Phoenix PC Users Group NEWS

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The Best Accessory for your PC!

August 2008

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

IS THIS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER? See the back page!

I'm Asked...

By Bill Funk
Phoenix PCUG Member

What's the deal with analog TV going away in February of 2009?

On February 17, 2009, full power TV broadcast stations in the U.S. will switch from analog to digital TV broadcasting. This means that if you rely on rabbit ears or a rooftop antenna and have an analog TV, you won't have any TV service. ("Full power" here means main TV broadcast stations, but not "repeater" broadcasts; sometimes these are called "translaters" instead of repeaters. If you live in a remote area, like Snowflake, Az, or Bullfrog, UT, for example, TV stations use repeaters, which aren't covered by this change yet.)

If you have either cable or satellite TV service, this will not affect you.

If you've bought a new TV within the last several years, you probably have a digital TV, so this won't affect you, either. Since 2006, TVs (and VCRs, Tivos and other TV devices) have digital tuners in them. Your TV's manual should tell you if your TV has a digital tuner in it; look for "ATSC tuner". If your TV has that, it's digital.

If you do use rabbit ears or a rooftop antenna, and have an analog TV, here's what you need to do: either buy a new TV with a digital tuner, subscribe to cable or satellite service, or get a converter box. Converter boxes have been on sale since early 2008 at such stores as Circuit City, Radio Shack, and Best buy. The U.S. government has set aside $900 million for a coupon program to help with the cost of the converter boxes. These coupons are worth $40 towards the cost of a converter box, and are good for 90 days from issuance. For more information, and help getting a coupon or two, you can go here: http://www.dtvanswers.com/. The boxes should start at about $50, meaning you'll have to pay about $10 for a box, with the coupon. Each household is allowed two coupons under this program. If your household gets its TV from a repeater, you'll need to get a special "analog pass through" converter box, that passes both digital and analog signals.

Why the switch? Well, there's only so much radio spectrum available, meaning there are only so many radio and TV channels available for all the uses we put that spectrum to. Analog TV uses more bandwidth than digital TV does, so each TV channel switching to digital frees up a lot of space in the spectrum for other uses. That extra space will be used for emergency public services like fire, police and rescue services. The advantage to the TV user will be better reception, and more channels, as well as High Definition (HD) programming.

This does not mean a converter box will get you HD TV. For that, you'll need to actually buy an HD TV, but your reception should be better, as digital transmission is more efficient than analog. You won't need to change your antenna, though, as the digital broadcasts will use the same frequency range as the old analog broadcasts, just less of it. As long as your current antenna gets you reasonable reception, it will work with the digital broadcasting.

If you get a convertyer box now, you can hook it up immediately, as TV broadcasters are already broadcasting in both analog and digital. This means you can connect the box now, and get the extra channels that are being broadcast now. Here in the Phoenix area, there are several extra digital channels, including a full-time weather channel.

In the future, digital TV will mean the possibility of interactive TV, meaning you may be able to vote for your favorite Americn Idol candidate immediately, using your TV remote!

Again, for more information about getting your converter box coupons, go to: www.dtvanswers.com.

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:	
Fountain Hills Coordinator:	Tj
East Side Coordinator:	TBD
West Side Coordinator:	Bill Aulepp
Public Relations:	Tj
Newsletter Editor:	Bruce Jacobs
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Bruce Jacobs	editor@phoenixpcug.org

The August 2008 main meetings will be

West Side .... Tuesday, August 19

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

East Side .... Wednesday, August 20

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

Fountain Hills . Thursday, August 21

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

The topic for the main meetings this month is:

Microsoft Mindshare Applications

OR

Voice over Internet Protocol

Steering Committee will meet before the West Side meeting this Month

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

Inside this Issue...

Users Group News

August 2008 General Meeting Topic

West Side meeting location:

Steering Committee

Microsoft© Mindshare Applications

Fountain Hills and East Side:

Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP)

With a live demonstration of

communication over the internet

Coming in September

All Meeting locations:

Not Yet Finalized

See Our Website

WWW.PhoenixPCUG.org

CALENDAR

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

August 2008

Tuesday, August 19 West (Mindshare Applications)....... CollegeAmerica

Wednesday, August 20 East (VOIP) .... UAT

Thursday, August 21 Fountain Hills (VOIP) ....Library

Wednesday, August 27 (Photo SIG)....................................... CollegeAmerica

Wednesday, August 27 (Video SIG)....................................... CollegeAmerica

September 2008

Tuesday, September 16 West (TBD)....................................... CollegeAmerica

Wednesday, September 17 East (TBD)... UAT

Thursday, September 18 Fountain Hills (TBD)...................................Library

Wednesday, September 24 (Photo SIG) .... CollegeAmerica

Wednesday, September 24 (Video SIG)............................... CollegeAmerica

Editors Note:
This 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!

The Members of
The ASCIi Computer Group

Cordially invite you to attend our inaugural week-night meeting

On Tuesday, Sept. 23rd at 6:30 PM

To be held at
CollegeAmerica, 6533 N. Black Canyon Freeway
(See map on page 19 of this newsetter)

Presentations

Microsoft OneNote by Kathy Jacobs,
Member of the APCUG Board of Directors,
Microsoft MVP

Q&A by Karen Hart, MCP

All attendees over the age of 18
Will be eligible to receive a door prize

We hope to see you there

For Anybody Who Has Thought About Trying Linux

By Drew Kwashnak, Linux SIG Leader, Danbury Area
Computer Society, CT
www.dacs.org
dacseditor(at)dacs.org

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For anybody who has thought about trying Linux, it has become easier than ever before with Ubuntu 8.04 LTS Hardy Heron. As with most Linux distributions, Ubuntu is available as a free download and is freely distributable. It is even available already installed on Dell computers. The most common method is downloading the ISO image from Ubuntu's website (http://www.ubuntu. com) and burning it onto a CD.

From the site, you can download the Desktop version or Server for 32-bit and 64-bit systems. There is even an option to download what is called an alternative version which is just the installer and does not include the LiveCD portion, which also includes an installer. If you are like me, until a couple months ago, and living on dial-up or you do not have a CD burner handy or just don't want to put in that much effort then you can order a free CD through the corporate sponsor of Ubuntu, Canonical, ShipIt department. I have been very pleased with the speed with which their CDs arrive. Alternatively, the website contains links to vendors where you can buy the CDs from under $5 to more, and they can handle large orders as well.

Once you have your CD in your hot little hands, trying Ubuntu is as simple as placing it in your CD-ROM tray and rebooting your system. If system will boot from the CD and after a short moment you'll be greeted with the Ubuntu welcome screen.

If you want to "try before you buy," then you can choose the default "Try Ubuntu without any changes to your computer" and your hard drive will not be touched during your session unless you choose to. You don't even need a hard drive to select this option; you just will not be able to install it from the session.

If you are more certain or just daring then you can go straight into the installer and in about 60 minutes (45 minutes if you know what Different Strokes For Anybody Who HasThought About Trying Linux by Drew Kwashnak) you're booting to your new Ubuntu installation.

Ubuntu will scan your hardware and load the modules and drivers necessary for your system. If you have hardware that has proprietary drivers available, Linux cannot include them in the CD for legal reasons. Ubuntu works around this by providing a Restricted Drivers tool that lists all such hardware found on your system and provides the ability to download and install the necessary drivers in a click or two, legally.

Now that you have Ubuntu up and running on your system, what can you do? Plenty! Ubuntu brings you a fullfeatured operating system complete with:

• Firefox 3.05 beta web browser
• OpenOffice.org 2.4 full featured office suite compatible with pre-Office 2007 Word, Excel, PowerPoint and some Access files.

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The New, The Best, and The Worst - May 2008

Collected by Pim Borman,
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Tales of Woe
Sorry, Folks, but this month I can't think of any New and/or Best to report on, only Troubles, with a Capital 'T.'So let's get started.

Spinrite 6.
Son Mike's computer recently refused to boot, and his main concern was the potential loss of some recent data files that he had not yet backed up. Regrettable, but it happens to the best of us - literally. The local school system lost all the students' test results of the current term because the computers crashed. The data were not securely backed up. Whom to blame? No one other than the operator, IBM, symbol of computing excellence. According to the local paper, the IBM representative claimed that this had never happened before and could not be explained. Sound familiar?

Back to Mike. When it was clear that he could not boot from the hard drive, not even in safe mode, the next step was to use a Windows XP setup disc and use its Repair function. Windows labored mightily, trying to repair his drive, but kept getting bogged down with a variety of obscure error messages. At one time he got a DOS prompt that allowed him to list the files on his computer, but when he tried to copy them he was denied access. When we booted his computer with a Live Ubuntu Linux CD he could also see his precious files, but access was again denied.

There is a lesson to be learned from this. The Windows XP operating system runs on a partition configured in the NTFS format. When data files are saved in that format, Windows XP (and Vista) by default protect those files from access by others. That is a nice safety feature for those who really need it, but it makes the data unavailable over your network, or evidently even from a DOS prompt. You can beforehand designate specific data files to be shared, but it is a lot of bother, easily forgotten. Here is the lesson: store all your data files on a separate partition set up in the older FAT32 format, and they'll be available whenever and wherever you need them. Even better, also back them up to an external drive in FAT32 format.

At this point I remembered reading about a terrific file recovery program, Spinrite 6, available for $89 from Gibson Research Corporation, owned and operated by Steve Gibson, the well-known computer guru (www.grc.com). We downloaded the program and converted it to a bootable disc. After booting Mike's computer with the Spinrite disc it immediately announced that his drive was subject to imminent failure. Well, that's what we spent the $89 for. We started the file recovery mode, with a warning that this could take a looong time, think 24 hours or so.

Several days later, after running something like 60 hours during which the program every so often would get bogged down and had to be restarted, the program had progressed to 93% completion and refused to go any further. No indication that any files were available to be recovered.

Mike installed Windows XP on a new drive and put the old wreck in an external hard drive enclosure connected to a USB port of his computer. The old drive was unreadable at this point. Still unwilling to give up, Mike tried the old standby, Windows' checkdisk with the /F parameter (for "fix") to let Windows try to repair salvageable parts of the drive. It worked! After several repeats of the procedure he was able to recover most of his lost files that meanwhile also had become accessible. So much for Spinrite, mark one up for good old DOS.

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Acronis

After creating the Spinrite disc, and before using it on Mike's computer, I tested it on my desktop computer by doing a routine check of my hard drive, expecting it to be in perfect shape. To my surprise Spinrite halted about 5% into the inspection because the hard drive was overheating. Newer serial (SATA) hard drives are equipped with a SMART program that reports many operating parameters of the drive. Windows can't read SMART, but Spinrite can. On inspection I found that the cooling fan for the hard drive compartment was kaput. It was easily replaced by the local people who built my computer, but even then the drive continued to overheat, a clear warning that it may fail any time.

I bought a new 500 GB Maxtor drive (on sale for $99!) which came with a utility, "MaxBlast" to copy an exact image of my setup to the new disc, avoiding the necessity to reinstall everything. The way it wanted to go about it was to do a three--way partition of the 500 MB drive, similar to the 3 partitions in the old (250 MB) drive, but twice as large. It was going to copy everything on the old drive to the new drive, including my Linux programs in their partition, with the warning that the Linux system would no longer be bootable. That was not what I had in mind, I just wanted to copy an image of the C: partition from the old to the new drive. Since MaxBlast turned out to be version 10 of disk manager Acronis, I gave Acronis-11 a try in the hope that it would be more flexible. I uninstalled MaxBlast and tried to install Acronis 11, but it balked. I tried to remove all traces of MaxBlast from the Registry, but Acronis still wouldn't install. I uninstalled as much as possible of Acronis and tried to reinstall MaxBlast. No luck; darn. So much for Acronis.

After clean installations of Windows XP and Ubuntu Linux on the new drive, Windows could not find my Internet connection. After struggling several days I finally realized that my

motherboard needed to be software-configured and that I did not have the correct drivers. Thanks to the local availability of the guys who originally built the system I got the correct drivers and all was well. Ubuntu never had any problem. It downloaded and installed the required Linux drivers automatically.

Ubuntu

Windows Vista is not the only operating system with compatibility problems on installation. Ubuntu and other Linux distributions have more than their share of installation problems. Most of these appear to be due to proprietary graphics systems for which Linux has no drivers (yet). I have been recommending for years that people ought to start using Linux, but on both occasions where I convinced someone, it turned out that Ubuntu was incompatible with their systems. Computers with integrated graphics and many laptop computers have low-cost proprietary hardware (made in China) that is attuned to Windows, but unlikely to have Linux drivers. Standard graphics cards from major manufacturers are more likely to have Linux drivers available, and those based on the NVidea chip set have Linux support from the manufacturer.

You can try to run Ubuntu from the CD-ROM without installing it on the hard drive, a so-called "live" installation. If that works, your system is probably compatible and you can proceed with a permanent installation. If it doesn't work, not much is lost since the distribution is free. In any case, Linux is a large program and requires at least 256 MB of RAM and 10 GB of hard drive space.

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What is PCI Express?

By Brian K. Lewis, PhD, Regular Columnist, The Sarasota
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Let's start this off with an explanation of PCI (Peripheral Component Interconnect). These are the slots in the motherboard of your computer used for connecting peripheral devices directly to computer bus. Now you're asking what is the computer bus? Essentially, the bus is the electrical means for a peripheral device to connect to the computers chipset. The chipset is the interconnection between the peripherals, the main processor and system memory. (Got all that?)

The original PCI bus released in 1992 had a maximum communication rate of 33 MHz. This allows data transmission at a maximum rate of 133 megabytes per second (MB/sec.). The bus is used by such things as the sound system, video card, network adapters, parallel and serial ports.

In the PCI system all data are transmitted in parallel. In parallel transmission many "wires" or connections are required for each PCI slot or integrated device. For example, if you have a 32 bit data transmission path from the PCI slot to the chipset, this requires 32 connecting wires just for data. Additional wires are required for control signals. With six PCI slots you can have more than 1,000 wires required for the connections. Each wire should be exactly the same length so that all the data arrive simultaneously. However, in a computer it is impossible for each wire to be exactly the same length. So as the speed of devices increased, data started arriving out of order. Therefore, the receiver had to delay until all the data were available before it could be processed.

Another aspect of PCI is that all the devices share the bus at the same time so the actual data rate per device will be significantly less than the maximum rate. It's like having a speed limit of 65 miles per hour on a multi-lane highway. When all the traffic lanes are full, everything slows down. Think Chicago or Atlanta in rush hour!

Shortly after PCI was introduced, the arrival of 3-D video cards made PCI obsolete for graphics purposes. That resulted in the development of the AGP slot in the motherboard for AGP video cards. AGP uses a separate bus and this freed up bandwidth on the PCI bus for other peripherals. The AGP-8X system can transmit data at the rate of 2.134 gigabytes per second (GB/sec.). In spite of the removal of the data intensive video card transmissions, the number of high-speed peripherals being added to computers quickly saturated the PCI bus and it remained a data transport bottleneck. Additional problems arise as communication can only be made in one direction at a time. Today, many communications networks utilize bidirectional traffic.

In 2004 the PCI Express (PCIe) bus started showing up on computer motherboards. This is quite different from the original PCI bus and in the strictest definition is not a true bus. It is described as a high performance, scalable, point to

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point serial bus. Now, that statement requires some further explanation as I'm sure it is not immediately clear to all of you. It certainly wasn't to me the first time I read it.

First, consider the "serial" relationship. In a serial device the data is transmitted in a single stream rather than in several parallel streams. This is like reducing a multi-lane highway to one lane in each direction. That should slow things down instead of speeding it up! But in PCIe the clue is that you now have a point to point relationship. That means the device is connected directly to the chipset and does not have to share bandwidth with other devices. It is like having a high speed commuter corridor that bypasses all the slow traffic on the rest of the multi-lane highway. You may have multiple PCIe connections to the chipset.

To prevent problems the connections occur through a system similar to a router. This router passes the data packets from each device in an ordered manner with a minimum of delay and contributes to the speed and accuracy of the transmission. Because this is a point to point connection with each device having its own pathway, this is not a bus under the strict definition of a computer bus. It is also important to note that PCIe transmission occurs in data packets.

The connections are in dual pairs so there is a possibility of a simultaneous bidirectional transmission. One pair is used for transmission and the other for receiving. As mentioned above, data is transmitted in packets, rather than in a continuous stream. Each packet contains an identifier so the data can be reassembled at the receiving end. This allows the receiver to work with multiple inputs. The data is encoded in what is called 8b/10b. This means that eight data bits

are packaged with two information bits in a ten-bit package. (See how much simpler it is to call this 8b/10b?) Also consider that this is the method used for data and voice transmission on the Internet. Hard drives have moved to an SATA interface that is a serial connection instead of the parallel IDE connection. Gigabit ethernet cards are also designed with a serial connection. More devices are moving to serial connectivity to gain additional speed and reliability.

The scalable part of the PCIe bus is in its ability to work with more than one pair of connections. These are called x1 (or times 1), x4, x8 or x16. The x1 version (two data pairs) can transmit the encoded data at a bidirectional rate of 500 MB/s or 250 MB/s in each direction. The x16 version (32 data pairs) can transmit at a rate of 8 GB/s. This is the combined bidirectional rate. The rate in one direction is half this figure. There is a second version of PCIe in the works, PCIe 2.0. This is expected to double the current transmission speeds and provide other benefits.

PCIe slots in the motherboard come in various sizes depending on the number of lanes they use for connection. These vary from the smallest connector for the x1 version to the largest for x16. It is the 16x version that is currently found on new motherboards which supports the latest graphics (video) cards. Unlike the AGP slots, the x16 slot can be used for peripherals other than the video card.

Another interesting aspect of PCIe is one means by which it achieves its high data rates. It is called "low-voltage differential signaling". Another phrase that I had better explain a little more. As I mentioned earlier, connections occur in a pair of "lanes" in each direction. One of the lanes carries a

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"positive" image of the data and the other carries a "negative" or "inverted" image. The transmission of the data follows strict rules such that any noise that occurs will affect both lines. When the data is reassembled at the destination, the receiver collects both signals, inverts the negative back to positive and sums both signals. This effectively removes the noise from the signal.

PCIe is also backward compatible with PCI devices and software that uses PCI devices. The configuration space and programmability of PCI Express devices are unchanged from traditional PCI. In fact, all operating systems can boot without modification on a PCI Express architecture. Programs originally written for PCI devices can run unchanged on PCI Express devices because the PCIe layer is transparent to the application software. This provides benefits to users who don't have to upgrade software applications to work with newer hardware.

PCIe has another characteristic that greatly improves on PCI. It has an active power management (APM) system. When a PCIe link is not in use it does require that the link remain active so that the transmitter and receiver remain synchronized. It is the role of the APM to reduce the power level whenever the link is inactive. The catch is that when data needs to be transmitted there is a recovery time to allow full activation of the transmitter/receiver. The longer the recovery time, the lower the power usage. Overall, the systems are designed for the lowest power usage with the shortest recovery time.

There is a gradual transition from the motherboard with combined PCIe/PCI slots to those that will have only PCIe slots as more PCIe plug-in cards become available. This will also affect the size of the motherboard and the ultimate

size of the computer. The specification for the PCIe mini-card allows for a card half the size of a standard PCI mini-card. Most of these mini-cards may be destined for laptop computers. However, some desktop designs that take advantage of all PCIe input are far smaller than the standard desktop computer. Some of the new small box computers utilize these smaller motherboards.

So when you get your next computer you should now have a better understanding of the role of the PCIe slots it contains.

Dr. Lewis is a former university & medical school professor. He has been working with personal computers for more than thirty years.

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Want your own 15 minutes of fame?
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- Review a Product
- Write a letter to the Editor
- Solve World Hunger!

Bookmarks Page

By Hank Pearson, Treasurer and Webmaster, ASCIi (Arizona Association for Computer Information, inc.)
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Wouldn't it be nice if you could view a searchable webpage of bookmarks for your favorite websites? You can, but why?

Find Bookmarks with Forgotten Names

One reason to view your bookmarks as a webpage (as an alternative to looking in a menu) is to be able to find sites when you can't remember the first word in the name.

Let's say you have a Firefox bookmark named Carbonite Online Backup, and you can't remember Carbonite but you know you are looking for the word Backup. On your Bookmarks page (you will soon learn how to view), you can easily search for Backup.

You are using Firefox, aren't you? If you haven't discovered Firefox, download it from Mozilla (http://mozilla.com). It's free, fast, and secure. Make Firefox your default browser.

View Bookmark Descriptions and Tags

Another reason for a bookmarks page is to give you plenty of room to view (and find) descriptions of your bookmarks. You will learn how to add tags to improve your searches.

Zoom In and Out

A third reason to display your bookmarks on a webpage is to allow you to zoom the text in and out so you can see it clearly. To zoom any webpage, press Ctrl+Plus or Ctrl+Minus, using the numeric keypad.

DIY for Fun and Learning

So, how do you display your bookmarks as a webpage? You could download a tool to do the work for you, or download a tool to search bookmarks. But it's easy enough to DIY (Do It Yourself). It's interesting, fun, and educational. Are you just using your computer to perform certain tasks, or do you also enjoy learning by experimenting? If you like to learn, this tip is for you.

Find the Bookmarks File

You don't need to create a bookmarks webpage. It already exists on your own hard drive! The name of the file is simply bookmarks.html. Press Win+F to find it. (While holding down the Windows key (next to Alt), press F, for Find.) In the left window pane, click 'All Files and Folders'. In 'All or part of the file name', type 'bookmarks.html' (without quotes). Click Search.

If you get multiple results, it's easy to determine which bookmarks.html file to use. It's the newest one. In the View menu (of your Search Results window), click Details. In the right window pane, click the Date Modified column header (to sort the list). The file you are interested in has the newest date and time (for a file with the Type shown as Firefox Document).

Bookmark the Bookmarks File
Double-click that newest bookmarks.html Firefox Document to open it in Firefox. Press Ctrl+D to bookmark the bookmarks.html file. In the Name field, insert a hyphen (-) at the beginning (to name the bookmark '-Bookmarks'), so this new bookmark will appear at the top of the list.

Now, with your Bookmarks page displayed, press F5 to refresh the view. (F5 is a common shortcut key for Refresh.) Surprise? The new -Bookmarks bookmark is at the bottom - not the top. Let's address that. (This is Firefox 2.0.0.11. Future versions might vary.)

Create Another Top Bookmark
First, create another bookmark that will be displayed at the top. For example, open Google.com, press Ctrl+D, and name the bookmark -Google (starting with a hyphen).

Sort Your Bookmarks
Now, in the Bookmarks menu, right click any bookmark, and click Sort by Name. Look in the Bookmarks menu to confirm that the bookmarks are indeed sorted. Note the two bookmarks that begin with hyphen (-) at the top of the menu.

Look at your Bookmarks page again, and press F5 to Refresh. The new bookmarks are still at the bottom.

Rearrange Your Bookmarks

To force Firefox to rearrange your bookmarks page, move a bookmark in the menu. In the Bookmarks menu, drag, for example, either new bookmark that starts with a hyphen up or down to precede or follow the other bookmark that starts with a hyphen. (Having two hyphen-prefixed bookmarks lets you rearrange those two at the top without rearranging the other bookmarks.) Press Escape to close the menu.

Refresh your Bookmarks page with F5. The bookmarks on the webpage are now arranged as shown in the Bookmarks menu. (Do you need to refresh three times? No, we simply demonstrated that the bookmarks.html file is rearranged when you move a bookmark in the menu.)

Finding Bookmarks on the Page
When you are viewing your Bookmarks webpage, press Ctrl+F for Find. Type Backup, for example, and press Escape (to close the Find toolbar). To find the next occurrence of Backup, press F3. (F3 is a common shortcut key for Find Again.) When you find the desired bookmark (link), click it (or Ctrl+click to open the site in a new tab). (Or press Enter, or Ctrl+Enter to open the site in a new tab.)

Add Descriptions and Tags
To add or change descriptions of your bookmarks, in the Bookmarks menu, right-click the bookmark you want to edit, and click Properties. In the Description field, type anything (including your own tags) that might help you find your bookmark and remember what it is for. After clicking OK and pressing F5 (for Refresh), you will see your new Description in the Bookmarks page.

Make Changes through the Menu
Now that you know where bookmarks.html is located, you might be tempted to edit it directly with a text editor. Mozilla warns that it is automatically generated, so do not edit it, as your changes would be lost. Make your changes through the Bookmarks menu.

Displaying your Bookmarks as a webpage is a start in discovering many more tips and tricks related to Firefox.

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Hank Pearson (hank.pearson(at)asciigroup.org) is the Treasurer and Webmaster for ASCIi (www.asciigroup.org).He is a long-time member who frequently writes articles for the group's newsletter, and has served as President, Secretary, Newsletter Editor, and Presentations Coordinator.

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improved• Evolution personal information manager for email and calendar goodness, a Microsoft Outlook user can feel comfortable with. There is even plug-ins to allow Evolution to access existing Microsoft Exchange servers.
• Pidgin multi-protocol instant messenger including Yahoo, MSN, AIM, Jabber, IRC and more.
• Gimp (GNU Image Manipulation Program), a powerful Photoshop-like image editing program that includes filters, layers and a host of goodies.
• F-Spot image manager for categorizing and minor editing of all of your pictures as well as easily importing pictures from your digital camera.
• And much, MUCH more…

If Ubuntu doesn't come with a particular application, thousands of free applications are available from the Ubuntu online repository which are easily installed and updated from the Synaptic package manager.

When you decide to install Ubuntu onto your hard drive or virtual machine you only need to click the "Install" icon on the desktop to start the process. After seven or so easy questions the installer will copy the files over to the hard disk. Depending on your system's speed this could take about 60 minutes, more or less. It will even detect if you have Windows installed and offer to transfer over your files and compatible settings from your Windows accounts!

Of course, if the limitations of the LiveCD, such as settings are not saved from session to session, and you are hesitant to partition and install the full operating system on your hard drive Ubuntu offers yet another alternative called Wubi. Wubi is, from the Ubuntu website: "Wubi is an officially supported Ubuntu installer for Windows users that can bring you to the

Linux world with a single click. Wubi allows you to install and uninstall Ubuntu as any other Windows application, in a simple and safe way.

Are you curious about Linux and Ubuntu? Trying them out has never been easier!"
Wubi can be downloaded as an .exe file directly. With Linux the installation is not the end, only the beginning! Whether you try the LiveCD, Wubi or a full installation you will find a wealth of quality applications, refreshing freedom and a community unlike any other!

Drew Kwashnak: Has been losing more nights of sleep with Linux since 2002 and just can't keep from downloading and trying the latest versions! When not working with Linux he works with ASP.NET and Microsoft SQL Server for a small financial company. He is also the DACS Linux SIG leader and a father of 3.

Links:
Ubuntu: http://www.ubuntu.com
Get Ubuntu:
http://www.ubuntu.com/getubuntu
ShipIt: https://shipit.ubuntu.com/

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⍦

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

MEMBERSHIP DUES

$18 will pay up to Jan 1, 2009
or
$54 will pay up to Dec 31, 2009

Phoenix PC Users Group Membership Application

First: _____ Initial: _____ Last: _____

Address: _____

City, State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Ext: _____
Please note: We DO-NOT share phone numbers outside the club, and will generally only use your phone information, if we cannot contact you in timely fashion, via e-mail, or the club web-site

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

E-mail address: _____
May the club share your e-mail address with other members only? •☐ Yes ☐ No
With club approved vendors? ☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ Please do not share my e-mail address

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

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Articles, photos, screen shots may be e-mailed over the Internet directly to the editor at jacobsbd@cox.net. Please include the author's name, address, phone number and e-mail address on the first lines of the article.

All materials submitted will be considered for inclusion in the "News", but the Editor reserves the right to edit as necessary, to maintain standards of literacy, grammar, and length requirements. No materials will be returned unless arrangements are made in advance.

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.

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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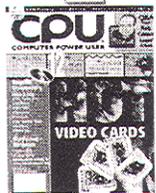Smart Computing; PO Box 85380
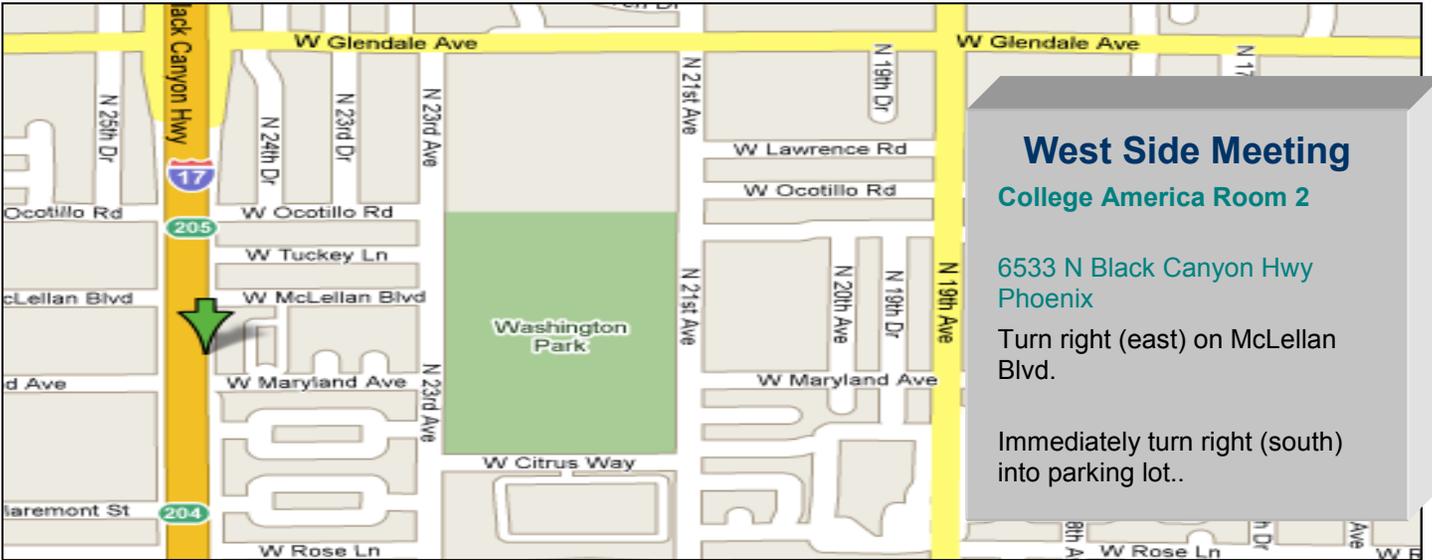Lincoln, NE 68501-9807
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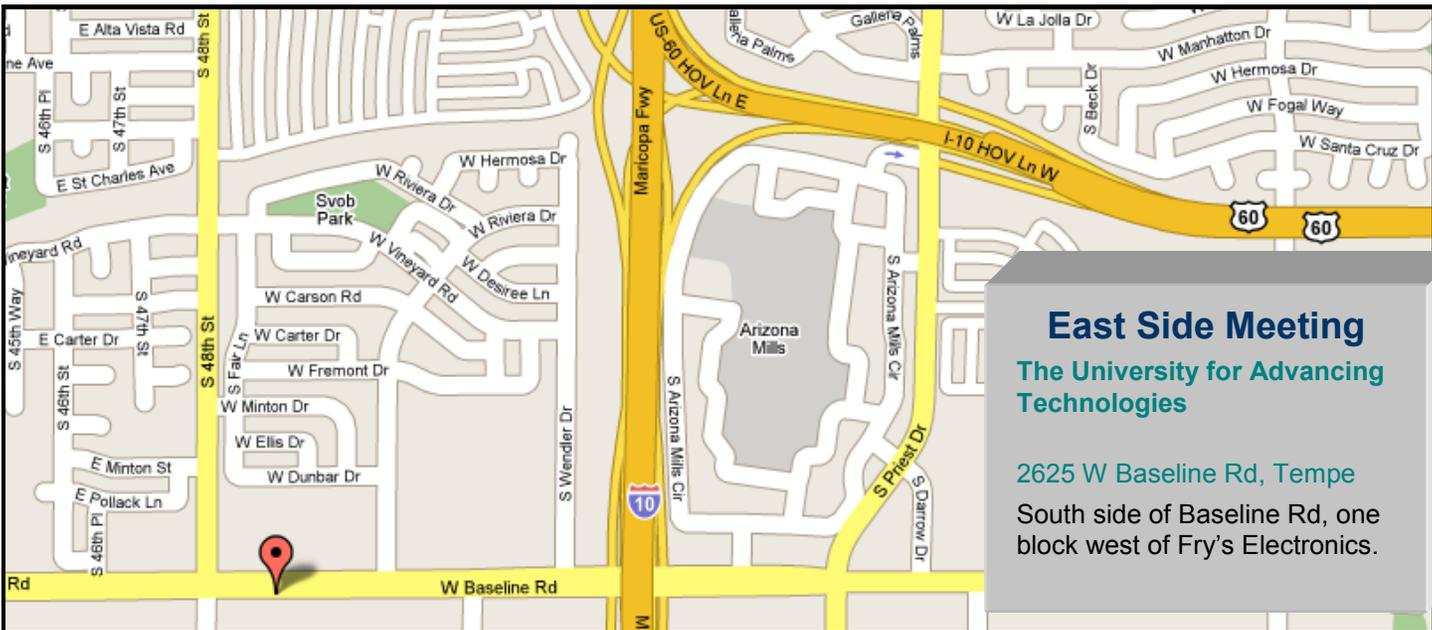**Call to Order:**
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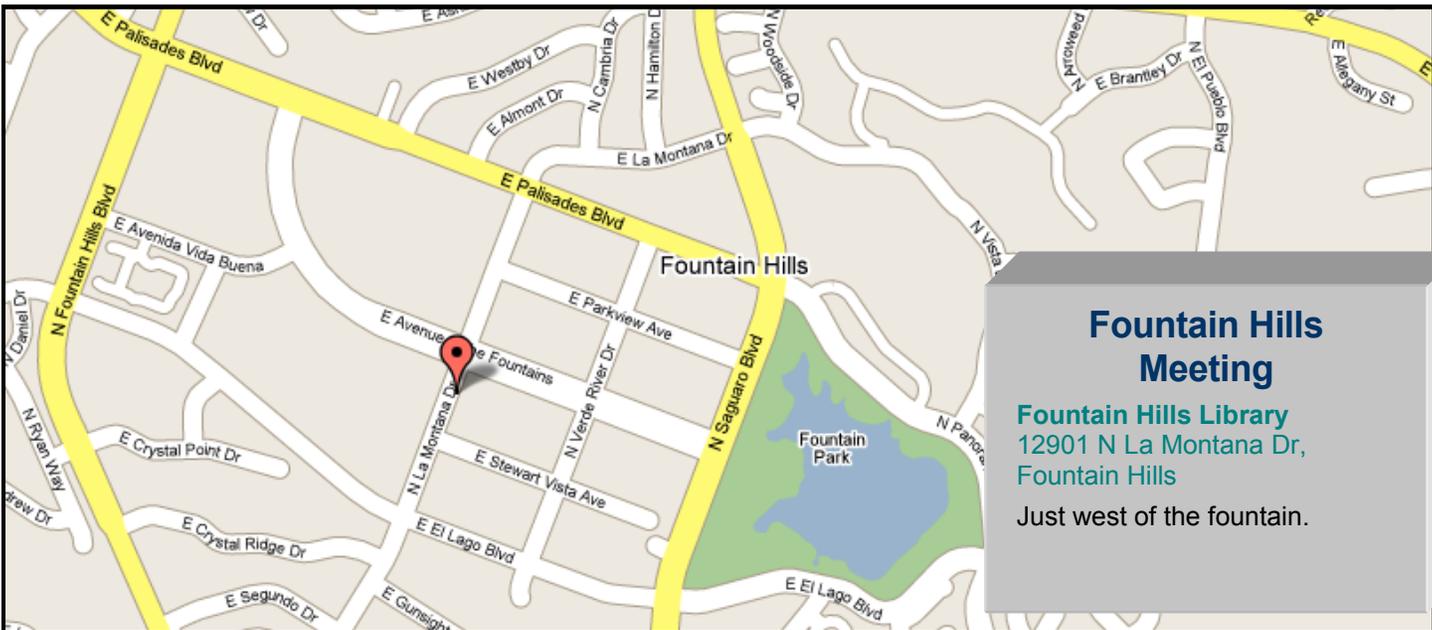
SmartComputing.com/groups

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West Side Meeting

College America Room 2

6533 N Black Canyon Hwy
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.

IS THIS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER?

By Bruce Jacobs
Lame duck Newsletter editor

As I understand it we are still looking for a willing and eager member to come forward to do the newsletter editing.

It really is not that hard and does not take as much time as you might think. Please contact us for more information.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Many of our members are behind on their membership dues.

If you have not paid you dues please send them along with the form on page 16 of this months newsletter.

$18 will pay up to Jan 1, 2009
or
$54 will pay up to Dec 31, 2009

remit to:
Phoenix PC Users Group
5555 N. 7th St. Ste 5 PMB 101
Phoenix, Arizona. 85014-2575