Phoenix PC Users Group NEWS

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January 2008

The Newsletter of the Phoenix Personal Computer Users Group
"Users helping users to understand computers"

PHOENIX PC USERS GROUP
5555 N 7TH ST STE 5 PMB 101
PHOENIX AZ 85014-2575

Predictions 2008

By Bill Funk, Phoenix PCUG Board Member

I always find predictions interesting. I used to read the supermarket tabloids around the New Year, to see what those who considered themselves to have some ability to see the future would predict. I also wanted to see how well they did the previous year, which they would brag about. It was interesting to see how many predictions they would make, and compare them to how many they bragged about that they got right the previous year. The number of current predictions always outnumbered the number of predictions they got right the previous year. That seemed strange, because those with the ability to see the future should get **ALL** of their predictions right, or so I think, anyway.

For myself, I make no claims to see into the future. Nonetheless, for your amusement, I will proceed to make predictions for the year 2008,

Will there be a "Killer App" for 2008?

No. I probably should let that be it. However, I can't help myself, so...

A "Killer App" is something like Visicalc (the first spreadsheet for computers), which not only gives the user a new way to use a computer to do something that really needs to be done, but also helps sell the hardware to do that job. Visicalc sold a lot of computers. Other Killer Apps include Lotus 1-2-3 (Visicalc was originally for the Apple II, while 1-2-3 was for the PC), Star Raiders for the Atari, and Microsoft Office for Windows 3.1. All sold a lot of computers.

For 2008, though, I don't see a Killer App on the horizon, for two reasons: first, there's not a huge pent-up need for a particular job solution that an application can fill. Yes, some jobs will be done better by new versions or releases of software, but that's normal progression. Second, there's no major (or even minor) new hardware platforms just waiting for the right application to launch it into marketing nirvana. Sorry.

Will 2008 be the year for 64-bit computing?

Probably not. I'm sticking my neck out here, because 64-bit computing has such promise, but it just doesn't have that much of a need to fill. While 64-bit computing has its place, it's not on the desktops of most users. Where it really shines is in very processor-intense operations that take a long time, and where the data needing to be processed in in large chunks. Mining large databases for information is an example of where 64-bit computing works well. Browsing the Web, writing stuff in a word processor, editing photos, or watching video are examples of where 32-bit computing is perfectly capable. Even video editing won't take advantage of 64-bit computing much, unless your editor is specifically designed to do so (and not many are). And, 64-bit computing has its drawbacks; not many companies make 64-bit drivers for their products, so a 64-bit Operating System (OS) can't use them. This means, for example, if your printer doesn't have 64-bit drivers, your 64-bit OS won't see it. Bummer. (Many have discovered that their peripherals, like printers, don't have drivers for Vista; this means they have to buy new peripherals for their 32-bit OS. Bummer!)

So, it doesn't look like 64-bit computing will make any large inroads into desktop computing.

What about multi-core processors?

This one's easy. 2008 will see quad-core processors become the predominant processor

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Phoenix PC Users Group

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Help Your
User Group Grow

Bring a Friend
to the Meetings

Contributors

Bill Funk

Kathy Jacobs

Hank Pearson

January 2008

The January 2008 main meetings will be

West Side .... Tuesday, Jan 15

DeVry University, 2149 W Dunlap Ave, Phoenix

East Side .... Wednesday, Jan 16

University of Advancing Technologies
2625 W Baseline Rd, Tempe
(one block west of Fry's Electronics)

Fountain Hills ...... Thursday, Jan 17

Fountain Hills Library, 12901 N La Montana Drive,
Fountain Hills

The topic for the main meetings this month are:

Broadband Options

and

Smart Computing

Check our Website at
www.phoenixpcug.org
to verify subject matter and
time for ALL meetings!

User Group News

January 2008 General Meeting Topics

Fountain Hills and West Side Meetings:

Broadband Options

East Side Meeting:

Smart Computing Magazine

See www.azacc.org for details

Coming in February

West and Fountain Hills: Spring Cleaning Your Computer

East Side AZACC meeting:

Microsoft OneNote

General Meetings start with Questions and Answers at 6:30 PM. This is followed by the general topic of the meeting. The meetings finish by 9:00 PM

Want to check your internet access speed

Try this website:

http://reviews.cnet.com/7004-7254_7-0.html

Run the test at a couple of different times of day and see if it changes significantly

CALENDAR

Check our website for room and time information and to check for last minute changes

January 2008

Wednesday, January 2 (Board Meeting) .... DeVry

Thursday, January 10 (General Interest SIG) .... Library

Tuesday, January 15 West Side, room 207 (Broadband Options)DeVry

Wednesday, January 16 East Side (Smart Computing)............... UAT

Thursday, January 17 Fountain Hills (Broadband Options)...... Library

Thursday, January 23 (Photo SIG) .... DeVry

Thursday, January 23 (Video SIG) .... DeVry

February 2008

Wednesday, February 6 (Board Meeting) .... Granite Reef

Thursday, February 14 (General Interest SIG)....................... Library

Tuesday, February 19 West Side (Spring Cleaning) .... DeVry

Wednesday, February 20 East Side (Smart Computing) .... UAT

Thursday, February 21 Fountain Hills (Spring Cleaning) .... Library

Thursday, February 27 (Photo SIG)................................... DeVry

Thursday, February 27 (Video SIG) .... DeVry

Notices:

East Side meetings are now AZACC meetings. See azacc.org for details

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The Official Policy of the Phoenix PC Users Group is that we do not condone software piracy in any form.

Yaw, Dacotah

By Hank Pearson, Phoenix PCUG Board Member

"Yaw, been windy," she says. She's a cousin we're visiting in Dacotah, as several local signs spell it (the Indian way). Aside from an occasional 'yaw', they speak only English in Aberdeen. We don't hear anything else, even in Taco Bell.

No long sloppy pants and spike hair. Aberdonians, as they call themselves, are clean-cut. And half the people working in McDonald's are older folks, providing good role-models for the youth.

The streets are clean - virtually litter-free. We don't see any graffiti. Our relative doesn't lock her doors, day or night.

We see no stucco, but lots of brick. Steep steel roofs are not uncommon, reminding us it's snow country. And basement windows are not unusual.

Instead of Home Depot, they have Menards. It's a home improvement store on steroids. Along with everything you'd expect, they sell groceries! Their lumber yard is huge, containing several big buildings full of supplies. And they stock numerous styles of pre-built roof trusses, ready to haul away. No need to wait for custom jobs.

Out in the country, miles from the nearest town, we find the Granary Rural Cultural Center. It features an art museum (in a granary), a nature walk, sculptures, art classes, and a labyrinth.

We can hardly wait to see the labyrinth, wondering if it is a maze of crop circles. But true to the promise of culture, the labyrinth is a classical pattern set in a lawn with bricks to mark walking paths. You start at one edge and wind your way back and forth and around until you reach the center. The idea is to provide an environment that encourages meditation.

This is no modern farmer's brainstorm. The concept is thousands of years old. A Google

search reveals a wealth of information about labyrinths. For a sample article, see http://www.crystalinks.com/labyrinths.html.

The design of the labyrinth at the Granary is from the floor of the 12th-century Chartres Cathedral in Paris:

When I first saw the pattern on a brochure, I immediately thought of Paint Shop Pro. (I know you were wondering what this has to do with computers.) The drawing poses a question. Are the paths the black lines or the white spaces between them? The black lines represent the bricks that line the grass paths. The white represents the lawn.

What we need here is a trivial dose of graphics editing, to widen the paths, to clarify where we walk. Sure, there are hundreds of labyrinth images on the internet, but why miss the opportunity to tweak, just for fun?

So in Paint Shop Pro, in the Materials palette, I clicked the background icon and selected white. Then, with the Magic Wand tool, I clicked the

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white lawn to select it (without selecting the black brick borders). In the Selection menu, under Modify, I clicked Expand to "grow" the paths a little wider, and hit Delete to change the selected area to white (the background color in the Materials palette).

Next, I mused, why is this drawing black and white? So in the Materials palette, I clicked the background icon and selected a light green. With the white lawn still selected, I pressed Delete to replace the white with green.

With the Magic Wand still active, I selected the black and changed them to brick red. Now, I have a diagram that is easier to relate to.

(The color picture can be seen at (http://pearsona.com/yaw/)

I know, the illustration is a diagram - not an aerial photo. Doctoring up the design is like doodling.

Do you admit you are still enough of a kid at times to doodle? If not, I feel sorry for you. Doodling is fun. Doodling is good, like meditating while walking a labyrinth. And why not doodle on your computer?

Without doodling, we wouldn't have art, would we? We wouldn't have the sculptures and exhibits in the granary. We wouldn't have the labyrinth on the floor of the cathedral! Perhaps real artists no longer doodle, but I bet they did when younger. You don't even have to be artistic or young to doodle. Don't take life so seriously. You don't need a practical reason for everything you do.

Yaw, been windy.

Did you know that you can get your newsletter electronically each month?

Or did you expect to get a copy electronically and still received a paper copy?

Just send us a note or check the box on your membership Application. You will get a notice each month when the newsletter is available on the website.

Make sure you include your email address. At least one member who requested an electronic copy did not include the email address on the membership application.

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choice for most desktop computers. Which will be strange, because a dual-core processor is all most desktop users will need. How often do we actually multi-process? We often have more than one app open at a time, but only one is actually being used; this is task-switching, not multiprocessing. Currently, there are few apps that even allow the use of more than one core at a time, and those that do are for things like heavy photo editing or video editing, which can actually use the horsepower multi-core processors provide. If you do a lot of this, dual-core processors are a good thing. Personally, I have a dual-core processor, and it comes in handy for some things; I can burn a DVD while writing this, for example. But usually, I'm just doing one thing at a time, and most of my apps aren't multi-core aware. A quad-core processor won't help me at all, and I doubt it would help many of us either.

So, why will quad-core processors take over? There are several reasons, and I'll mention two:

Economics; it is as cheap to make a quad-core processor as a dual-core processor.

Looking forward; the prediction here is that apps will be made to be multi-core aware, making multimedia much easier to both make and use. As larger video files, for example, are made, multicore processors will greatly speed up the rendering process; and on the viewing side, with more resolution and better physics simulations available, multicore processors will give a much better viewing experience. This means much better games, for example. (Games often are the first to make use of better hardware.)

So, quad-core processors will take over, but unless you have an app that specifically uses those extra cores, it won't get you much of a gain over a dual-core processor.

Where will digital cameras go?

The megapixel wars will end soon; stuffing more pixels into a sensor will only add noise, which degrades the image. There is a solution, through noise-reduction software, but that only does so much. What we will see is more features added to the cameras, to give the user more control over the final image. Better lenses, bigger zoom ranges, and larger sensors will be among the more useful features. This means the pictures you take will be in better focus, the exposure will be better, and the colors will be truer to the original scene.

Of course, this doesn't mean you'll take better pictures; if Aunt Martha has a utility pole growing from her head, the pole will look better, but it will still be there.

Which will win: HD-DVD or BluRay?

I dunno.

Personally, I like BluRay; the capacity is greater, even for multi-layer discs. HD-DVD boasts better security and a better error-recovery system, but BluRay isn't giving any problems, so the difference is nil for the user. Security, through DRM (Digital Rights Management), is useful only to keep honest people from copying the DVD; people who want to pirate movies can do so with relative ease.

But this isn't like BetaMax vs VHS; the two HD DVD systems are very close as far as the user is concerned. It's possible that burners that can handle both at a reasonable cost, just as both "+" and "-" DVD burners are available, but why? The answer is, IMHO, simply one of pride; neither camp wants to cry "Uncle!"

And finally: **My political prediction of the year:**

Ted Kennedy's new book will become required reading for the AA.

Windows Live Hotmail

By Lynn Page,
Editor, Crystal River Users Group, Florida
www.crug.com
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Obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

I have had a Hotmail account for many years and use it regularly. The latest Windows Live Hotmail is easier to use and includes many impressive features. With 5 GB inbox so you don't have to worry about it filling up while you are away. Safety features, including color codes alert you to suspicious email and spam filtering automatically sorts out unwanted email. You can even drag and drop messages between folders to keep things clean and organized.

I use the full version, which contains some more advanced features but you can choose the classic version. Hotmail opens to the Today page, showing a status meter of mail usage, current news headlines, and a folders view showing how many unread emails are in the inbox.

Color codes make it easy to tell at a glance whether a message is safe or not. The bar at the top of a message comes in three colors: White means the message is from known contacts. Yellow means the message is from someone not on your contacts list. Red means the message appears to be fraudulent.

Control junk email with filters and senders lists. Select low, standard or exclusive filters. I use standard and it catches most of the spam. I also have junk email found with the filter sent to my junk email folder, where it is automatically deleted after five days. However, I look at the folder and empty it daily. After using the filter for some time, you may decide to immediately delete junk email. You can mark a message as safe or unsafe. Clicking the mark as unsafe link, automatically reports the sender to Hotmail's junk email filters and deletes the message. Then the sender will no longer be able to send you email and will receive notification that your address is not valid. If a non-junk email gets accidentally filtered to the Junk folder, clicking on the Not junk link to report a message as not junk. If someone is trying to solicit personal data, like passwords or financial information you can report the phishing scam. Click the down arrow by the Junk link and select Report phishing scam.

Maintain your safe senders, safe mailing lists and blocked senders to be sure you get the email that you need. Be careful when blocking a sender in choosing whether to block only the sender or domain.

I like to keep things organized and Windows Live Hotmail makes it easy to keep email organized. Just create new folders and file existing messages in them for later reference. Move messages by checking those to move, then use the Move to drop down menu to file them. The full version makes it even easier. You can drag and drop messages into the proper folder. To delete messages, select the messages, and then click delete.

If a filing system goes awry, you can use the search box above the inbox to find messages in one of your folders or inbox. Just type in a search and select the Mail button. Clicking web accesses images, news, or information across the Web based on your search.

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Hotmail continues from page 9

Hotmail can even help maintain contacts. Contacts can be imported from Outlook, Outlook Express, Windows Contacts, Yahoo Mail and Gmail. On the other hand, when you receive an email from a new contact you can easily add that person to your Windows Live Hotmail contact list. Just click the Add contact link below the From: line on their email. And your address book automatically updates anytime a contact changes Windows Live contact information.

You can export Windows Live Hotmail contacts to a CSV file to transfer to another email account or save a backup copy. If you regularly add email addresses to your contacts when you receive mail, duplicate contacts can become a problem. Now when you add a new contact from your inbox by clicking Add contact in a received message and the contact has the same name as an existing one, you're asked if you want to merge them. You still have the option of keeping them separate, giving you complete control over your contact list. Running clean up duplicate contacts searches for and cleans up duplicates. Just choose to delete, edit or merge information into one contact.

Windows Live Hotmail contacts have fields for most information you need and probably more. Add a first and last name, nickname; personal and business email address, phone numbers and address; birthday and a note for other information.

Options provide personalization features to suit your needs. Forward email from other accounts to Hotmail or forward Hotmail to another account. Set up a personal vacation reply when you will be unavailable. The reply is sent to any message that goes into the inbox. If you receive many messages from one person, they will get the vacation reply every four days.

Customize your email by selecting a language, reading pane settings and your email signature. Set whether to save a copy of sent email. You can even have sent mail include a different reply to address. Select the reading pane configuration to make the reading pane appear on the right or bottom of the screen or turn it off altogether. I personally keep the reading pane off in all of my email accounts. That way if a junk email gets through the filters, I can select and delete it without dealing with the message at all.

However, the full version of Windows Live Hotmail has a reading pane so you can preview a message without risk. The reading pane lets you quickly view your e-mail. Email from unknown senders has a yellow safety bar, and the attachments, pictures and links blocked to help avoid alerting spammers. You quickly go from message to message without opening and reloading the page. Double click the message to open it up in the full window. You can also change your inbox layout.

If you like to get an audible alert of new email, set Windows Live Messenger to notify you. In Windows Live Messenger, go to select Options in the Tools drop down menu. In Options select Alerts & Sounds and then Display alerts when e-mail is received.

To send an email, click the New envelope icon that in the top menu bar. In the full version, clicking the drop-down arrow to the right of the New button opens a menu to create new Folders, Contacts and Groups. If you click away from the email you're composing, you'll receive a prompt to Save as draft. Use font styles, sizes and formatting, bullets, graphics and even emoticons while creating a message. Add recipients to an email from your list of contacts. Or with the full version just start

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AMD News

By Kathy Jacobs, Phoenix PCUG President

AMD sponsored the APCUG Breakfast on Sunday, where they made some announcements that went public today. Let's see what I can share…

You can check out my pictures from the presentation in this video : www.screencast.com/t/c1y95DL8ISQ

There isn't any sound to the video. Watch it while you read to see what they are talking about

What did AMD have to show us?

The first few pictures you saw were of AMD Live. being demoed. Yeah, we actually saw it running. It's a new way of looking at and working with media, web, etc. It can grab content from your local PC, the web, or a remote server. It lets you run video at the same time you surf the web and work with other items.

Another thing they talked about was Branded Technology. AMD is moving towards "Better by Design". The idea is working to design hardware components that are designed to work together, instead of just putting pieces together and letting them work together as best they can.

The next couple of pictures were the information that was provided about Swift and Shrive - Optimized design of systems for laptops that improve speed while reducing energy usage. I am not 100% convinced on this one, but the ideas are intriguing.

On the desktop front, the information was on Phenom… Called the first true quad core processor. Check out the pictures and let me know if you think it's revolution, evolution, or hype.

The last few pictures are Scott and Simon, the

people from AMD who presented. The big walkaway from them was that AMD Live won't just make it easy to store, edit, and use your pictures - it will also make it easier to know where stuff is and on which machine. We will see if it turns out to be any different from the Media Center implementations that Microsoft already has out.

SIG Notes

Digital Photography

Bill Funk runs the Digital Photography SIG. This month's topic will be:

Gradients, Tiles and Framing in Paint Shop Pro

Video

David Yamamoto leads the Video SIG, which meets right after the Digital Photography SIG. This months topic will be announced.

General Interest

Chuck Lewis leads the General Interest SIG. This SIG meets in the Fountain Hills Library conference room. Email for this SIG can be sent to genint@phoenixpcug.org

The General discussion SIG will meet Thursday, February 14th at 6:00

We plan to resume discussion on several hardware capacity questions that are open, how the task manager memory calculations relate to your performance in XP. New questions are always welcome as time permits.

Contact SIG leaders by e-mailing SIGs@phoenixpcug.org for more information.

How To Find Podcasts

By Mike Lyons, President Orange County IBM PC Users' Group, CA
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president(at)orcopug.org

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Download the free 7.3 iTunes program from www.apple.com/itunes/ and install. Now, all you need is an mp3 player, and you're all set to download podcasts and listen to them on the go.

When you first open iTunes, click on the "Podcast Directory" at the bottom next to "Report a Concern." That actually takes you to the Apple Store. In the upper left corner is a magnifying glass and a space to search for a word or phrase. Type in "computer." The Apple logo in the top center area changes to a candy cane-striped bar as it searches. The bar will turn solid and display the results: Name, Time, Artist, Album, Price, Popularity and Genre.

Next to the name is a grayed-out circle with an arrow in it. This leads to more information about the podcast. It includes a description, user reviews, a list of the last 20 podcasts and a list of 5 "Listeners also subscribed to."

Headings are sortable by clicking on them, so if you click on Price, all the free ones appear at the top.

Some of the stuff is pretty explicit, that's why they call it the "wild, wild web." Podcasts are labeled "clean," "explicit," or blank which means the rating hasn't been determined.

I look to see how often and consistently the podcast occurs (some really good ones haven't been updated since 2006), check customer comments, and the "Also subscribed to" list.

If you want to subscribe, simply click on the "subscribe" button. To go back where you were, under the Apple logo on the left is a small button with a left pointing twirly. Click on this to get back.

After downloading podcasts, connect your mp3 player to a USB cable and right click on the file. Select "Send to" and click on the drive letter of the mp3 player to transfer podcasts to it from your computer.

Besides the iTunes Podcast Directory, you can find podcasts of Computer America shows at www.businesstalkradio.net/weekday_ host/ Archives/cc.shtml and National Public Radio at www.npr.org/rss/podcast/podcast_directory.php.

There are even locally-produced user group podcasts. The Los Angeles Computer Society has podcasts of their main meetings at www.lacspc.org/podcast/Archive.html

You don't have to have an mp3 player to listen to podcasts, though. If you left-click on the mp3 title, it plays right in your browser. Or, if you right-click on the title, select "Save Link As," and you can save it to a directory on your computer.

Besides playing podcasts in mp3 players and browsers, mp3 files on your hard drive can be burned to a CD. Then, you can play them in your car. Just burn them as a music CD instead of a data CD.

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Backup continues from back page

Windows up, where to back it up to, and it does the rest. That easy.

But what's imaging? Glad you asked. Imaging is a type of backup where the contents of a drive or partition are copied, compressed, and turned into a file that contains all of the files and file structure of the original drive or partition, and can be restored if needed onto any drive you need it restored to. What this means is this: if your drive goes bad (and your hard drives are the most fault-prone parts of your computer system), all you need to do is replace the drive, restore the partition (as easily as you made it!), and your new drive is the same as the old one when you made the image.

If you're like me, that will save you hours of work reloading the Operating System, registering it, upgrading it, then loading all your applications, upgrading them, and getting them set up the way you want them.

I can hear some of you asking: "Do I need to do an image after I change something small?" No; you can do an **incremental** backup, using the same software, that will make a new file containing only the changes that were made since the image was made. This means that, for instance, if you find an upgrade to one of your applications, you can install the upgrade, do an incremental backup, and the upgrade is safely backed up, so it can be restored if something goes wrong. How cool is that?

Another thing I've learned from experience: I keep my data on a separate drive from my OS and my applications. They are on my C: drive, and I have another drive for my data. This came about for two reasons; if either drive goes out, I only need to restore the drive that got farkled, and this reduces the time lost, as well as making it

easier to keep track of where things are. The second thing that brought this about is the low cost of hard drives. One drive for OS and applications, another for data. If either one is overwhelmed (runs out of space), it's a snap to replace it with a bigger one (which will probably cost less than the smaller one it replaces!). Take out the old one, install the new one, restore the image, and I'm ready to go. It really is that easy. One relatively large external drive holds all the images and incremental backups for both internal drives. If any of the three drives dies, it's a snap to replace. The external drive doesn't need to be on all the time, and since it uses a separate power supply (well, 3.5" drives do; 2.5" (laptop drives) are usually powered from the USB cable), a power supply problem in your desktop won't hurt the external drive (remember, it was a power supply problem that took out both internal drives on my prior desktop system).

Since I'm paranoid, I take another step. My photo files, and some of my data files (the important ones) also get burned onto DVDs, and stored in a safe I have. The safe is fire resistant enough to protect them in case of a house fire (the safe also holds important papers, of course). I'm not recommending this step, as it can get expensive; I have the safe for other reasons.

There are other ways to get the same effect, though. If you have a friend or relative you trust, you could ask them to hold DVDs of your important files. Or, you can use one of the many on-line backup solutions; for a relatively small amount, you can store data files with an online company, so you can retrieve them if needed. You can Google "online file storage" (sans quotation marks) to find many such companies. Some offer free limited storage, and more for a fee. I do recommend that you check the reputation of

Backup continues on page 14

Backup continues from page 13

any companies you are considering, though. It would be the pits to discover your files disappeared when you needed them, or that they weren't secure from prying eyes.

I think I hear someone saying, "But a SCSI tape system is better." In fact, I **know** I hear it. I hear it all the time. And, for some situations, such a system is better. But you'd know if you were in that situation, because you'd probably be in business that had a **LOT** of data, spread over a lot of drives, accessed by a lot of users. For such situations, a SCSI tape drive can make sense. But since such drives (and their software) are expensive (more expensive than a three-drive desktop system designed for gaming, which can be pretty expensive), they don't make sense unless you need that kind of security.

So, to sum up: I recommend a backup solution that uses three drives; two internal drives, one for the OS and applications, and one for your data. The third drive should be external, for the backups themselves. Pick an imaging application (again, I use Acronis True Image; it works very well for me). And, of course, actually **DO** the backups. Oh, wait, even that's easy: you can make True Image schedule images and backups to be done automatically!

So, next time you have a problem with a bad drive, and you're asked, "Do you have a backup?", you can rest easy.   ψ

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                       dydavid@ix.netcom.com
                       http://dydavid.tripod.com
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Hot Mail continues from page 11

typing the first or last name of the recipient and auto-complete finishes it from your address book.

If you regularly send email to the same group of people create personal distribution lists. Create a new list from your contact list. Just click on All contacts in the Contacts section and select the contacts in a group and then click the down arrow to open the Add to group drop down menu. Choose to add them to an existing group or create a new one. Once a group has been created type it's name into the To box when you want to send mail to everyone at once. Remember to use bcc.

I personally don't use blogs but if you do you can publish blog entries to your Windows Live Space from Windows Live Hotmail. If you have a customized a MSN.com page you can add your inbox to it. Then a glance at the page lets you know when you have new email. You can access and reply to email from a Web enabled cell phone or mobile device. Browse to www.mobile.live.com and log into your Windows Live Hotmail account.

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Granite Reef Senior Center
1700 N. Granite Reef Road,
Scottsdale

Please note that the
February board meeting will
be at Granite Reef.

OnPPT
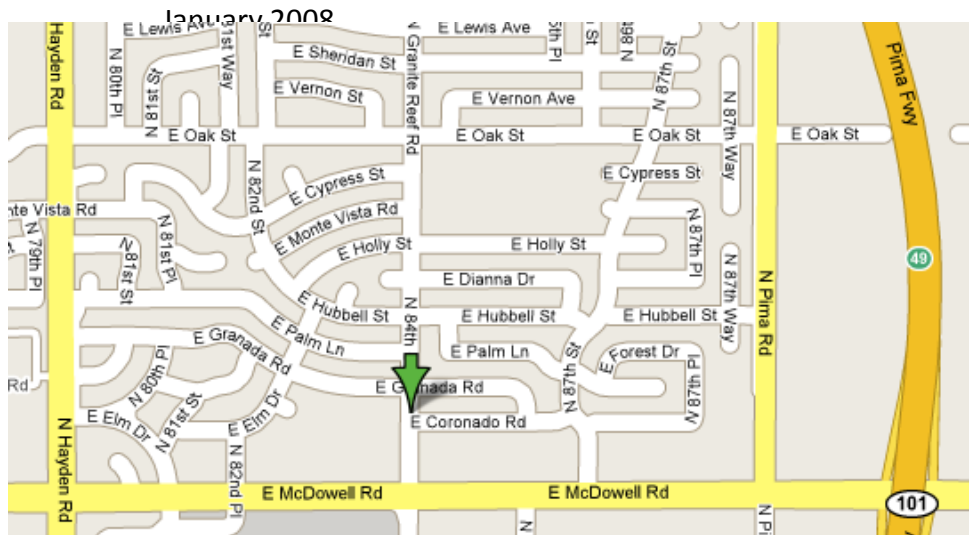
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Phone: 602-569-6430 or 602-791-1138
call_kathy@cox.net or kathy.jacobs@gmail.com

Want your own 15 minutes of fame?

Write an article for your newsletter.

- Explain Something
- Review a Product
- Write a letter to the Editor
- Solve World Hunger!

Need a Ride?

Have you been not able to come to our monthly meetings because you have no way to get to them? We have a solution for you!

Able to Provide a Ride?

Are you willing to pick up, transport and drive another member to one meeting a month? We have an opportunity for you!

PPCUG's Ride Sharing Program

Allen Hunt, long time group member has volunteered to coordinate member communication for those who need rides and those who can provide them.

To join the program for either side, email Allen at adhunt@cox.net Provide your name, your address, a way to contact you, and whether you can give or need a ride.

Allen will gather the information from everyone who responds and connect up drivers with riders. It will be the responsibility of the individual members to organize the actual rides, dates, and pick up information.

As an added bonus, any driver participating will receive one extra raffle ticket each time they drive a member to a meeting.

Phoenix PCUG News Wins Award

The Phoenix PCUG News was awarded second place in the APCUG (Association of PC User Groups) newsletter contest in the small groups division.

I would like to thank those members who have contributed articles to the news, helped edit the newsletter, and those who have made suggestions for improvements.

I would also like to thank the members for their patience when it comes out late, and for forgiving the mistakes I have made over the last year.

Bruce Jacobs
Your Newsletter Editor

Phoenix PC User Group Membership Application

First: _____ Initial: _____ Last: _____

Address: _____

City, State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Ext: _____

Release my address to venders?   ☐Yes ☐No   Note: Phone numbers **will not** be listed.

E-mail address: _____

☐   Standard * $36.00 per year
* Individual member and/or their spouse and children under 18.

Receive Electronic newsletter ONLY
☐ Yes ☐ No

Mail this completed form with payment to:

Phoenix PC Users Group
5555 N. 7th Street, Suite 5
PMB101
Phoenix, AZ 85014

Smart Computing Magazine

There is a way you can support your user group. Smart Computing Magazine will give a gift subscription to the Phoenix PC Users Group to be used as a door prize, raffle, etc., for each five subscriptions received from our group. Subscriptions can be applied for with the subscription coupon below or by phone as long as you use our group's unique source code number (8305) when beginning the subscription.

For each paid subscription using the source code 8305, our user group will be credited one credit. Results are calculated each quarter, and credits will accumulate until the group reaches five paid subscriptions, at which time they will contact the PPCUG.

In the event our group does not reach the five paid subscription mark by the end of the quarter, credits will be carried over into the following quarter until the amount reaches five paid subscriptions, at which time a free subscription will be issued.
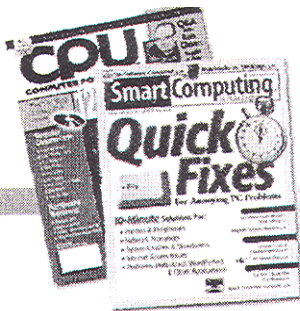
Smart Computing & CPU

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Be Sure to use the **Phoenix PCUG** Numbers:

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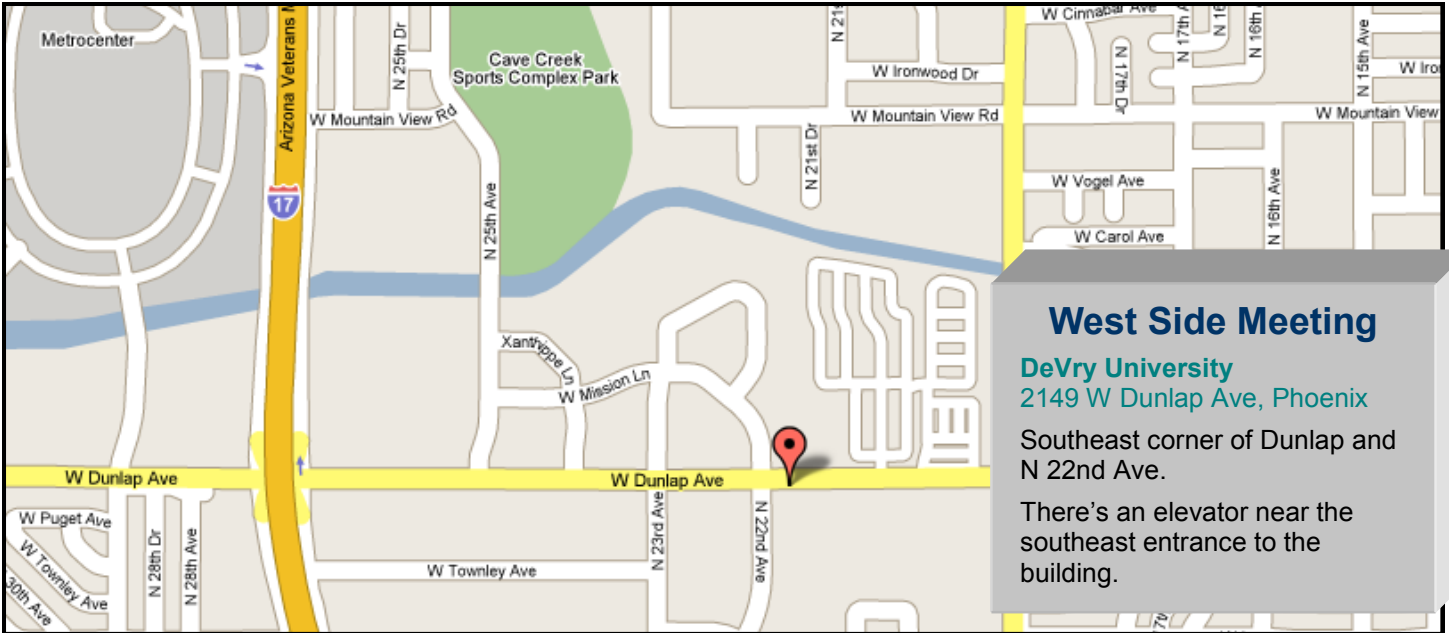402-479-2193
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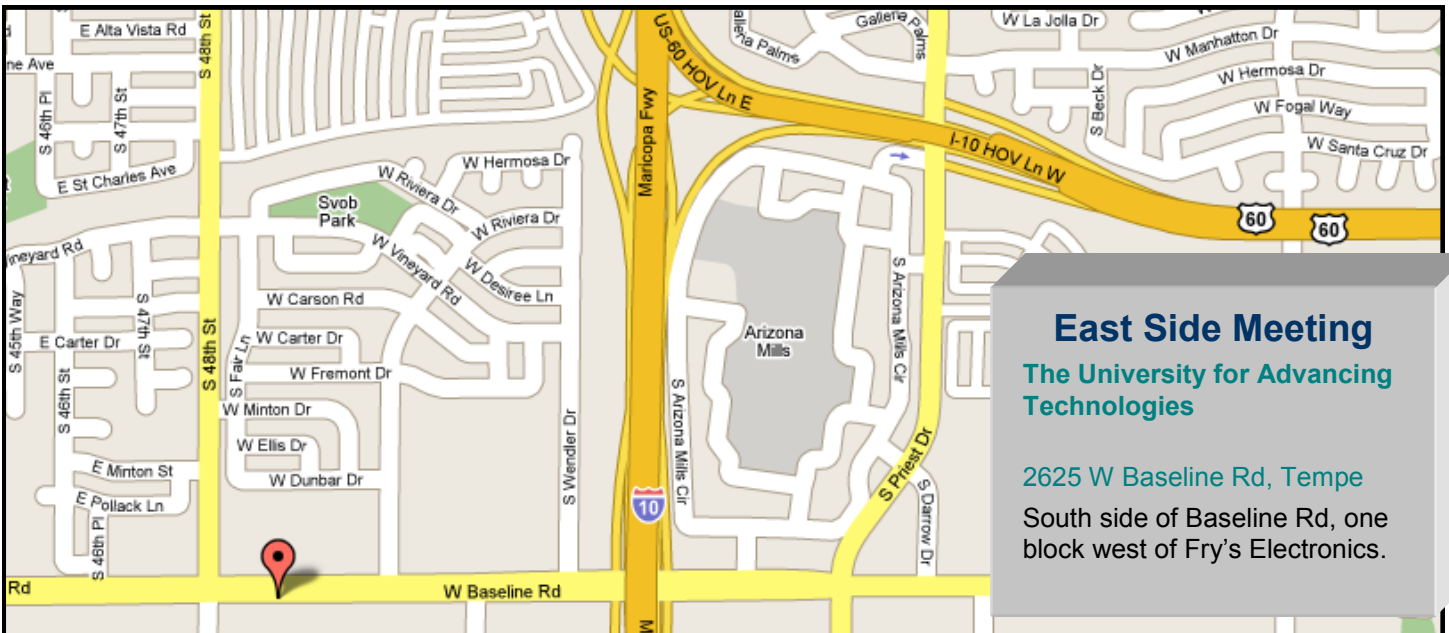800-733-3809 • 402-479-2136
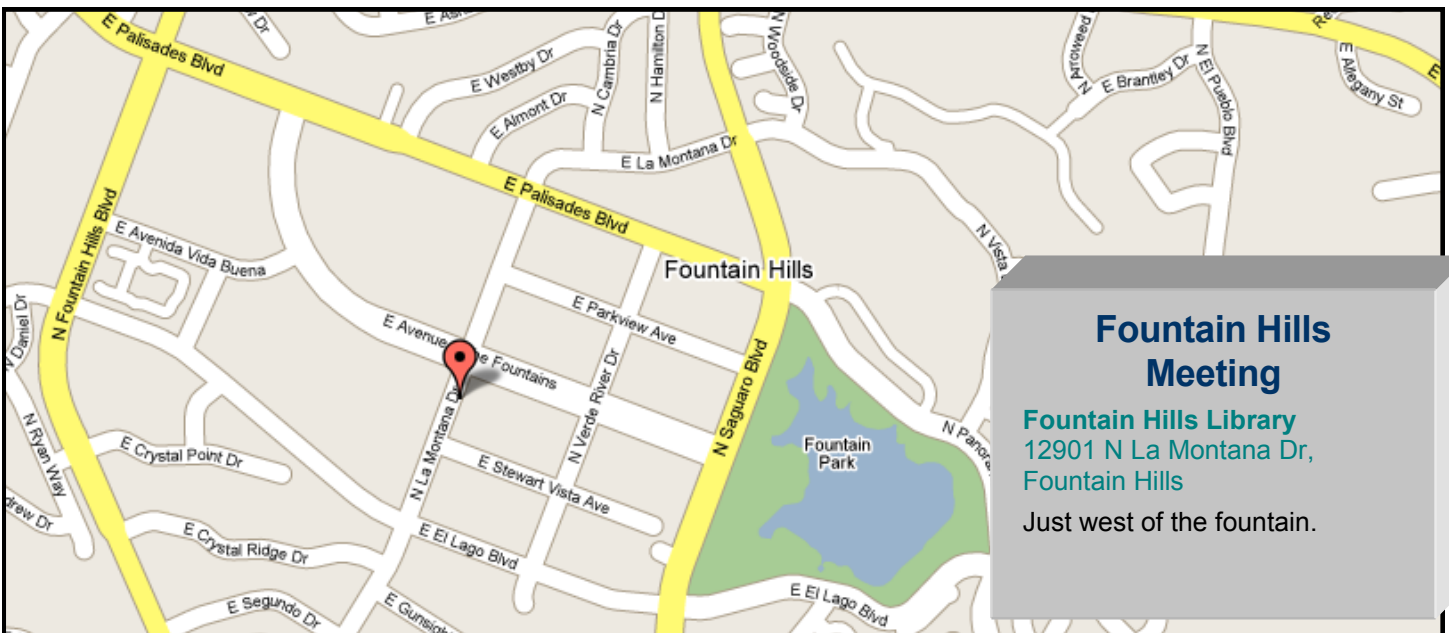
Smart Computing or CPU?

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West Side Meeting

DeVry University
2149 W Dunlap Ave, Phoenix

Southeast corner of Dunlap and N 22nd Ave.

There's an elevator near the southeast entrance to the building.

East Side Meeting

The University for Advancing Technologies

2625 W Baseline Rd, Tempe

South side of Baseline Rd, one block west of Fry's Electronics.

Fountain Hills Meeting

Fountain Hills Library
12901 N La Montana Dr, Fountain Hills

Just west of the fountain.

BACKUP? WHAT'S THAT?

By Bill Funk, Phoenix PCUG Board Member

The last time you heard from me, I'd written about my computer taking a dump. Remember? The point was, I didn't lose much data. This time, I'll tell you why that happened.

I'm paranoid. Really. And I really hate losing stuff, especially on my computer. It's happened before, and each time, it's been a learning experience. I've gone through a lot of different backup solutions, and the early one were a real pain. How many of you remember swapping 5.25" floppies to do a backup? I do. And 3.5" floppies really weren't any better. They took a long time to make a decent backup, and they weren't really reliable. Then came tape. Colorado systems were easier than floppies for backups, but they really weren't as reliable as they should have been. Travan systems were next (these are my experiences; yours may vary). Travan was better than the Colorado-type tape system; it was faster, and more reliable, but just barely. Personally, it always worked for me, but others did have problems with reliability, even after doing backups including verification.

Let me tell a story; we have friends who were, at the time of this story, living in New Mexico. We were visiting them, and I was helping then set up a new PC, a replacement for their Tandy Model III. At the time 3.5" floppies were the preferred backup solution, because hard drives were very expensive. We'd loaded DOS and a few applications, when I said this would be a good time to do a backup, so if (when!) things went wrong, we would save a lot of time getting to this point again. After we did the backup (with a sizable stack of floppies), I was asked how reliable the backup was. Well, truth to tell, I wondered the same thing. So, I quickly entered "format c:" then answered "y" when asked if I really wanted to format the drive. There were gasps(!), but the backup worked to restore the drive. If it hadn't, I would have had a lot of work to do. Sometimes, the only way to answer, "Will it work?" is to try it.

To get to the present, I've been using hard drives for backups for some time now. With hard drives so inexpensive, doing backups to an external hard drive is, at present, the best way to go. Watching ads (and here in the Phoenix area, we're lucky: we have two Fry's Electronics stores. Watch the Friday ads!) will get you some pretty good buys on external drives; I've seen 350 GB external drives for about $100.

So, just how do you do a backup? The first thing to remember is this: **ANY** backup that's actually done is better than a far better backup that isn't done. By that, I mean this: you should pick a backup solution that you will actually do, instead of waiting for the "perfect" solution that you won't do because it takes too much work. Luckily, these days, there's a very good solution available that's easy to do. (Trust me here; I'm lazy. My backup solution has to be easy!) What is it? **IMAGING**! There are several applications that will do imaging; you can take your pick. I've been using Acronis True Image for several years, and it's worked well for me. Take that as a recommendation, if you want; I don't have any connection with Acronis except as a customer. But True Image works well, and it's easy to use.

How easy? This easy: it's Wizard-driven. That means you start it, tell it what you want to back

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