## 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**

# NEWSLETTER
## The Best Accessory for your PC !

**Proud member of www.azacc.org**
The Arizona Alliance of Computer Clubs

### MAIN MEETINGS - maps on P. 12

**West Side…………Tue, May 20, 2014**
CollegeAmerica, 9801 North Metro Pkwy E, Phoenix

**East Side………….Wed, May 21, 2014**
2625 W Baseline Rd, Tempe
(one block west of Fry's Electronics)

**Fountain Hills…….Thur, May 22, 2014**
Fountain Hills Library, 12901 N La Montana Drive, Fountain Hills

### Presentation this month:
**Current computer topics in the news**

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

## FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Hello everybody!  Thank you Michael for an excellent column.  Well, our valley of the sun is going to live up to its reputation this summer, with very sparse rain fall and California even worse off than we are.  Not much more we can do other than recycle water, probably pay more and conserve.

Kids graduating, school ending, Mother's Day - makes for a very busy month.

Microsoft XP has an update!   Very unusual!
http://www.komando.com/happening-now/251127/microsoft-releases-patch-for-internet-explorer-and-includes-xp

Hackers now crave patches, and Microsoft's giving them just what they want
http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9248265/Hackers_now_crave_patches_and_Microsoft_s_giving_them_just_what_they_want?taxonomyId=85&pageNumber=2

Paul Thurrott, Windows news, also has XP info.
http://winsupersite.com/windows-1 -

Don't forget:
http://www.pcmag.com/  & http://www.pcworld.com/

Leo Laporte - The Tech Guy
http://www.techguylabs.com/
http://www.techguylabs.com/episodes

10 things we want to see in Microsoft's Surface Mini
http://www.pcworld.com/article/2151782/10-things-we-want-to-see-in-microsofts-surface-mini.html

CES 2014 latest articles, Running of the Nerds series
http://www.aroundhawaii.com/technology_in_plain_english.html -

http://apcug.net/speakers/index.htm  - lots of info
http://www.aztcs.org/meeting_notes/meeting_notes.shtml

David -

## FROM YOUR EDITOR

Most of the countries of the world are envious of at least some features of the United States, its' wealth if nothing else.  But some governments are not satisfied with the monetary largesse donated by the State Department and private donors, even though foreign aid dwarfs the outlay of any other of the so-called "rich" nations.

Accordingly, the enormous growth in the electronics technology business profits as well as the accompanying two-edged results of global data exchange – such as spam, hacking, data base leaks, trivial social networking, intrusive advertising, invasion of individual privacy, and other unforeseen consequences, has caused individual governments and regulatory bodies to look to another all-too-American method of extracting more of the gold mine profits of well known US companies – the law suit.

Microsoft has had a running argument for a decade with the European Union concerning that bodies' longstanding insistence on the use of fair competition in software usage. And Yahoo is three years into an anti-trust lawsuit with the same oversight body.  Counter-filing of lawsuits by American companies has not been entirely successful, at least not in the foreign courts. Apple has lost a suit concerning infringement of patents by a Chinese firm; but then, Google won in an American court, at least they thought so, when a Chinese firm was ruled to be unlawfully blocking data access over there. But the Chinese government has since overturned the US court ruling, stating that the data was disruptive.

That the governments of foreign countries may overrule their own courts is not really a surprise. But recently, when Twitter was blocked by the government in Turkey, the Turkish court ruled that the ban was not valid.  So, not losing their eye on US dollars, the government instead now wants Twitter to open a local office, with any and all profits going to the government.

It seems that profits trump political disruption.

Michael

## *2014 MEETINGS CALENDAR*

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

## *PRESENTATION THIS MONTH*

## Current computer topics in the news

## *GENERAL MEETINGS*

**WEST SIDE: CollegeAmerica (see map page 12)**
- Tuesday,  **May** 20, 2014
- 6:00 PM - Steering Committee and (Election of Officers - Nov & Dec)
- 6:30 PM - Q and A

**EAST SIDE: University of Advancing Technology (see map pg 12)**
- Wednesday, **May** 21, 2014
- 6:30 PM - Q and A

**FOUNTAIN HILLS: Fountain Hills Library (see map page 12)**
- Thursday, **May** 22, 2014
- 6:30 PM - Q and A

**Meetings this year 2014:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| May 20, 21, 22 | June 17, 18, 19 | |
| July 15, 16, 17 | August 19, 20, 21 | Sept 16, 17, 18 |
| Oct 14, 15, 16 | Nov 18, 19, 20 | Dec 16, 17, 18 |

## REMEMBER:
## PAY YOUR DUES!  Thanks.

**Storage Media, Interfaces, and Backups**
Recap of December 2013 Meeting by Anne Moss, Secretary, Northern Neck Computer Users' Group, NJ
January 2014 issue, The Computer Link
www.nncug.org
mcmillan (at) va.metrocast.net

Rob Mink, President NNCUG, was the speaker at the December NNCUG Meeting.  Rob's discussion about storage media and interfaces was designed to pick up from Brian Riley's October discussion about the use of external hard drives for computer backup. Throughout his talk, Rob passed around examples of different storage media.

There are two basic types of storage media – Magnetic and Solid State. However, optical storage may still provide a method of relatively long term data storage.

Magnetic Storage: First, Rob noted that physical media, for example punch cards, is extinct for computing. The most common form of magnetic storage is found in hard drives. Soft drives (such as tapes and floppy disks) are obsolete.  Currently the maximum capacity of hard drives is 4 terabytes (TB). The 4 TB limits of hard drives dictate the use of a desktop computer. A hard drive in a desktop computer can have 4 or 5 platters to store data on each surface area. Additional storage usually can be installed in a desktop computer or attached to it. A desktop will use a 3.5 inch drive and a laptop will use a 2.5 inch one. A laptop hard drive uses a lower number of data storage platters with a maximum a capacity of about 1.5 TB. Laptop capacity can be expanded by the use of a USB flash drive which functions as an external drive.  In addition, an external hard drive may be attached to a laptop via a USB port. Magnetic storage devices can fail quickly or gradually. They sometimes give warning of forthcoming failure.

Solid State Storage: These storage devices commonly can be Solid State Drives (SSD), USB Thumb drives or "sticks", and flash memory cards.  Basically, these devices are made of transistors and capacitors in the desired format and size. Data life can be from 8 years to over100 years, depending upon the temperature in which they are used and stored. The greater the capacity, the higher the price! However, over time, the prices for a given size device usually drop. The drawback for these solid state devices is that they can suffer sudden and catastrophically failure.

Solid State Technology: This comes in single layer or multilayer forms. It is made from Floating gate MOSFET NAND FlipFlops. Floating gates keep data for a very long time - 80 years was mentioned. Even though the technology is quite difficult for the average user to understand, one sees the products everywhere – for example, tablets and memory cards. Rob was asked why sudden failures occur. Reasons can be a bad interface with a chip or sudden drops can kill a device. The technology still is immature, so it is not good at recognizing failure. He does not trust flash drive backups considering the risk of sudden failure. (In response to a question about photograph storage, Rob indicated that, in actual practice, photos by the average home user could be stored on magnetic media.  Alternatively, while photos can be stored on flash drives, Rob counseled that it is probably safest to burn a CD.)

Optical Storage Technology: This includes CDs (read only and read-write), DVDs (in various types such as read only, read-write, dual layer that are burned on each side), and Blu-ray disks (in similar types). Optical storage media can be normal or archival in nature, depending upon the dye material used. Best is gold or silver dyes found in the more expensive disks. Normal grade disks are other colors such as green or blue.  (Rob noted that it is best to stay away from DVD's with a purple colored dye.) Expect a burned disk to last from 2 to 25 years. For critical data, Rob advised that it is wise to burn pairs of disks. Then if it

is needed, recovery can be made by combining data from both disks. It is unlikely that both disks would fail in the exact same place. Optical media is cheap and comes in capacities of 650megabytes to 125 Gigabytes. Data can be burned in a single write session or multi-write sessions depending on the media used.  The former is locked after the initial write session, and the latter can be written to or erased many times. The latter method is less reliable, and somewhat less readable by devices other than the one that was used to create the original disk.

Interfaces: Rob described a wide range of interface types. Internal interfaces in computers include SATA, IDE, and SCSI/SAS types. Some need a connector to the power supply to function. External interfaces include Serial Peripheral Interface (SPI), SATA, USB, and Firewire.

Backups: There are two major strategies for data backups. First, backups can be kept offsite using cloud storage firms such as Carbonite or Spider Oak. Costs vary, but one should estimate about $1.00 per gigabyte per year. Relatively limited cloud storage may be available for free. Second, one can use onsite storage. There are a few different types of onsite storage. Onsite magnetic storage includes using RAID and NAS hard drive configurations. (Different RAID type numbers indicate different configurations of hard drive storage.) Onsite optical storage, such as CD's or DVD's is a good means of back up storage, but is labor intensive for burning the data to disks. (Burn disks in pairs and not automatically.) Tape backups have changed and now are smaller than cassettes. However, tape backups are slow, and there are may be a number of failures.  Rob indicated that the best approach is to have backups on two optical disks and another type of storage such as hard drives. Some computers have a removable hard drive bay and one can use several hard drives to have a rotating backup plan. This approach is useful for whole hard drive backups.

To sum up, Rob presented an extensive list of the available choices when choosing to back up data, as well as highlighting the changes in standards that has occurred over a relatively short time in computer technology.

**"TV Ears" - You Won't Believe Your (TV) Ears**
The Gadget Geezer
By Les Goldberg, APR, Contributing Writer
www.sunset-publishing.com
www.examiner.com
lgprman (at) gmail.com

As a 70-year-old, I have trouble hearing my TV. There are no audio controls on the set itself, so I have to strain to listen to the dialogue when it is combined with background music.

My doctors tell me that "when you get to be your age" it is common to experience what is called "ambient noise" problems – the inability to distinguish different sound sources and tones and block them out. It is like trying to listen to one person speak in a nightclub with loud music, laughing and people shouting.

They said ambient noise is the same thing as background noise. You hear these terms used frequently when discussing devices with built-in microphones, such as Bluetooth headsets, computer headsets and webcams. The more ambient noise there is, the more difficult it can be to hear the caller.

In my case, watching TV is frustrating since my wife, only four years younger, does not suffer from hearing loss and background noise does not bother her. When the sound level is fine for her, it is inaudible for me.

My problem is only with the TV, so I wasn't ready to explore hearing aids. What I found, however, was a product called TV Ears.

Since I review all the products before considering them for this column, the manufacturer sent me a product to evaluate.

I can safely tell you that of all the products I have reviewed over the years, TV Ears provided the most immediate improvement to my particular problem.

How do they work? TV Ears is a wireless TV listening device that uses an infrared signal similar to that used in your television remote control. You don't need to have a wireless router.

Following the easy one sheet, easy-to-follow instructions, I plugged one end the audio cables into my cable box (or directly into your TV) and the other end into the headset base unit. Then I seated the headset into the base unit charger.

When the green light on the charger came on, I put the headset's two ear pieces into my ears, turned down the sound on my TV and turned on the headset volume. I also adjusted the tone control to a comfortable combination of treble and bass.

Let me tell you, folks, the difference was amazing. With the help of the product's "voice clarifying circuitry" technology, the manufacturer's claims were unmistakably true:

"(This technology) automatically manipulates the audio curve to increase the clarity of television dialogue and decrease the volume of background sounds such as music and sound effects. The words seem to jump out of the sound track, making even whispers and accents understandable."

Don't like to wear headsets? TV Ears solved that problem, too. Weighing only two ounces, the headset is designed to rest under your chin, not on your head. It won't mess up your hair, it won't get hot and you can even watch TV lying down. The TV Ears tips adjust easily to your ears.

One TV Ears customer wrote:

"Just wanted to tell you that I have the latest and greatest hearing aid technology at a cost in excess of $4000. To watch TV, I take them off and use the TV Ears wireless headset. The hearing aids do not even come close to reproducing clear sound from the television as does the TV Ears product."

TV Ears offers a variety of options, including a wireless speaker system, a special device for use with hearing aids and a mobile system for travelers.

Prices for TV Ears products range from $79.95 to $249. They are available at www.tvears.com or (888) 883-3277.

**What is Disk Defragmentation**
By Larry McJunkin
The Retired Geek Technical Tips for the Non-Technical "Over 50" Crowd
http://retiredgeek.net/
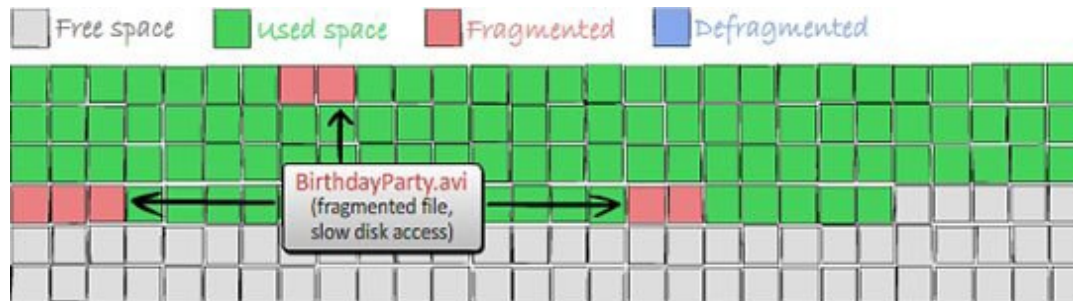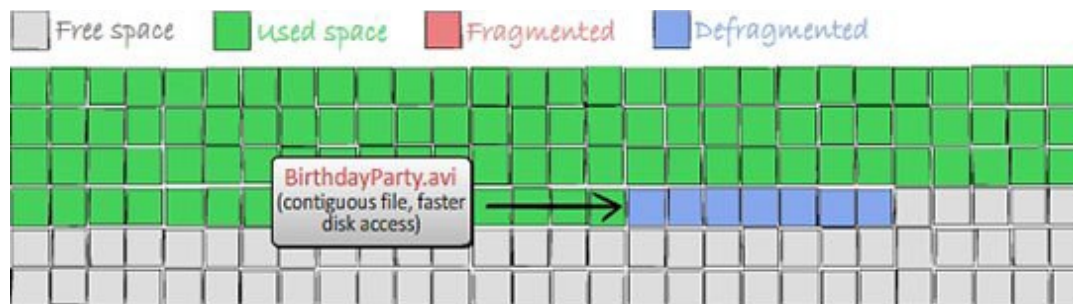http://retiredgeek.net/contact-me/



Defragmenting your hard disk is one of the best things you can do to speed up your Windows computer. Think of your hard drive as a file cabinet. If you're like most people, you have your papers stored in alphabetized folders so you can find things easily.

Imagine, however, if someone took the labels off all the folders, then switched the locations of all the folders, and moved your documents into and out of folders at random. It would take you a lot longer to find anything since you wouldn't know where your documents were. That's what happens when your hard drive gets fragmented: it takes your computer much more time to find files which have pieces that are scattered all over your hard drive. Defragmenting your hard drive restores complete order to this mess and speeds up your computer…sometimes a lot.

A Fragmented File on Your Hard Drive
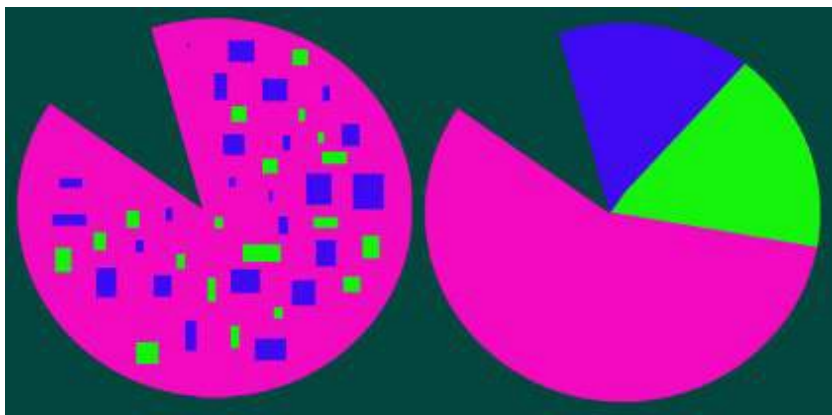


A Defragmented File on Your Hard Drive



To most people, a file on a computer is something tangible…a thing, a document, a music file, or any other file you

may have stored on your hard drive. You would never think of a file as many very small bits of information scattered all over the drive. But Windows (and your hard drive) think differently. To Windows, a file is all these small fragments of information that are kept in various clusters on a hard drive. Windows knows exactly where each fragment of each file is and which is the right order for reading them…that's how you get your file displayed as a whole. File fragmentation occurs when clusters of free disk space get reused over and over again when you delete old files and save new ones.

Defrags (slang) can be a pain! Primarily, you have to find a time when your computer is on, but you aren't using it. However, there are good reasons why computer experts keep telling you it needs to be done! The most important of these reasons is that defragmenting your hard drives will help speed up computer performance!

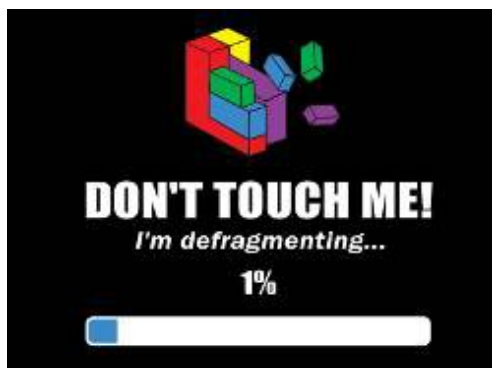How Hard Drives Become Fragmented



Armed with just what little you've read so far, you might wonder why Windows goes through all this hassle whenever you open a file, and why doesn't it just put the files on your hard drive as complete chunks…thus eliminating the need to defragment. The answer is simple. Because Windows is very space-efficient, and doesn't want a single bit of hard drive space to be wasted.  So when a new file is created (or modified) and saved, it puts pieces of the file in every little nook and cranny it can find.

Just because Windows scatters this information around is not bad…it's merely inefficient. The only downside of putting file fragments all over the drive is that the drive read needs to do a lot of extra work to find and access all fragments of a file when you want to open it. As a result, fragmented files can often take quite a while to open and what you see is a slow computer.

Defragging is the simple process of re-associating all these file fragments and putting them together in one place to speed up file access. This is the primary reason why you should defragment your hard drive on a regular basis. The least amount of time between defrags the better so you never notice your computer getting slower.

How to Defragment Your Computer

Starting the defrag process varies slightly, dependent upon which version of Windows you have, but the actual process is exactly the same. For Windows 8, when you're on the Metro (tiled) desktop, simply begin typing "defrag…." and Search will find "Defragment and Optimize Drives". For Windows XP, Vista and Windows 7 go to the bottom of the Start Menu and in the Search Bar begin typing "defrag…." and you'll be taken to the defragmenter for your version of Windows.

When defragmenting a disk, it's usually best to leave your computer alone, though if necessary you can use it without messing up anything. Disk Defragmentation might take from several minutes to a few hours to finish, depending on the size and degree of fragmentation of your hard disk. You can still use your computer during the defragmentation process. If you defrag regularly, the time it takes is much shorter.



**Web Browsing 101**
By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS
www.compukiss.com
sandy (at) compukiss.com

Do you know the difference between a browser and a search engine? If not, it's time to learn the jargon! At the same time you can learn all about Web browsers and what they can do for you.

Often when I ask people which Internet browser they are using, they respond "Google." Yet, Google is not a Web browser. It is a search engine. This is a confusing concept for many. When you go to the store you may be browsing through the aisles while searching for a certain item. You can't be searching for a certain item unless you are already in the store browsing through the displays.

You can apply that concept to the Internet. You browse with an Internet browser like Internet Explorer, Google, Chrome, Safari, etc. You search with a search engine like Google or Bing. You cannot use Google, Bing, or any other search engine unless you use a Web browser to get on the Internet first. So the Web browser is your gateway to the Internet.

There are many different Web browsers. If you use a Windows computer, phone, or tablet, the default Web browser is Internet Explorer. You may know it as the blue "e" that you use to get on the Internet. If you are using a Mac, iPad, or iPhone, the default Web browser is Safari. The icon that starts it looks like a compass. Other popular Web browsers include Opera, Firefox, and Chrome.

All of these browsers are free. All work in a similar manner. Each has tabbed browsing, bookmarks, auto fill, zoom, pop-up blockers, and automatic updates. Yet each one is just a little bit different. The toolbars and menus look different. Things are in different places. For instance, each browser handles downloaded files a little differently and may give you different download options and put the downloaded files in different folders.

Sometimes, even main features vary. For instance Safari, Internet Explorer, and Firefox have parental controls. Chrome and Opera do not. Both Opera and Safari have Mouse Gestures, which allow you to move your mouse in simple ways to give the browser commands without using the more cumbersome menu choices. Internet Explorer, Chrome, and Firefox do not have Mouse Gestures.

All of these browsers work with Windows XP, Vista, Windows 7 and Windows 8. All, except Internet Explorer, which is Windows only, also work with the Mac OS. Depending on which tablet and/or smart phone you own, you can often also install these Web browsers or mobile versions of them on your portable devices. Your tablet may also have a special Web browser for use only on that tablet. One example of this the Web browser called "Silk" that is built-into the Amazon Fire tablets.

If you are working on a PC or Mac, it is a good idea to install a second Web browser. This gives you an alternative way to get on the Internet if, for some reason the browser you usually use is not working properly. Not only can you install two or three different Web browsers, but you can use them all at the same time, if you wish. This makes it easy to try an alternative browser. You can run them side-by-side to decide which one you like better.

If you are currently using Internet Explorer or Safari and want to try another browser, check out Opera or Chrome. If you look at both of these browsers, you will see a stark contrast. Opera has all of the controls and menus visible while Chrome has a much cleaner look, with fewer obvious controls. It is up to you to determine which type of interface you prefer.

Here are links to several popular Web browsers. All are FREE!

Opera – www.opera.com
Chrome – www.chrome.com
Safari – www.apple.com/safari
Firefox – www.firefox.com
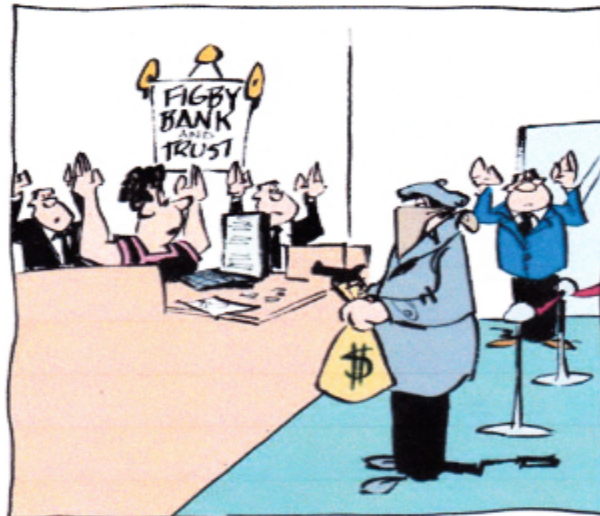Internet Explorer – Built into Windows, not available for individual download

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**Tech News**
**http://news.google.com/news/section?pz=1&cf=all&ned=us&topic=tc&ar=1399846986**

**http://apcug.net/speakers/index.htm**

## Short Circuits....zzzt!

A 15 year-old high school student was walking along a boulevard in Staten Island, New York when she fell into an open manhole. She was too intent on tapping out a text message to notice the gaping hole in the sidewalk and just dropped straight on in. She managed to avoid bicyclists and ordinary pedestrians who were actually sharing the street and sidewalks, but not the manhole. She was extracted unhurt by workmen of the City Dept. of Environmental Protection. In a television interview after the incident her mother seemed more distressed that she lost one of her sneakers. *USA Today*

"Location, location, location" is the mantra of real estate sales professionals. Sometimes timing is equally important. One of the largest marketers of natural and organic groceries announced plans to open a megastore in the Buffalo, New York area. Unfortunately, the cheers of local fans of the upscale chain were dampened when the expansion notice was followed soon after by an announcement that the company was reducing its sales and earnings outlook. Business analysts suggested the move to lesser markets means that they will have to lower their traditionally high prices and profit margins. The company's stock price dropped 19 percent. *Buffalo News*



"I don't hack computers — I come from the old school of crime."

As part of his duties with the Boston PD's Youth Violence Strike Force, an officer followed a known felon via Twitter messages. The officer was alerted to a pair of tweets that included photos showing the man posing with a pair of identifiable handguns. The photos were taken on consecutive days at a firing range. As a felon, the man is not allowed to possess firearms, even rented weapons. Since he was a known associate of a local gang, authorities were alarmed that he was attempting to improve his marksmanship. Police arrested him on his violation of his parole pending a hearing. *Boston Globe*

A Maine teenager is flustered but not hurt after a photo op with a squirrel went awry. The youth saw what appeared to be a friendly squirrel on a hand rail while walking through a park. He took a "selfie" of himself and the squirrel, but the flash and noises from his camera phone scared the animal, which climbed under his shirt and hung on. His mother snapped photos of the hoopla and posted them, but she allowed that neither her son nor the squirrel was harmed. *AP*
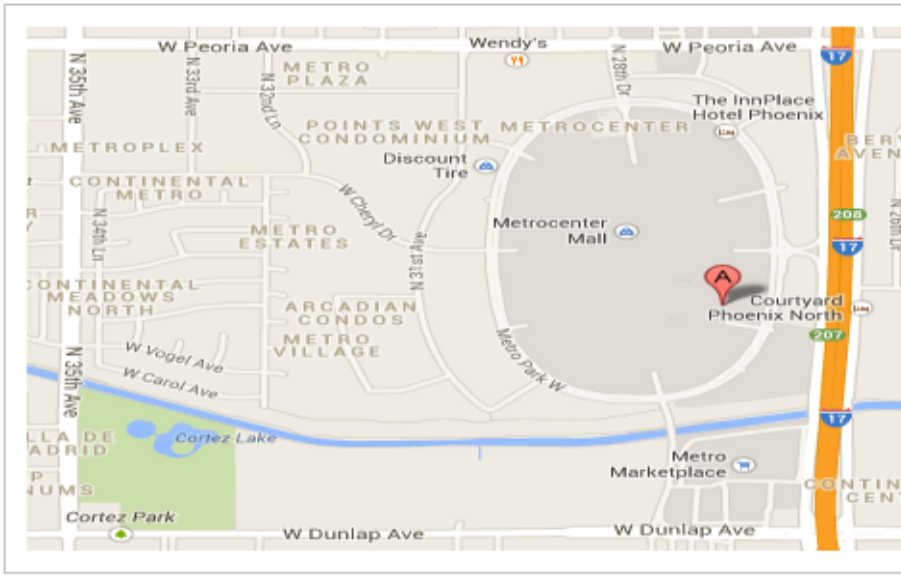


"Please continue to hold. Your call is very important. Almost as important as the text I'm sending to my boyfriend while you wait."

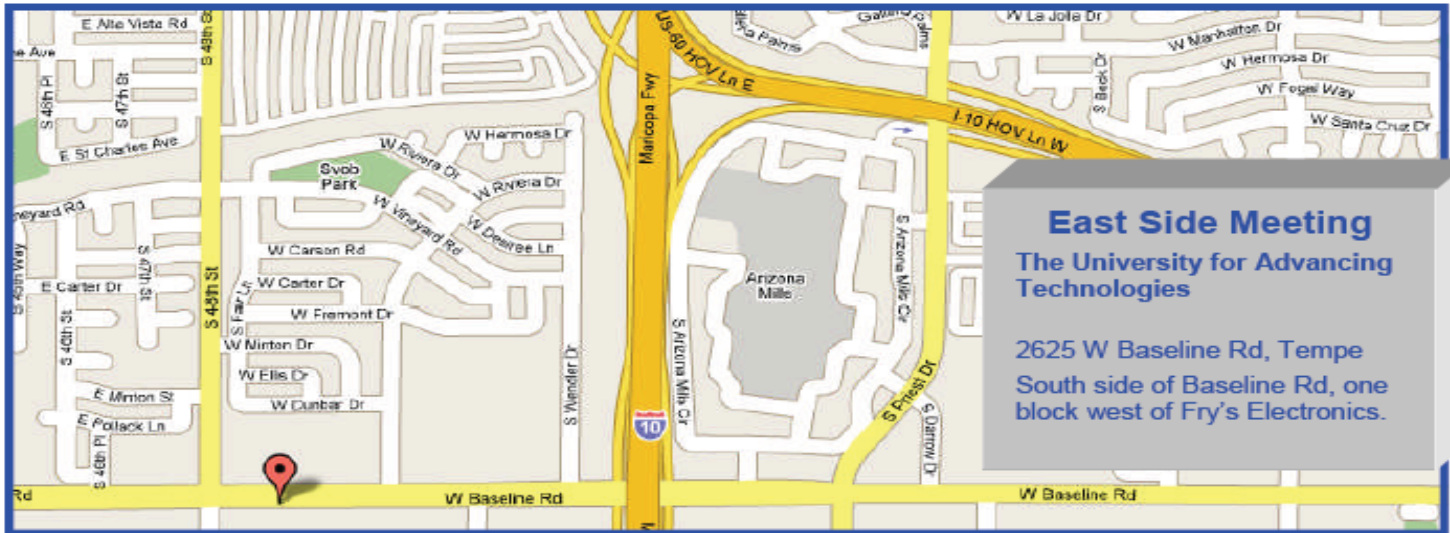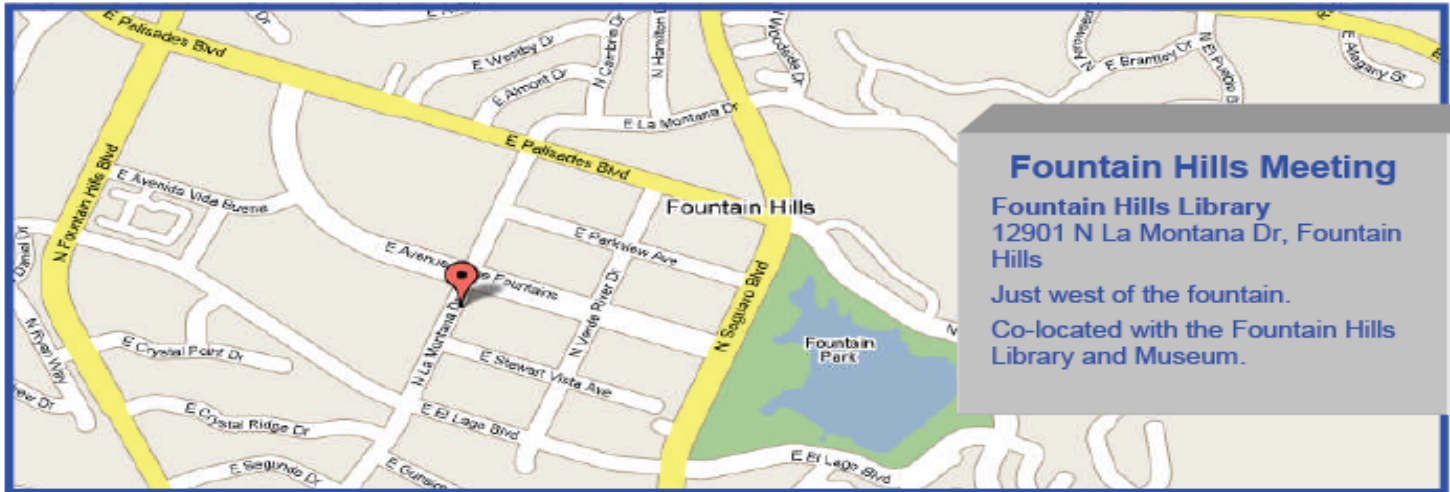*These items are based on articles from the noted sources and have been adapted by the Editor*

# HOW TO GET THERE



**West·Side·Meeting¶**

**CollegeAmerica**¶
www.collegeamerica.edu/phoenix·¶
9801·N·Metro·Parkway·East¶
Phoenix,·AZ·85051¶
**Phone··(602)·257-7522**¶
Google·map·error,·"the·red·A"·is·¶
actually·east·side·of·Metro·Parkway¶

Exit·**Peoria·Ave**·west,·past·I-17,·¶
turn·first·left,·go·south·on·the·frontage·
road,·turn·right·at·the·first·driveway·past¶
Cheryl·Drive,·CollegeAmerica·is·the·white·
building·on·your·right·(north).··North·of¶
Castles·&·Coasters·amusement·park.¶



### 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.**

## *2014*
## *DUES $36*

Phoenix PC Users Group Membership Application

First: (Print Legibly) _____Initial: ___Last:_____

Address: _____

City, State: _____ Zip Code:_____

Home or Cell 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 a timely fashion, via e-mail, or the club web-site.

Receive Electronic PDF 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 _____

Mail this completed form with payment to:
**Phoenix PC Users Group**
**PO Box 45451**
**Phoenix, AZ 85064-5451**

Web address:
www.phoenixpcug.org

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

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**PHOENIX PC USERS GROUP**
**PO Box 45451**
**PHOENIX, AZ 85064—5451**

**STAMP**

*PLEASE NOTE - OUR NEW ADDRESS*