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Steering Committee:

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

NEWSLETTER

*The Best Accessory
for your PC!*

MAIN MEETINGS

West Side.....Tue, Aug 16

CollegeAmerica, 9801 North Metro Pkwy E, Phoenix

East Side.....Wed, Aug 17

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

Fountain Hills.....Thu, Aug 18

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

Presentation this month:

How to buy a new computer
David will go through all phases of buying
And setting up a new computer

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

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THOUGHTS FOR THE MONTH

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Thank you all for providing last month's feedback. We will use this to help our meetings, website and newsletter. Stay tuned & please bring a friend to August meetings! We are working as time permits on more remote Dimdim presentations.

Well here I am again writing via voice recognition in Microsoft Windows, both available in Vista & 7. Pretty cool technology. Please give it a try, I'm sure you'll like it.

It is back to school time, as many of you may know. So many good deals are available for laptops, accessories, printers, etc.. Check Fry's ad on Friday's paper and all the other vendors. For the most part, forget the other devices like tablets. Windows laptops generally give you the best bang for the buck. Also get a USB backup hard drive. If you are unsure of how good the deal is, don't open it when you get home. Tape the receipt to the box, check online reviews of the exact make and model. We can cover this during a demo. If you need to take it back, within a few days, as long as everything is intact, you can get your money back easily.

With laptops, I recommend a service contract so if anything goes wrong, it can be repaired at a store close by. I generally do not like repairs requiring shipment out of town, since items may get lost or stolen. Computer insurance is also a good idea.

I agree with Michael in many respects as editor, he has seen many changes in technology and how it affects us. Let me give you some perspective to think about.

Imagine this: a constant display device, completely wireless, full color and photo capability, with a full range of brightness, easily manipulated, thrown away if necessary, recyclable, very portable and can be folded, multiple size and thickness options, less than an ounce in weight, requires no batteries, contents can be quickly reproduced, and is extremely inexpensive. It's rich history goes back thousands of years to ancient China and totally mystified Europeans of the time before it became available. It is one of two products used in the computer industry, the other being ink, that is absolutely irreplaceable.

Yes, you guessed it, ordinary paper - which is quite remarkable in its own right.

(David's Column continues on page 3)

FROM YOUR EDITOR

The proliferation of electronic devices, pads, pods, notebooks, e-books, earpieces, tablets, readers, multifunction telephones, whatever they are called, has obviously changed the world. Dramatic differences in what was once called the Third World, have changed age-old traditions and social behavior. Countries with huge populations, China and India in particular, have been able to leapfrog the need for the traditional infrastructure requirements associated with telephone communication by the wholesale adoption of wireless technology. On the other hand, the developed nations of the world have demonstrated a penchant for acquiring the "newest New Thing" in electronics, regardless of need. In doing so, there has been an unanticipated, but understandable, decline in the business of printed media. Numerous newspapers have ceased to exist, magazines have shrunk in size and quality of content, book publisher megastores have gone bankrupt, and schools have rushed into adopting on-line courses, in total disregard of learning outcomes on an individual student basis.

This is not inevitable progress. There are some things that can not be done with an electronic device. Just to name a few - it is a lot easier to put a bookmark in a real book than in a reader. Snide comments from nasty writers, i.e., some bloggers, are not printed in a newspaper. Unwanted advertisements do not appear, flickering... on-and-off, on-and-off, on-and-off.....on a printed page. Nor do the advertisements block out an article that one is trying to read. It is difficult to cut out an interesting photograph from a computer screen, much less put it in a scrapbook, or post it on a bulletin board. There are fewer spelling errors in an editor-scanned publication, especially in comparison to the closed captions accompanying a "live" (but pre-recorded) event. A genuine book does not need a battery or power cord. A daily newspaper costs less than the daily charge for a cable Internet provider. Printed advertising, despite cluttering up a mailbox, does not refer every product inquiry to Amazon.com, or some other vendor that has paid heavily to be listed as the first on a search engine. It does not matter if morning coffee is spilled on a newspaper. And besides, there are daily sets of crossword puzzles, Sudoku, contract bridge, anagrams, Scrabblegrams, and more, all located on a single page. The list goes on and on, and even at the end, fish and chips can not be wrapped in an electronic box.

Michael

RESULTS OF RECENT MEMBER SURVEY

PC, CAMERAS, CELLPHONE AND OTHER EQUIPMENT OUR MEMBERS USE

(Based on recent member survey.)

HOME NETWORKS	25%
DESKTOP PCs	90%
USE XP	65%
USE VISTA OR WIN 7	50%
LAPTOP	40%
USE XP	20%
USE VISTA OR WIN 7	80%
CELL PHONES	95%
GENERIC TYPE	90%
SMART PHONES	10%
DIGITAL CAMERAS	100%
USE PHOTOSHOP TYPE PGM.	65%
VIDEO CAMERA	15%
USE EDIT PGMS.	Nil

PROPOSED PRESENTATION SUBJECTS

(Based on recent member survey.)

BUYING A NEW COMPUTER

SETTING UP A NEW COMPUTER – HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

HOME NETWORK AND INTERNET PROVIDER

EMAIL FROM A TO Z

PRINTERS FROM A TO Z

HOW AND WHERE TO BUY ELECTRONIC PARTS AND EQUIPMENT

CAMERAS AND CELL PHONES FROM A TO Z

PHOTO AND VIDEO EDITING

DIM DIM USER INFORMATION AND GUIDE

David, Lo and the BOD are working to create meeting presentations that more closely fit the interest and requirements of our group.

The first step was a survey to determine what our members were using in the way of equipment. You can see the results above.

The second step was to find out what subjects most interested our members. See above.

Last month we took a preliminary survey of our members attending those meetings. If you did not attend one of the July meetings please either attend one of the August meetings or email your thoughts on presentation so that we can include your requests in our survey.

We will go into further detail on our plans for future meeting presentations both at the August meetings and then on our website.

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

(Continued from page 2)

Studying material that is in printed form has its advantages and disadvantages but can be overcome, so here's what I did. I am taking a course that I do not totally agree with so I used a flatbed scanner & completely scanned the study material into jpg images using Irfanview (free). Then I saved them to a directory on my PC, OmniPage converted them OCR in batches to a Word document. To keep things consistent, some of the illustrations I copied from those jpg images, using the Snipping Tool or Paint in Windows. (Try a free OCR online service - search Google, send images up, then download document. Cool).

That is a lot of work, but it gives me a big advantage - now I can edit the text and make comments, test the web links from the original document, and completely manipulate it to my heart's content. And finally, using Windows Narrator, which is a text to speech software, I can listen to the document instead of having to read it. If I want to send the instructor an email including some of the text and my own comments, it's a piece of cake.

In closing, here is an interesting idea from Kim Komando - our Arizona based Digital Goddess:

"Ditch your CDs and DVDs - Learn the easy way to transfer your favorite music and movies to your PC, Mac, iPad, tablet PC and more. All it takes is a few simple steps. Watch and you'll see"

<http://tinyurl.com/3tb9tp3>

David

MEETINGS

CALENDAR

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

PRESENTATION THIS MONTH

How to buy a new computer
David will go through all phases of buying
And setting up a new computer
He will also cover some of the latest
info about what he and the BOD have been working on

GENERAL MEETINGS

WEST SIDE: CollegeAmerica (see map page 16)

- Tuesday, Aug 16, 2011
- 6:00 PM - Steering Committee and Election of Officers
- 6:30 PM - Q and A
-

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

- Wednesday, Aug 17, 2011
- 6:30 PM - Q and A
-

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

- Thursday, Aug 18, 2011
- 6:30 PM - Q and A
-

THE ON-RAMP TO THE INTERNET

The On-Ramp to the Internet

By Phil Sorrentino, President, Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, FL

May 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor

www.spcug.org

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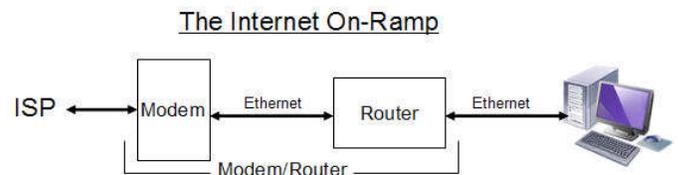
The Internet is the highway to many wonderful places. Places where you can engage in conversation with friends and family members, and even see them, with the right setup (ala Skype). Places where you can see things you may never get close enough to see in person. Places where you can correspond with companies and/or individuals. Places where you can buy items not available in your local shops and stores. Places where you can store your favorite pictures, videos and documents. All these places are on the internet and you can get to them using a computer and your own On-Ramp. The On-Ramp to the Internet is simply an Internet Service Provider (ISP), and a Modem (typically, a router is included to provide Local Area Networking {LAN} capability). With these items, you can get on to the Internet with any of your desktop or laptop computers.

So, now that we know why you might want to get on to the internet, let's see how we build an On-Ramp. First, and maybe the easiest, is to find an ISP. In this geographic area there are many providers, but the major players are Verizon, Comcast, and Brighthouse. Verizon provides FIOS, a digital connection; or DSL, a copper wire connection. Comcast and Brighthouse are cable providers so they provide a cable connection. (Long-time users will remember that there is also a dial-up connection that could be had using the telephone wiring in your house, but this provides an On-Ramp with such a speed limit that it is almost un-useable.)

Each provider will provide a modem that is capable of connecting to its specific network, which in turn connects to the Internet. For the technically, or etymologically, interested, the word modem is a combination of the two functions that it provides, MODulation and DEModulation. The signals going to the In-

ternet must be Modulated, and the signals coming from the Internet must be DEModulated. If you use only a modem (no Local Area Network) then the modem connects directly to your computer. But, more.

Typically a router is used so that many computers can use the On-Ramp simultaneously. (The router can be a separate enclosure or included in the Modem enclosure.) So, the signals from the ISP first go to the Modem, then to the Router and finally to the computer(s).



In terms of wiring, the ISP connector (Cable, FIOS, or DSL) goes to the Modem, if a router is in the same enclosure, an Ethernet cable goes from the Modem/Router to the Computer Ethernet port. If an external Router is used, an Ethernet cable goes from the Modem to the WAN (Wide Area Network) input of the Router, and another Ethernet cable goes from a LAN port of the Router (usually one of four) to the computer Ethernet port. The Ethernet connector is called an RJ-45 connector and looks like an oversized telephone connector (for those of you who have looked at a telephone connector).



Now that the Modem and Router are wired, we're ready to go. Well, yes, but there is a Power-On sequence to keep in mind whenever the Modem, Router, and Computer(s) are to be powered up. Start with all the equipment turned off, and power up the modem first. After about a minute or so, the blinking lights on it will stop blinking, mostly. Next, if the

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THE ON-RAMP TO THE INTERNET

(Continued from page 5)

router is a separate enclosure, power up the router, and wait for a minute or two, till its lights stabilize. (If the Router is part of the Modem, the electronics in the Modem/Router will take care of the sequencing.)

Next, the computer(s) can be powered up. (Note that if you ever have a power failure, or turn all this equipment off intentionally, or you experience very strange networking problems, you should go through this power-on sequence once again.)

Your On-Ramp requires very little maintenance. Once everything is up and running well, the Modem and Router can be left on 24/7 (unless you are leaving your home for an extended period of time). The only things you might want to shut down at the end of the day are the computers, if you so desire. Following the above few guidelines will help keep your On-Ramp in good repair and allow you to get on, and stay on, the Internet, and enjoy all those places you intend to visit.

Once the On-Ramp is in place and useable, your browser, on your wired computers, should be able to get you onto the Internet. If things don't connect right away, there may be a few networking windows that may need to be visited to get the network connection up and running, such as the "Network and Sharing" window, which is part of the Control Panel. (The networking windows are slightly different for each of the Operating Systems, XP, Vista and 7.) Also, if the Router is not part of the Modem enclosure, the router may have to be setup, although most routers right out of the box will probably get your wired computers on to the Internet with their default settings. The wireless computers may take some additional setup, which will have to be part of a future "wireless networking" article. Or, you could get all of the information needed to setup a wireless network by attending one of our wireless networking educational classes. Hope to see you there, some day.

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THE KILLER APP OF THE 21ST CENTURY

The Killer App of the 21st Century

By Vinny LaBash, Contributing Columnist, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

June 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor

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Over the years, and more than once, my wife has said "Until computers work the way they do on Star Trek, they are not ready for prime time". She has a point. While computers, smart phones, laptops, tablets, and other close relatives of PCs have certainly become ubiquitous in our society, they are among the most complex devices ever developed by human beings. Their internal complexity rivals that of the most advanced F-22 fighter planes. No one expects grandma to climb into the cockpit of one of these things and be an expert after a few lessons because no one expects an F-22 fighter to be easy to use.

Despite what you have been hearing for years, computers are not easy to use, and they are anything but intuitive. If Isaac Newton were suddenly transported from the 17th century to the present and handed a smart phone, he would have no idea what to do with it. The ability to make a computer do something useful has nothing to do with intelligence and everything to do with familiarity. Twelve year olds have no problems with smart phones or other devices controlled by microchips because these objects have always been a part of their young lives. Most adults have not enjoyed a similar advantage, and many feel that technology often works against them.

The problem is that people have had to adjust to the needs of technology rather than the other way around. That is the basis of my wife's complaint about computers. She thinks they should adjust to her, and I believe she is right. In the 1982 movie "Firefox", Clint Eastwood played a character sent on a covert mission to the Soviet Union to steal an advanced aircraft that could be controlled by the pilot's thoughts through a neural link. This was and still is science fiction, but it's also a good example of digital technology adjusting to the needs of analog beings like us.

The "Killer App" of the 21st century will be a tool that makes computers and other complex devices adapt to us. It already exists, but it's still in its infancy or perhaps even its embryonic stage. Wherever it is on the evolutionary scale, it has not yet moved much beyond the multi-cellular level. We're talking about present day speech recognition, a considerable distance from Star Trek where machines understand natural language and react to it as another person would.

Windows 7 has speech recognition built-in. You don't have to pay extra for it. Using it can be quite entertaining as well as educational. Set it up on your computer with a three step process accessed within Windows Control Panel. You will need either a stand-alone microphone or one attached to a headset. The headset-microphone combination is the better option. It's comfortable, and the headset filters out extraneous noise better than most standalone mikes.

It's tempting to get started quickly, but to get the best results you need to setup your microphone properly. Access the **Configure Your Speech Recognition** dialog box, and select **Set up Microphone**. Tell Windows what kind of microphone you're using and the **Setup Wizard** will tell you how to position your equipment and set your audio level.

Now comes the hard part. Bring up the **Configure Your Speech Recognition** dialog box again and select **Train Your Computer to Understand You**. The Wizard will now guide you through some phrases which give Windows the information it needs to understand how to interpret and execute your commands. Training the computer may be annoying, but it is nowhere near as irritating as trying to get your dog to fetch, heel, roll over, and play dead.

Microsoft has thoughtfully provided a reference card which explains how you tell Windows to handle common speech recognition commands, keyboard shortcuts, punctuation marks, and other special characters. You can print it out from the **Control Panel's Speech Recognition** dialog box. Windows will not respond to "Go jump in the Lake", nor will it attempt to perform any anatomically impossible acts.

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THE KILLER APP OF THE 21ST CENTURY

HOW TO CHEAT IN PHOTOSHOP CS5

(Continued from page 7)

Keep your requests reasonable, and Windows will get along with you just fine.

Smart phones are also getting into the voice activation business. Newer Android models have a neat application that does some very useful things. Google Voice Search is nothing short of amazing. I spoke into my recently purchased Android driven HTC Thunderbolt "Pictures of Ringling Causeway Bridge" and the result was four pictures of the bridge, including a map of how to get there from my Sarasota location.

I then tried "How far from the earth is the Moon?" This brought up a selection of web sites, one informing me of the distance in miles, and a second of the distance in kilometers. There were loads of additional astronomical information about our nearest planetary neighbor, far too much to explore in one session, but lots of reasons for a return visit for the curious.

Next was "Directions to Starbucks". I instantly knew the location of all the Starbucks in Sarasota, and I had my choice of getting directions by public or private transportation. The application even offered directions by bicycle or foot.

In an effort to stump it I asked "How can we get rid of Khadafi?" Incredibly, the thing gave me an answer that might actually work. The Pentagon should be informed.

It effortlessly translated units of measurement from one system to another such as miles to kilometers, and yards to centimeters. It told me a gallon of water weighs approximately 8.35 pounds, and on and on. I finally stopped it cold when I asked it to change miles per hour into furlongs per fortnight, but that was probably unfair.

Google is doing a great job with getting technology to adapt to us. There is still a long way to go, but the future looks promising which brings us back to Star Trek. Whenever Captain Picard wants tea, he always asks for it the same way. He says "Tea, Earl, Grey, hot." Why can't he say something like "Tea, my usual?" I suspect the computer is smart enough, and the fault lies in the scriptwriter's lack of imagination.

How to Cheat in Photoshop CS5

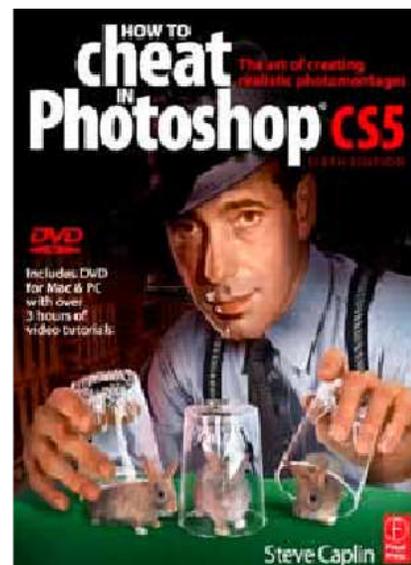
By Donna Kamper, Member, Tucson Computer Society, AZ

April 2001 issue, TCS eJournal

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This is not a "how to cheat" book. It's a "get the look you need" book. And it's great! It's not a book for absolute beginners. You really need a basic understanding of Photoshop first. But if your day job is image composition, this book is exactly what the doctor ordered.



Combining elements from different sources can bring up all sorts of problems. Frequently lighting and color differences must be addressed. Issues of perspective and proportion crop up. Moving the direction in which the subject's eyes are looking can make or break the "realism" of your composition. The book has the solutions for these and more difficulties.

Each section is color-coded, the divisions visible even with the book closed. Each example is complete on a two-page spread, which makes it easy to see both before and after, as well as the interim steps. Everything here is task oriented.

The driving force behind this book is "how to create realistic photomontages."

(Continued on page 10)

SMART COMPUTING MAGAZINE - SUPPORT



There is a way you can support your user group. Smart Computing Magazine will give a 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.



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HOW TO CHEAT IN PHOTOSHOP CS5

(Continued from page 8)

So – if you add a pair of sunglasses to a scene, how do you create and orient their shadow? That and more is covered.

Need a light source? Add a lamp to the scene. Then darken the area except where the lamp's light is being directed. Make sure the light is more intense inside the lamp. Is there a surface from which it's being reflected? Add that in, and the scene is now much more realistic.

There are fifteen sections, and each one is essentially a mini-workshop in that particular subject.

The first skill to master is the art of making selections, which is precisely why Photoshop has so many selection tools. Putting two images together is easy. Making them look as though they started out together is what separates the novice from the pro. Accurate selections are the first step, so the first chapter concentrates on selection tools.

The subjects are "Natural selection" – how to capture the area you want and no more or less; "Transformation and distortion" – making elements of your composition belong together; "Hiding and showing" – working with layers and masks; "Image adjustment" – or making skin tones (and other colors) match.

"Composing the scene" and "Getting into perspective" – placing subjects appropriately in relationship to each other and the background; "Light and Shade" – deals with realistically shadowing and lighting your composition; "Heads and bodies" – looks at everything from body position to fly-away hair, including matching one person's head to another's body.

"Shiny surfaces" – also deals with light on both reflective and transparent surfaces, and how it adds depth and realism to your composition; "Metal, wood and stone" – have hard, reflective surfaces and depth to deal with; "Paper and fabric" – can move, bend and flutter using the shading techniques taught here.

"The third dimension" – can be achieved with perspective, the vanishing point and a little Repoussé; "Hyperrealism" – in this book it isn't photographic realism, its added effects such as blurring for speed or flying glass with explosions. The next-to-last section, "Advanced techniques" – covers important tips and techniques (Bridge, ACR, natural media brushes) not directly involved in photocomposition; and the

last section, "Working for print and the web" – deals with output.

The DVD included with the book has 74 movies (over three hours total) in Quick Time format. Most of them are less than two minutes with descriptive names so it's easy to find what you want. But that's only the beginning. There's an image file for almost every example given in the book, as well as 41 PDF's, mostly 1-2 pages that were deleted from the printed book. True, some of these are from earlier versions of the book (this is its sixth edition), but that doesn't make the information less valid. There are many more images included than those needed for the lessons. A lot of bonus content is on the DVD for the reader's use, some from earlier readers of his earlier works and some from the author's own website.

One folder named "Test yourself files" has 23 images for you to work with, each labeled as to what technique it's for. The author even includes a cheat sheet with hints on how to use the indicated technique for each image.

This book is a joy to work through. It also makes a great reference when you absolutely have to get something done NOW! The two-page format is a great way to present information and an easy way to learn it. It makes a great asset for any Photoshop user working with compositions.

About: How to Cheat in Photoshop CS5: the art of creating realistic photomontages

Author: Steve Caplin

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MICROSOFT SOFTWARE UPDATES

Microsoft Software Updates

By Dick Maybach

June 2011 issue, BCUG Bytes, Brookdale Computer Users Group, NJ

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If you use MS Windows, it's important that you keep all your Microsoft software up-to-date. Most PCs use MS software, and this makes them the most attractive targets for attack. Don't think that installing an anti-virus program and a firewall provides sufficient safety. Some attackers exploit flaws in your operating system or its applications, and the only defense is to correct the flaws. You must rely on your software vendors to do this, and the most important of these is Microsoft.

The two most common programs to keep MS software updated are *Windows Update* and the newer *Microsoft Update*. I prefer the latter, since it maintains all Microsoft software, not just Windows. (If your PC has just Windows Update, read carefully when you run it and you will find a link to install the newer utility.) With both Microsoft Update and Windows Update it is important to use the correct update strategy. You can find what your PC is using by going to the Control Panel, then to Security (the exact title varies with the particular version of Windows), and finally to Updates (again the exact title varies). You will see several options, among them are (1) install automatically at a fixed time every day, (2) download automatically, but not install, and (3) neither download nor install, but just notify you that updates are available. The problem with (1) is the fixed time. If you choose something like 2 a.m., it is unlikely that your PC will be on, and updates will never be installed. If you choose a time when you usually are using your PC, the update process will slow it down, perhaps for an extended time. Option (2) is less intrusive, but you must remember to install the downloaded updates. I prefer (3), because I can see what the updates are before they happen and can choose a time to do them. If you also take this approach, don't put off the updates, because your PC is vulnerable until they are complete.

Be careful not to turn off your PC during the update process. Windows is supposed to survive this, but a

friend had to reinstall Windows from scratch, because she became impatient. This is easy to do; a recent update for XP required two hours to complete. I am even reluctant to do any other computing while a patch is in progress. This is probably being over-cautious, but the consequences of a problem here are ugly. This hazard is also a good reason to do your updates manually; that way you know when they take place. If they happen automatically, you may not realize they are in progress. Finally, if you patch manually, you can make a system backup prior to each one, which lets you recover with minimum fuss if disaster strikes.

Microsoft usually releases security patches on the second Tuesday of each month, with the result that this is called "Patch Tuesday." Some people immediately analyze the patches so they can develop malware to exploit the flaws they correct on PCs that haven't yet been patched. Their goal is to release this malware within a day, so "Exploit Wednesday" follows Patch Tuesday. This makes it important that you apply patches as soon as possible. Sometimes the bad guys find a flaw before Microsoft releases a patch. If they develop a program to exploit it, it's called a "Zero day exploit," and you have to rely on your anti-malware software, your firewall, and luck for defense.

While most operating systems are updated by replacing entire modules, Microsoft appears to attach patches to the existing modules. When the module is executed, your PC jumps to the patch and then back to the module. As a result, as these patches accumulate, you slowly lose disk space and your computer becomes slower. I still use XP, which now has about ten years of patches, and it's slowed to a stately tectonic speed. I've also had to remove a substantial amount of software to free disk space. (What was a huge disk ten years ago is quite cramped today.) For this reason, when you review the available downloads from Microsoft, or course install the essential patches, but be reluctant to download any new software unless you are really sure you will use it.

After hearing about the potential problems associated with updates, you might prefer to avoid them, but this would be a big mistake. So long as you are careful, the risks are minimal.

THINGS, THINGLETS AND THINGASSOS

THINGS, THINGLETS and THINGASSOS - NOVICE CORNER

By S. Jack Lewtschuk, Past President & Columnist,
Monterey Bay User Group-PC, CA

June 2011 issue, mbug-pc newsletter

www.mbug.org

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Spam

Symantec's MessageLabs Intelligence: 2010 Annual Security Report shows that the global spam rate increased 1.4% compared to 2009. Botnets* were responsible for sending significantly more spam this year, accounting for 88.2% of all spam, and they did so mostly from Asia and South America early in the year and predominately from Europe later in the year. About the same number of botnets (5 million) sent spam this year [2010] as in 2009 although the average amount of spam per botnet per minute dropped from 85 to 77. The Rustock botnet was responsible for 47.5% of all spam.

*Botnet (Robot Network)

Also called a "zombie army," a botnet is a large number of compromised computers that are used to create and send spam or viruses or flood a network with messages as a denial of service attack. The computer is compromised via a Trojan that often works by opening an Internet Relay Chat (IRC) channel that waits for commands from the person in control of the botnet. There is a thriving botnet business selling lists of compromised computers to hackers and spammers.

Make sure you do your part to try to reduce the amount of spam you receive or send (knowingly or not). Some well-known spam filters are listed below:

<http://www.spamato.net/> <http://getpopfile.org/docs/doku.php> <http://www.mailwasher.net/>

ISPs (Internet Service Providers) usually use filters that reduce the amount of spam received.

In 2010/2011, I have received spam from MBUG members that was sent because their computers were infected (botnet), and in one instance, spam was sent knowingly.

What is Core?

The "core" is the part of the processor that does all the work.

Multi-core processors have been around for quite a while now. You can find dual-, tri-, quad-, hex- and octocore processors. Some server processors even have 12 or 16 cores.

Each additional "core" is just like having another processor in your computer in the space occupied by the one core. Your CPU (central processing unit) with multiple cores allows multiple pieces of information to be processed simultaneously. This makes processing much faster, same as several people doing one job, compared to you doing the same job alone.

At first, most software was designed to work with a single-core processor, so the second core was of little help. Modern operating systems and programs are designed for multiple cores. Especially those of you who do photo and video editing will appreciate the additional cores. Gamers will really like the speed due to the much better animation renderings; artificial intelligence can be assigned to a core and sound effects to another core. Multitasking is also generally improved by having multiple cores. Software still isn't as good at parallel processing as it could be. Past a certain point, more cores don't make a difference for most tasks.

Multiple core processors increase in cost with the number of cores. A quad-core CPU is the top processor recommended for the average user.

Unwanted Telephone Calls Bothering You?

I guess that I am lucky; I do not get telephone calls from sales people because I registered my phone numbers with "DO NOT CALL."

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THINGS, THINGLETS AND THINGASSOS

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Actually, there are times when I miss these calls. Back in "the old days" I used to engage the callers in a conversation, trying to persuade them to buy something else, change bad habits, join MBUG, etc.

The National Do Not Call Registry gives you a choice about whether to receive telemarketing calls at home. You can register your home or mobile phone for free. Telemarketers should not call your number once it has been on the registry for 31 days. If they do, you can file a complaint at this website: <https://www.donotcall.gov/confirm/conf.aspx>.

If you think that you have already registered your phones a few years ago, you can check that with the registry also. If you would like to know more about the registry, go to: <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/alerts/alt107.shtm>.

Good Old Snail-Mail Junk

Long before digital spam, our friendly mail carrier was filling our mailboxes with "snail-spam" and never stopped.

Getting too many catalogs and commercial solicitations from companies you have never done business with? How about "preapproved credit card applications?"

The Direct Marketing Association (<http://bit.ly/kTMROB>) operates a free online service that is the official mail preference service for catalog and direct marketing companies and is supported by the U.S. Postal Service. Your registration won't stop mailings or calls from organizations not registered with the service, but it should help you to get the mail you want and less of the mail you don't want. Sometimes mailings are prepared several months ahead, so it

could take up to 90 days for your registrations to become fully effective.

Position for Your Monitor

Position the top of your monitor at or slightly below seated eye height. Lower it a little more if you:

- Work with hard copy.
 - View through bifocals or progressive lenses.
- Look at the keyboard when typing.



A Little Trivia

The world has 295 exabytes worth of information. Scientists have measured the amount of information stored in the world. The grand total comes to 295 exabytes. That amount would fill up about

one billion 250-gigabyte hard drives.

An "EXABYTE" = 1 million terabytes = 1 billion gigabytes.

You better start reading!



CONVERTING DOCUMENTS TO PDF

Converting Documents to PDF

By Wayne Comstock, Member, South Walton Computer & Technology *Club* (SWCTC), Florida
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Walaco (at) gmail.com

One technique I frequently use to save an online article or publication is to convert and save it as a PDF file. Once converted, Adobe Reader software then becomes an excellent way to open, view and read any converted document off of your computer screen. PDF documents can also be easily emailed to others as an attachment.

You can convert to PDF from **any** file you can print, including Microsoft Word, Works, Excel, PowerPoint and digital pictures. Rather than being printed ink to paper the file becomes a PDF file. If the document is already a paged PDF file you can convert the file to just the pages you select and select your PrimoPDF printer to convert.

You will need PDF conversion software to accomplish this. I recommend the Free PrimoPDF program. It's free, easily installed and available at:

www.primopdf.com/index.aspx

Browse Primo web site and download one of the two installers available for 32 and 64-bit versions of Windows. Ensure that the version you download corresponds to your operating-system.

When prompted, select a download location which you can find easily, such as your 'Desktop' or 'My Documents' folder, and click OK.

When the download is complete, double-click the file named FreewarePrimoPDFXX.exe (XX being a 2-digit number) which would have appeared in the location you selected in the previous step.

Follow the simple instructions to complete the installation. A system-restart is **NOT** required.

PrimoPDF installs itself as a virtual printer in the Windows Printers and Faxes device group. This allows any software with print functionality to output files to PrimoPDF for quick and easy PDF conversion.

To convert a document to PDF:
Open a document in any printable program (e.g.

Microsoft Word, Works etc.), and select **File >Print.**

In the printer dialog, select PrimoPDF from the dropdown menu and click OK to complete the print, and launch the PrimoPDF interface.

Select one of the Creation Profiles for the document **Quality** you need to achieve. A detailed explanation can be found in the PDF Creation profiles section of this guide. Point your cursor at each button to define.

Select the Save As dropdown menu to set a name and location for the created PDF.

Ask when creating PDF – Allows you to rename the PDF and select a save-location.

Specific Folder – Allows you to select a save-location while using the name of the document which is being converted. This option returns you to the PrimoPDF interface should you wish to change other settings for the same conversion.

Click the Create PDF button to convert your document.

Alternatively, if you wish to save the PDF under a different name of directory, just click Cancel and you will be returned to the Save As dialog.

There are many more options and features available. (Appending a PDF)
Go to the web site below and download the PDF Primo detailed User Guide.

http://www.primopdf.com/pdfs/PrimoPDF_V5_User_Guide.pdf

Short Circuits...zzzt!

I say, old man! A policeman knocked down by a driver in a stolen car jumped straight back up, raced after the fleeing man, and stopped him with a Taser gun. A roadblock was set just outside London to catch a thief driving a stolen BMW. The officer was standing at the door of his patrol car when the thief crashed into it. He was knocked off his feet but immediately jumped up and chased the thief a few meters away from the abandoned vehicle. He stopped the perpetrator by firing a stun gun. The incident was filmed by a video camera attached to another police car. And the thief was jailed for 23 months for dangerous driving and resisting arrest.

Associated Press, Aug. 2, 2011

Plain or glazed. Oklahoma wildlife officials say nothing traps a black bear quite like a doughnut. Wildlife officers are studying the growing black bear population in the eastern part of the state, and they say they've had the best success in trapping the animals when they use pastries as bait. An official of the Wildlife Department said that the agency usually finds 300-pound male bears and 200-pound females in its traps. But on a recent day, a 50-pound cub got to the doughnut first. The bears are tagged and researchers take fur and tissue samples for DNA analysis. Some adult bears get tracking collars. About 200 bait stations equipped with hair snares will be set up. DNA from the hair will help map bears' movement. *Associated Press Jul. 23, 2011*



Payback. The manager of a cell phone store in Ohio called 911 to report a gorilla had been attacked by a banana. The Wireless Center in Strongsville advertises at curbside with a man in a gorilla suit. The manager was watching last week as a kid dressed as a banana emerged from some bushes and took a flying leap at the store mascot. The attacker looked like a Spartan from the movie "300" -- except he was a banana. The gorilla was knocked down but got back up, adjusted his head and went back to work. The banana split -- running down the street with other teens. Police weren't able to find the offending fruit. *Associated Press, July 8, 2011*

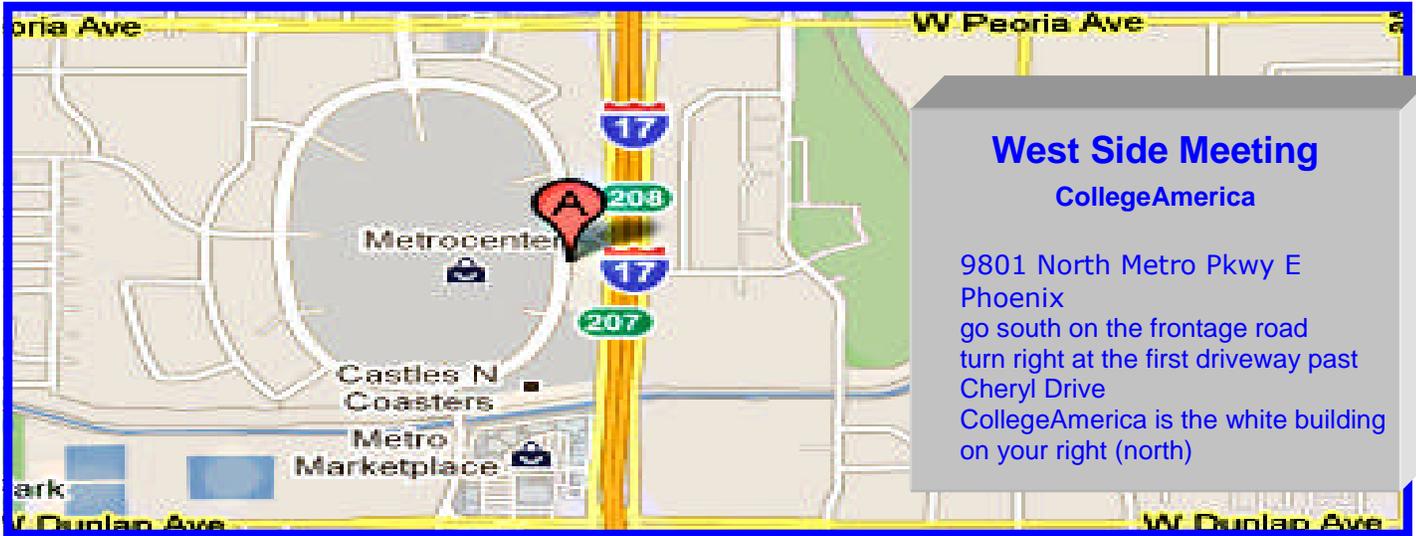


"What's the point of computer dating if I can't download George Clooney?"

R U Kidding. You gave it a pet name. It knows more about you than your mother does. Sometimes you even sleep with it. In fact, you're so attached to it that being separated for only a few minutes could send you into a panic. While smartphone users worry about mobile hacking and other security threats, psychologists are concerned about another equally troubling issue: the growing obsession among people who would much rather interact with their smartphones than with other human beings. *Associated Press, July 26, 2011*

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

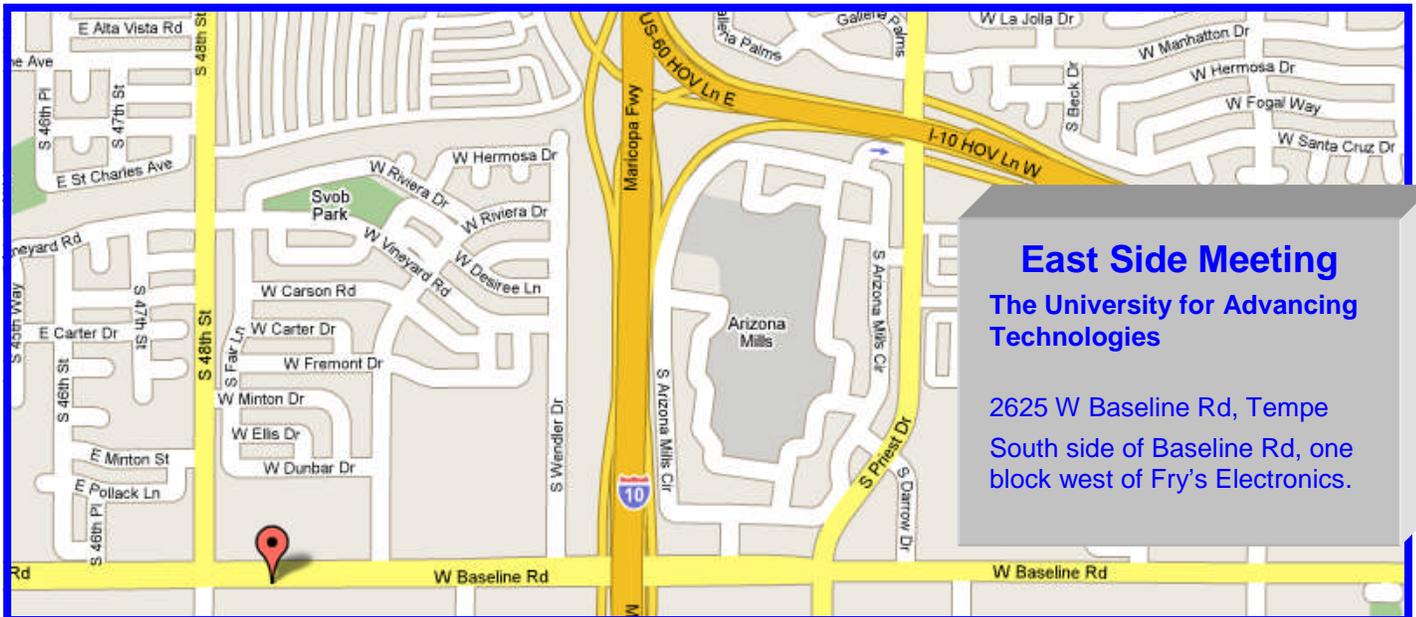
HOW TO GET THERE



West Side Meeting

CollegeAmerica

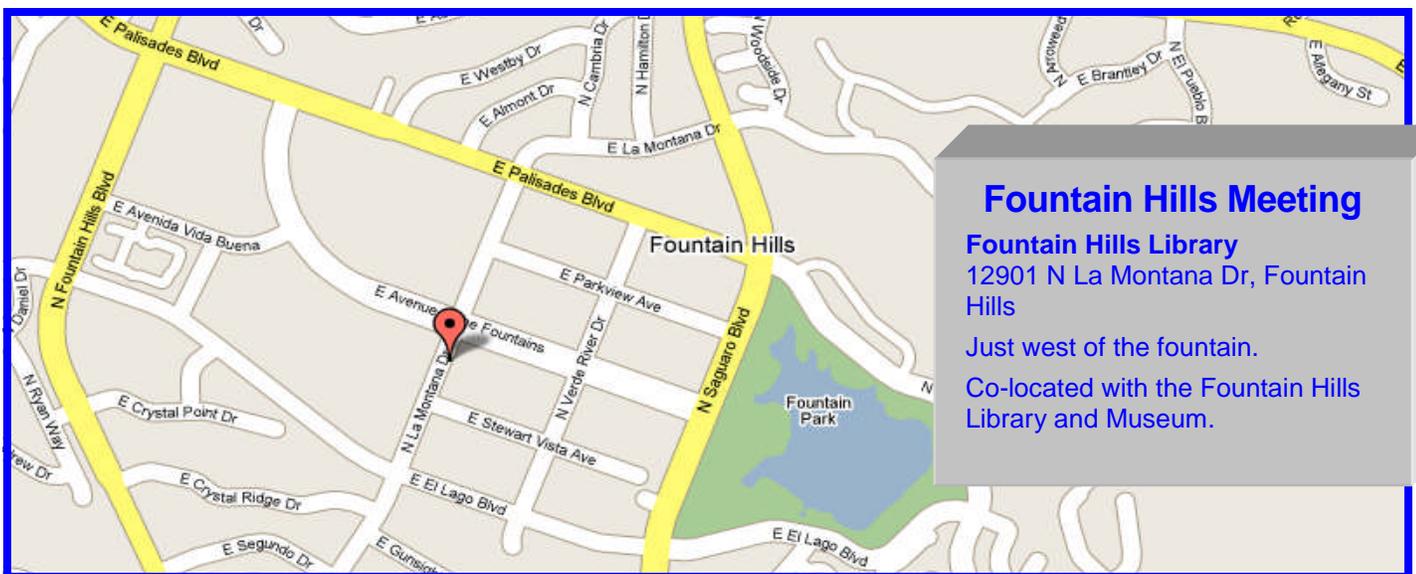
9801 North Metro Pkwy E
 Phoenix
 go south on the frontage road
 turn right at the first driveway past
 Cheryll Drive
 CollegeAmerica is the white building
 on your right (north)



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, 2011*

Phoenix PC Users Group Membership Application

First: (Print Legibly) _____ 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

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 only? Yes No

With club approved vendors? Yes No

Please do not share my e-mail address

Mail this completed form with payment to:

Phoenix PC Users Group
PO Box 7127
Phoenix, AZ 85011-7127



*The Best Accessory
for your PC!*

Web address:
phoenixpcug.org

August 2011

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

PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESS

PHOENIX PC USERS GROUP
PO BOX 7127
PHOENIX, AZ 85011-7127

STAMP