



*The Best Accessory  
for your PC!*

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

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## Is this your Last Newsletter ???

*By Bruce Jacobs*  
*Phoenix PCUG Newsletter Editor*

Most of the newsletters for the past few months have been sent to members who are not current with their dues. We have been doing this as a courtesy to former members and because of confusion about who has paid and who has not. We have been doing this since last summer.

As the newsletter is the user groups biggest expense, we cannot continue to do this. The Board of Directors has decided that this is the last newsletter that will be sent out in this manner.

If you sealing label is colored, you will not be getting next month's newsletter. You will need to send a check for 36 dollars to the user group's mailing address (the return address on the back of the newsletter). Or contact our new membership coordinator, Steve Palmer, at

[membership@phoenixpcug.org](mailto:membership@phoenixpcug.org)

April 2007

# Upgrading to an LCD Monitor

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*By Herb Goldstein, Software Evaluation Chairman and  
Reviews Editor, Sarasota PCUG, Florida  
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Actually, I was happy with my high quality CRT (cathode ray tube) monitor. It was with considerable reluctance that I recently decided to get with the modern era and upgrade to an LCD. It has been quite a learning experience. Looking back, I realize that there are a number of very important practical considerations of which I was unaware in making the change and in making a choice. Perhaps I can pass along a summary of them along with some insight gained by hands-on experience to make the experience a little easier for you than it was for me. You need to do your homework both before and during your investigation. Here are some of the most important things you should know.

An LCD monitor offers considerable advantages in upgrading from a CRT. It is infinitely lighter and takes up much less desk space than a CRT. It uses the smallest fraction of electricity by comparison and is devoid of radiation concerns. When properly installed, its display may prove brighter, sharper and provide superb color.

**SIZE:** In any size range, an LCD will display more viewable screen than a similarly sized CRT. I decided on a 19 incher, the size of my CRT that I was happy with. Seventeen may work for you if that's what pleased you on your CRT. Over 19 for average use is both too much screen and excessive cost for most people.

**ORIENTATION:** Most prefer a normal tall screen (portrait view) for average usage. Wide (landscape) screens are available at greater cost in the same size range and are not recommended

unless you have special need for that display. Some makes offer a swivel screen that you can change from tall to wide and back again instantly. You will pay considerably more for this feature when it is available.

**COST:** Has been decreasing from a few thousand some short years ago to a few hundred today. A quality 17 inch LCD can be found today for under \$200, and a 19 incher for less than \$300. If you have a watchful eye, special sales are common and offer substantial saving.

**BRAND:** There is a very significant display quality to be gained in better models of better brands. The most common best quality brands usually topping the review lists in computer publications are LG, NEC, Viewsonic, Dell and Samsung. Different models in the same brand provide different features. Check them out carefully on their respective websites and "Google" for reviews. You need to do your homework both before and during your shopping experiences if you want the best for your buck.

**WARRANTY:** Better brands provide a 3 year replacement on defective monitors. Don't settle for a one year warranty!

**VIEWING ANGLE:** Unlike a CRT, an LCD's view falls off sharply at the sides when you are not positioned in front of your monitor. In practical usage, this should not be at all a problem. Your view will be just fine when you are normally seated at your screen, with more than sufficient leeway from the norm.

**RESPONSE TIME:** Usually indicated in the advertising of better models. A faster response

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**Phoenix PC Users Group**

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**The April 2007 meetings will be**  
**West Side ..... Tuesday, Apr 17**  
 DeVry University, 2149 W Dunlap Ave, Phoenix

**East Side ..... Wednesday, Apr 18**  
 University of Advancing Technologies  
 2625 W Baseline Rd, Tempe (one block west of Fry's Electronics)

**Fountain Hills ..... Thursday, Apr 19**  
 Fountain Hills Library, 12901 N La Montana Drive,  
 Fountain Hills

**The topic for the main**  
**April meetings will be:**  
 Microsoft Office 2007, the most radical change  
 Office has ever seen.

A copy of Office Professional 2007 will be  
 given away to a member attendee.

For more info check the meetings pages

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

**Help Your  
 User Group Grow**  
**Bring a Friend  
 to the Meetings**

**Contributing Editors**

Kathy Jacobs

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## Users Group News

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### The topic for the April meetings will be:

#### **Microsoft Office 2007**

Microsoft's Office 2007 is drastically different from any other version of Office you have ever seen. There is a new interface for you to see, a new file format for you to share, and new graphics for you to use.

How different is it? No more menus. The entire program is run from what is called the Ribbon. The Ribbon runs across the top of Word, Excel, PowerPoint and parts of Outlook. The file formats for Word, PowerPoint and Excel have been change to a more open format. The graphics and text processing have been rewritten as well.

Are your dues paid?

Please check the  
sticker which seals  
your newsletter.

If it is not white you  
need to pay your  
dues according to our  
records

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### May General Meeting Topic

#### **Smart Computing**

#### **Needed: May speaker!**

We have a topic. We have content on the way. We just need someone to be the voice.

Here's the deal:

One of the benefits that Smart Computing offers our club is a Presentation in a Box. This program provides information, a presentation, and links to the Smart Computing site. All you need to do is stand up front and talk.

If you are looking to get some practice speaking in front of a group, this is a great opportunity. You don't need to be a great speaker. You just have to be willing to give a couple of hours of preparation time and 45 minutes per meeting in front of the group. We need one, two, or three people to volunteer to present at the meetings. Will you do your part?

If we don't get volunteers, then one of us will show vacation pictures for an hour each night. Not good ones either. The choice is up to you!

# CALENDAR

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

## April 2007

Tuesday, Apr 17 West Side, room 113 (Office 2007) ..... DeVry  
Wednesday, Apr 18 East Side (Office 2007)..... UAT  
Thursday, Apr 19 Fountain Hills (Office 2007)..... Library  
Wednesday, Apr 25 6:00 PM room 106 (Photo & Video SIGs) . DeVry

## May 2007

Wednesday, May 2 room 106 6:30 PM (Board Meeting) ..... DeVry  
Tuesday, May 15 West Side (Smart Computing) ..... Devry  
See website for room number when known  
Wednesday, May 16 East Side (Smart Computing) ..... UAT  
Thursday, May 17 Fountain Hills (Smart Computing) ..... Library  
Wednesday, May 25 6:30 PM room 106 (Photo & Video SIGs) . DeVry

**The May newsletter is started!**

**Please send in your articles!**



## Scanning Published Photos

*By Irving Elliott, Twin Cities PC User Group,  
Minnesota [www.tpc.com](http://www.tpc.com)  
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If you scan a photo from a newspaper or magazine, then examine the results on your computer screen, you may see a criss-cross pattern of fuzzy lines over the entire print. If you print the scanned photo, you may also see such a pattern. This happens because pictures in newspapers and magazines are printed in a "halftone" mode.

The halftone process was invented when it was desired to print black-gray-white photographs using a printing press that used only single-color black ink. In this process, the photo is divided into a pattern of small squares, then each square is replaced with a black "blob" of a size proportional to the average shade of black in the square. For example: a white square remains white; a light gray square becomes a small



black blob; a dark gray square becomes a larger black blob; a black square remains black. The gray shades were called "half-tones", which explains the name of the process. Originally, the conversion was done by re-photographing the picture with a camera that contained a wire screen. then developing the picture in a high-contrast mode. Nowadays, the process can be accomplished on a computer.

If the density (squares per inch) of the scanned picture is not an exact multiple of the pixel density of the scanner, computer screen, or printer, an interference pattern occurs. They may also appear if the original photo is slightly rotated after scanning.

Colored pictures from publications may also give you interference patterns. For these, the halftone process uses filters to split the image into more than one black-gray-white photo, with each photo representing the intensities for each color. In each resulting halftone, the blob pattern is slightly offset from that of the other halftones. The picture is reproduced by printing the same paper once for each halftone, in the corresponding color. The printing press does not print one color on top of another because of the slight offset of the halftones.

You can get rid of the interference pattern by processing the picture with any photo software package that has a "blur" or "soften" selection. For example, in Paint Shop Pro, the



IMAGE/SOFTEN menu selection spreads the black blobs so that the fuzzy bars magically disappear.

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## The Garage

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*By Berry F. Phillips, a member of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City and a monthly contributor to the e-Monitor*

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IT was born in a garage! If you had driven by the garage located in a residential neighborhood, you would not have noticed there was anything strange about the garage since it looked like all the other garages attached to residences. However, if you were a neighbor you would be aware of certain unusual activity. You would have at times noticed the cars lining the street, and people going into the garage carrying various equipment usually in the evening. If a neighbor was blessed or cursed as the case may be, with an active imagination several fantasy explanations could come to mind. Perhaps it was a band practicing in the garage but there was no sound of music. Perhaps it was some kind of a terrorist group but no smoke or explosions or sounds of automatic rifles being fired. Perhaps they had a still operating in that garage however there were no police raiding the garage. Well, the garage could be used for all kinds of purposes but one thing is certain; it was not being used as a garage!

The garage was located in Menio Park, San Mateo County, California and was a maternity ward for the birthing in March 1975 of the Homebrew Computer Club. The 1999 made for television movie, "Pirates of the Silicon Valley (and the book on which it was based, "Fire In the Valley: The Making of the Personal Computer") describes the role the Homebrew Computer Club played in creating the first personal computer. Hackers were attracted to the garage like steel to a magnet since in those days it was just another name for a computer enthusiast like nerd or geek. In the old days a hacker is one who "hacks" through a computer problem and who writes his own code to fix it. In modern times a hacker has unfortunately a negative connotation which

should be correctly called a cracker, a combination of the word, criminal and hacker. The hackers wanted to "homebrew" their own machines using parts from the Altair computer kit, computer chips such as Intel 8080, or any other computer equipment. While the members of the Homebrew Computer Club were hobbyists, most of them had electronic engineering or programming backgrounds. I am reminded of Bill Gates' Open Letter to Hobbyists which lambasted the early hackers of the time for modifying and pirating commercial software programs. Several founders of microcomputer companies including Bob Marsh, Adam Osborne, Lee Filsenstein, and Apple founders, Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniack were founding members of the Homebrew Computer Club. Thirty years later in 2005, a reunion celebration was held as part of the Vintage Computer Festival sponsored by the Computer Museum. Upon the completion of the activities in the exhibit hall, there was an autograph signing as well as vintage computer equipment for sale that took many a hacker back to those early days they "homebrewed" their computer.

The Homebrew Computer Club's newsletter was one of the major forces that influenced the formation of the Silicon Valley created and edited by the members. The first issue was published in 1975 and continued in several designs ending after 21 issues in December 1977. There have been other Homebrew Computer Clubs that have emerged like the one in the Netherlands that started with a dozen members and operates today with 180 thousand members which is the largest association in the world. Their small newsletter grew into the magazine, "Computer Total."

Today, many of the original members of the Homebrew Computer Club meet today as the 6800 Club named after the Motorola (now Freescale) 6800 microprocessor. Who would have ever thought that a garage would be a maternity ward for the IT (Information **Garage... Continues on page 17**

## VistaVexes: The Windows Vista Pains'n'Gains Page

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*The Windows Vista Pains'n'Gains Page*

*By Jan Fagerholm, Assistant Editor, PC Community,  
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Applications compatibility is still slow coming in Vista. Since Vista came out, Microsoft has released one update aimed at improving applications compatibility (KB929427). While it is not unreasonable to expect vendors to update their applications, Microsoft has not been forthcoming with information that vendors need. Both Symantec and McAfee (70% of the anti-virus market) are at open war with Microsoft over the lack of kernel information on Vista. Microsoft says this is for "security reasons". This reasoning seems specious in view of That Other Operating System (Linux), which is Open Source. Anyone can download the kernel source code and study how it works, and Linux has far better security than Windows for just that reason. Everybody knows how it works; they also know just how to prevent intrusion.

So, compatibility for lots of applications has been slow coming. The Big Kahuna application vendor, Adobe, is an example. While CS2 installs and runs on Vista, they have released about 300 MB worth of patches to address "compatibility issues" in Vista. These range from visual anomalies to outright crashes. If reliability is foremost, you may be stuck in Windows XP for several months. Don't give up that dual-boot configuration just yet. . .

ReadyBoost is a new feature of Vista that lets you use a USB flash drive as part of system memory, improving what Microsoft characterizes as "system responsiveness". It serves as storage for

the system cache that gets paged to the hard drive in a low RAM machine. Computers with less than 1 GB of RAM benefit most from ReadyBoost; Vista moves a lot of the system cache to the flash drive, where it is accessed much faster than if it were paged to the hard drive.

I tested ReadyBoost by reducing the RAM on my Vista machine to 512 MB and running Vista over several sessions to get a feel of the system's responsiveness, then adding a SanDisk Cruzer 2 GB ReadyBoost-capable flash drive to see the difference. Leaving the flash drive in the computer during startup actually lengthened boot times. (Same thing happens if you add RAM: Windows simply spends more time filling the added RAM with more system components.) The speed difference shows up while you are running applications. Vista caches system and application pieces in memory, but lacking memory, it will simply page these off to the hard drive, which is the slowest component in the computer. When it can page these pieces to the flash drive instead, system response improves markedly. If you do something like load Adobe Photoshop, Adobe InDesign, and CorelDRAW, and switch between the applications, there is a definite improvement in system response. Crude stopwatch testing on my part suggest 25% - 50% improvements whenever Vista works the cache. Even Flight Simulator X was faster, with less delay between scenery changes while in flight. Noted from other sources, performance improvements are best in machines with the RAM configured single-channel and barely noticeable in machines that have paired modules running in dual-channel mode.

Note that the flash drive must be ReadyBoost capable. It must meet minimum speed tests

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## Get Organized Now!!!

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*By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS*

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With today's complex world and multi-tasking, it is not surprising that we all seem to have too much to remember. The time-honored "to-do list" is still a suitable way to keep all of your tasks remembered and organized. Now the to-do list has gone high tech with Gubb an online list-maker.

Gubb is simple, effective, and free. Just surf over to [www.gubb.net](http://www.gubb.net) and click on the large Start Here button. Enter your email address and the username and password that you want to use. Gubb will present you with preformatted lists or you can create your own from scratch. Each list can have a different background color or you can make them all the same.

Gubb made PC Magazine's list of the 10 worst application names, but don't let the name throw you. Gubb is a winner despite its name. Gubb's clean and simple interface makes it easy to create lists and to add, edit, or delete items. Important items can have one, two, or three stars. You can sort items by priority, date due, completed items, or alphabetically. Especially useful is the ability to rearrange items in a list by dragging and dropping them. You can also drag and drop the lists themselves to position them on your screen. If your lists get too long, you can collapse them so you see only the title, opening them to full length as you need them.

If crossing items off your list as you complete them gives you a sense of satisfaction, Gubb will let you perform that task quite easily. Just click in the check box next to each item and Gubb puts a

line through the item and marks it as completed. Gubb can also move the item to a completed list automatically or you can set it up so that you can archive your completed items at the end of the day, or any time of your choosing. If at anytime you need to see if, or when, you completed a task, you simply click on the name of the list to look at all the completed items and the time and date that you marked them complete.

These features alone make this Web service worthwhile, but there is more. You can share your lists with others. You can email or text message items right into your lists. You can have any of your lists emailed to yourself or to others. If you have an Internet-connected cell phone, lists can also be sent to your phone. So if you were in a grocery store and needed your shopping list, with the right equipment, you could access it from Gubb on your cell phone. All this may sound a bit complicated, but Gubb has done an exemplary job of keeping all these tasks easy to do.

My husband and I have each created multiple lists. We also have several lists that we share. Since we work together, this has really helped keep us organized both at home and at work. He can add items to my office or home lists and I can add anything I like to his office or home "honey-do" list. Gubb is helping us keep synchronized as well as organized.

Gubb is not perfect, but it is close. My complaints are pretty minor. I would love the ability to create several categories within each list. I would also like to be able to easily see if my husband added something to my list or vice versa. The program offers 3 shades of each of the following colors: blue, red, yellow, green, orange, pink, and gray. That's 21 colors to choose from so I am really being picky when I say I would like to be able to

**Organized... Continues on page 14**

# Online Retirement Planning Resources

*By Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont TX; radio and TV show host  
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## WEBSITES:

<http://finance.yahoo.com/retirement>  
<http://finance.yahoo.com/calculator/retirement/ret-02> Retirement Calculator

<http://money.cnn.com/pf/retirement/>  
<http://money.cnn.com/magazines/moneymag/money101/lesson13>  
Money Magazine-CNN retirement planning lessons

<http://www.fidelity.com/myPlan>  
Fidelity Investments online interactive retirement calculator

Let's face it; many of us are working hard and may or may not be planning for retirement. All too many of us are present oriented, and do not adequately plan for our financial future. Whatever your political persuasion or beliefs, social security retirement income is only intended as a minimal safety net, and not a comprehensive retirement plan. Many of my college students have expressed concerns that either social security will not be around for them to collect when eligible, or that benefits will be cut back as the ratio of workers to social security recipients declines.

Many of us are lucky enough to have 401(k) or 403(b) tax sheltered retirement plans, while others among us may have IRAs, either traditional or the newer Roth plans. Many of us blindly accept that our employer will take care of us. Most of us are not independently wealthy, and will have to depend on ourselves to provide

for our own retirement, either in part or in full. Very few of us have a reliable prediction of how well off we will be financially at retirement.

There is an old cliché that "information is power", and by having good information and acting on it in a timely fashion, we may have a financially comfortable retirement. Fortunately, the internet has many reliable resources that can help us with our retirement planning, regardless of our current age or fiscal situation. Some retirement planning resources are available from the financial media websites, while others are available online from brokerages, insurance companies, and mutual fund sponsors.

The online service Yahoo has extensive financial information freely available, including a comprehensive personal finance section. One such section is its retirement information at [finance.yahoo.com/retirement](http://finance.yahoo.com/retirement). This page, which is continually updated, is rich in retirement information. Included on this page, as I type this, are topics including a variety of "how to" guides, "questions and answers" on retirement topics, and a variety of financial calculators.

One calculator available for free from Yahoo is its online retirement calculator at [finance.yahoo.com/calculator/retirement/ret-02](http://finance.yahoo.com/calculator/retirement/ret-02). This online calculator is easy to use and confidential, and does not require any type of registration, but it does ask some very personal questions necessary to provide a retirement solution. The Yahoo retirement calculator asks for current age, income, spouse's income, predicted rate of inflation, desired retirement age, and other pertinent information. While not totally comprehensive, the results provided by this calculator are a graph showing retirement

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**Monitor... Continued from page 2**

time is better--it indicates how quickly the screen can refresh a video image. If an LCD's response time is too slow, the display's pixels won't be able to keep up with the information sent from the computer's graphics card, and you may see ghosting and digital noise as a result. 8ms or better response time is common on quality LCD's and is preferred! The lower the response time, the less of a blurring effect is possible on the screen.

**ANALOG VS. DIGITAL:** Video cards can provide outlets for two different monitor display types, analog and digital. CRT monitors are cabled to your video card with an analog (15 pin) cable. LCD's usually provide the same cable and connection but will provide a significantly better display when attached via a digital (VDI-D) to a digital port on your video card. Better LCD's provide both digital and analog connections. So do better video cards. If your card doesn't have a digital port, you can either replace the card with one that does, or you can add an additional card. Easy to do. Just plug it into a PCI slot and your computer will recognize it. You are really better off in many ways with a better card.

If need be, you can run your LCD with the same analog connection as you used for your CRT previously, but a digital connection will give you better results.

**NATIVE RESOLUTION:** LCD monitors will provide their best display when run at their "native resolution" which varies with the size of the monitor. For a 19 incher, the native resolution is 1280x1024. The resolution of a display can be changed easily by right-clicking on an empty area of your desktop and selecting "properties," and "settings." The same can be accomplished through your Control Panel in your Start Menu. Normally the correct choice will be made automatically by the installation software that

accompanies your new monitor.

When you change your most common CRT setting of 1080x760 to 1280x1024, everything, including all your icons and fonts, will suddenly appear much smaller. Your LCD display however will become infinitely sharper. If you find it strange to your eyes, you can easily change your display properties to provide larger fonts. Additionally, many programs like word processors permit you to change your text to any size you wish while maintaining its quality, regardless of screen resolution.

Running at native resolution (your choice to do or not, but very highly recommended) will make your screen display smaller but you will be able to accommodate more viewed area on a page. It may be strange somewhat to your eyes at first, but the greatly increased sharpness and over-all quality of your LCD display will more than make up for it, especially if you are using digital rather than analog display.

**AUTO-DISPLAY:** Most quality LCD monitors will automatically install at their best display settings when you plug them in. However, they will also provide easy to adjust menu settings for most of their values that permit you to easily adjust the display to what is most pleasing to your eyes. The most common adjustment people make is for brightness. Most LCD monitors tend to be too bright unless adjusted. LCD screen illumination is entirely different and better than that from a CRT.

**RUNNING MULTIPLE MONITORS:** What's to do with your CRT now that you have your new LCD? One of your choices may be to keep it and run two monitors side-by-side. If you are using Windows XP and you have two ports on your

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**Retire ... Continues from page 10**

balance and retirement income and an annualized table displaying age, salary, beginning retirement balance, additional savings required, inflation adjusted desired retirement income, projected social security income, withdrawals from retirement account, and ending retirement account balances. While no online retirement calculator should be counted on to be absolutely accurate in predicting the future, this calculator will at least give the user a ballpark concept of what to expect at retirement under different scenarios.

Money Magazine and CNN have online retirement resources at [money.cnn.com/pf/retirement](http://money.cnn.com/pf/retirement). As I type this, the page is displaying information on 401(k) plans and possible hidden fees which can eat away at returns, how to draw upon a 401(k) at retirement, information on accepting a pension or lump sum distribution, “The last 401(k) guide you’ll ever need”, and strategies for a comfortable retirement. On this page are also links to a variety of calculators to calculate savings nest eggs, debt reduction, a “millionaire” calculator to predict when the user will accumulate a cool million, and other calculators.

Many brokerage houses, insurance companies, and mutual funds have online retirement information. One of my personal favorites is the “My Plan” available online from Fidelity Investments at [www.fidelity.com/myPlan](http://www.fidelity.com/myPlan). No registration is required to use this comprehensive calculator. This calculator has a friendly and helpful audio voice accompanying the simple questions asked. The use of a slider to enter information, as well as to demonstrate the impact of any changes is commendable. With only five simple questions, the calculator will demonstrate potential retirement scenarios. Small grey question marks are displayed adjacent to each term used and will open a window

explaining each of the terms. The first question asks your age, followed by (second question) your current income. The third question asks how much you have already saved for retirement, followed by (fourth question) an inquiry about how much you are putting aside each month for retirement, including employer contributions. The final question asks about your investment style, with the slider ranging from “Short Term” (no stocks, no bonds, 100% cash instruments) to “Most Aggressive” (100% stocks, no bonds, no short term investments). As a solution, the calculator returns a pair of bar charts showing projected results at retirement if the market does poorly, or if the market performs about average. The calculated retirement goal shown is for 85% of pre-retirement income, poor market conditions, estimated social security income, and no other retirement income. Clicking on the link “Our assumptions and methodology” will give the details on how the projections are determined, based on statistical information.

On the myPlan “Snapshot” projections page are sliders for “Time” (retirement age), “Money” (contributions), and “Investment” (style and risk categories of investments). By adjusting these sliders right and left, the scenario will interactively change demonstrating in real-time the effects of the changes. Clicking on the boxes at the top of the “Snapshot” allows the user to vary age, income, and amount of savings, all of which will effect the graph shown.

The best time to have started to plan for retirement was “yesterday”. Since “yesterday” is past, we should all plan now for tomorrow. These and other reputable resources may be a big help in our retirement planning.

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video card (or two video cards), it's easy to do with a few simple settings in your display properties menu. You will then be able to run two different programs at the same time and easily drag items from one monitor screen to the other. Your cursor will readily move from one monitor to the other alongside. It can double your productivity and allow you to see and do things you did not know were possible.

Over all, upgrading to an LCD monitor will greatly enhance your computer experience and enjoyment. It's way more than worth any effort or expense involved.

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**The Fountain Hills  
General Discussion SIG  
will not be meeting until  
further notice.**

## Problems with Online Membership Payments

We had a system on the website designed to accept credit card payments of membership dues. The system would accept the credit card information and then wait for the data to be processed. The processing step was lost in the process of membership changes. We are not able to get at the information to charge the credit cards or even find who has tried to pay in this way.

If you have tried to pay for your membership online in the last year your credit card should not have been charged. You need to send a check to the address on the back cover. In the unlikely event that your card was charged, please let a board member know right away.

The root cause of the problem is that the data was too secure. Not only was unauthorized access prevented, after several attempts we discovered we could not access it as well. Phoenix PCUG apologies for any inconvenience this has caused our membership. The board of directors is working on adding a new shopping cart to the website. This will allow memberships to be paid by credit at some point in the near future.

If you have any questions, please contact Ric Fischer at [president@phoenixpcug.org](mailto:president@phoenixpcug.org)

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**Due to unforeseen delays, The report  
on the March Town Hall meetings will  
not be in this month's newsletter**

# Twitter

*By Kathy Jacobs,  
Vice President Phoenix PCUG*

I've fallen into a new addiction over the last month. It's called Twitter. It is a way to keep in touch with people that are online.

At it's most basic, Twitter is a series of 146 character answers to the question "What are you doing?" In reality, it can be anything from a communication toy to a way to keep track of how you spend your time and what you do everyday.

Once you sign up for Twitter, you fill-in a basic profile and provide an avatar. Next, you fill-in what you are doing and wait. As you acquire friends and followers, you see what they are doing and they see what you are doing. Simple, clean, easy to use.

You can post from your phone, the web interface, or any of a number of tools that Twitter-fans have created to "improve" the concept. I use the web to post or Twadget, a Vista sidebar gadget that lets you post see your friends posts. (Fun fact: When Twadget is running, every post causes a bird twitter sound. Drives the husband nuts. When it is broken he calls it a "twagety". Flip side is, it reminds me to turn off the sound for the tablet every night so that the other audible reminders don't sound either.)

There are several other interface applications written for Twitter. Check out TwitterVision and TwitterMap - they let you see where the latest twitters are coming from. Another tool I found when playing around is TwitThis. TwitThis lets you send a twitter from a webpage to show what you are reading. I found it via "Freakitude Technology Blog" <http://tinyurl.com/2s9eql>



There are plenty of more great twitter toys out there.. To see them, Google Twitter. Oh, and while you play, make me a friend. You can find me under the Twitter name callkathy!

The fun comes in as your friends and followers lists grow. Some call it "StalkMeNow.com". Bruce doesn't get it. My question is: Do you? ψ

## Organized... Continued from page 9

use purple, turquoise blue, and lime green for my lists. Okay, I know I am being hard to please, but maybe the Gubb creators will accommodate my wishes.

A recent survey showed that 25% of New Year resolutions are completely forgotten, but now you can use Gubb to resurrect your "I am going to be more organized." resolution. Sometimes getting organized means buying shelves, bins, baskets, and folders, but if you have an Internet-connected computer, Gubb will help

you get organized without any expense. Go ahead. Do it. It will feel great to get all those scraps of paper and to-do notes off your desk and to get all those to do items off your mind. I know, because Gubb has helped me do just that!

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### **Need a Ride?**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Thanks to everyone who participates in the program for making our group better!**

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

### **SIG Notes**

**Joe Benedetto** runs the Digital Photography SIG. See the SIG calendar on our website for last minute information.

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

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

**These are your SIGs, so please support them!**

### **Start a new SIG!**

Several members have expressed an interest in creating one or more SIGs that would meet on the East side of the Valley. If you are interested in organizing a SIG for this part of town on any computer related topic, please let Kathy Jacobs know. She has a potential meeting location for the SIG, but does not have the time to organize it.

### APCUG Articles

This User Group is a member of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), The organization provides many services to its member organizations.

One of the services provided is a common clearing house of articles for use in member newsletters. Any article in the newsletter which says "Via APCUG" in the by line was obtained through APCUG.

If given permission by the author, we will submit articles to APCUG for publication in other newsletters.

If you wish to submit an article to the *Phoenix PC User Group News*, please let me know if you want it submitted to them.

## Want your own 15 minutes of fame?

### Write an article for your newsletter.

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



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**Garage ... Continued from page 7**

Technology) Industry? I have decided to elevate the status of the lowly garage in my mind especially since I found out many of our largest corporations were also born in a garage! Why I am thinking now that a garage should not be for cars or junk but a shrine dedicated to American ingenuity and innovation!

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**Vexes ... Continued from page 8**

before Vista will use it. Every other flash drive I own fails this test. When you go to the store, make sure the package says the flash drive is ReadyBoost capable. A side benefit of ReadyBoost is that if you don't want the flash drive for ReadyBoost, you can get an ordinary 2 GB drive for as low as \$14.

So, this month, I found out how much faster I can't run my incompatible applications using ReadyBoost in Vista; the Microsoft version of Catch-22. Stay tuned for more misadventures.

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**How to Submit Commercial Advertisements**

Send commercial ad copy and payments to:  
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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")\$100.00  
Half Page (7.5" by 5.0") \$50.00Ask about multiple insertion discounts!!!  
Quarter Page (3.75" by 5.0") \$32.00Note: Oversized ads are charged to the next higher size rate!!  
Business Cards (2.0" by 3.5") \$ 10.00 (minimum of 3 months prepaid)  
For questions please contact Bruce Jacobs, 602-569-6430 or write to above

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

## Smart Computing Magazine

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

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

In the event our group does not reach the five paid subscription mark by the end of the quarter, credits will be carried over into the following quarter until the amount reaches five paid subscriptions, at which time a free subscription will be issued. This information is also posted on our website for future reference at [www.phoenixpcug.org/members/only/discounts/](http://www.phoenixpcug.org/members/only/discounts/) (members only section....User name and password required.) See [www.phoenixpcug.org/members/faq.shtml](http://www.phoenixpcug.org/members/faq.shtml) for questions about obtaining a password or retrieving a forgotten password.



# USER GROUP PROGRAM



**Phoenix PC Users Group**  
Be Sure to use the Phoenix PCUG Numbers:  
**SC: 8305**  
**CPU: 513**

**Mail to:**  
Smart Computing; PO Box 85380  
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[SmartComputing.com/groups](http://SmartComputing.com/groups)

Smart Computing or CPU?






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The Phoenix PC Users Group News, a newsletter, is published monthly, with article **submission deadlines occurring the 29th of each month**. This publication is mailed with the intention of reaching members before the monthly meeting of issue date. The Group is not responsible for lost or destroyed newsletters, other than replacing an issue lost in the mail. Notify the group Membership Coordinator at least four weeks in advance of change of address when moving.

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Submissions to the "News" should be in MS Word, RTF or unformatted text.

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

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

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