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**Web address:**  
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**July 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

# Your Next Computer Will Be Green

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By Marjie Tucker, Editor, Mountain Computer User Group, GA  
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With Europe leading the way, the computer industry is decidedly becoming "green." The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and the Restriction of Hazardous Substances (ROHS) directives went into effect earlier this year. These two directives state that certain electrical and electronic equipment must cut down on hazardous materials such as lead, mercury, and cadmium. They also give customers the right to return their equipment free of charge. Companies have several years to fully implement these directives, but the leaders have already started to make changes.

Dell, for example, is advertising Energy Smart workstations and notebooks that can reduce power consumption by as much as 78%. The Energy Smart configuration uses a default power setting that is designed to reduce consumption and energy costs right out of the box. In addition, the power supply, fan, and motherboard use significantly less energy to maintain cool internal temperatures.

HP is using 80 Plus power supplies to lower energy bills and AMD technology that reduces heat output and PC power consumption. In addition, they have already introduced an HP recycling program where you can trade-in or donate the products.

## Government Initiatives

Many U.S. government agencies have implemented standards and regulations to encourage green computing. The Environmental Protection Agency launched an Energy Star program in 1992 and strengthened its

requirements in 2006. In 2003 the California State Senate enacted the Electronic Waste Recycling Act and in 2007 President Bush issued Executive Order 13423 requiring all federal agencies to use the Electronic Products Environmental Assessment Tool when purchasing computer systems. In addition, a global consortium called The Green Grid was founded in 2007 by AMD, APC, Dell, HP, IBM, Intel, Microsoft, Rackable Systems, SprayCool, Sun and VMware.

Another initiative formed by a group of Global-minded IT executives, the Green Computing Impact Organization (GCIO), was created to be an active participant in transforming the IT community from an environmental liability to an Earth conscious example of responsibility. GCIO is a nonprofit organization that is based on environmental audit programs for consumers and small business homes with respect to general energy-efficiency programs (including lighting, heating, insulation, etc.). GCIO's mission is to educate and assist enterprise technology users in the design of environmentally aware and responsible information system operations. They help consumers become more environmentally responsible by reducing energy consumption and electronic waste in an effort to protect the Earth.

GCIO is sponsoring educational programs across the country and participating in a Green Computing Summit that will be held in Washington, DC on May 20th. The summit will address how public sector IT managers, procurement officials, and program managers public sector professionals can transform their IT and data center operations into more environmentally conscious yet efficient solutions. This conference will attract senior government IT professionals and their industry partners tasked with helping agencies become greener in the coming years. Attendees will represent federal, state and local governments,

***Green continues on page 14***

July 2008

The July 2008 main meetings will be

**West Side .....Tuesday, July 15**

CollegeAmerica, 6533 N Black Canyon Hwy, Phoenix, room 2

**East Side ..... Wednesday, July 16**

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

**Fountain Hills ..... Thursday, July 17**

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

**The topic for the main meetings this month is:**

**Microsoft Mindshare Applications**

*Steering Committee will meet before the Fountain Hills meeting this Month*

**Check our Website at [www.phoenixpcug.org](http://www.phoenixpcug.org) to verify subject matter and time for ALL meetings!**

## Phoenix PC Users Group

### Steering Committee

President: Dean Botchuck  
Vice-President: David Yamamoto  
Secretary: Chuck Lewis  
Treasurer: Lo Hardman

### Also

### Members who are present at the meeting

### Staff Members

Membership Coordinator: Chuck Lewis  
Asst Membership Coord: Tj  
Fountain Hills Coordinator: TBD  
East Side Coordinator: Bill Aulepp  
West Side Coordinator: Tj  
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# Users Group News

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## July 2008 General Meeting Topic

All Meeting locations:

**Bylaws changes Q & A**

*Microsoft® Mindshare Applications*

Fountain Hills: Steering Committee

## Coming in August

All Meeting locations:

*Not Yet Finalized*

*See Our Website*

[WWW.PhoenixPCUG.org](http://WWW.PhoenixPCUG.org)

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

# CALENDAR

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

## July 2008

Tuesday, July 15 West (Mindshare Applications) ..... CollegeAmerica  
Wednesday, July 16 East (Mindshare Applications) ..... UAT  
Thursday, July 17 Fountain Hills (Steering Committee) .....Library  
Thursday, July 17 Fountain Hills (Mindshare Applications) .....Library  
Wednesday, July 23 (Photo SIG) ..... CollegeAmerica  
Wednesday, July 23 (Video SIG) ..... CollegeAmerica

## August 2008

Tuesday, August 19 West (TBD)..... CollegeAmerica  
Wednesday, August 20 East (TBD)..... UAT  
Thursday, August 21 Fountain Hills (TBD).....Library  
Wednesday, August 27 (Photo SIG)..... CollegeAmerica  
Wednesday, August 27 (Video SIG)..... CollegeAmerica

### Editors Note:

**Next month is the last month I will be doing the newsletter editing by myself.**

**In September the new editor must be chosen or the newsletter will not be produced!**

# My Vista

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By Rob Limbaugh, President, Danbury Area Computer Society, CT  
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Just about every year I make some sort of 'major' effort to move forward with technology in some way on my primary home workstation. I periodically wipe out the machine and start a fresh OS install from scratch. I reasoned that as laborious a reinstall is, I may as well bite the bullet and this time make the move to Vista. What made the timing right was that Microsoft gave Windows Vista Ultimate 32-bit w/SP2 for those who attended the APCUG 2008 LDC. Here's my experience.

## Check Compatibility

When loading an OS it is important to make note of your hardware and key software. Vista Update Advisor will highlight any hardware or software compatibility issues of which to be aware. In my case, the only issues to address were applications that would be replaced with new Vista versions—no big deal. In terms of hardware, my machine checked out OK. Last I had heard, my ATI All-In-Wonder 2006 video card was not yet supported in Vista, so I double checked the AMD (they now own ATI) website and confirmed there are now Vista drivers and software. It's a Go!

## Backup Data

Next, I made backups of all my important data. This time around I used an external USB hard drive and just dragged and dropped the data to a 'backup' folder. I wanted to start fresh and clean, so I didn't bother making a backup of my Windows or Office user settings. There aren't any

new BIOS updates for my motherboard, so I was all set to go.

## Time for Install

I started the install process around 8 p.m., electing to wipe all partitions on the hard drive. My first boot to the desktop post install was shortly after 10 p.m. So far, so good. And, considering this is a P4 2.4GHz machine, I was rather impressed. Vista's graphics worked from the get-go because the ATI All-In-Wonder 2006 uses an ATI Radeon 9600 compatible chipset for which Vista loaded drivers. Sound worked. Networking worked. I expected SOMETHING to be wrong, due to all the horror stories I had heard! My machine even received a 3.2 on the "Vista Experience Index". That means I can use Aero! Now we're cooking!

## Post Install Issues

A notice appeared that Windows detected hardware and needed to install drivers. My system's motherboard has an integrated Realtek AC'97 sound card. Unfortunately there isn't a Vista driver for the MIDI interface. If I want to hook up MIDI devices in the future, I will probably need to disable the built-in sound card and install a properly supported one to gain MIDI interface functionality.

Watching TV is one of the things for which I built this machine, and I expected to use Vista Media Center. This is where my second issue came up. While AMD (they bought ATI) has released updated Vista drivers and software for the ATI AIW 2006 video card, they didn't actually 'fix' the issue with how the ATI Hydravision software accesses the TV Tuner. I searched around for a solution and came across a Home Theater application called "Beyond TV" by SnapStream. So

***My Vista continues on page 13***

# Viewing the Bigger Picture

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At the risk of being the bearer of bad news, I have to say that none of us is getting any younger. User groups tend to be populated more by senior citizens than by any other age group. As we age, we find the need for more and more assistive aids, including those that will help us to use our computers more comfortably and efficiently.

Many of us will find, as time goes on, that our vision is not what it used to be. We may find that our eyes fatigue as we read information on the computer monitor, and we may find that some of the smaller fonts and graphics on the screen require us to squint and lean forward into the display.

In this article, I will discuss two screen enlargement programs that might help us minimize our visual difficulties as we use our computers.

The first program I want to talk about is called Magic Lens Max. I downloaded an older version of the program from Giveawayoftheday.com and was very impressed with what it could do. I e-mailed the program's author and told him what a terrific program it was and I have demonstrated it to various groups who provide services to the blind and visually impaired. Additionally, the cost of the program is only \$39.95. I went ahead and purchased a copy of the most recent edition and was even more pleased with what the author had added since my downloaded version.

Magic Lens Max provides a variety of ways to magnify the computer screen, from resizable

moveable lenses, which magnify directly over where your mouse or cursor is working, to a full screen magnification option, which slows down the screen refresh very minimally. You have some color contrast options to choose from with this program as well as an invert colors option for light text on dark background. The magnification levels can be selected from 50% (which is non-magnification) up to pretty much infinity. Anything above 350% starts to blur a bit, although there are options to sharpen. Below is the Magic Lens Max option screen: <insert magic\_lens\_max>

The Magic Lens Max icon that resides in the system tray can be single-clicked to turn on or turn off the magnification.

This is an excellent program that is both useful and affordable. If you are interested in testing it out, go to [www.visionsuit.com](http://www.visionsuit.com). You can download a 30-day demo of the latest version. If you decide to purchase Magic Lens Max, once you have paid the \$39.95, you will be sent a registration code that can be entered into the demo, and it becomes fully functional.

The second program I evaluated for screen magnification allows for an additional option: speech along with the magnification. This program is called iZoom, and can be obtained from <http://www.issist.com/>. I really like the customizing options available in iZoom. These can be accessed from the initial menu when iZoom comes on, or once the menu is closed, you can reopen it quickly by clicking the mouse on the iZoom icon in the system tray. Here are the option screens: <insert izoom1 and izoom2>

iZoom allows for default or customizable hot keys, several sizes and colors of mouse pointers, color combinations supplied with the program, as well as custom color modes, several sizes and

***Viewing continues on page 15***

# Moving on to Vista

*By Neil Stahfest, Librarian, Tacoma Area PC User Group, WA  
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Windows Vista is becoming more popular every day, but there are still several special features that few people are aware of! Besides the energy saving features I mentioned last month, there's another feature that goes largely unnoticed by the average user. It's about displaying time in multiple time zones using Vista's system clock. It works very well, particularly since we work with countries all around the world and are no longer confined to one time zone. It also helps when you intend to chat with a friend or family member who lives in another part of the country. Now, instead of calculating different time zones in your head, you can have a handy toolbar on your Vista computer that will tell the time for you.

1. The first step is to right click on the clock in your system tray at the bottom of your desktop.
2. Select Adjust Date/Time.
3. Click on the Additional Clocks tab at the top of the window.
4. Choose the checkbox that you want to show the additional clock.
5. Next, pick a time zone and give it a title.
6. You can add up to two additional time zones this way.
7. Apply your changes.

To see the additional times, just hover your mouse over the clock in the system tray.

Vista's Service Pack 1 is out, if you have automatic updates enabled on your PC its should already be installed. So what does SP1 do? Microsoft previously announced that Service Pack 1 would improve the operating system's performance and security. It would speed up file

copying, waking up from sleep and hibernation faster and add and extract files from compressed folders faster.

When you install SP1 it apparently checks to see if you have installed previous updates and if it doesn't find them it installs them. Then in proceeds to install it's —new — features. I had used automatic updates to keep my installation current and Service Pack 1 installed quickly on my laptop without any apparent problems.

Did I see any improvements? <sigh> Not really. I saw no noticeable improvements in performance. As far as I could tell start-up time was the same and file copying was the same but the file copy —fix! I had previously. Other people have reported similar impressions. One person reported Vista with SP1 compressed files faster than without SP1 but it is still slower than Windows XP.

What about new features? Frankly, the only one I looked for and found was the disk defragmenter. Pre SP1 when you selected the defrag function you had no choices. The function simply defragmented your all of your hard drive. With SP1 installed, the defragmenter first examines your computer and makes a suggestion as to whether your drives and partitions need to be defragmented. There's also an option to schedule defragmenting at regular time intervals. I don't remember if this was available pre-SP1. If you select the button to defrag your hard drive, you see a new screen which gives you the alternatives to defrag all of your partitions and drives or select specific partitions and hard drives to be defragmented. As with pre-SP1 Vista, you can defrag your hard drive(s) while continuing to use your computer. There is no specific information that tells you how badly fragmented your drives are or how much space is used. In my opinion, the disk defragmenter in Windows XP was more useful. For that kind of detail you'll need to use a third party disk defragmenter. I would say that Vista's

***Moving On continues on page 15***



# Painter 4 Essentials, a First Impression

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Corel's demonstration of their products at the recent Southwest Computer Conference showed one new product that really interested me. Corel Painter 4 Essentials is a real painting program, not a photo editing program. It has the features of being able to paint or draw with a computer. If you have a shred of drawing talent, you might really like this program.

Now I have no talents this way unfortunately. Why I would buy a program like this, being a photographer, might surprise you. Painter has a great feature that will auto paint or draw from a photo. In this mode you pick a style from many artistic techniques and stand back.

Will this look great for all photos? The simple answer is no. If you have a lousy picture you will probably end up with a lousy painting. Photos that are dependent on a lot of fine detail to work will also not be a good candidate for this product. Simple landscapes or portraits or more abstract photos will probably work the best. Now having said that, there are always exceptions that will work, trying the process only takes some time. You start with a photo that has been corrected and cropped using a photo editing program. Jpeg's, tiff, and PhotoShop psd files will work. Just open them in Painter and start selecting the artistic medium you want. Once the program commences you will see a very blobby and abstract image in the beginning. As the process continues, details emerge; you can stop the drawing at any time or let it go to completion. Once done you can go into using your own

painting efforts to add or subtract details to enhance the painting. A good example of this would be a portrait. Increasing the details around the eyes usually helps the overall composition. If some of the background contrasts too much with the person, you can blur and tone down the background.

A graphic tablet is a real plus with Painter, as it uses the stylus for changing the brush characteristics, as you go. A mouse works fine, but it doesn't have as much flexibility as the tablet. Wacom makes some tablets that are fairly inexpensive. Please note, a tablet is not required to get this program to work.

Printing with this program is quite simple. It doesn't have a dedicated color management system as more expensive programs, but if you can print a good photo, then printing with Painter is no problem.

Painter comes with some excellent video tutorials that really clue you in on the features and give a great how-to aspect to it. They are logically arranged and each segment is not too long. Painter even comes with a nice printed manual, with illustrations. The manual generally follows along with the tutorials.

Retail price is \$99 and the member price is \$79. It installs on both PC's and MAC's. As a supplement to a photo editing program, I certainly recommend it.

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# Skype 4.0

*By Joe Nuvolini, Webmaster & APCUG Rep, Pikes Peak  
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I've been a Skype subscriber for some time now. What is Skype, you say? Well, it's an online chat/phone/video service which has, as of the end of March, some 309 million registered users. Last I heard, that is more subscribers than all the US telephone services combined! It allows you to make computer to computer calls free worldwide. It can support 12 million users at a time. In addition to audio and video chat, you can instant message, send text messages to phones, and share files. You can call from computer to phone as well.

It has three levels of service for the computer to phone service. For \$2.95 per month you can make free computer to phone calls anywhere in the US and Canada. The \$5.95 service includes the US, Canada, and Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Monterrey Mexico. For \$9.95 per month you get unlimited free computer to phone calls worldwide. They point out that unlimited means up to 10,000 minutes per month. Let's see, 10,000 minutes is over 6.9 days! I'm currently subscribing to the \$2.95 service. To call overseas with my service it runs about 2.1 cents per minute to Europe or from Europe back to the States. Skype has been offering video calling as well since 2005. Their data compression allows quality voice transmissions on a bandwidth of as little as 2kbs and video on 6kbs. It has a new version, 4.0, which is in beta testing. It allows you to see the person you are calling full screen. For this feature to work well you need 90kbs. I'm using it and it seems to work real well. This full screen mode will be very useful for the computer user group community.

While at the Association of PC User Groups (APCUG) Convention held in conjunction with the January 2008 Consumer Electronics Show (CES) attendees in their forum with the vendors

discussed presentations at user group meetings. Over the years, the cost of sending representatives out to user groups for the purpose of promoting their wares has become no longer cost effective. We discussed the use of Webinars (live presentations across the Internet).

This new version of Skype looks to be ideal for such a program and it can be done at little or no cost to the vendors and user groups. If you haven't tried Skype, you should. You can download the current version (3.8) at: <http://www.skype.com/download/skype/windows/>. If you are adventurous and want to try 4.0 beta go to: <http://www.skype.com/intl/en/download/skype/windows/bets/>.

By the way, if you have wireless Internet access you can purchase a WiFi phone at the Skype online store and it will allow you to make calls whenever and wherever you have wireless Internet access. There's a lot more information which you can checkout at their Website: <http://www.skype.com>.

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## New Editor Needed for Newsletter

No experience needed

Come September I will have been editing and publishing the Phoenix User Group News for two years. As I am no longer able to attend meetings and do not have time to properly produce the newsletter, much less time to write articles, I have decided it is time to pass on the torch in September.

It is not really that difficult, it just takes some time.

I am willing to give the new editor lots of training and other help. Please contact the board or myself if you have any questions

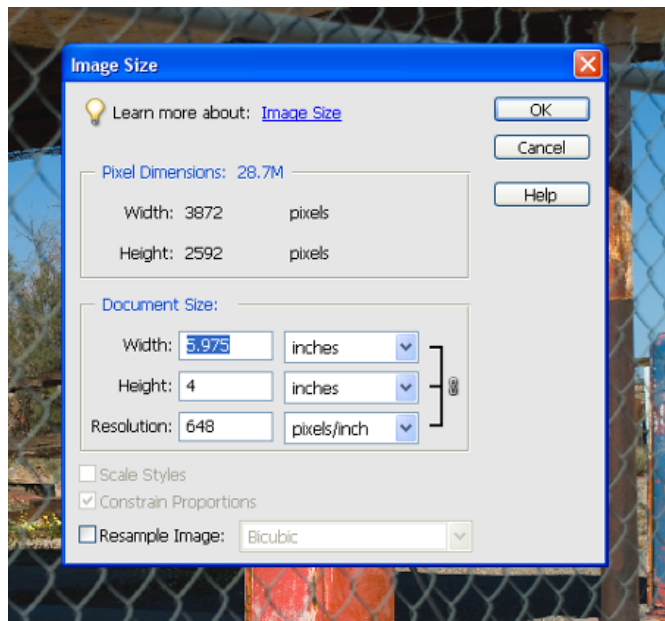
Bruce Jacobs      [jacobsbd@cox.net](mailto:jacobsbd@cox.net)

***Photographs continues from last page***

Computer and choose Resize Pictures. You are limited to four specific sizes but they are good choices. They don't tell us what compression they are using but the results look OK. Unless you tell them under Advanced to replace the image in the file, it will make a copy. That's good. They will add the word, "Large", "Medium" or "Small" to the end of the name you have chosen.

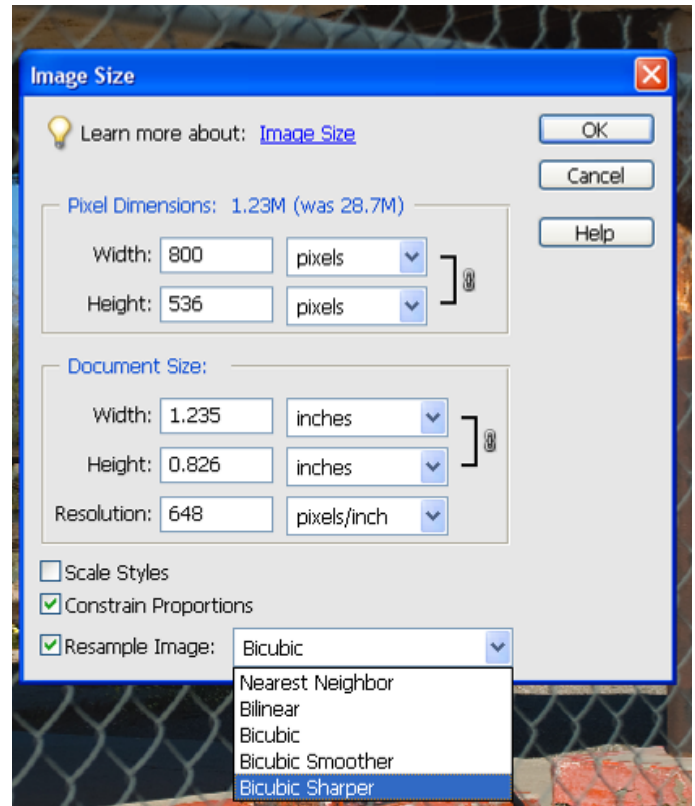
If you are happy with this solution, then read no further. But, if you want to use a picture editing program, maybe this will help.

In Photoshop Elements 5, click on Image>Resize>Image Size and this window will pop up. Note that there is some garbage at the bottom about "inches" but we will ignore that. First we will click the Resample Image box. That puts the Pixel Dimensions in play and that is what we want. I selected the Width box and changed the width to 800 pixels. Since the Constrain Proportions box is selected, that is all I have to do.



Note, down at the bottom, that we have several choices of sampling algorithms. This is frosting on the cake. I read somewhere that I should use Bicubic Sharper when downsizing so that is what I do. Most programs don't give us all these choices.

Then we should click on File>Save As and give the photo a new name. I often just use the same name and add "\_800px" so the next time I will know it is ready to e-mail. Here we can choose the JPEG format and the compression amount. Photoshop Elements 6 is out now and sells for about \$100. If you are able to spend that much and want one of the best editing programs, I highly recommend it.

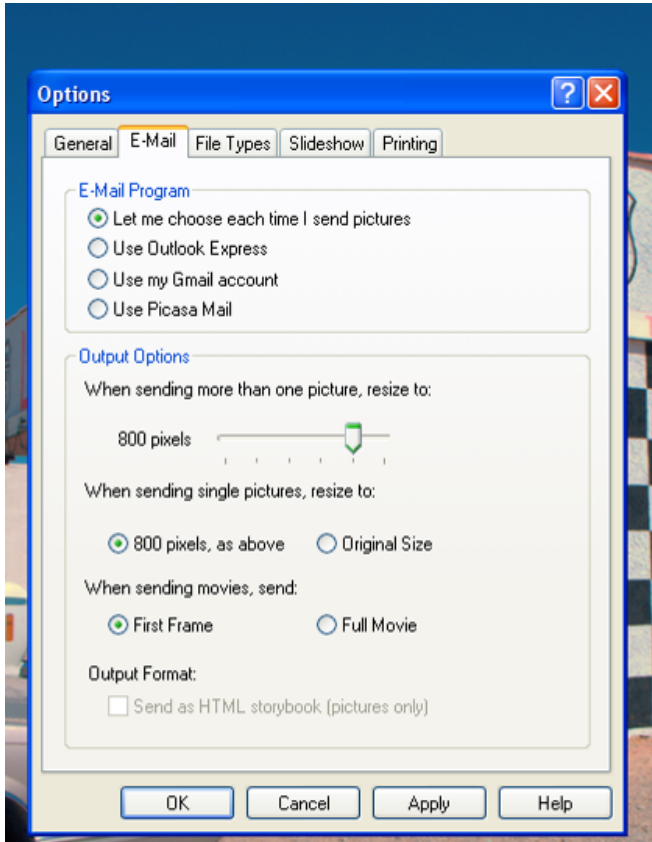


Let's look at Picasa2. It is a free program from Google and looks really good but I do not have much experience with it. By all means, try it first because the price is right! When it comes to e-mailing photographs, it is a little more automated but not any easier to use than Elements. First, click on Tools>Options>E-Mail. Then select the width you want in pixels. There are six choices. Then click on Apply and OK.

***Photographs continues on page 12***

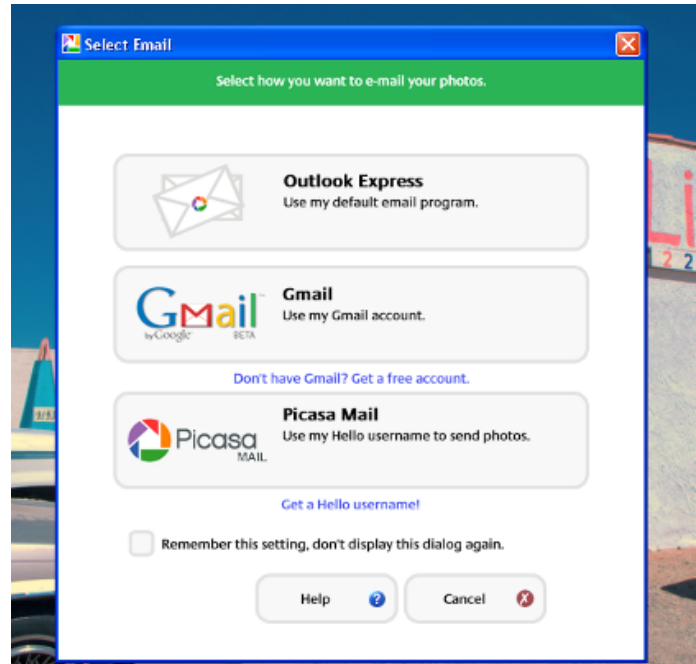
## Photographs continues from page 11

The next step is to click on File>E-Mail and you will get three choices of how you want to e-mail your photos. Fortunately, I use Outlook Express so my choice is listed.



When I clicked on Outlook Express, an e-mail page popped up with the photo attached. At this point we can write something else on the e-mail and send it. I recommend this so the recipient will know it is really from you and not something sent out by a virus. When I receive e-mails that only say "Attached", I Delete them without looking at the attachment. This saved me one time when I received a virus from my sister-in-law that she did not know she sent. She spent weeks and dollars getting her computer back up. Oh, I digress. If you want to send more than one picture (and, who doesn't?), you must select the picture and click on the Hold button near the bottom of the screen. Do this for each photo you want to send and they will all be attached to the e-mail. The program automatically chooses JPEG format and a

compression ratio but does not tell you. That is OK as the pictures I tried looked good. Picasa2 has considerable capability for editing photos in many respects. Try it!



There are many other editing programs that I haven't mentioned and have no experience with. In all cases you want to change the picture's size in pixels by resizing or resampling. Pay no attention to anything that says "inches" as that will have no meaning for this process. Sometime later we will talk about printing pictures and then we will use inches.

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**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!

## ***My Vista continues from page 6***

Obtained far that seems to solve my issue. Beyond TV has a ton of cool features (worth looking at even if you aren't going to Vista).

### **Reality Check**

In my consumer opinion, lack of proper drivers for an OS is the fault of the hardware integrator and not the OS maker. AMD is blaming Microsoft's changes in DirectX 10 D3D (which happen to address performance and security) as why the ATI TV Tuner software doesn't work. Well, AMD, how come SnapStream could figure it out? AOpen has not released any new drivers for their implementation of the AC'97 chip on my motherboard. I can live with AOpen's choice because most people don't use the MIDI interface feature of sound cards. AMD has no excuse for not supporting an expensive video card that is bought for the very feature they aren't supporting. My buying habits will be adjusted accordingly in the future.

### **Supporting Apps**

Along with Beyond TV, I installed what I consider 'Base Supporting Apps'. These included Avast! Antivirus, Notepad++, Pidgin, Adobe Reader, Adobe Flash Player, Adobe Shockwave Player, TrueCrypt, PrimoPDF, and WinSCP. Office Ultimate 2007 is going to round out the Office Suite. Everything installed smoothly. No issues, arguments, or contentions between apps.

### **Where I Stand**

My machine has paid its dues many times over and the driver issues didn't affect my ability to

use what I needed, so I was OK with that. Others with more particular needs should be aware that integrated soundcards, atypical hardware, old devices, and fancy graphics capture cards may require special attention. Replacements may need to be considered. I'm not suggesting everyone run out and install Vista. This is now the fourth time I've installed Vista on a machine—first time on one I plan to use regularly. All said and done, the experience has been pleasant and not anything like the horror stories I've heard. At the time of this writing it's been about two weeks and all continues to work well. This article was typed on that system using Word 2007 and sent to the editors with Outlook 2007.

From my vista, Vista works just fine.

Vista Upgrade Advisor:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/products/windowsvista/buyorupgrade/upgradeadvisor.aspx>

Compare Vista Editions:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/products/windowsvista/editions/choose.aspx>

SnapStream Beyond TV:

<http://www.snapstream.com/products/beyondtv/>

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## ***Green continues from page 2***

public policy organizations and suppliers to government. You can read more about this event at [www.e-gov.com/EventOverview.aspx?Event=SGCS08](http://www.e-gov.com/EventOverview.aspx?Event=SGCS08).

## **Features of Green Computing**

Power management is the most popular method. The operating system of the computer can be set to directly control the power saving aspects of the hardware. It can automatically turn off the monitor or hard drive after a period of inactivity. Or, the entire system may hibernate, turning off most of the components such as even allow the user to manually adjust the voltages supplied to the CPU to reduce the electricity consumption and the amount of heat that is produced. As of July of 2007, all new Energy Star certified desktops must have a power supply that is at least 80% efficient. Other features include using motherboard video output instead of a video card, hard disks that consume less power, flash based solid state drives that require fewer write cycles, and lower energy monitors. And, manufacturers of networking equipment are developing switches and routers that reduce energy costs.

## **Recycling Materials**

Obsolete computers can be reused for charities, non-profit organizations, and developing countries. Parts from really old systems can be recycled through some recycling centers. Some recycling charges can be passed back to the manufacturers. Recycling this equipment keeps the lead, mercury, and chromium out of our landfills. In addition, computer supplies such as cartridges, paper, and batteries can be easily recycled.

## **How Can We Work Greener?**

Visit the website for Climate Savers Smart Computing at [www.climatesaverscomputing.org](http://www.climatesaverscomputing.org)

to view a three step program to go green. Here are the basic steps that they suggest:

**Step One** - Turn on Power Management. Since the average desktop PC wastes nearly 50% of the energy it consumes as heat, it makes sense to use the power management features that are built into Windows XP and Vista. The benefits? You will reduce your electricity bills and your energy footprint will be lowered as you reduce your greenhouse gas emissions. The Climate Savers organization predicts that the power management features on your computer can save nearly have a ton of CO<sub>2</sub> and more than \$60 a year in energy costs.

**Step Two** - Buy an energy efficient computer. Energy Star, the program designed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, specifies the standards that equipment and appliances must meet to wear the Energy Star badge. You can visit their website at [www.energystar.org](http://www.energystar.org) for specifics. Basically an Energy Star compliant PC uses 15 to 25 percent less energy. This program is expected to save U.S. consumers and businesses more than \$1.8 billion in energy costs over the next five years and prevent greenhouse gas emission equal to 2.7 million vehicles.

**Step Three** – Unplug from phantom power. As long as your computer is plugged in it still uses electricity, even while it is turned off or in standby mode. A computer that is turned off, but still plugged in, can use up to 10 watts. The Climate Savers estimate that you can reduce your electricity bills by as much as 10% by unplugging your appliances and electronics when they're not being used.

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### ***Moving On continues from page 8***

deframerter with SP1 is improved but still a disappointment.

And that's my general impression about Vista SP1. I'm disappointed. The speed improvements that were predicted just don't seem to be there. Maybe the security is improved but it's not obvious to me. Maybe Service Pack 2 will be better...

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### ***Viewing continues from page 7***

shapes of "locators" that help the user find the location of the mouse pointer, and a choice of several lens shapes, as well as full-screen magnification. iZoom magnifies from 1X to 32X.

The negatives I have found in iZoom are as follows: First, when using the lens mode, you have to place the lens first over what you want to interact with, and then move the mouse pointer within that lens. Second, from about the 3X magnification up, the display becomes more and more pixilated which can be a problem for some vision conditions, such as astigmatism, among others. Third, there is only one voice offered with the speech option and it is not a particularly pleasant one.

As you would expect, with additional options comes an additional cost. Again, you can download a 30-day demo of iZoom from the Website, and if you wish to purchase the program, the price is \$199.00. However, keep in mind that the two major commercial screen magnification programs, MAGic from Freedom Scientific and ZoomText Plus from AI Squared, both weigh in at from \$300.00 to \$550.00, depending on how many options you wish to have. So, if you feel the need to view the bigger †

picture, give the demos of the above programs a try, and see if they will be of use to you.

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## **SIG Notes**

### **Digital Photography**

**Bill Funk** runs the Digital Photography SIG.

The Digital Photography SIG meets monthly to discuss issues related to digital photography.

If you're on the Digital Photography SIG mailing list, Bill will let you know where the meeting will be. If you're not on that list, but would like to be, let him know:

Bfunk @ pippina.com

### **Video**

**David Yamamoto** leads the Video SIG, which meets right after the Digital Photography SIG.

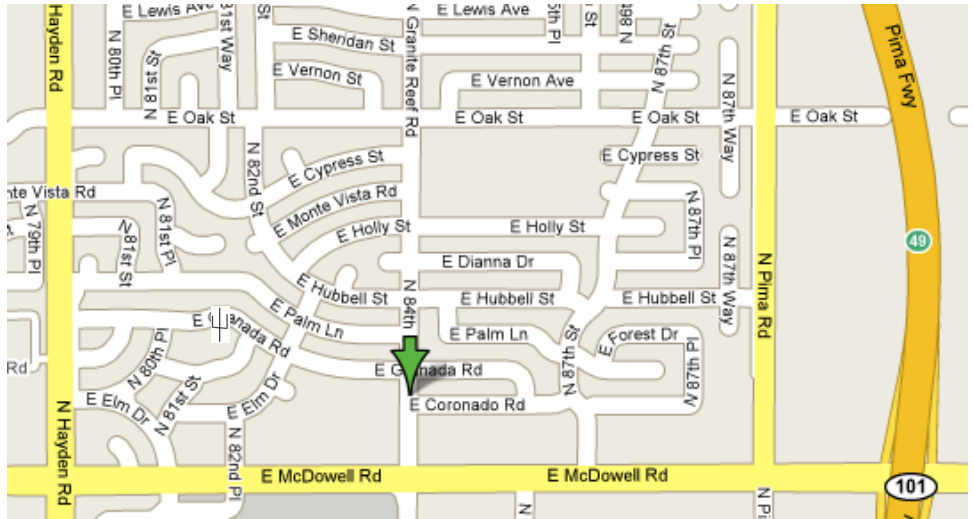
### **General Interest**

**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](mailto:genint@phoenixpcug.org)

Contact SIG leaders by e-mailing [SIGs@phoenixpcug.org](mailto:SIGs@phoenixpcug.org) for more information.

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

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

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Please do not share my e-mail address

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Yes  No

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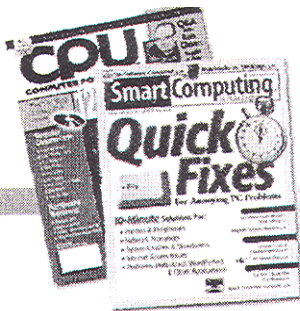
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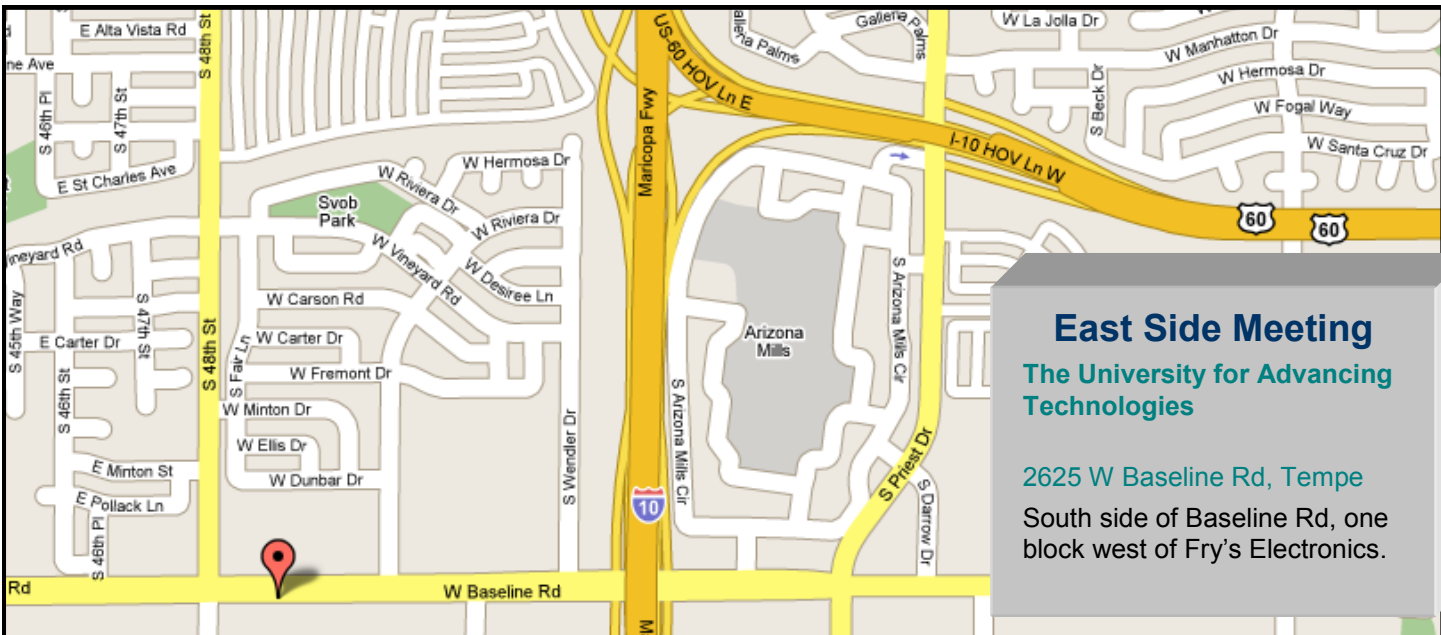


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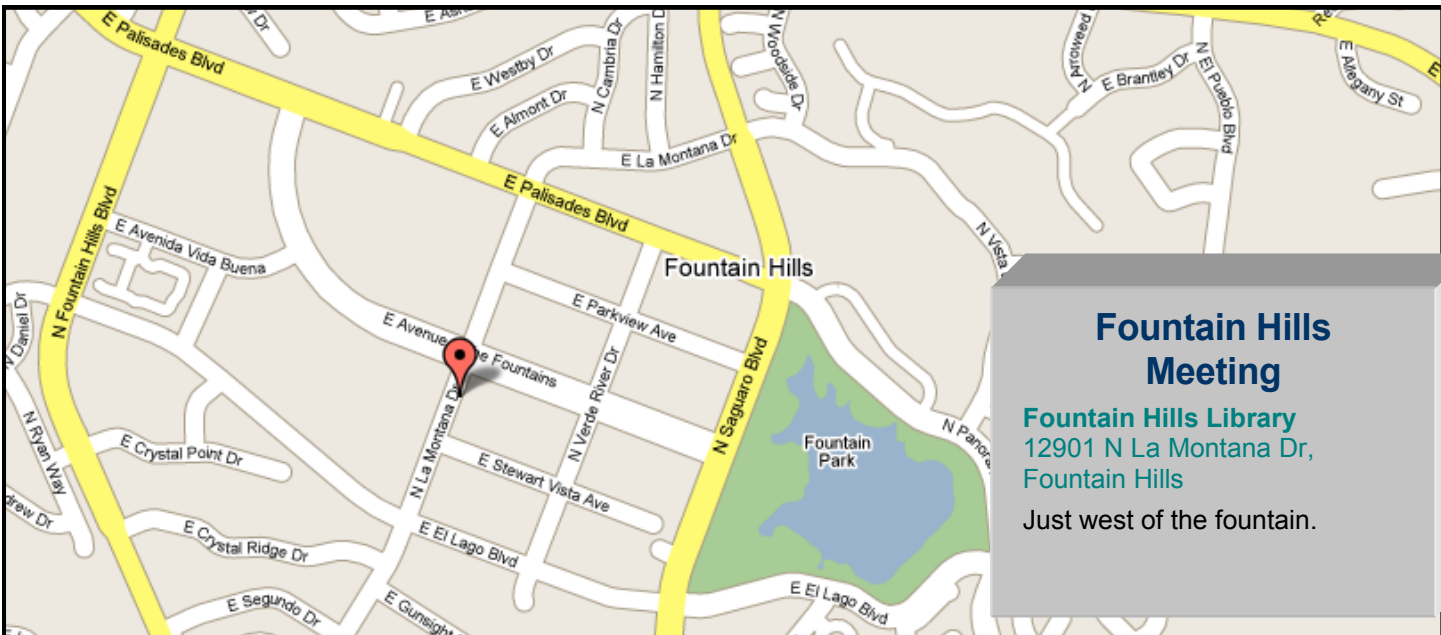




**West Side Meeting**  
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Phoenix  
Turn right (east) on McLellan Blvd.  
  
Immediately turn right (south) into parking lot..



**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.

# E-Mailing Photographs

By Richard Kennon,

Editor, Amador Computer Users Group, CA

[www.acug.net](http://www.acug.net)

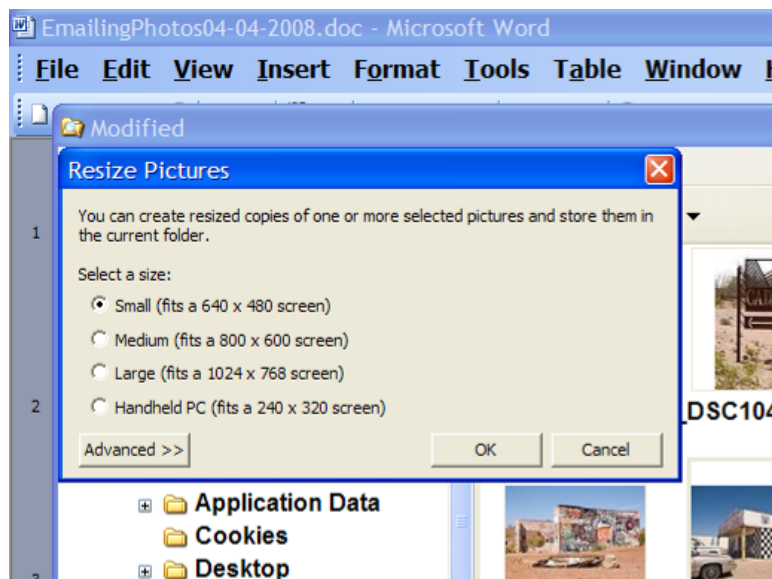
[Drtrdguy\(at\)volcano.net](mailto:Drtrdguy(at)volcano.net)

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First, we must understand that photograph (image) size in the camera and in the computer is measured in pixels. These are the basic dots of color that make the picture. Do not pay any attention to anything that says "inches" or "pixels per inch." These terms are meaningless when we are considering a picture either in the camera or in the computer. They may come into play later if we want to print the photo on paper. But, that is another subject for another time. For now, we think only of pixels. Most cameras record too many pixels to e-mail. For instance a 6 megapixel camera will make a picture about 3000 pixels wide by 2000 pixels tall and the file size may be several megabytes. Our screens are usually only about 1000 pixels wide (some are larger and some smaller). So, if we e-mail the native picture, it will be wider than the screen for the recipient and the file will be so large, it may take "forever" to download to the recipient's computer. It is possible the service provider will not even accept it.

There are two things we must do to make a photo e-mailable. The first is to resize or resample the picture. We want to change the picture width from 3000 pixels to 800 pixels, for instance. This process is called resizing or resampling. We have to pick the best 800 pixels out of the 3000 to represent our photo. Well, no, that is not exactly correct but it simplifies things to think of it that way. We don't have to worry about it because a lot of very smart programmers have developed ways (algorithms) to help us. Just remember, you want to resize or resample to get the photo down to a size convenient for e-mailing. I usually use

800 pixels or 900 pixels width for pictures I attach to e-mails.



The second thing to do to make a photo e-mailable is to save it in JPEG format (.jpg). That is a format that reduces file size a lot and picture quality a little so the picture can be downloaded more quickly and still be nice to look at. Some software programs give you choices of compression amount with numbers ranging from 1 to 10. One will result in a very small file but the picture quality will not be good at all. A 10 will give the very best quality but with a very large file size. A reasonable compromise is to use 5 or 6. I usually use 6.

How do you do this? First, I will describe how to do it with a free Microsoft program. Then I will try to look at some other programs.

Microsoft Power Toys for XP has a Resize Pictures toy that is slick and easy but feedback says it only works on XP. It can be downloaded at <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/downloads/powertoys/xppowertoys.msp>. Right click on an image name or thumbnail in Explorer or My ***Photographs continues on page 11***