NEWSbits

CCUG-PC Banner

"Back in the Groove Again!"
by Elaine Pitre

The reunion luncheon meeting turned out better than I could imagine. CCUG-PC is back on target and getting better. Old friends/members were there to give their support to what few knew as an extremely good user group. It was unmatched, by some of the much larger groups.

Jerry Serigni of the local Channel 8 Fox television here in New Orleans surprised us with a visit. He had lots of technical advice on using 64 bit versus 32 bit. For some of us, it may have been hard to follow, but there were others with heads up, listening to every word. Jerry was a frequent guest at the monthly meetings in Chalmette, prior to Hurricane Katrina. He was, and is supportive, and I might add, a genuine friend to CCUG-PC. He mentioned that if members had any technology

Supporting Our Troops

questions, they may be answered on his Fox 8 TV's Wednesday morning technology show at approximately 6:18 a.m. and 7:18 a.m. You can e-mail him at techguru8@gmail.com.

Ray Paternostro, Secretary of NOPC (New Orleans Personal Computer Club) returned after a four year hiatus. His knowledge is known among us. He listens well and responds when he feels that he can offer additional information than was already given. We sincerely respect his knowledge and welcome and invite both he and Jerry Seregni to visit us often. *EP*

Help us by contributing an article periodically for the newsletter. Short or long, it's fodder for a newsletter!

Hard Drive Backup and Recovery

Guest Members Jerry Seregni and Ray Paternostro flank President and speaker, Jerry Montalbano as they discuss the importance of data protection.

Upcoming Event - Feb. 13, 2009

PICCADILLY CAFETERIA
69008 Hwy. 190 Service Rd. Covington, La. 985-892-9994

CCUG-PC will meet for a luncheon at 11:30 a.m. on November 14, before the holiday break, followed up on Feb. 13. As usual CCUG-PC members love their meetings and we'll hope to continue the luncheons at the bequest of members who wish to meet and share tips, ideas and experiences with the group. *C'Ya!*

Holiday Gift Ideas for 2009
(Of course, these are ideas and not purchase Mandatory?)

Computers

Dell Inspiron 546 ($399 includes AMD Athlon II X 2 215, Genuine Windows 7 Home Premium, 4 GB Memory with a 500 GB Hard Drive, Plays and Creates CDs and DVDs; 15 months of McAfee Security Center, Piano Play but choice of 6 dazzling color choices (for $20 extra) . An additional monitor (18.5" for about $100) extra. (Dell.com).

Many people choose computers running the Windows operating system because it's what they've always used. Microsoft has released a new version of Windows, Windows 7 on October 22. Microsoft is offering free upgrades to those who bought their

The Newsbits staff has kept this tiny corner to remind of us the good times we spent in Back to Basics. Margaret Wynn led this superb gathering each week with presentations, Q. & A and loads of fun and excitement.

Please keep Margaret in your prayers as she presently is challenged with her illness and wish her speedy recovery after operation and malady. If you cannot offer her well-wishes personally at a meeting, do write to offer her any kind words, at melody43@ bellsouth.net. Get well soon, Margaret! Our prayers are a rock to your recovery!

computers running Vista Home Premium or above between June 26 and October 2, 2009.

Don't try to get just any Microsoft Windows 7 System without knowing which of the multiple choices are right for the computer. (Check firstly with http://www. microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/ --for features and compatibility. And, if you're a college student you can save considerably from a place called win741.com . They are featuring student copies of Windows 7 for $29.95. Offer ends January 3, 2010.

TV's

High Definition is most definitely in these days with cable companies and broadcast channels on the cutting edge. Most come with crystal clarity in a few technology styles that include LCD (ranging from $200 to the thousands) and the PLASMA styles. Although LCD's are more common than plasma types, motion blur is less common on plasmas and the "black-level" is more excellent than LCD's. With plasmas they are more energy consuming, angle-viewing is better, but the glass screens can be more reflective of light. With LCD's and Plasmas, cost per square inch are similar. However, playing DVD's give the Plasma models the edge, but durability is a bit better for LCD's.

Most HDTV owners perfer the 46-52 inch models for larger rooms and 32-40 inch for bedrooms and smaller quarters. Many believe the Samsung (like the LN-52A950, LN-52A650 or LN-52B750 <Under $1800) of the 52 in. or the LN-46B750 <under $1500>), Sony and LG to be a few of the leaders in widescreens in high definition LCD 1080p TV performance/quality.

Video Games and Consoles

 - Wii Hottest Game Titles (Beatles Rock Band, etc.). Like to rough, tough and tumble? A hot new "battle" type game is Call of Duty—Modern Warfare 2. It's for the PC, Xbox 360, and Playstation 3. Players face off against a new threat dedicated to bringing the world to the brink of collapse (sounds depressive huh? Not for serious head-2-head gamers. It's a runaway hit for them.

Speaking of hit, the Playstation 3 has come down to

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Hi, CCUG-PC Members!

Yep, we're rolling along. Currently, our meetings have followed a path of reunion, luncheon and now exists as a "roundtable" comprising what we had formerly as SIGs and meeting roundtables of Q & A and even oral presentations. At some point, we'll probably introduce visual presentations as we had when Katrina disrupted our program.

Doesn't it feel good again to recapture a positive peace of the puzzle missing since then? Yes. like old times.

Now we're rounding out the year with our 3rd gathering. The first, to reorganize, the second to add presentation to the mix and this last one to enjoy the moving into the next year. Holidays, (football for the sports fans), fall weather for the overheated and project starters and friend and family gatherings we always look forware to at this time of year.

In February, we'll be close to Mardi Gras, but we won't let that stop our meeting on February 14th. In May, we'll beat the summer heat on May 8th which will culminate with 2010 with the fall gathering on October 9th.

Although the 20-something of members who have been meeting thus far on a solid basis at Piccadilly, we'd like to grow some more. This means getting members to bring in former members,

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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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guests and perspective new ones. It would be so nice if some of you who haven't attended thus far get to do so. Many of the existing attendees and myself miss the cheerfulness of the crowd we had in St. Bernard Parish. It also brought in guest speakers and giveaways, useful product information and lots of answers for your questions.

I commute to the meetings from the Baton Rouge area. It's a nice ride to take 3 or 4 times a year, and well worth seeing old friends and meeting new ones upcoming. When we gather, it's like all of us in attendance haven't missed a heart beat since our great and memorable days of yesteryear. Oh, we're four years toward retirement and old age, but such a thrill as you'll find out if you're attending for the first time.

If you're still residing around the St. Bernard Parish/New Orleans area, great. As you will see, Covington at the moment is equal to "a country ride on Sunday" (except of course, we never meet on that day). Remember visiting folks every couple months to see what the latest gossip was (not everyone could afford long-distance calls years ago) or to see and discuss family after not doing so months at a time? Well, I'd like to say that CCUG-PC had its own social network of family. In my heart, some of you go back 20 yrs. next year, and I cherish the times we get to say hi in person.

With the advent of the Internet, we've lose the closeness of being able to look each other in the eye when we gather. Although the Net has its good points, we're more isolated than ever. And there indeed is more to life than talking to our monitor (or cussing at our computer!).

Lastly may I wish everyone a blessed holiday season as we approach Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's and holidays. I'm looking forward to saying "HI!" to more of you at our upcoming meetings!

Jerry Montalbano

NOTICE!

Upcoming Date to Remember
February 13, 2010 - 11:30 a.m.
Quarterly Reunion Luncheon
69008 Hwy.. 190 Service Rd.,
Covington, La. 985-892-9994

November 14 CCUG-PC Luncheon

*Top: Harriet, Shirley & Priscilla * Middle: Jerry*
Bottom: Marge, Harriet, Elaine, Buster, Shady

Garland Hilton discusses computer issues while members discuss digestion!

Members Mary, Priscilla, Buster and Carol, and Elaine pose for a group portrait—cheese!

A Meeting in Progress

Above: Jerry, Marge, Jerry S., Harry & Ray
Below: Harry, Mary, Carolyn, Unidentified

Member Linda and guest

Hey? Where'd everybody go?
Ray Paternostro just waits for his shapshot!

Genealogy 2010

By Sue Wessing
St. Bernard Genealogical Society, Inc

What is the same and what is different about researching your family history in the 21st century?

What's the *same —are the Basics!*

Start with yourself and work backwards. Get group sheets and pedigree charts free off the web. Work in pencil. Use a research guide, because you're not going to remember where you got the information from. Site your sources and date them.

Interview family members (don't grill them): "What do you remember about Grandma Jones? Where did she live, go to school, funny stories"? Find out your cousins, they may come in handy when you're stuck later on (research their ancestors). Memories may not always be correct. This link has lots of information:

http://genealogy.about.com/library/onestop/bl_beginner.htm

What's Different

The vast amount of information via the Internet, most good, some bad, some free, some at a price. Find local support groups that can help you learn what is available. These are the people that have been researching a long time and sometimes a short time. Learn from their mistakes! Learn where the local repositories are.

Digitize and backup your work!

Many of us from Southeastern Louisiana have found out (though most too late) the importance of making your documentation portable and storing in different locations. Get a genealogy software program such as *PAF* (free from Mormon Church), *Family Tree Maker 2010, Roots Magic 4.0* are some of the most popular. Keep you backups in current formats, USB, CD, DVD, online backups. Get a *scanner* to scan photos and never put your originals on the walls, keep them in archive safe location that will go with you or be protected from fires and floods.

Send queries (requests for information) to established genealogy societies. More information on how to do these see our next edition.

Use Search engines such as

Google.com to look for information on your ancestors: type in: *John Jones family history*

www.rootsweb.com
www.Ancestry.com

Visit our website at
www.ccugpc.org/sbgs/sbgs.htm

How to identify a hard disk failure?

When a hard disk fails it can be identified from the following ways:

BIOS will not *recognize* or access hard disk.

Hard disk makes *clicking* noise.

Hard disk/computer system *restarts* on its own.

Hard disk shows a *boot failure*, and asks for the boot records to be updated.

Hard disks become dead *silent*.

Finding a Quality Camera Under $300

by Kim Komando

Before you know it, the holidays will be here. There'll be plenty of memories you'll want to capture. Fortunately, you don't need to spend a fortune on a new camera. These days, you get a lot of camera for $200 to $300.

For years, manufacturers touted megapixels. Megapixels were equated with camera quality; more was considered better. What megapixels really means is image size. With more megapixels, you can make bigger enlargements.

Many cameras in the $200 to $300 range boast 10-megapixel or larger sensors. That's all you probably need. You'll get excellent 8x10-inch prints. But, you should even get quality 13x19-inch enlargements.

Instead of megapixels, look for features that will improve your photos. Optical image stabilization is a must. You'll get better low-light and telephoto pictures.

Casual photographers will want plenty of scene modes. Scene modes automatically optimize the camera's settings for the situation. For example, look for portrait, sports, macro and landscape modes.

Enthusiasts will want manual controls. You can specify the settings you want. You'll have fun experimenting with photography. Here are 4 great cameras in that range:

Panasonic Lumix ZR1

Panasonic's Lumix ZR1 ($280) is a 12-megapixel compact camera. The 8x zoom lets you get close to distant subjects. It also has a 2.7-inch LCD screen but is still small enough for your pocket.

The ZR1 offers optical image stabilization. And, there are plenty of scene modes. There's even Intelligent Auto (iA) Mode. It automatically detects the best settings for any situation.

The ZR1 shoots HD (720p) video to an SD card. There's even a special travel mode. It organizes slide shows based on when and where photos were taken.

This camera is ideal for casual shooters. But, more advanced photographers will miss manual controls.

Canon PowerShot SX120 IS

Canon's PowerShot SX120 IS ($250) is heavier and bulkier than the ZR1. But, this 10-megapixel shooter features a 10x zoom and a 3-inch display.

You get plenty of scene modes. The Easy Mode optimizes settings for you. Or, set controls manually. This versatility makes it ideal for both beginners and enthusiasts.

There's optical image stabilization and motion detection to help eliminate blur.

And face detection makes sure you get perfect skin tones.

The SX120 IS records video in standard definition. Clips can be up to one hour long or 4 gigabytes.

Samsung TL220

The Samsung TL220 ($300) is a 12-megapixel compact camera. It features a 5x zoom lens.

The TL220's real draw is the display. Scroll through menus and photos on the 3-inch rear touch screen.

There's also a 1.5-inch front-mounted display. You can check the composition of your photo—and still be in the picture. Or, display included animation to make a child smile.

You'll also get image stabilization and a bevy of scene modes. Included is Smart Auto for optimizing the settings in any situation. There's also HD (720p) video recording.

Enthusiasts will prefer a camera with more manual options.

Sony Cyber-Shot H20

The Sony Cyber-shot H20 ($280) is a 10-megapixel high-zoom. It has a 10x zoom lens. Compose and review your shots on the 3-inch display.

Optical image stabilization will eliminate blurred photos.

And the H20 has plenty of modes.

The Intelligent Auto (iAuto) mode automatically senses the conditions and optimizes the settings. Easy Shooting Mode makes it easy for beginners to use the camera. Or use manual mode to specify your settings.

Face detection optimizes settings for up to eight faces. Smile Shutter snaps a photo when the subject smiles. There's even the Anti-blink function that will help you capture shots without blinking or squinting. The H20 will capture high-definition (720p) video with stereo audio.

Add lenses to your digital camera

Want to take the very best picture of a small coin or the Grand Canyon's panoramic vistas? You don't have to be limited by the lens on your point-and-shoot digital camera. Conversion lenses, as they're called, work with cameras that don't readily accept interchangeable lenses.

These lenses typically attach to the camera's existing lens, either directly or with the aid of an adapter. Certainly, photo-editing software allows you to create similar effects after the picture is taken. But editing software often affects image quality. Resizing and cropping images lowers the resolution.

 A lens actually changes what the camera records. A zoom lens, for example, will capture a distant object at full resolution.Here are some tips for picking out lenses:

Magnificent magnification

Macro, or close-up, lenses let you take phenomenal pictures of flowers or very small objects. Not to be confused with telephoto lenses, macro lenses focus on objects close to the lens.

The magnification of a macro lens is usually expressed as a ratio.

18-250mm SLR Lens
with Anti-Shake Stabilizer

With a 1:1 lens, the object appears life-sized in the picture. A 2:1 macro lens doubles an object's natural size.

You may also see macro lenses expressed as a number, such as +10. The higher the number, the greater the magnification.

They're also useful for portrait photography. In this case, choose a lens with a greater magnification. This allows you to put some distance between you and your subject.

When using a macro lens, consider using a tripod. Because of the greater need for light, exposure times are longer. This increases the risk of camera shake. You can find a macro conversion lens for as little as $15. Or you may see a set of lenses that can be stacked for around $40.

Expansive Landscapes

For breathtaking landscapes or cityscapes, choose a wide-angle lens. These allow you to capture more without having to move farther away from the subject.

The focal length defines wide-angle lenses. Anything smaller than 35mm is wide-angle. When expressed as a power, decimals indicate wide-angle--for example, .56X. The smaller the number, the wider the angle.

Perspective distortion is inherent in wide-angle lenses. The edges of the photos curve and part of the image appears abnormally large.

Pictures taken with fisheye lenses (extreme wide-angle lenses) exemplify this. The center of the photo is large and the rest of the image falls away.

Stunning close-ups

Telephoto lenses are easy to understand. Use them to take pictures of wildlife or close-ups at Junior's soccer game.Telephoto lenses zoom in on distant objects. It appears that you're close to your subject. This is achieved with an increased focal length. Anything larger than 70mm is considered telephoto.

From The DealsGuy

November, 2009

Bob Click, Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

Recreation Time

My wife and I took a bargain cruise in September with two other couples and found that corporate cutbacks have also invaded the cruise industry. At least that's what we were told when we asked crewmembers, or customer service, questions. Customer service urged us to e-mail our concerns to the corporate Web site. Our ship was the Freedom of the Seas, a Royal Caribbean beauty. It can carry about 4,300 passengers and has 1,400 crewmembers. Last December (2008), we cruised on the Mariner of the Seas (also Royal Caribbean) and it's slightly smaller than this one, but they are both large. There are no more free gifts for "Crown & Anchor" members (people with multiple cruises on RC). We did get coupon books, but discounts in them don't amount to much.

We weren't the only ones who noticed that portions at dinner are now smaller, although I have no problem with that. The buffet was only complete in the morning. For the luncheon buffet, half of the area was cordoned off, but the selection was still good. We never went to the evening buffet so we don't know about that one. Servers told us that with part of the area cordoned off, there was less food that had to be thrown away. Everybody did get whatever food they wanted. We noticed a few other cuts, but we still enjoyed the cruise. Of course, some of these policies could actually be "that ship's" policy. The cruise in December on the Mariner of the Seas was better, but it's been moved to Las Angeles and the Freedom is taking its place out of Port Canaveral. Corporate cuts probably took place since we took the cruise on the Mariner.

The Freedom of the Seas is about 1,100 ft. long and 126.64 ft. wide; and is much too large for the Panama Canal. As I said, we had a fun cruise, but it is often crowded in certain places. The evening shows were great and one person in our group managed to get us tickets to a show at the ice rink, and that was also a spectacular show.

We think our next cruise will be on a smaller ship. There seems to be some great cruise bargains available these days. How about $399 for a 7-day cruise on a Holland America ship! Also, Norwegian Cruise Lines, which I have never tried, called to offer us a five day cruise at $129, but we weren't quite ready for their fast approaching open dates.

We did sign up for the Florida Association of PC Users Groups spring conference, which will be held on a three day cruise next spring. Registration for it has been great and it seems to be well received.

Enough about our fun (which is destroying our savings); here's a few things that might be of interest to you.

Just the Ticket For Dark Restaurants

If you haven't seen (or heard) them, you'd be impressed with "Talking Menus." I saw them at a food show some time ago, but haven't been to a restaurant that uses them. I've been to a few restaurants with a dark ambience and tried everything to see what was on the menu. These talking menus would be the answer, and according to the brochure, they can also tell you the nutritional facts if you are interested. Look them over at <http://www.talkingmenus.com>.

I could have asked them for a discount, but I doubt your budget would have tolerated a $399 menu for your dinner table at home (from the prices in the booklet they gave me), and I doubt the cook offers multiple selections to choose from. Ask your favorite restaurant if they'll be getting them soon. We don't frequent the dark places much and our favorites, the fast-food places, don't need them. However, my wife has to read the menus behind the counter to me because the print is too small. Have you noticed that on their dollar menus?

Tool For Repairing Access Files

I ran this product back in March, but if you missed it at that time, DataNumen is now offering a 20% discount by using the coupon code DATA-E2OI-TWEN when ordering at <http://www.datanumen.com/aar/order.htm>.
This is a better deal than the discount last March which was only 10%. The discount code may also work for ordering their products for repairing Excel and Word; and for the Outlook and Outlook Express files. Check their Web site for descriptions of the products. The version for Access is 2.1, updated from the one in March.

How's Your Battery Doing?

Hewie Poplock of Central Florida Computer Society <http://www.cfcs.org> mentioned this product to the members of his SIG (Special Interest Group) and it sounded to me like something that my readers might be interested in, considering the proliferation of laptop use these days. According to their product page, "BatteryCare is a free utility that gives you much more information about your battery than how much charge you have left for the current session: The app changes power profiles for you when you connect your laptop to a power source, *Continues on Page 9*

lets you know how many recharge cycles your battery has left, and more, all for free." I know my laptop is not accurate about its remaining time, but I have not used it very much while depending entirely on its battery.

It sounds like a handy product, and how could you go wrong if it's free. However, the developer does appreciate any donations to help keep his work going. Makes sense to me. <http://batterycare.bkspot.com/en/index.html>

Having problems reading the screen?

A while back, I read a review of DeskTopZoom written by Bonnie Snyder in Bits of Bytes, newsletter of the Pikes Peak Computer Application Society of Colorado Springs <http://ppcompas.apcug.org/bb0903.pdf#page=5>. This product does a good job of giving you options for enlarging parts of your screen for easier reading, or to study something you can't see very well on a page. It does have a few shortcomings, but all in all, she speaks highly of it, and the price is "nada." If you would like to find out more, read her article in the above link, or go to <http://www.softpedia.com/get/Desktop-Enhancements/Other-Desktop-Enhancements/DesktopZoom.shtml>. There may be improvements since her review was written.

Magnifier You May Already Have!

Let's say that you sometimes need simple magnification for something. Like me, you may not have known about the screen magnifier in XP. It's nothing exciting, but simply click "All Programs, then Accessories, then click Accessibility" and you'll find Magnifier. I tried it and it's pretty basic, but I'm told that more information about it is on the Microsoft Web site. The article I read said there's a link for that, but I didn't see it. On my screen, large text appeared at the top with a large curser, and while there wasn't much magnified screen area, I was able to make use of it. Try it; it may be all you need. Clicking "exit" stops it. I was unaware of this gem until I read it in a newsletter.

That's it for this month. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged. Bob (The Cheapskate) *Click!*

CLASSIFIEDS
FREE Classifieds

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. For placement of member ads, e-mail: Jerry Montalbano, Editor at:

jerryccug@cox.net

CCUG-PC HELPDESK

would be lost to any recovery method. Therefore, many Acronis experts and experienced users know the value of being able to get to their backup file (image file which records every aspect of the file areas). Their secret (which may not be exactly a secret, but a knowledge by inexperienced users) is to have a second drive (portable, external, or internal) or other large media (including multiple Blu-Ray discs/DVD discs, etc.).

One makes a bootable (and even a backup bootable for a failure) CD disc to boot to Acronis to be able to access the drive/media with the backup .TIB file. I've used it myself over the past 3 months during a drive failure, so I know it can happen.

Therefore, if one has a choice, this method of an alternative to keeping the backup file on the same drive (although on a separate partitioned part of the drive) could be a "backup saver".

CCUG-PC members speaking out!

* "I got so much out of the meeting, I ordered the back up software, but most of all seeing old friends. Loved it." —*Carolyn Wagner*

* "Thought it was great today! Thanks to all!" —*Sue Wessing*

* "Back on track again. Great day, Informative. Good to have Jerry Serigni pop in."—*Elaine Pitre*

* "I just miss the way it used to be and everybody else does too. But considering the circumstances...it is always worth the trip to see old friends and try to learn something new." —*Garland Hilton*

* ":-) Almost seemed like old times :-(" —*William Shadwell*

* "It was nice and we lucked out and missed the big rain that Slidell got. Cya in Nov. at the next one." —*Buster Matthews*

* "All I can say is that for the people who can come, but decide not to, they are missing out. I had not seen my friends Mike and Linda Swanner since before the storm. It was great to catch up with them. And I enjoyed talking to Adam." —*Joe Vilardo*

* "I had a great time, and it was really nice to see many of the people who were regular attendees before Katrina. It was an unexpected treat to get a visit from Jerry Seregni as well."—*Ray Paternostro*

* "I laughed 'til I cried. It was that good!" —*Jerry Montalbano.*

* "I enjoyed the meeting very much. It was very informative, and I enjoyed seeing everyone again." —*Harriet Ordes.*

* "It was almost like a regular CCUG meeting." —*Harry Cancienne*

$299 and can go online, play Blu-Ray movies and great games as well.

Digital Cameras

Images taken with your cell phone are ok for quick transferring to the net or social network, but for keepsakes and more perfect quality, consider the choices available from about $100 (3x optical zoom 10 MegaPixel/2.7 LCD) to up in the thousands. However, this time when you're considering a great all-around digital, go one better: Choose a D-SLR which allows quick snaps, changeable telephoto/zoom adjustable lens, image stablizer ($500-$1500). These are priceless for those who don't wish to miss the once-in-a-lifetime shot, and distance nature.

Some brands include the *Nikon D5000* (www. youtube.com/watch?v=XXlZW5L2Pbk), which has a 12.3 MegaPixel quality, 2.7 swivel display and 4 fps continuous shooting) from $650. (Also the D3000 is available). Another popular brand is the EOS Rebel XSi (check internet for good prices).

If great pictures are what you need spend the additional couple hundred bucks to get a camera of which you can be proud to exhibit superior pics. Lastly, don't forget the wide array of digital video cameras which will document special events into cherished movies.

Printers and Accessories

Although you can buy injet and laserjet printers for under $50, why should you? The output is usually low quality and the units are considered "throw-a-way" by design. Step up and buy a better quality one for the holidays. Once has to know that printer companies usually make their ideal money through selling the printing inks and are willing to sacrifice in the short run by providing great bargains and quality printers knowing over a period of its life, you'll be buying more of their inks. When purchasing, consider the number of pages per minute you'll need, whether you want to use it as a workhorse (toughness and long-lasting) or for occasional use (internet, photos, word processing). The inkjets are slower but many can produce outstanding quality with good inks.

HP Photosmart (photos and light printing) and its multifunctional such as the HP6500 and HP8500 (fax, print, copy) printers are ideal (from $399) for the All-in-One approach for the home office. The other popular makers, Epson, Brother and Canon are available but less popular. Laserjet printers, such as the HP laserjet (600-1200 dpi - from $100-$225) are faster (12-18 ppm) and great for black and white (although color laserjets (HP Model CP2025dn) and cartridges more expensive are available).

Many offer great features such as Bluetooth and wireless for hookups to multiple computers and routers which help place one on the wireless network together. Other features include card readers (from camera to printer/computer), LCD displays for info and operation, double-sided printing, and more.

Phones and Gadgets

Audio and Sound - MP3 Players, iPods, cell phones with music players (ex. Apple Smart Phone). One extremely popular digital phone is the iPhone 3G by Apple.

Smart phones are also available depending upon the service you carry (Verizon, AT&T, Sprint, for example), and some simulate the iPhone, like the Samsung

CCUG-PC

HELP! DESK

Questions & Answers

with Jerry Montalbano

Q.   My computer has slowed remarkably? Tell me what I must do to address the change to need for speed?

A.   Firstly, as we all know, as time evolves and we attempt to try new things on our computer, these actions will penalize your computer's performance. For each new program arrives new "weight" to our computer booting up, loading these apps and its notification/system tray full of "quick-loads", etc. to the computer.

Many more technical people are more prone to this because they LOVE to try new things: technology, applications (especially when they are free or give trial-periods, etc. As a consequence to their "addition", they need to restore their hard drive back to "square-one" when they ran their new computer for the first time. Most came with restore disks, which are needed to restore everything to the time of their primary boot when purchased.

Other options are purchasing products which back-up their drive to DVD's or a second hard drive with "image backup" software like Symantec's Ghost, Acronis True Image Home 2009, (those within 30 days of the 2010 release can upgrade free), and others, including Windows Backup in Vista.

If the option is not there for image backups at this time(but certainly a good choice in the future), consider removal of some of these items which loat at boot-time. Typing msconfig (at Start, Run)can get you to the Startup tab for removing some items which are not needed. (you can see them in the right hand corner of Windows system tray/notification area in

Vista) which load in. Thus unchecking specific (except anti-virus, (ex. Symantec, Mcaffee, etc) and others would eliminate needless programs from quickstart memory loss. Make a note of checks that are unchecked firstly in case one is needed to recheck.

Running ad-aware from Lavasoft.com (free) can help get rid of adware which are memory hogs for adware, and cookie tracking, etc.

Last case scenario if aggravated enough would mean a restore to get a fresh, clean system and an opportunity to get back performance once experienced. Just make sure all data, financial files, backups in e-mail, document folder etc. are saved to CD/DVD away from the system which would format drive and restore.

Q. Free Download of Acronis True Image it reads. This was on yahoo groups, if you own a Western Digital Hard Drive, you may want to get this. Western Digital offers a Free Download of Acronis True Image for owners ofWestern Digital Hard Drives." Yes or no?

A. One thing came to mind about the Western Digital version of Acronis. I believe I brought it up to the membership, but wanted to add to it for you and Sue. Having "A backup plan is preferable to having no backup at all." Having the chance of recovering everything as it exists currently on one's drive is a wonderful thing. Some as I've mentioned have no backup (not even backing up their data, photos, financial info, etc.).

What I'm getting at is if one has the opportunity to get a free piece of software that can do a backup job, it's a winner in that respect. Under most circumstances, it will work out to a users' expectations. Acronis will create a partition (hidden area for its work) and a backup file called a TIB (True Image Backup) to be placed for recovery at some time.

However, here's the catch: what happens when the entire drive fails (no activity, no light, no way to access the drive)? With no way to access a file, the backup

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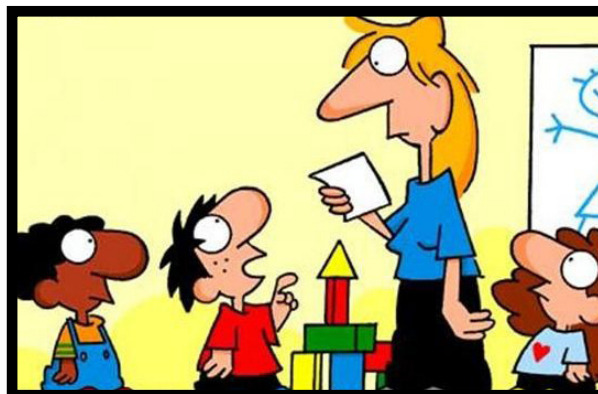
Buster Matthews, Yahoo Group CCUG-PC Online Moderator Worldwide CCUG-PC Yahoo Club: **http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ccugpconline/**

Where are we today?

Four years later begs the question, "where are we today" with our computer knowledge, careers and interests? Have we grown technically, professionally, and skillwise concerning these matters? Have we taken advantage of the Internet, reading materials and courses, user groups, and other choices which help us to better the usage of these marvelous pieces of technology? Perhaps some have added more tools of technology such as mobile devices (Apple iPhone, iPod, SmartPhones) as well as portable laptops, satellite phones, and peripherals. Just where are we, today?

CCUG-PC CHUCKLES
"Laugh til' you chuckle"

My name was David, but that sounded old-fashioned. So I shortened it to DVD!"

http://www.facebook.com

Facebook is a global social networking website that is operated and privately owned by Facebook, Inc. Users can add friends and send them messages, and update their personal profiles to notify friends about themselves. Additionally, users can join networks organized by city, workplace, school, and region.

A January 2009 Compete.com study ranked Facebook as the most used social network by worldwide monthly active users, followed by MySpace. It's more than time spent playing cutesy games, chatting or getting acquanted internationally. Sure, it's a pasttime. It'll keep you busy for hours on end. Some say to the point it's *time consuming.*