



# NEWSLETTER

The Best Accessory for your PC!

## MAIN MEETINGS



West Side. . . Tuesday, November 18

CollegeAmerica, 6533 N Black Canyon Hwy, Phoenix

East Side Wednesday, November 19

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

Fountain Hills .Thurs. November 20

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

The Presentation this month is :  
**THE WEBSITE FLICKR**

### 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  
6:00 P.M. West Side meeting

#### Staff Members

Membership Coordinator: Chuck Lewis  
Asst Membership Coord: Tj  
Fountain Hills Coordinator: Marion Smith  
East Side Coordinator: Bill Aulepp  
West Side Coordinator: Steve Semon  
Public Relations: Bill Aulepp  
Newsletter Editor: David Yamamoto  
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*Steering Committee meets at 6:00 P.M.  
before the West Side meeting each Month*

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

*Get Windows Vista Premium free - Read On*

# JUSTIN FROM OUR MEMBERS

## FROM OUR PRESIDENT

**This month we have a special door prize, one new full unregistered copy of Windows Vista Home Premium operating system. Tickets will be collected at all three locations with the drawing held at the Fountain Hills meeting.**

The ASCLi group has formed their Merger Committee so, we are far behind. We could not hold our "straw Poll" last month because of poor attendance at the West and East meetings. I am hopeful the the attendance at this month's meetings will allow some discussion and conduct the poll on the merger agenda. Before any action on the merger can take place, we need to form a Merger Committee. The Committee is to meet with the ASCLi group's committee to develop a plan. This is an important step for our group. To proceed, we should have a delegate from each of our three locations. Your input is needed.

Once again, I would like to mention that even though the official Steering Committee meeting is held prior to the West Side general meeting, we do need input from the East Side and Fountain Hills locations. Let us know your Pros, Cons and Ideas! At this time, we do not have a presentation scheduled for the December meeting. Lets have some new faces presenting their own "whatever"! We should all be thinking of ideas and/or presenters. You don't have to be an expert to give us your 'show n tell'. Please email [president@phoenixpcug.org](mailto:president@phoenixpcug.org) with your comments. Get something going for the December and January meetings This is the transition year under the new Bylaws. That means December is Election of Officers again. You can help the group by running for an office or filling one of the supporting positions available. Send your nominations to: [president@phoenixpcug.org](mailto:president@phoenixpcug.org)

I have been asked to address the needs of new computer users. I think the Newsletter would be a great forum for that need. I am proposing that we devote an article each month expressly for new users. Members can request a topic for an article by emailing [president@phoenixpcug.org](mailto:president@phoenixpcug.org) and an article addressing that issue may be published in the next newsletter. These articles should be written in a clear, concise, new user level. This should satisfy oldtimers and newcomers alike. I received one such request this month, it was great! We need more of them.

*Dean Botchuck*

## FROM OUR TREASURER

This is a summary of club activity from July to November of 2008. It includes some expenses for previous periods (Apr, May, Jun 2008) which were part of the previous period (Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2008 until the By Laws were voted on in the July 2008 meeting).

During the July-November period the club received \$1,462 in funds from New and Renewed memberships (27 at \$18 (to Dec 2008), 8 at \$36 (to Jun 2009), 1 at 40 (to Jun 2009+\$4) and 12 at \$54 (to Dec 2009)).

During the same period the club disbursed funds totaling \$874.26. Major expenses in this amount were: 1) Newsletter - \$334.87 (Bill expects paper and printer toner to last through the Dec 2008 mailing); 2) Raffle Prizes - \$359.43; 3) Tax Late Fees / Interest and Tax Preparation (2005 and 2007 years) - \$179.96 - .

There is \$83.89 in un-deposited funds, a renewal for \$54 and a reimbursement of \$29.89 for the Tax Late Fees / Interest by the previous treasurer.

There may be some bank charges for Sep and Oct, about \$8/month. I do not have on-line access to the account yet, it got disabled when the new signatures went into place, I hope to have that resolved in the next few weeks.

The balance as of Oct. 31, 2008 (not including any bank fees from Sep-Oct) is \$2,393.61.

My apologies for not getting a report into the Newsletter since I was elected this past July. I am hoping to do a short summary at least Quarterly, preferably Monthly for inclusion in the newsletter.

*Lo Hardman*

### SIGS(SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS)

**GENERAL INTEREST:**  
Chuck Lewis leads this SIG.  
Meets: TBA See Website

**DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY:**  
Bill Funk leads this SIG  
Meets: Wed Jan. 28th. 6:00 PM  
At CollegeAmerica

**DIGITAL VIDEO:**  
David Yamamoto leads this SIG.  
Meets: After Photography Sig

# JUSTIN FROM OUR MEMBERS

## FROM THE EDITORIAL STAFF

The Holidays are coming up and, because of date conflicts, most of the SIG meetings will be postponed until the year 2009. My how time flies. Bill Funk has scheduled his next Digital Photography SIG to meet January 28<sup>th</sup> 2009. Dave Yamamoto will have his Video SIG on the same date following Bill Funk's presentation. See your Newsletter and the Web site for schedule changes of the other SIGs.

Beginning this month we are placing some complimentary copies of the Newsletter at CollegeAmerica. We are also putting a notice on their bulletin board announcing our meeting time and the subject of the presentation. This will allow any of the people at CollegeAmerica a chance to attend our West Side meeting if they wish.

Dean points out in his letter this month that we should appeal to newer computer users as well as the more advanced group. "Users helping users to understand computers" is our stated mission.

Where better can we be of service than with new users and possibly gain some new members as well. Dave Yamamoto has been exploring the possibility of new members with the Boy Scouts. Anyone that has any ideas on the subject send an email to [president@phoenixpcug.org](mailto:president@phoenixpcug.org).

Dean also hopes we can get some articles from our group addressing the new user. To start with next month I will do an article for the new user titled Visiting Vista. It may be the blind leading the blind while I am not a new user I am a new Vista user. No one can address everything Vista encompasses but I'm taking a stab at the basic items a first time user encounters, should know and understand to get up and running. (See Page 14)

Another item we should be thinking about is our annual Christmas Party. At the general meetings we can discuss how and where the parties will be and obtain volunteers to set them up.

*Bill Aulepp*

### **IF YOU DO NOT KNOW BY NOW YOU ARE NOT PAYING ATTENTION !!**

*This month we have a special door prize, one new full unregistered copy of Windows Vista Home Premium operating system. Tickets will be collected at all three locations with the drawing held at the Fountain Hills meeting.*

### **Need a Ride? YOU MIGHT BE ON OUR MOST WANTED LIST**

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

### **PPCUG's Ride Sharing Program**

Bill Aulepp, 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 Bill at [bill@aulepp.com](mailto:bill@aulepp.com) Provide your name, your address, a way to contact you, and whether you can give or need a ride.

Bill 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.

### **Able to Provide a Ride?**

Are you willing to pick up, transport and drive another member to one meeting a

# WHATS ON AND WHERE

## CALENDAR

Check our website

For room and time information and to check for last minute changes

### *November 2008*

***Tuesday, November 18*** ..... West 6:00 PM.

THE WEBSITE FLICKR ..... CollegeAmerica

***Wednesday, November 19*** ..... East 6:30 PM.

THE WEBSITE FLICKR ..... UAT

***Thursday, November 20*** ..... Fountain Hills.. 6:30 PM.

THE WEBSITE FLICKR .....Fountain Hills Library

### *December 2008*

***Tuesday, December 16*** ..... West 6:00 PM.

TBD ..... CollegeAmerica

***Wednesday, December 17*** ..... East 6:30 PM

TBD .. ..... UAT

***Thursday, December 18*** ..... Fountain Hills 6:30 PM.

TBD ..... Fountain Hills Library

### PLEASE NOTE

***Wednesday, January 28 will be the next meeting for***

**Photo and Video SIGs 6:00 PM. CollegeAmerica**

**Chuck Lewis is working on a meeting for his**

**General SIG in December check our website**

# A STRESS FREE PC

## A STRESS FREE PC

By Jim McKnight, Los Angeles Computer Society,  
Director, California.

[www.lacspc.org](http://www.lacspc.org)  
[mcknight@lacspc.org](mailto:mcknight@lacspc.org)

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

As you know, there is no such thing as a totally "Stress-Free" PC, but there are many things you can do to reduce the stress and worry of owning one.

As we use our PC's, many of us worry about losing our data files, losing our email, losing our Music, our iTunes, our connectivity to the Internet, losing power in the middle of a critical activity, losing our ability to boot the PC, losing control of our PC to hackers, Spy-ware, etc. Wow, we worry a lot! It's a wonder we dare use our PC's at all.

To help solve and minimize these worries, here is a collection of ideas to help protect your computing environment. These steps are not really that difficult or expensive. In fact, many are free. There is lots of help available to you from User Groups, Friends, Internet Googling, PC Magazines, etc. to implement these suggestions. Details for implementing many of these suggestions are in the various self-help documents on my website at:

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

Will it take a lot of time and energy to implement these ideas? Yes, at first, but once you have

these processes in place, the regular time spent is minimal. Will I see a payback? You will only see a tangible payback for your time and energy if you experience some kind of catastrophic situation. Just like house insurance; if everything keeps running smoothly you will never know if it was worth it. You do get the warm fuzzy feeling of being protected, and you will sleep better at night.

Here are the three main areas of action. First: Protect your PC from bad things happening. Second: Prepare your environment so you can recover if bad things do happen. Third: Practice Secure Behaviors.

PROTECT YOUR PC FROM BAD THINGS

HAPPENING:

1. Buy yourself Hardware Router (*Even if you only have one PC*)

The Router acts as a hardware Firewall.

Put it between your PC and your Modem.

Be sure to change the Admin Log-in password from the default to something private.

Either disable the Wireless feature and hardwire your connection, or lock-down the Wireless using WPA Encryption and a password.

2. Make sure the Windows Firewall is active.

Make sure Windows "Automatic Updates" feature is active and all your critical/ important Windows updates are installed.

Install and activate an Anti

virus Program. Set it up to scan incoming e-mails.

Install and activate Windows Defender and other free Anti-Spyware programs. Defender will continually scan your PC for harmful activities (Note: Vista comes with Defender built-in).

Firefox (free) browser is generally safer than Internet Explorer.

Install McAfee Site Advisor (free) on each of your Internet Browsers. It helps identify risky sites.

(*Note: It is not related to McAfee's Anti-virus or security suite.*)

Buy yourself a Battery Backup Power Unit (unless you use a Laptop), so if you lose power at a critical time, you can gently close the PC down.

9. E-mail:

a. The best single thing you can do to secure your e-mail is to pick a good password. Do not use a single word, but a short phrase, and include some [numbers. ie](http://numbers.ie): "happy2cu4now" or "my5kidsrgr8". I avoid passwords that include l, I, 1, 0, o, or O. Too easy to confuse my memory. I prefer to stick with all lower case for ease of entry, but if you like finger exercise, you can include UPPER CASE and special characters to make it even more secure. Be creative: "C@@LDUDE" could work and easy to remember.

b. Set up your email program to block images, unless OK'd by you.

c. Using "Plain Text" e-mail is safer than using "HTML" e-mail, but not as pretty.

d. Note: Your anti-virus program can scan incoming e-mails, but does not fully protect you.

e. Thunderbird is a more secure e-mail client than Outlook, Outlook express, or Windows Mail.

PREPARE YOUR ENVIRONMENT (so you can recover if bad things do happen.)

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# A STRESS FREE PC

(Continued from page 5)

**RESTORE/INSTALL DVD/ CD's:** Make sure you have your "Windows Install" or "System Restore" DVD/CD's on hand (or kept safe off-site). You need these in case of a catastrophic failure. If you do not have them, many manufacturers have instructions on how to burn your own Restore DVD/CD. Do it!

**BACKUP PLANS:** Put multiple Backup processes in place that include:

- a. **DATA BACKUPS:** Plan regular backups of all your personal data to CD/DVD's (and kept safe off-site).
  - b. **IMAGE BACKUPS:** Plan regular "Image" back-ups of the entire hard-drive, preferably to an external Hard drive. *This is a full image of your main Hard-drive that can be used to completely restore the PC back to normal.*
  - c. **TESTING:** Test your back-up process to make sure it can restore the system. This is less risky if you do it when you first buy a PC, because you have your system restore DVD's (hopefully) to put things back as they were when you bought it.
  - d. **ONLINE BACKUPS:** If you like, sign up for an on-line automatic backup service like Carbonite, Jungledisk, or Mozy.
  - e. **RESTORE BOOT DISK:** Create a Boot-Disk (using your Backup Program), so if you need to restore from a backed-up image, you are ready to go. This disk should be tested for "bootability" and then kept off-site.
  - f. **FLASH DRIVES: Warning:** Do not trust Flash Drives as your only means of data backup. They are prone to unexpected catastrophic failures. Having 2 or 3 duplicate Flash Drives would possibly be a reasonable alternative to DVD/ CD's for your personal Data.
3. **HARD COPY BU:** Write down or print out all your critical info, passwords, access info, log-in ID's, etc. and save off-site. Print out a hard copy of all your e-mail contacts and save off-site.
4. **PASSWORD FILE:** If you keep a list of Passwords on your computer, make sure the file is hidden and/or protected by encryption. Name your password file something that only has meaning to you. Do not name your file; "passwords.doc". Duhh. Use something off-beat, like Recipes.doc or Flowers.doc. Also, there are "Locker" Programs that are free or cheap that will hide, encrypt, and password protect your personal data files.

## PRACTICE SECURE BEHAVIORS

### E-MAIL:

1. Never open e-mail attachments from strangers.
2. Never click a button or link in an email. If desired, copy & paste the link into your browser and make sure it is going where you think it is going.
3. Be cautious about opening attachments & links from friends and family. Especially if it is something that was forwarded from someone else.

### ANTI-VIRUS ~ ANTI-SPYWARE SCANS

1. Run a full Anti-virus Scan at least once a month.
2. For each of your Anti-spyware Programs, run updates and a full scan weekly or at least monthly.

### SECUNIA SCANS

Once or twice a month, run a Secunia "Software Inspector" scan to make sure your most common programs are up to date against vulnerabilities. This runs from their website. You do not have to download any programs.

### BACKUP, BACKUP, BACKUP

1. Do your planned backups regularly. At least once a month, backup all your personal data files, emails, pictures, etc. to CD/DVD's, and put them somewhere offsite. (A safe-deposit box or a friend or relative's house).
2. At least monthly, backup an image of your main Hard Drive to an external or second Hard drive.
3. If possible, physically take the external hard-drive containing your backed up image off-site so you can recover easily in case of fire, flood, theft, etc. (A safe-deposit box is good). *There are now many small cheap external Hard drives that will easily fit in a Safe-Deposit box. Buy two and alternate them.*
4. Periodically printout a hardcopy of your passwords and contacts. Save off-site.
5. Keep your external Hard-drive powered off when not in use.

### HARD-DRIVE SURFACE ANALYSIS SCANS

Run a maintenance scan quarterly or semiannually on all your hard drives using a utility like "Spin-Rite". This helps assure you against a surprise hard drive failure.

### REFERENCES & RECOMMENDED

(Continued on page 7)

# A STRESS FREE PC

(Continued from page 6)

## PROGRAMS: MOZILLA Products:

Firefox Browser - Free: [www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/](http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/)

Thunderbird E-mail Client - Free: [www.mozilla.com/en-US/thunderbird/](http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/thunderbird/) See Thunderbird Step-By-Step setup at: [www.jrmcknight.net/](http://www.jrmcknight.net/)

## ANTI-VIRUS ~ ANTI-SPYWARE Products

McAfee Site Advisor - Free: [www.siteadvisor.com/](http://www.siteadvisor.com/)

AVG Free Anti-virus - Free: <http://free.grisoft.com/doc/downloads-products/us/frt/0?prd=aff>

Defender - Free: [www.microsoft.com/athome/security/spyware/software/default.mspx#](http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/spyware/software/default.mspx#)

AVG Anti-spyware - Free: <http://free.grisoft.com/doc/downloads-products/us/frt/0?prd=asf>

Ad-Aware 2007 - Free: [www.lavasoftusa.com/products/ad\\_aware\\_free.php](http://www.lavasoftusa.com/products/ad_aware_free.php)

SpyBot Search & Destroy - Free: [www.safer-networking.org/en/spybotsd/index.html](http://www.safer-networking.org/en/spybotsd/index.html)

## SOFTWARE SCANS & BACKUP:

Secunia Software Inspector - Free: [www.secunia.com/software\\_inspector/](http://www.secunia.com/software_inspector/)

Requires the latest version of Java to run: [www.java.com/en/download/index.jsp](http://www.java.com/en/download/index.jsp)

Spin-Rite Program: [www.grc.com/sr/spinrite.htm](http://www.grc.com/sr/spinrite.htm) The SpinRite Storage Utility

Program is not free, but is money well spent.

Acronis True Image Backup Utility [www.ugr.com/](http://www.ugr.com/) This program is available at a discount at the above listed site and includes a free Tutorial CD.

Automatic Online Data Backup sites: [www.carbonite.com/](http://www.carbonite.com/) & [www.jungledisk.com/](http://www.jungledisk.com/) Carbonite is currently \$50.00 per year for unlimited storage. Jungledisk is variable priced on usage but cheap.

## BATTERY BACKUP POWER

### UNITS (also called a UPS:

**Uninterruptible Power Supply):** When buying a UPS, I suggest you add up all the power ratings on all the PC equipment you plan to connect to the unit, then pick a unit about 1.5

times that [amount. ie:](#) If your usage is 300 Watts, buy at least a 450 Watt UPS (equal to about a 700 VA

unit).

The VA rating (Volt-Amps) vs Watts rating is confusing. With PC equipment, 1 Watt is about 1.6 VA. I go by Watts. If the tag on your PC says 2.0A and 120V, then calculate 2.0 Amps x 120 Volts or 240 watts for that device. (VA would be about 400)

A UPS that is rated too small will fault when first powering on all your equipment at once. The first 30seconds or so is when the highest power usage occurs.

most reliable brands seem to be APC and BELKIN. Triplet is OK.

*\*\*Always check for the latest version of this document at: [www.jrmcknight.net](http://www.jrmcknight.net)*

## How to Submit Commercial Advertisements

Send commercial ad copy and payments to: Ad Manager, Phoenix PCUG Newsletter, 5555 N 7<sup>th</sup> Street Suite 5 PMB 101 Phoenix, AZ 85014

Make checks payable to Phoenix PCUG (Note: AD PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY AD unless credit arrangements have been made). Commercial advertising rates per issue are shown below. Submit camera-ready black and white copy.

Typesetting service and photographic services provided at additional cost and must be scheduled and paid for IN ADVANCE. Payment must accompany ad. Copy will not be returned unless return postage is prepaid. Single insertion ad rates are as follows:

Full Page (7.5" by 10.0") \$50.00

Half Page (7.5" by 5.0") \$25.00 Ask about multiple insertion discounts!!!

Quarter Page (3.75" by 5.0") \$16.00 Note: Oversized ads are charged to the next higher size rate!!

Business Cards (2.0" by 3.5") \$ 5.00 (minimum of 3 months prepaid)

For questions please contact David Yamamoto, 602 418-1243 or write to above,

Submission deadlines are the 25th of each month prior to month of publication. Prices subject to change without notice.

# FASTSTONE CAPTURE

## FASTSTONE CAPTURE

A Review by Ron Hirsch, a Member and Contributing Editor of the Boca Raton Computer Society, Florida  
[www.brccs.org](http://www.brccs.org)  
 Ronhirsch1439 (at) comcast.net

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

### THE BEST SCREEN CAPTURE PROGRAM I'VE EVER USED

Since it is possible that some of you may not know what a "screen capture program" is, I'll start off by defining that program type.

. IT SUPPORTS ALL MAJOR GRAPHIC FORMATS (BMP, JPEG, JPEG2000, ANIMATED GIF, PNG, PCX, TIFF, WMF, ICO AND TGA) AND POPULAR DIGITAL CAMERA RAW FORMATS (CRW, CR2, NEF, PEF, RAF, MRW, ORF, SRF AND DNG).

### WHAT IS A SCREEN CAPTURE?

When you are working on your computer, the material you are working on/looking at, is displayed on your monitor screen, as a bunch of pixels. Often, it is nice to be able to "save" the info onscreen, or parts of it, for further uses.

Windows does offer a "Print Screen" capability, to send info to the clipboard or printer, but as with many of Windows utilities, it's a pretty barren utility, with very few options. Fortunately, there are several 3rd party utilities out there, one of which I consider the best I've ever used.

### MY HISTORY WITH FASTSTONE

When I started using FastStone Capture in early 2007, it was still freeware, with a request to send in a "contribution", if one liked it. I liked it so much, I sent off a contribution immediately, and received a very nice "Thank You".

Shortly after my contribution, it became a "paid for" utility. For \$19.95, you get the program, and updates are free forever. There is a 30-day free trial period, during which you can use a fully functional version, to convince yourself that this is indeed a program that you want to keep using.

### LINKS

#### FASTSTONE MAIN SITE

The link to the FastStone site is: <http://www.faststone.org/index.htm>.

While here, check out the other excellent programs, all of which are free, or click on the Download button for FastStone Capture to download it.

### FASTSTONE CAPTURE PAGE

The link to page for this program is: <http://www.faststone.org/FSCaptureDetail.htm> or just click on the "capture" program when you are on the first link noted above.

### WAYS TO USE SCREEN CAPTURES

Below, I've included some of the ways I use this screen capture program - which, by the way, I use just about every time I'm on my computer.

Remember, this program can capture a wide variety of areas on your screen - see the listing below in one of the screen captured images.

Have you ever installed something where a variety of screens and dialog boxes came up, and had to be filled in with info for various options, etc.? Sometime later on - weeks, months, or even years, you need to know what info and options et al that you filled in. No problem - just save each screen and store the saved screens in a named folder. Then all that info is available at a moments notice. All you have to remember is where you stored it. And you can also print out each of the screens after saving them, and file those pages in a loose leaf notebook.

You have some digital photos that you'd like to send to someone in an e-mail. If you just "insert" the pix into the e-mail message as many people do, they may come out to a very large size - much larger than you wanted, or expected. There are of course a variety of ways to "resize" image files, but there is one that is pure simplicity. What I do is to display each picture file in a program such as Windows "Picture and Fax Viewer", or the free Fastone Viewer offered on their site. Then adjust the size of the displayed image on the screen, to what you'd like the size to be in your e-mail. Then capture the image. When inserted into your e-mail it will be exactly the size that you captured, since it captures pixels, and monitors all have very similar pixels/inch.

You're on a web page, and there is something interesting that you want to save, but you don't want to print out the whole page. Just

*(Continued on page 9)*



# FASTSTONE CAPTURE

*(Continued from page 8)*

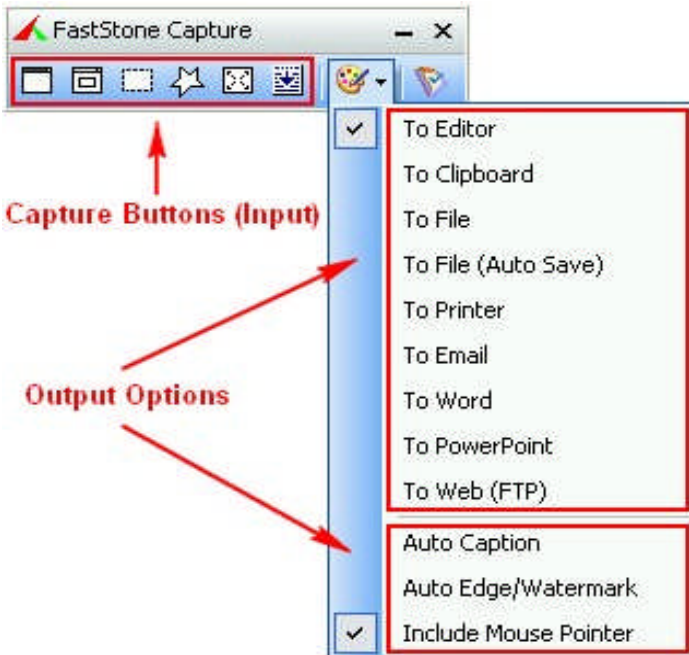
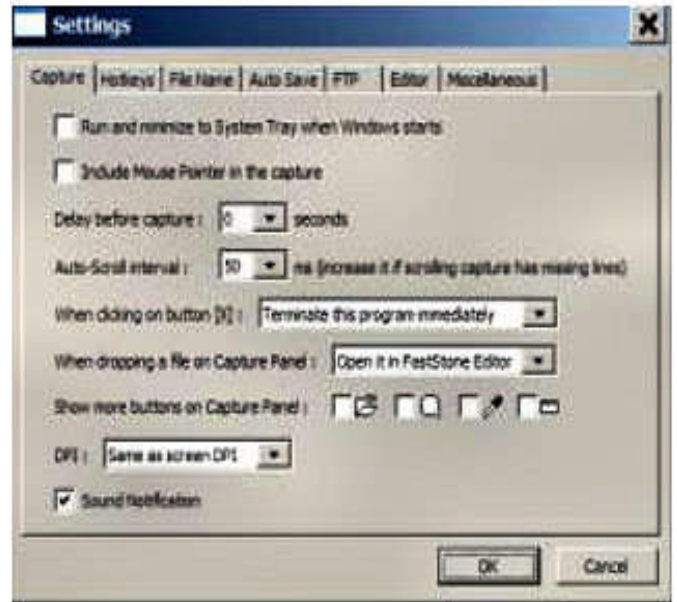
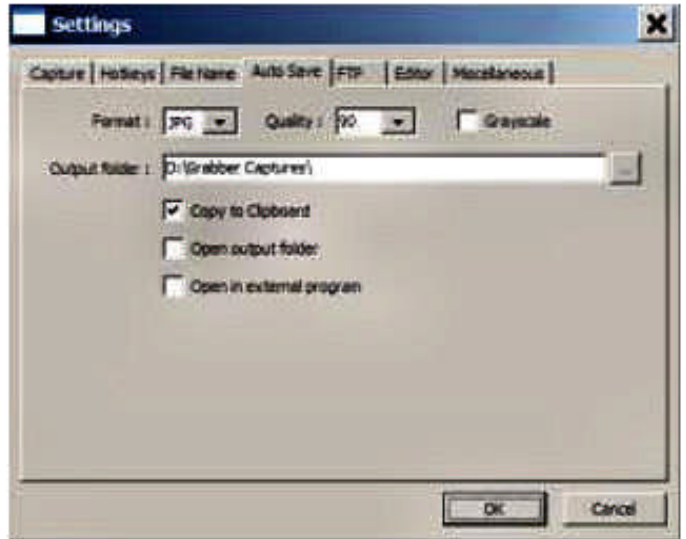
screen captures are just pixels. The capture process doesn't care what created those pixels.

select the desired area using Fastone Capture, and save/print that area only.

You're watching a video on your TV, and there was an image of someone/something you wanted to capture. Just pause the video, and select the area you want in Fastone Capture. Your image is captured. Remeber,

Remember, this capture method saves things as an "image" (I use the jpg choice). It will not save text in editable form. If you want to do that, you must copy and paste into a text editor, such as Notepad. But, if you have a program such as "Omnipage" which is generally included when you buy a flatbed scanner, you can use it to convert a jpg image of text to an editable page of text.

The images below are several of the screens and drop-down menus from Fastone. The choices available to the user are well thought out and very useful. Note all the various options for what can be chosen to get saved, and the hot keys for these choices.



Want 15 minutes of fame?

- Write an newsletter article .
- Write a letter to the Editor
- Send pictures of members at work or at play

# MEMBERSHIP

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

## DUES

\$39 will pay up to Dec 31, 2009

### Phoenix PC Users Group Membership Application

First: (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_ 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 vendors?  Yes  No Note: Phone numbers **will not** be listed.

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

- 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

# NEWSLETTER POLICIES

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Please include the author's name, address, phone number and e-mail address on the first lines of the article.

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# YOUTUBE FOR POSTERITY

## YOUTUBE FOR POSTERITY

By Mike Moore, Editor, Bowling Green Computer Users Group, Kentucky  
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The video sharing websites, such as Google Video and YouTube, are either great resources or the world's biggest time-wasters, depending on your viewpoint. YouTube for example, allows users to view and share video clips with ease, and anyone can upload a video clip on this site without cost, making it a kind of "America's Funniest Videos" of the internet.

In an effort to keep users coming back to their site (and thus generating more ad revenue), YouTube encodes its video files in the Macromedia Flash format (SWF), with Flash video (FLV) data embedded within, which also prevents viewers from downloading files and making digital copies. Instead, the video files are streamed directly to the embedded player in your browser (Internet Explorer or FireFox). There is no obvious download link for users to save the video locally for offline viewing or for transferring to a portable media player. You might think of this in terms of your desktop: you get the link, but not the file.

One of the things I like about the internet is it's a little bit like a dream that you can control. Or, if you like, some kind of software heaven. If you can just imagine a solution for some perceived problem, often times you can look out there, and a solution will have already been created, like magic. In reality, this arises from the very large number of creative folks that use the internet and come across the same difficulties that you and I do, and are actually able to whip up a solution. More often than not, they don't want any money in exchange for the solution, they just want the problem to be fixed.

There are, in fact, multiple solutions for this problem-that YouTube offers no handy download link and no apparent way to put its videos on your iPod or computer for later enjoyment. I will present only one, but I also want to tell you how I found it, because that process is one that will help you with locating future solutions like this.

You can find YouTube video recorders at download.com and a host of other download sites, but I have a problem with programs found on these sites. I look for well behaved programs that only minimally solve the problem and do not try to do too much. And the distinction between well-behaved programs and ad-ware and spy-ware is getting to be very small indeed. The word "free" on these sites, in reference to someone's program, usually means anything but free.

It is difficult to find a site that presents only open-source, well-meaning programs that respect my desktop and my time. Such programs are like finely crafted European or Japanese tools. They are understated and unassuming, and behave exactly as expected and are documented well. The closest I have ever come to a site that presents such tools for download is <http://sourceforge.net>.

Sourceforge.net is not perfect. One of the pervasive problems on the site is that you won't always know if a particular program is for Windows, Linux, Unix, Mac or some other more exotic computer. Another problem is sometimes programmers jump right into the middle of their story when documenting the program and forget to tell us what the heck the program is supposed to do.

Anyway, I browsed to sourceforge.net and typed in two keywords: youtube recording ...and got 45 hits. Try that on Google and you be lucky to get less than 45,000!

Since SourceForge is about teams of programmers communicating towards a solution to a particular problem, we find far less junk on here than we do on one of the more popular download sites. But we also find projects that have only just started, and don't really have anything for us to download yet. To help me decide which of the 45 solutions to look at, I focus on the last column, which tells me the number of downloads and therefore the relative popularity of the program.

Please turn to page 7 for a screen capture of what the SourceForge search looked like.

Based on over 35,000 downloads, it looks like "Youtube Downloader" is a good choice. Note: SourceForge is not known for creative program titles either!

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# YOUTUBE

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Note that the description of this program indicates the program is “platform independent,” meaning that it does not matter whether you have a Mac or PC, this should run on both. Platform Independent usually means that the program runs inside of a browser and uses Java technology to achieve its independence. See Java.com for more information on how Java manages to do this. If you have the latest Internet Explorer or FireFox browser, you probably have Java. If not, it’s easy to download it from Java.com if you have a fast internet connection.

The file comes down as ytd17.zip. After I unzip the file to a directory (a good choice would be My Videos), I notice there are two directories, one labeled YouTubeDownloader and one called simply, bonus. Without even being tempted by the “bonus” directory, I navigate into the other directory and find two more directories, “full” and “opensource,” and I chose full. Inside there is a file called ytd.jar. It carries a little blue and orange coffee-cup logo which is another giveaway that this is a java program. I double click on this file and hope for the best. Windows asks me if I want to open it, and I click OK. It opens, but I am also directed to a web site automatically. I hope the programmer just wants me to know something about the program and is not wanting to sell me anything!

Here we see another benefit of Java programs—no installation needed. Just double click and it goes to work for you.

I opened my browser and went to YouTube.com, selected a video and then copied the URL (from the browser address window) using CTRL-C, put my mouse cursor in the space where it says “Enter youtube links separated by a new line” and hit CTRL-V to paste the URL in there. I guess you could type it in too, if you were very accurate. [In Europe, they refer to the ENTER key as a “new line.”]

I clicked on the download button and when the download was complete, the program rather cryptically referred me to the download directory, which turned out to be where I installed YouTube Downloader, My Videos. There was a file in there called YouTube-Dancing Liquid.flv, which was indeed my video, but there was a problem—the FLV file extension was not associated with any of my applications! No matter, when I double clicked the FLV file, Windows gave me a choice of what to open it with. I chose my trusty VideoLAN player (on your BGAMUG CD), and it worked just fine.

# THE NEW USER

## A NEW LAPTOP A NEW COLUMN

If you have decided to buy a laptop computer because you want to get on the internet, write e-mails, write the great American novel, take all your digital pictures and do all the marvelous things you have heard a computer can do etc., etc., etc. then you will be interested in next months THE NEW USER column. It will be the first of many articles for the newer PC user.

Almost always your new computer will have an operating system called Vista. That is the subject of next months column but first a little background information.

If you have previously owned a computer you remember that it probably came with an earlier operating system and a series of discs containing the operating system and other programs that allowed you to do some of the things listed above.

Well now it’s different. You will not find discs in a package with your new laptop. They are there on your hard drive. You will be given instructions on how to record (burn) them to discs using the optical drive which has been built in to your laptop.

If you do not have an optical drive included in your laptop all is not lost. You can buy one that will plug in to your laptop. This points out the folly of buying the cheapest laptop you can find because you will end up paying more money to upgrade it and acquire a migraine in the process.

When buying a laptop ask the salesman (if the specifications are not listed with the price tag) does this laptop contain at least 2 gigs of memory, at least a 100 gig hard drive or more and what version of Vista does it use ? Stay away from Vista Basic as you will soon find that you will be forced to upgrade to a better version of Vista to accommodate the programs you wish to use. Migraine time again.

Don’t worry about what all these terms mean. We will go in depth about them in later Newsletters.

Remember anything a salesman says can never be proved later unless you are “wired” If you are “wired” you do not need this column. So hang in there and next month we will look at Vista as a new user which to be truthful many of us are when it comes to Vista.

# HACKING 101

## HACKING 101

By Marjie Tucker, Editor, Macon Computer User Group, North Carolina  
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We are being bombarded with warnings about securing our data and the entry to our computers. Do you ever wonder what the big fuss is all about? How can a hacker possibly get into your data? And, what would he be looking for? Let's spend some time answering those questions.

### How Does A Hacker Get In To Your Computer?

When you give your computer access to the Internet, you need an IP (Internet Protocol) address. The IP addresses that we are currently using have 4 octets with periods between them. They will be something like 192.168.100.1. When you access the Internet, that address is read by the router, modem, whatever that links you to your Internet Service Provider. Then it is read by the routers that route all the data through the Internet. This address makes it possible for you to send data, such as e-mail or requests for web pages. And, in turn, that same address is used to direct incoming e-mail and web pages into your computer. There are several websites and programs available that will translate these IP addresses into the name of the company that purchased them. In many cases, like our residential usages, the company name will be the ISP. For commercial use, it will be the name of the company that rents the block of IP addresses. Hackers use this IP address information to find their targets much like we use a physical address to find a house or office.

Once a hacker finds out your IP address it's relatively simple to send your computer a Trojan horse program, spyware, or a virus that will open a port that you usually don't use. Once that port has been opened, he can freely enter into your operating system and browse around just like he was there in person. He would look for programs that store valuable data like social security numbers and credit card account numbers. (Do you have that in-

formation entered into your Quicken or Money program?)

He would look through your My Documents folder for password lists and search your Internet Explorer favorites for financial sites where you saved the username and password. And, before he leaves

he usually plants another Trojan horse that will give him the ability to take control of your computer in the future.

### Commercial Websites

The most common way to hack into a company's website through the Internet is by using a Denial of Service attack. These DoS attacks use multiple computers to overload a website with bogus requests for information. The hacker usually creates a Trojan horse program that he sends into the computers of unsuspecting people (remember that program that was left behind when your computer was invaded above?) The message that he creates usually contains a header saying that it comes from an IP address that doesn't exist. When he is ready to attack, he calls up all the computers that he infected with his Trojan horse and tells them to contact a specific IP address. Those computers follow his instructions and send his preprogrammed message to that website. Servers that control websites always check to verify that IP addresses requesting information or webpage downloads are legitimate addresses. When a server is hit by a bombardment of these false address requests, it tries to track down every one of the fake addresses. Before long the server becomes overwhelmed by the fruitless process and crashes. When it crashes, the website will vanish and the hacker will be given access to a prompt for the server. He can then use Linux or DOS commands to request and view information on that server other servers.

### How About Wireless?

Let's put this hacker into an airport where hundreds of people are sharing a wireless network. It's like leaving a child alone in a candy store. In this case the airport's wireless system usually provides the IP addresses through DHCP and he can easily look at the list of addresses that have been supplied. He can test each of the addresses for available ports and it's quick work to access the most vulnerable. The same principles apply in hotels and restaurants that provide wireless Internet ac-

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# HACKING 101

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cess. If you have a wireless network in your home, our hacker can drive down your street using a laptop or PDA to search for wireless networks. This process is called Wardriving. If he finds one that has not been secured at all, he doesn't even have a challenge. If you have added a password, he simply has to crack the password.

## What Tools Do They Use?

It's very easy for a potential hacker to find the tools of his trade. There are many websites that offer program tools and tutorials for using them. Here are some of the popular:

**Anonymizers and Remailers** - Anonymizers are online services that eliminate the trail of information that is left behind. These sites use anonymous proxies that a hacker can use to access computers and servers without leaving his IP address on any log. Remailers strip the header off a message and replace it with a meaningless header that can't be traced.

**Command.com** - When this command is typed into a server it will basically give you administrative rights. You can then see all the folders and files. It's also very easy for the hacker to create a new administrative account that he can re-use in the future.

**Password Crackers** - These programs try random passwords at lightning speeds. They are usually very successful.

**Key Loggers** - Hackers frequently install these on computers, especially public PCs. The programs actually record every stroke that you make. Hence, when you type in a username and password, it has been captured.

**Port Knocking** - This is a method of externally opening ports on a firewall by mimicking the process you normally use to add a port to your firewall.

**Wireshark** - This popular program captures and analyzes the data on a network. It's used by hackers to find information they want and it's also used by network administrators to manage networks.

**Aircrack** - This program is used to crack wireless WEP and WPA passwords.

**Metasploit Framework** - This is a tool that can be used by hackers to search the Internet for sites that have dubious code. These are the sites that are the easiest to hack - especially when this program does the searching for you.

**Networks** identifying the types of data and the internal addresses of this data. It's a valuable tool for administrators, but can save a great deal of time for a hacker.

**NMAP** - This is a port scanner. Since a hacker knows that he needs to use a port to access your computer or network, he can use this program to see which ports you have open.

**NetStumbler** - This program finds any wireless networks that are in range.

**Wardrivers** drive through residential neighborhoods using

**NetStumbler** to search for available wireless networks.

**Kismet** - This program takes NetStumbler one step farther. It searches for wireless networks that are not broadcasting their SSID.

**NSLookup** - If you type a domain name into this program, it will give you the company's IP address

**Traceroute** - This is a very valuable troubleshooting tool for technicians. It will trace a packet on its route through the Internet. It shows every IP address it visits along the way.

**Snort** - This is an open-source intrusion detection system. It shows traffic analysis and packet logging on networks.

**TCPdump** - This is the most widely used network sniffer/analyzer for UNIX networks.

**Net Cat** - This has been called the Swiss army program for hackers. It performs many sniffing and cracking tasks.

This was really just some of the basics. But, if we know why security is so important, we may remember to take the right precautions. Hope your web surfing stays secure.

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# November 2008

The Newsletter of the Phoenix Personal Computer Users Group  
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