're using.* One printer setting deserves special attention. Make sure that the printer (for direct printing) or printer driver (for printing from a computer) is *set for the type of paper you're actually printing.* You can bet that any manufacture would tell you (based on tech support calls), that the single most common mistake people make is *not changing the paper type setting to match the paper.*

Some manufacturers have tried to bypass the problem with sensors that automatically detect the paper type, but they don't always work reliably. Unless your printer uses symbols on the back of the paper that the printer can read like bar codes to confirm paper type, *don't assume that an Automatic Paper Type setting will work. Get in the habit of setting the paper type manually.*

9. *Print from an editing program.* For the best-quality prints, move your photos to your computer and print from a photo-editing program. Photo printers aimed at professionals generally don't offer direct printing, because professionals—and serious amateurs—know that they get much better control over basic features like cropping, resizing, and color management, as well as far more sophisticated editing tools, with a photo-editing program. With some printers, a photo-editing program will also let you print *higher-resolution photos than you can when printing directly from a camera or memory card.*

You probably have one or more easy-to-use editing programs that came with your printer, camera, or scanner and are well worth exploring. In addition you can download a free copy of Picasa from Google.

Even low-end programs often include surprisingly capable, easy-to-use features for fixing common problems in photos, such as *red eye, yellow eye* (the equivalent problem to red eye for animal photos), *backlighting* (with a bright background, as with sun streaming in a window behind someone and turning his or her face into a silhouette), and more. Even better, if your printer or scanner is aimed at a relatively sophisticated audience, it may well have come with a mid-range or high-end photo editor designed for that audience.

You may not want to spend the time and effort it takes to master even a moderately sophisticated photo editing program, but *if you already have one for free*, it's worth taking a look at it. Even if you use only some of its features, you may be surprised at how much you can do to improve your photos with very little effort.

10. *Edit copies, not originals.* Before you start editing a photo—which can mean anything from making minor tweaks, to applying special effects, to cropping the original to use only a part of it—*create a copy first.* That way you can return to the original if you need to. And don't plan on editing and then saving under another name. It's safer to create copies before you open a file *to avoid accidentally overwriting it*. Once you have a copy to work with, you can feel free to experiment.

(PhotoTips, continues on Page 9)

11. *Avoid compression woes.* Most cameras default to—or are even limited to—saving pictures in a compressed JPG format. It's always a good idea to *turn off compression (if you can) when you want the best possible photo quality.* Even more important, however, is that you should *never edit a compressed photo on your computer and then save it back to a compressed format.* JPG is a *lossy* compression scheme, which means it *loses information every time you save* the file and recompress it. If you edit a compressed file, save it in the editor's native format or a *format like TIF,* without compression, to avoid degrading the image further.

12. *Explore your printer driver.* Virtually every printer's driver offers settings that affect picture quality. The choices may be limited to choosing between good, better, and best quality, or you may be able to adjust brightness; contrast; red, green, and blue levels; and more. If you want the best possible output, it's *worth investing the time to explore your driver.* At the very least, experiment with each of the quality settings to see the effect on the output quality and speed, so you can decide whether the improved output at high-quality modes is worth the extra time it takes to print.

There are other techniques for improving photo printing, but these are the most important. The more you experiment with them, the better your prints will become, and you'll have learned a range of methods you can apply to any given situation.

Printers Currently Available and worth considering in your online and store-front search can include:

Canon Selphy ES40 ($87 - $155); Epson PictureMate Charm ($144-$155); HP Photosmart Premium Fax All-in-One - C309A - ($225-$260); Epson PictureMate Show ($279 - $330); HP Photosmart A646 Compact Printer ($120 - $150);

Tech Tip: *(Continued from page 11)*

is displayed:

Message given: ***"An error has occurred in the script on this page"***

Error: Object doesn't support this property or method

URL: res://C:\WINDOWS\System32\mmcndmgr.dll/views.htm

Resolution: This occurs due to missing OLE32 registration. You may use the following VBScript to correct the above problems. Download **olereg.vbs** and run the file. In the Start Search Box. (http://windowsxp.mvps.org/reg/olereg.vbs).

Cox Officially Jumps Into the Wireless Pool

After nearly a year of trial testing, Cox Communications is officially launching its wireless service, called "Unbelievably Fair." That is the service's official name, not an adjectival description. Unbelievably Fair will launch in three markets: Orange County, California; Omaha, Nebraska; and Hampton Roads, Virginia, the original three test markets. Monthly service will be available for $40, and Cox is planning some unique offers, like offering to refund some money for unused minutes, up to a $20 savings per month. Cox will also offer bundled packages that include a home phone, a wireless phone, a home data connection and cable television. The company will buy 3G network access from Sprint, and will offer devices including Android phones like the HTC Desire and Motorola Milestone (Droid). Cox has previously said it plans to build its own network, and has indicated an interest to use 4G LTE technology. The wireless service is available now in the select markets, and Cox expects to expand its service to any market where it maintains a foothold in cable television.

Tech support score updates released by Laptop Magazine

There are not many objective measures of the customer service provided by PC vendors. One of the few worthwhile scorecards is the annual *Laptop Magazine* tech support showdown, which takes twelve of the biggest names in the industry and faces them with the typical tech support queries to see how they fare against each other. The results for 2010 are now in and, for the most part, they seem fairly consistent over previous years.

Apple remains at the top of the heap and was the only company to receive an overall grade of A. *HP* and Lenovo are tied for second place and each earned a B+. Lenovo's placement is not a surprise, as they have done well in Laptop Magazine's prior tests, but HP's results represent a huge improvement over the C- the company received in 2009. At the *bottom* of the pile you'll find *Acer and Gateway,* both of which were slapped with a D+. The identical scores are not surprising either, as Gateway has been a subsidiary of Acer for several years.

Tech support seems to be getting worse overall. No company earned lower than a C- in the previous year, and the number of scores below a B- has increased by one. On top of that, the report described a "disturbing trend" in which several of the companies apparently refused to answer questions unless they were strictly related to broken hardware, pitching some fairly pricey support packages instead. Web support seems to be the most serious issue as Asus, Fujitsu, Gateway, MSI and Samsung all received a D or F in this category!

Photos from January 22, 2010 Meeting

Pre-Meeting "Computer conversations gone wild!"

Jerry prepares the laptop for meeting presentation

Jerry introduces Ray Paternostro as speaker

Ray Paternostro and Jerry Montalbano spearhead elections

Harry and Mary Cancienne listen attentively at meeting

Ray Paternostro Cyber-shocks the audience

Clowning around is allowed only by the speaker (Ray)! :)

Ray's presentation on "CyberRugged"

Virginia and Curtis McElroy smile for the photo op

Smart phone market overtakes PC: 2010: Greater volumes phone shipments for 1st time

The shipments and market share of smart phone, PC, and mobile phone vendors have been announced, revealing that smart phones overtook PC shipments for the first time last year. In the final quarter of 2010, approximately 101 million smart phones were shipped compared to just 92 million PCs. The smart phone market has been rapidly growing in the last few years, most noticeably since the launch of iPhone in 2007.

While Nokia kept hold of the largest Smartphone market share, Apple stands firm in second, despite only having two phones on the market. Apple also remains the fifth biggest mobile phone vendor.

HP have the largest market share of PC's closely followed by Dell, Acer, Lenovo and Toshiba. It is now worth watching the tablet market, as it is expected to grow in similar fashion to smart phones as more products emerge.

CCUG-PC HELP! DESK Questions & Answers with Jerry Montalbano

Q. ***I've been upgrading my desktop like crazy including additional hard drives, an additional blu-ray disc burner and have upgraded my video card and added fans. I'm concerned about whether my existing 450 watt power supply will hold out or if I need to upgrade my power supply to handle the load. Any suggestions?***

A. Well, one way you can ascertain as to whether your existing PSU (Power Supply Unit) can continue indefinitely as you go along is to do calculation. There are a few power supply calculator tools online that you can visit to calculate whether you need to upgrade to 600W or beyond. For info about this visit a couple here:

www.newegg.com and http://www.extreme.outervision.com/

Q. ***I'm hearing a strange noise I've never experienced before coming from my computer. It's sort of a clicking noice making a "click-click" and then repeats every so many seconds. Is it anything I should be very concerned about?***

A. Mild noises (whirling up or down), vibration might be normal as well as fan noises but could be an issue in itself (as things change louder for the worse). However, the clicking noises can be a sign you need to backup data and or make a digital image copy of your drive (for example, Acronis.com's Acronis' True Image 2011 which is available cheaper at Gene Barlow's site - (http://www.ugr.com), Symantec's Norton Ghost and other image creation software. OR you can use an online remote site service such as Carbonite and others.

Rather than simply backing up files, you can create a complete backup of your system that can be restored over top of your system. The only problem with creating these type of backups is that they require a real lot of drive space. The best bet is to create an image when your system is up and running and everything is installed, and then you can use it to more easily restore everything rather than reinstalling everything manually. Of course, you may have discs that came with the system but if you don't and you didn't call the manufacturer within 30 days to request them, it may have been placed in an hidden folder which is accessed by keystrokes. However restoring to a hard drive that could be failing is not a good choice. Backups should always be made to an external drive or perhaps a second physical drive within the computer.

For the more technically minded, there are at least three causes for the clicking sound: a scratch on a platter of the hard drive, a pre-amp on the a Actuator arm, or the PC board within becoming faulty (static electricity or a part onboard is damaged). Click!

Q. ***I restored back to the day my computer was worked on now I can't restore back to an earlier date. When I reset the system and Windows XP launches I get a blank screen. Also, when trying to update Windows on Internet Explorer, I can go to the site but I can't get it to update. Any help here?***

A. Well, another issue that can occur is that the calendar on the left side of the "Choose a Restore Point" window is not displayed to you. But, back to the issue at hand. Try this as a possible resolution:

Login as Administrator or equivalent (logging in as your name if you're a home user who registered). Click Start, Run and type these commands one by one and press enter:

regsvr32 jscript.dll
regsvr32 vbscript.dll
regsvr32 /i mshtml.dll (For Internet Explorer 6 only)

If this problem was seen after installing a recent Cumulative Update for Internet Explorer, the following fix is suggested according to some other problems such as:

When you open the User Accounts applet in the Control Panel, you may receive the following error message:

Message given: ***"Wrong number of arguments or invalid property assignment"***

* System Restore window is completely blank.

* Windows Update page displays the following message even though the ActiveX control is already installed. Also, the Information bar does not appear, thus you're unable to re-install the Windows Update ActiveX control.

Message given: ***"Install the ActiveX control required to view the website"***

* Help and Support pages are incomplete.

* System Information utility (MSINFO32) displays a blank window.

*When you open Services.msc snap-in, the following error

Tech Tips *(Continues of page 9)*

Yahoo Online Help from CCUG-PC!

Any of you who haven't joined the CCUG-PC Yahoo Online Group are doing yourself and your PC a disservice.

With all the things that are packed into a limited time frame for the monthly meetings we can't possibly answer all your questions fully or tell you: the latest news and virus alerts, software bugs and patches, scams, trojans, spyware, new technology, work-arounds, new software, great sites for pc resources, hardware and software bargains, the many MS bulletins that come out each month and more.

There's no time limit on our CCUG-PC Yahoo Online Group. We have over 400 members from all around the world who will take all the time needed to get your questions answered and your problems solved. You can post anything pc related and if it needs a reply check back at your convenience and see if anyone has one for you.

It also takes some of the stress off of Jerry and other techs as they can respond when time is available and not have to rush to something else to keep on schedule.

This is the best Free Support you'll find anywhere and you can do it from work or home! Try it, you'll like it.

Buster Matthews, Yahoo Group CCUG-PC Online Moderator
Worldwide CCUG-PC Yahoo Club:
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ccugpconline/

FACEBOOK CCUG-PC Now: ONLINE

You can now subscribe to our new Facebook CC UG – PC online group. Simply sign on to Facebook; search for CCUG-PC or click link: http://tinyurl.com/3vctcnc

CCUG-PC CHUCKLES

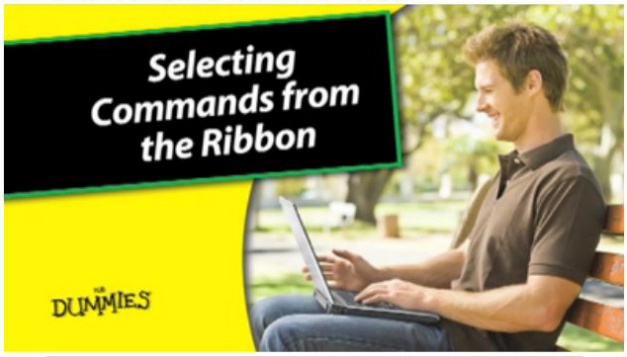
"Laugh til' you chuckle"

There ARE better ways to log off, don't you think, Marv?

websites of the MONTH

http://tinyurl.com/3pu9869

How to Make Use of the Office 2010 Ribbon



The Ribbon, rolled out with Microsoft Office 2007, organizes hundreds of commands in a horizontal band of tabs.

Each tab features functional icons in family groupings - such as, Page Layout - to allow you to pick a command to perform a task.

You can minimize and restore the Ribbon to move it out of the way and bring it back to your screen in full view.

Here is a video from the "For Dummies" series that helps illustrate the commands selection in 2007--2010.