



mbug-pc newsletter

Established 1983 / Incorporated 1988

IN THIS ISSUE

MBUG-PC Volunteer Positions	2
MBUG-PC Information	2
Carolyn's Viewpoint	3
Things, Thinglets & Thingassos	4
My Favorite Website	5
Smart Computing Tech Support	6
Video Book Review	7
Raffle Prizes for February	7
The Care and Feeding of CDs	8
Purging Your Hard Drive	10
MBUG-PC Magazine Discounts	11
MBUG-PC Book Discounts	11
Need Computer Help?	12
Computer Coaches Needed	12
PG Adult Education Classes	12
MBUG-PC Supporters	13
MBUG-PC Listserv Benefits	13
MBUG-PC Upcoming Workshops ...	14
MBUG-PC Calendar	15
Ink Cartridge Update	16
Membership Report	16

**What might be coming
to our houses soon
through the
GAS LINES???**



Check out Jack's prediction in his TT&T column on page 4.

'Whittles Picks' for the Digital Home

In the ideal digital home, PCs and other electronic devices are not only protected against Internet security threats, but work together to deliver digital media (pictures, video and music) to the parts of your home where you want it. Enabled by the rapid pace of the latest innovations, you can re-invent your lifestyle, waste less time and have more fun. You can now take pictures and videos with digital cameras and camcorders, add your own music, and within moments share them with family and friends via e-mail, CD and DVDs, and view on hand-held devices, computers or television sets in "home theatres".

This Friday's General Meeting guest speaker is **David B. Whittle**, author of *Cyberspace: The Human Dimension* and named by *Working Woman Magazine* as "... one of America's most original technological thinkers ...". Dave has been a leader in the PC revolution since 1979, and an opinion-leader in the PC industry since his days as OS/2 "evangelist" at **IBM** in the early '90s. Most recently, he's been writing for *Smart Computing*.

Dave will give us a brief look at the latest gadgets, goodies, software and services available for the digital home including **muvee™ autoProducer 5 (muvee™ Technologies www.muvee.com)**, **3D Album PicturePro (3D Album www.3D-Album.com)**, **Photovista Panorama 3.0** and **Photovista Virtual Tour 3.0 (iSeeMedia www.iseemedia.com)** and **ZIP*LINQ (Zip*Linq www.ziplinq.com)** from the latest trade shows. He'll show us how to turn digital photos and video footage into dramatic, enjoyable movies on DVDs or CDs, including a way to turn ordinary flat snapshots of special locations into immersive 3-dimensional pictures which you can look at in any direction.

And don't forget your cash, checkbook or credit card: although, as always, this meeting is FREE and open to the public, there will be an MBUG fundraising raffle and Dave will have some of the actual products he demonstrates for sale at significantly discounted prices. Questions? Phone (801) 489-0605 or e-mail dave@webworkingservices.com. ♦

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2006 at 7pm
Pacific Grove Adult Education Center
1025 Lighthouse Avenue, Pacific Grove
FREE, educational and always interesting!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THESE GREAT MBUG-PC POSITIONS!

Program Chair

Find and schedule First Friday General Meeting Guest Speakers.

Publicity Chair

Publicize MBUG in local publications and to members on the Listserv.

Workshop /SIG Leaders

Share your knowledge: run workshops or Special Interest Groups monthly/bi-monthly/quarterly

Meeting Reviewers

Attend General Meetings (or any other ongoing workshops) and write 500-word-or-less reviews.

Hospitality

Provide coffee service at First Friday General Meetings
(store equipment and supplies, bring the needful and set up for coffee and goodies).

E-mail or call Vice-President **Don Slaiter** at slaiter@pacbell.net ☎ (831) 655-4443 and 657-4154

MBUG-PC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Carolyn Lake President 643-2023 lakelyn@ix.netcom.com
& Video Project Team
Donald R. Slaiter .. Vice President, 655-4443/657-4154 slaiter@pacbell.net
Assistant Treasurer, Membership Chair
& Lead Mtg Facilitator
Tom Streater Secretary, Treasurer 657-4249 tom223@pacbell.net
& Newsletter Proofreader
Regina Doyle Publishing Editor 375-4496 reginadoyle@aol.com
S.Jack Lewtschuk. Columnist 757-0123 blacklion@royal.net
& Immediate Past President
Charlie Mehlert Workshops Coordinator .. 375-0316 mehlert@sbcglobal.net
Clive Sanders Advisor / F1 Help 375-5376 simbacli@pacbell.net
Gary Stephens Workshops Coordinator. 384-2440. garykstephens@sbcglobal.net
& Vice-Photographer

MBUG-PC Newsletter is published monthly by Monterey Bay Users Group-Personal Computer, Inc., a nonprofit, tax-exempt, charitable, educational corporation, PO Box 51611, Pacific Grove CA 93950, telephone Don Slaiter (831) 655-4443 or 657-4154, website www.mbug.org.

DISCLAIMER: No warranty, expressed or implied, is made by MBUG-PC, Newsletter editorial staff, or any individual authors or contributors.

This disclaimer extends to all losses, incidental or consequential, from the use of this publication.

Unless specifically stated otherwise, the opinions expressed in any article or column are those of the individual author(s) and do not represent any official position of, or endorsement by, MBUG-PC which is a 501c3 corporation and is not affiliated in any way with any vendor or equipment or software manufacturer.

Copyright © 2006 by the Monterey Bay Users Group-PC. Permission for reproduction in whole or in part is hereby granted for other nonprofit use, provided credit is given to MBUG-PC and to the author(s). Other reproduction without prior written permission of MBUG-PC is prohibited.

MBUG-PC VOLUNTEERS

Jim Anway Workshop Leader/F1 Help .. 625-5618 AnwayJ@comcast.net
Joe Asling Video Project Coordinator .. 641-9560 jasling@pacbell.net
Bill Baumgardt Workshop Leader 372-5500 www2.comcast.net
Eileen Begley Workshop Leader 655-4884 eb@spyderbytes.com
Richard Binsacca . Raffle Sales 678-2518 .. rjbinsacca@sbcglobal.net
Bill Bowles Columnist 375-3954 B@bowles.com
Margaret Bradbury Workshop Leader 657-4119 .. mgradbury@redshift.com
Norma Cocklin Canterbury Woods 657-4257 nmchec@aol.com
Liaison & Newsletter Proofreader
Joyce Elisha Video Project Team & 646-9603 ellias@msn.com
Ink Cartridge Coordinator
Ralph Games Meeting Facilitator 394-8876 gamesri@redshift.com
Jim Hinwood Columnist ehinwood@msn.com
Bill Hyler Photographer 624-4456 hyler@comcast.net
Lee Keely APCUG Rep & F1 Help 626-8033 Lee@leekeely.com
Kristen Knutson ... Special Projects 375-6072 mcle@msn.com
John Laughton Legal Advisor 649-1122 john@netlawyers.com
John Rowe Columnist 384-3617 johnr@tolt.com
Bob Stephan Historian, F1 Help, 646-1373 bob@bobstephan.net
Columnist & Workshop Leader
Bill Stockton Recording Secretary 384-6130
David Thorp Video Project Team 373-4623
Ed West Webmaster /Listserv Owner .. 372-6200 captain@mobile.com

SUBSCRIPTION: See back cover for rates. (Subscription is not tax deductible). **NEWSLETTER AD RATES:** Special rate for local business card ads (approximately 1/10 page) is \$30.00 for 6 issues or \$50.00 for 12 issues. Full and partial page ad rates are available upon request. MBUG will publish at no charge classified ads for individual subscribers who have computer hardware or software for private sale. Advertising information contact: Regina at ReginaDoyle@aol.com.

MBUG-PC benefits: Computer Help, the Newsletter and 15 - 20% Discount on Computer Books at Borders and Waldenbooks with MBUG-PC Membership Card (see Don Slaiter for card).

CAROLYN'S VIEWPOINT

Carolyn Lake
President



photo: Bill Hyley, MBUG-PC

PHONING HOME ... AND ELSEWHERE

At the January General Meeting, **Ken Schipper** of **Graniterock** provided a most intriguing view of the new generation of mobile phones and pocket PCs. Speaking on “The Future Of Wireless Data Access”, Ken described how PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) phones may in future be used pretty much world wide, based on cellular technology — no need to lurk within 50 feet of an access point. The new pocket PC smart phones offer a variety of media access capabilities: e-mail, music downloads, Internet, sub-mini PC keyboard, and, oh, a phone. Within two years, they will be able to handle 2 megabits/sec, which means they can then bring you movies and TV (if you like to view them on a 3-inch screen!). We hope to have a copy of his presentation available soon, but for more information on PDAs and wireless, Ken recommends www.pdaphonehome.com.

GENERAL MEETINGS ONLINE

We now have the **PowerPoint** slides from two recent General Meetings posted on our website in **PDF** format for viewing or printing. Go to www.mbug.org and click on the ‘General Meeting’ menu button, then select either **Scott Coté’s** presentation on “Identity Theft” from the October 7 meeting or **Jordy Berson’s** December 2 presentation on “Computer Security”.

CREATURES FROM THE BLOG LAGOON

Have you noticed that blogging, (creation, distribution and use of blogs on the Internet) is more or less suddenly a term we hear everywhere? “Blog” is derived from “web + log” and refers to a website where users may post articles, pictures, videos, etc.; the one who posts entries is a “blogger”. In a recent article in *The Monterey County Herald* (“In the blink of eye, blogs became a part of our lives” 12/23/05), **Daniel Rubin** notes that nine percent of American adults who web surf are writing blogs, and 27

percent of Internet users are reading them — that’s 39 million Americans, not counting those under 18!

Blogging may be seen by some as one of those inexplicable time-wasters that we come up with from time to time (like phone booth jamming and marathon dancing), but for some, it has become a way of providing significant and timely information. For example, following natural disasters such as **Hurricane Katrina** and the 2004 tsunami, text and pictures posted to blogs through mobile phones provided some of the earliest close reports of events.

Blogs are now emerging as a form of corporate communication with clients and the general public. An **EarthLink** blog was the source for the “Ten Tips on Spotting and Stopping Phishers”, published in our November 2005 Newsletter. A local TV station has a blog report, which spouts opinions on newsy topics, and invites comments in return, at the end of a newscast. An interesting side effect is that the reporter is also actively demonstrating how to locate information and do searches on the Internet.

Blogs also have their dark side, so it pays to be wary. As with any Internet material, the source is important. Rubin reports that 30 percent of new sites are spam blogs, a means to dispense advertising. Blogs have great appeal to young people, who may use them to post personal information, which may lead to obvious bad outcomes. Personal blogs or blogs on unreliable sites may be a source of viruses. So if blogging becomes a source of entertainment or information for you, know your source and, of course, practice good computer security.

Recently, in my search for **Medicare Prescription Drug Plan** information, I discovered that the **AARP** (American Association of Retired Persons, www.aarp.org) maintains an “Issues Blog” of many pages on topics such as Health, Travel, Technology and Learning, etc. The blog is written and produced by an AARP team. The technology link led to an interesting review (“Tech Books for Non-Dummies”) of the *Sandy Berger Great Age Guides*, including the *Great Age Guide to Gadgets and Gizmos*, which also received a positive review in the February issue of *Smart Computing*. The Guide provides brief descriptions on a variety of tech products, including PDAs, digital music players and mobile phones. So, you too may find blogs to be another useful Internet resource — use with care and enjoy! ♦ lakelyn@ix.netcom.com



THINGS, THINGLETS & THINGASSOS

S. Jack Lewtschuk
MBUG-PC
Columnist



photo: Bill Hyley, MBUG-PC

Gas Isn't All You May Get

It may sound nuts today, but a San Diego company called **Nethercomm** (www.nethercomm.com/) is developing a way to use ultra wideband wireless signals to transmit data at broadband speeds through natural-gas pipes.

The company claims its technology will be able to offer 100 megabits per second to every home, which is more than enough to provide voice, video and high-speed Internet access.

Do You Have a Cellular Phone You No Longer Use?

Do you know what to do with it?

You can donate it to a non-profit organization, who, in turn, will donate it to people who can't afford one and who need to be able to call 911.

You can sell it.

Or, you can keep it. Do you know that as long as your old phone is charged you can call 911? Well, you can. You do have to remember that no one can call you and the emergency dispatchers will not know who is calling, where



illustration: R. Doyle, MBUG-PC

you are or how to reach you, so remember to give them that information if you make an emergency call.

You can find much more information about cell phones at www.fda.gov/cellphones/wireless.html#1.

Another Place for User Group Philosophy

As we all know, the root of the User Group philosophy is people-to-people help. Our purpose is not to be critical, not to impress others with our knowledge, not to be intimidated and not to be upset when being shown solutions to problems.

In other words: teach and learn!

I have found that in addition to participating in a "brick and mortar" user group like MBUG, there are a number of message boards on the Internet which give me opportunities to help others (as I have been helped by so many) and at the same time have an opportunity to learn.

I invite you to visit community.aarp.org/rp-computers/start, a message board sponsored by the **American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)**. I know that most MBUG members are much too young to join AARP (☺), but membership is not a prerequisite.

Another similar message board is **Senior Net** at discussions.seniornet.org/cgi-bin/WebX?14@@.

Cable or DSL?

(Reprinted with permission from *Smart Computing*)

"There is no definitive winner when it comes to choosing between DSL and cable. The choice varies depending on where you live and what services the providers are offering in your area. In choosing how to connect to the Internet, the primary considerations are price and bandwidth, which is usually equated with download speed, or the rate at which data travels from the Internet to your PC.

Upload speed is the rate at which keystrokes or other data originating with your computer travel to Web sites. Other considerations include the convenience of having an always-on connection and whether you need to share your bandwidth with others. Cable is generally easier to install and sometimes faster than DSL, but DSL often provides a more stable Internet experience, in terms of both speed and uptime.

Although the price is comparable between DSL and cable, you might find that cable is cheaper if you already subscribe to cable television. Ask what “bundling” deals are available with each service option and whether free trials are available and then give one or both a try. If you aren’t happy with the service you end up choosing, you can always switch.”

In other words, call the DSL and cable ISP providers and check with current users (preferably in your area).

NOVICE CORNER

Adding to Your ‘Start’ Menu

The ‘Start’ menu was created to make it easy to get to programs when your screen is filled with, well ... programs!

Here’s one way to do it:

- 1. Right click a blank portion of the Taskbar at the bottom of your screen.
- 2. Click on ‘Properties’.
- 3. Click on the ‘Start Menu Programs’ tab.
- 4. Click the ‘Add...’ button.
- 5. Click the ‘Browse’ button that appears and locate the program or file you want on the ‘Start’ menu.
- 6. In the ‘Browse’ window, there’s a box named ‘Files of type’. This can be ‘Programs’ or ‘All Files’. If you set it to ‘All Files’ you can put anything on the ‘Start’ menu.
- 7. Click ‘OK’ to pop the path to the file into the command line.
- 8. Click ‘Next’ to get to the ‘Select Program Folder’ box.
- 9. Select the folder you want to place the file in by clicking it once.
- 10. Click ‘Next’ and select a name for the shortcut. Either leave the name that’s there by default, or create a new name.
- 11. Click the ‘Finish’ button, then ‘OK’. You’re done!

Now go to the ‘Start’ menu by clicking the ‘Start’ button. You’ll see the new program listed. Place files or programs on the ‘Start’ menu that you want to access at any time. This is very handy if your desktop is covered up with open windows.

Now if you’re as lazy as I am, you can just drag and drop the icon onto the start button. ♦ blacklion@royal.net

MY FAVORITE WEBSITE

by *Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director /
Columnist ‘The Examiner’*

Beaumont, Texas



My Family Health Portrait
A tool from the U.S. Surgeon General

Recently a relative in another state was hospitalized via an emergency room admission. His new wife of just a year did not have much information on the family health history so urgently needed by physicians in order to diagnose and treat my relative. Urgent phone calls followed, gathering the requisite family medical history to enable the appropriate diagnosis and treatment.

It made me think, “*What if a comprehensive family medical history could have been immediately available?*” This circumstance is not unique, but a reasonable solution has been available for free for over a year at www.hhs.gov/familyhistory, courtesy of the **US Surgeon General’s Office**.

This site explains the necessity of such data with the statement, “*Health care professionals have known for a long time that common diseases - heart disease, cancer, and diabetes - and even rare diseases - like hemophilia, cystic fibrosis, and sickle cell anemia - can run in families.*”

If one generation of a family has high blood pressure, it is not unusual for the next generation to have similarly high blood pressure. Tracing the illnesses suffered by your parents, grandparents, and other blood relatives can help your doctor predict the disorders to which you may be at risk and take action to keep you and your family healthy.”

In order to accomplish this task, the Surgeon General offers two simple options: one at <https://familyhistory.hhs.gov>, an online web maintained version hosted on a secure server (that is what the ‘https’ means in the internet address); the other a 1.6MB downloadable zip file which may be stored on a home computer and utilized in the privacy of the home. The files created in either version can easily be exchanged among family members via e-mail or CD.



In the online version, a family history can be newly created, or an existing version can be uploaded from the home computer to the secure Surgeon General website where the data can be managed, and then saved back on the home computer; no personal information is saved or captured by the government computer, protecting the privacy of the user. It should be noted that much effort has gone into the creation of this web-based service, in that it explicitly works equally well with almost all known browsers, including **Internet Explorer, Firefox, Mac Safari, Netscape** and many other browsers.

The first step in using the online version is to 'Create a Family History', or to 'Load a Saved Family History' if a file had been previously created. The preliminary step is to create a personal profile, where basic information such as name, gender, height and weight are entered. The personal profile continues with a simple checklist of major common diseases (such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes), and age of onset, followed by a "fill-in-the-blank" chart of other diseases.

After the personal health history is created, there is then an opportunity to create a family profile. The family profile states,

"Only add family members that are biological (blood) relatives (not adopted or step-relatives)." Similar "fill-in" charts are presented to complete the information for other family members. Data can be modified, added, or deleted at any time.

Once the user has completed entering the basic family information, a 'Go to My Family' button takes the user to the basic 'Family Health Portrait' where a family health tree can be displayed or printed; this family tree contains symbols and abbreviations immediately recognizable by a health care practitioner as a basic family health history. Other family members, such as aunts, uncles and other blood relatives can be added to the list as well. Other family members listed on the family tree can have their own personalized family tree created at this point, and the entire file can be downloaded to the user's computer, leaving no personal data on the **US Department of Health & Human Services** computer.

If for privacy or other reasons the user does not wish to enter personal family health data to the secure website, the downloadable version is a self-contained version of what is available on the website. Once uncompressed with any zip utility (built in to **WindowsXP**), the file is easily and quickly installed. The software does require the **Microsoft Net** utility, Version 1.1 or later (available for free at windowsupdate.microsoft.com). Once installed, the entire process is completed in the privacy of the home, with no personal data leaving the computer, unless the user desires to send the data files to other family members to complete or use as a basis for their own family health history.

With this information readily available both within a family unit, and shared with other blood relatives as appropriate, family health histories can be easily maintained and distributed or printed as needed.

Many times we cannot recall family health problems that family members may have had which may give us a predisposition, or otherwise genetically affect us. With this free service and software from the Surgeon General, we may all be better able to provide our health care professionals with the information that may prove so vital to our health care and treatment. ♦ iwilsker@apcug.net
(Reprinted with the permission of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG) of which MBUG-PC is a Member)

Smart Computing

Anyone who's ever picked up a copy knows that there's more to **Smart Computing** magazine than meets the eye!

But did you know that **Smart Computing** gives **FREE tech support**

to both subscribers and non-subscribers?

Check it out by phone:

1 (800) 368-8304

Mon-Fri 7am to 8pm CST

Saturdays from 8am to 4pm CST
(Nebraska time)

or any time on the Internet:

webhelp@smartcomputing.com or

www.smartcomputing.com

To subscribe to Smart Computing:

12 issues for \$29.00 / 24 issues for \$48.00

36 issues for \$64.00

PO Box 85380 / Lincoln NE 68501-9807

Phone: 1-800-733-3809 / Fax: 1-402-479-2193

Use **source code 8181** when ordering and for every five subscriptions MBUG-PC gets a free subscription which we raffle for funding educational activities.

VIDEO

BOOK REVIEW



by **Joseph Asling**
MBUG Video Project
Coordinator

**Digital Video
Production
Cookbook**
by **Chris Kenworthy**

photos: Bill Haylor, MBUG-PC

are quite a few hints on using camera motion to make scenes more interesting: background slides, faking dolly movements, spins around your characters, building establishing shots which move into the characters' action. If you are creating a drama, there are instructions on how to fake a fistfight, a stabbing, or a shooting. The section on make-up describes how to make your actors appear sick, injured, or dead.

Many of the effects are techniques for use on the set, but there are some computer editing tricks: passing through walls and keyholes, using a bluescreen to simulate a moving background for a parked car, and making 'picture-in-picture video' appear to be showing on a television or computer monitor.

First Edition November 2005

ISBN: 0-596-10031-0

192 pages, \$29.95

Published by O'Reilly

www.oreilly.com/catalogue/

digvidprog

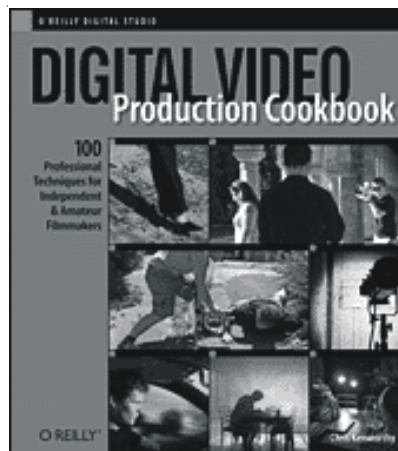
Are you the next **Cecil B. DeMille** or **Steven Spielberg** or **Peter Jackson**?

The difference between ordinary and compelling video shots is often lighting, camera motion, or an unusual effect.

O'Reilly sent me a free, unsolicited copy of a new book by author and "indie" (independent) filmmaker **Chris Kenworthy** who has compiled some great professional information.

The techniques are grouped into sections on lighting effects, camera illusions, camera movement, editing illusions, production effects, visual effects, stunts, night shoots, weather, audio, and make-up. Each technique is described in one or two pages, with text and six or seven photos illustrating how to set up the effect. Although the format does not permit going into much detail, the techniques are well-presented and easy to understand. The computer editing effects assume a working knowledge of a nonlinear editor such as **Adobe Premiere** or **Apple Final Cut Pro**.

Some are pretty straightforward, such as using a light card to decrease shadows on faces, selective focus, and framing a subject dramatically. Others are ways to simulate a complex shot with basic equipment, such as various kinds of night-for-day shooting and faking rain, snow, and desert sun. There



This book is aimed primarily at videographers who want to create dramatic productions, music videos, and commercials, where striking shots help hold viewer interest. Those of us who record documentaries, our families, and events such as lectures and meetings, won't have a need for most of them. All of us, however, can improve our videos by following the techniques on proper lighting and camera movement.

Last fall I reviewed O'Reilly's *Digital Video Hacks* (MBUG Newsletter October 2005, page 6). The formats of these two books are somewhat similar, but the subject matter is complementary. Videographers who want to get "oohs and aahs" from their viewers will find both books valuable. ♦ jasling@pacbell.net

GENERAL MEETING RAFFLE PRIZES

TRY YOUR LUCK

FEBRUARY 3



- ♦ **Zone Alarm: Internet Security Suite**
- ♦ **Zone Alarm: Computer Vacuum**
- ♦ **Keyboards**
- ♦ **SanDisk: Titanium USB Flash Drive**
- ♦ **Neato 2000: CD labeller kit**
- ♦ **... and more!**



The Care and Feeding of CDs

by Lynn L. Kauer, Editor
Saginaw Valley Computer Association

I read an interesting article in the September 2005 issue of *Popular Photography* written by **David D. Busch** titled, *The Truth about Disc Rot*. It paralleled some other magazine and news articles I have read on the same subject. The following is what we should know and understand about CD [compact disc] and DVDs [digital video discs] discs as storage devices. For the purposes of this article, CDs and DVDs are considered the same as far as backup media is concerned. The only difference is that DVDs can hold more data.

We save things that are important to us. Those of us who take digital photos know that simply storing them on the hard drive of our computer is not a wise or safe thing to do as the disc may crash and we will lose everything. Thus we copy photos to a CD or DVD disc so that they will be always available for a long period of 20 or more years. However, will they *really* be there when we look for them?

The media of choice for backup and storage purposes less than ten years ago was tape. Some commercial enterprises continue to use digital tape for backup purposes. Tape is rarely used, if at all, for home use anymore. Actually the backup media of choice for commercial use is moving toward external hard drives. Where do CDs fall into all of this?

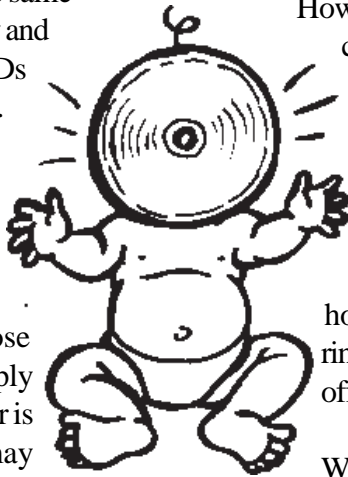
There are hosts of backup utilities that utilize the CD for backup purposes. Most CD manufacturers advertise that CD media is good for 20 to 100 years depending on the depth of marketing they are trying to offer. The **National Institute of Standards Technology** (NIST) tests products for longevity. The catch is that longevity is available if the user adheres to very strict rules and standards. Let us look at some interesting facts:

Handling

When a CD is burned, a laser shoots through the bottom of the disc into the dye layer located under the top protective plastic covering on at the top of the CD. This is the layer where the laser burns pits into the dye layer to allow the

computer to interpret what is being written by the computer. When the bottom side of the disc becomes scratched or soiled, the laser is diffused and the data is not clearly written.

Secondly, if the top layer becomes damaged, moisture can penetrate the surface and cause the layer to slowly disintegrate and is the beginning of what is called "disc rot."



Illustrations: R. Doyle, MBUG-PC

How often have you watched someone open a CD case and directly pull on the edges of a CD until it is released from the case? Notice how the CD is bent while it is being removed? This bending is causing tiny cracks to develop in the reflective (protective) layer of the CD. To properly remove a CD from the case, press down on the inside of the retaining plastic that holds the CD in place. This causes the retaining ring to become slightly smaller so that the CD slides off easily without bending forces.

When handling, always pick up or carry the CD by the outer edge. Avoid placing your fingers on the 'read' (bottom) side of the disc as this will cause acid penetration of both protective layers to begin.

Reliability

CD-R [Compact Disc – Recordable] is a disc that that can be written to once, while CD-RW [Compact Disc – Rewriteable] are discs that can be written to many times — reportedly 1,000 times. CDs that are the least reliable for archival purposes are CD-RWs. These discs include a layer that is altered by the CD burner each time it is rewritten. Experience has shown that when these discs are used with another computer, it is a common for the second computer to be unable to read it.

I burn a new music CD monthly for each show that I do (I entertain at nursing and retirement homes). I burned and placed the CD-RW into my karaoke player, but it would not recognize it.

In addition, my second computer would not recognize it either. Only the computer that *originally burned the CD* was able to read it! Imagine if I had saved *all* of my music and photo images on a CD-RW. When the computer is eventually replaced, the discs will likely be unreadable. **It is better to save data on CD-R discs, as they are readable with any computer with a CD player.**

CD-Rs aren't permanent either. The organic dye layers that the burner works with are similar to dyes in film. When exposed to sunlight, heat, cold and humidity and UV light the dye layer changes over time. How often have you watched someone place a CD on the dashboard of a car or keep it in a glove box? Proper storage of CDs is critical to their useful longevity.

Dyes

There are many types of dyes used for the production of CDs. To quote the above-mentioned author: "*Under the NIST's accelerated 'stress test', which includes exposure to very bright light, high temperature and humidity, recorded CD discs using phthalocyanine dye, combined with a gold/silver alloy reflective layer, proved to be considerably more stable than all other types of CD-R media. Discs using azo dye as the data layer had less stability under light, temperature and humidity testing. Media using cyanine dye performed well when exposed to light, but had longevity problems under temperature and humidity stress. DVDs, which generally use a modified form of a stabilized cyanine dye for the recording layer, are less predictable in terms of longevity. NIST data suggest that, despite lower data capacity, you might be better off in the long run using premium CD-Rs instead of DVD+/-R discs.*"

The author went on to say that it's not always possible to tell what kind of dye was used for the manufacture of the disc because the dyes can be tinted. Cyanine based CDs (the most common) have a light green or blue tint on the data side. Phthalocyanine dyes are often light green, while the azo dye tends to have a blue color. While it's possible to tell the dye type by reading the specs from the manufacturer, a better indicator might be the reflective layer. If a gold reflective layer was used then the likelihood of using a good quality dye is increased. But note: some cheap discs appearing to have a gold layer may be simply paint. Buyer beware!

Recommended brand name discs are **Fujifilm, Imation, Kodak, Maxell, TDK, Verbatim** and **Mitsui/MAM-A**.

Protection and Care of CDs

Manufacturers recommend storing CDs *vertically* in a cool, dry area instead of horizontally. The reason is to prevent warping and damage from humidity. Also, **never use solvent based pens to write on the reflective part of**

the disc (permanent felt-tipped pens). The solvent can penetrate the protective layer and damage the reflective layer below. The only safe place to write on the top of a CD is in the clear center portion of the hub if using a felt-tipped pen.

It is better to apply a label to the top of the disc for identification purposes. **Never write on the label with a ballpoint pen when it is applied to the disc.** The tip of the pen can cause stress cracks in the protective layer. When using CD-RW discs, I use removable labels (which can be found at www.digitalinnovations.com). They can be written on many times and then removed and replaced as necessary. For discs that I intend to keep for archival purposes I print the contents on the label with an ink jet printer (go to www.fellowes.com).

When cleaning to remove fingerprints or smudges on the 'read' side of the disc, always use a CD or lens cloth wiping radially out from the center. **Never clean using small circular motions on small portions of the disc** as it can cause diffusion of the laser beam. Isopropyl alcohol or clear or soapy water can be used to clean a grimy disc. **Never use acetone, anti-static agents or wood-based products such as toilet paper or facial tissue to clean a disc.**

When applying labels, be sure to **center the label on the disc** to avoid "off balancing" it (when the disc is rotated at high speeds, the off center label can unbalance the disc and cause problems with high-speed readers). For this reason I purchased a label applicator that perfectly centers the label each time, versus putting the label on the disc by eye.

The Future

Like the 1.4MB floppy drive, tape drives, Zip discs and LS 120 disks that are no longer being used, the CD as we know it will likely bite the dust in about ten years. I predict the media of choice for backup and archival purposes will be that of external drive media similar to USB jump drives and flash card burners or other external drive sources. Personally, I use a 160GB external hard drive to backup my computer data including music and photo files. Because of their transportability, I also back up my music and photos on CDs and store them at an offsite location in a safety deposit box. ♦ llkauer@chartermi.net

(Reprinted with the permission of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG) of which MBUG-PC is a Member)



Protect and Purge Your Personal Files: Eliminate Private Documents Permanently from Your Hard Drive

By Alyson Munroe

When you stop and think about it, your home computer holds a lot of information about you — credit card numbers, bank account details, passwords, medical information, websites you've visited and those deep, dark secrets you share with your best friend via e-mail. There naturally comes a time when it's time for an upgrade, whether it be a bigger hard drive or an entirely new PC. But what should you do with the old one? And what about the information on it?

You need to remove this information whether you donate it, sell it or trash it. Imagine your hard drive — including all of your personal information — falling into the wrong hands. That's what could happen if you don't do a little damage control before you dispose of your hard drive.

Why 'delete' isn't enough

Many people think that clearing their history, deleting files and cookies, and emptying their computer's recycle bin is enough. Not so, according to Vancouver IT specialist **Tony Lum**. He says that's like removing the table of contents in a book. The chapters (or your files, in this case) are still there, they're just harder to find.

What you've actually done is remove a particular file from the disk's index. The file itself still exists on your hard disk. For the average person it's harder to recover, but an experienced programmer (or hacker) could easily locate the file. Previous or temporary versions of the file might also be saved under different names.

You need to go one step further and overwrite your data. Lum recommends you back up everything you want to keep on your hard drive and then run hard-drive wiping software, which will overwrite your information with random ones and zeros. He also recommends you use a program that overwrites your data more than once. The more it's overwritten, the harder it is to recover.

Select software to wipe your hard drive clean

Is it impossible to retrieve your information afterwards? Not 100 per cent, but Lum says unless CSIS or the CIA is after you, you should be in the clear after using one of these disk-erasing tools that are available for you to download online:

■ Active@Kill Disk

Active@KillDisk

This free hard drive eraser overwrites data using zeros (killdisk.com). You can upgrade to the professional version that conforms to the US Department of Defense (DOD) standards.

■ Eraser

Eraser (www.tolvonen.com/eraser/) is a free download that boasts a simple user interface and top reviews from a number of popular computing websites and magazines.

■ Softpedia/ DP Wiper

SOFTPEDIA™

Toronto IT consultant

Daniel Gresser recommends freeware programs from Softpedia, like **DP Wiper** (www.softpedia.com), which can overwrite in from one to 35 passes and has DOD-compliant wiping.

■ WipeDrive

For \$39.95, WipeDrive overwrites your data as many times as you like and runs a verification test (www.whitecanyon.com).



"Always keep a record of where all important files are stored," says Gresser, who recommends deleting each file by dropping it into DP Wiper and selecting the kind of wipe required.

Unless you take the hard drive out and keep it, to get a PC ready for sale, Gresser suggests PC users delete the following using DP Wiper or a similar program:

- Everything in the 'My Documents' folder
- All temporary Internet files
- All cookies
- All files relating to personal and financial matters that may have been stored in folders other than 'My Documents'
- All e-mail: **Outlook Express** users need to search for and delete *.dbx files and **Outlook** users need to search for and delete *.pst files. This will send them to

the recycle bin for secure deletion. Also, remember to remove all e-mail account settings and passwords, etc.

Reinstall your operating system to overwrite files

Your operating system's installation CD should allow you to simultaneously reinstall and clear your hard drive. Lum says this should be enough to prevent the average person from obtaining personal information from your hard drive. However, he says he's managed to salvage data from computers using third-party software even after an operating system was reinstalled.

Protect information on your work computer

You'll also want to think about personal information on your work computer when it's time to move on to a new job. You can't wipe the hard drive since the computer isn't your property, but you can make it somewhat harder to find sensitive information by deleting personal e-mails, clearing your web browser's cache and history, deleting any personal files on your hard drive and emptying your trash or recycle bin.

Playing it safe

Still concerned? Don't dispose of your hard drive. *"The bottom line is, if you're really concerned about identity theft then don't give away your hard drive,"* says Lum.

Gresser also recommends taking some preventative measures when you set up your new computer. *"One thing people can do to make disposing of PCs with sensitive data easier down the road is to encrypt their data as soon as they get a new PC or hard disk,"* he says. *"If strong encryption is used then you can format the drive and dispose of it with the computer. Someone who wanted to retrieve the data would first have to undelete the data and then try to break the encryption, which is not going to happen."* He suggests using **BestCrypt** from **Jetico** to encrypt your documents.

(This article is provided by our friends at Microsoft® Windows® and reprinted with the permission of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG) of which MBUG-PC is a Member.

If you have comments or questions about this article or the Microsoft Mindshare program, please contact mindshare@microsoft.com

HERB GOODMAN DISCOUNT COMPUTER MAGAZINE* PRICE LIST

	1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs
Computer Games	\$10.95	\$20.95	\$29.95
Computer Gaming World	\$14.95	\$28.95	\$41.95
Computer Shopper	\$16.97	\$32.95	\$47.95
Dr. Dobbs Journal	\$15.95	\$30.95	—
Mac Addict	\$10.97	\$19.97	\$28.97
Mac Home Journal	\$15.97	\$29.97	—
Mac World	\$12.95	—	—
Maximum PC	\$9.95	\$18.95	\$27.95
Microsoft System Journal	\$21.95	\$39.95	—
PC Gamer	\$12.95	\$23.95	\$33.95
PC Magazine	<i>(22 / 44 / 66 issues)</i>		
	\$25.97	\$48.95	\$68.95
PC World	\$16.95	—	—
Videomaker	\$11.95	\$21.95	—
Wired	\$6.00	\$12.00	\$17.00

Prices above are for new subscriptions & renewals. All orders must be accompanied by a check, cash or money order payable to:

Herb Goodman
8295 Sunlake Drive
Boca Raton FL 33496
phone (561) 488-4465
hgoodman@prodigy.net

Allow 10 - 12 weeks for magazines to start.

Renewals: Send your address label from your present subscription to ensure correct start of renewal. As an extra service Herb will mail a renewal notice 4 months prior to expiration date.

**For over 300 more titles at excellent prices, contact Herb by e-mail.*

MBUG-PC Members now get 30% O'Reilly Discounts

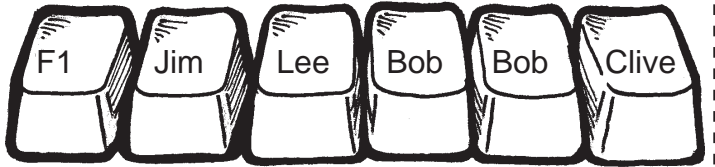
Our Members get a 30% discount on all O'Reilly "No Starch", "Paraglyph", "PC Publishing", "Pragmatic Bookshelf", "Sitepoint" and "Syngress" publications. Use code "DSUG" when ordering books.

Group purchases with better discounts are also available. O'Reilly catalogues are available at general meetings. Interested? Contact: S. Jack Lewtschuk blacklion@royal.net



Computer Help - Just a Click or Call Away with MBUG F1

You know you push the 'F1' button on your computer when you need help. But do you also know that you can call or e-mail **MBUG-PC** "F1 for Help" with your computer questions?



Our expert team of helpful F1 Volunteers

is willing and able to share experience on software and hardware. And if they don't know the answer, they'll direct you to someone who does. To get computer help:

- (1) Contact any of the people listed below; or
- (2) Ask questions during any MBUG-PC meeting break or Q&A session; or
- (3) Leave a message with Vice President **Don Slaiter** (831) 655-4443/657-4154 ; or
- (4) Broadcast a message to all members through the **MBUG-PC Listserv** (mbug@listserv.redshift.com) *in plain text only* (NO html, please)!

Services are free of charge

(with the understanding that MBUG-PC, its Board of Directors, and the F1 Volunteers themselves are in no way responsible or liable for the accuracy or the outcome of any advice or suggestions!)

■ Jim Anway

STRICTLY Wednesdays & Fridays
from 2pm to 5pm at 625-5618

■ Lee Keely

Prefers e-mail at Lee@leekeely.com
or call 626-8033

■ Bob Shanteau

e-mail to shanteau@iname.com
or call Monday - Friday 10am-5pm
394-9420

■ Bob Stephan

e-mail to bob@bobstephan.net
or call only between 9am-5pm
646-1373

■ Clive Sanders

e-mail to simbacli@pacbell.net
or call only between 1pm to 9pm
phone (831) 375-5376 ◆

VOLUNTEER COMPUTER COACHES/TEACHERS NEEDED

Sally Griffin Senior Center in Pacific Grove

is in need of additional "computer coaches" and instructors for their

Technology Access Program for Seniors.

The center provides older adults an opportunity to learn and practice their technical skills in a small lab, working one-on-one and in a small class format.

If you have the time, ability and patience to tutor beginners in a relaxed setting, contact **Kimberle Herring** at the Sally Griffin Senior Center at (831) 375-4454 or e-mail kherring@mowmp.org

*Pacific Grove
Adult
Education
Center*



Vocational
Education
Computer
Classes

"Learning for Life"

1025 Lighthouse Avenue

Pacific Grove CA 93950

See PGAEC catalog & web pages for
class descriptions.

Call: Computer Office (831) 646-6657
or e-mail Bruce Cates: bcates@pgusd.org

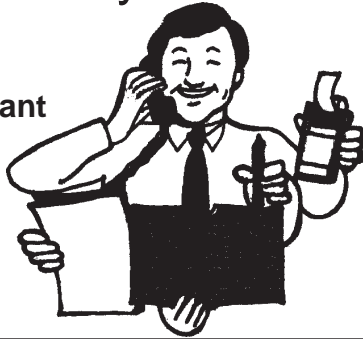
<http://www.pgusd.org>

MBUG-PC SUPPORTERS

James W. Anway

Retired IBMer
Computer Consultant

Phone: 831 625-5618
Fax: Call first



BIZTECH

SHIPPING & COPY CENTER

Richard Pryor, Owner

26384 Carmel Rancho Lane, #101
Carmel CA 93923
(831) 622-9024 Fax (831) 622-9026
E-mail - bizcopy@aol.com

COMPUTER POWER

Star Reierson

star@computerpowerstar.com

1173 Ninth Street
Monterey CA 93940

Phone: (831) 373-3919
Fax: (831) 373-0671

C Sanders

Sanders and Associates

Computer Consultants

636 Spazier Avenue
Pacific Grove
California 93950

Telephone: 831-375-5376
Cell: 831-521-6676
E-mail: simbacli@pacbell.net

Carolyn S. Lake

lakelyn
graphics

798 Lighthouse Ave, #194
Monterey, California 93940

phone: 831-643-2023
email: lakelyn@ix.netcom.com

In-home Computer Coaching

- Practical guidance to make your computer work for you
- Sessions geared to the older adult (beginner/intermediate)
- Special projects: document preparation, graphics
- Learn the basics of popular Microsoft programs and more...

Word Outlook PowerPoint Internet Scanning
Excel Publisher FrontPage WordPad CD Burning

Four Winds Travel



Where the good times beginSM

■ Dan Presser, Owner

26080 Carmel Rancho Blvd., Suite 103

Carmel CA 93923-8757 ■ (831) 622-0800

Fax (831) 622-9467 ■ CST #1000683-40

fourwinds@redshift.com/www.fourwindstravel.com

ARE YOU A REGISTERED MBUG LISTSERV MEMBER YET?

Join the MBUG listserv and send messages to all other MBUG Members
and have other Members reach you with important information:

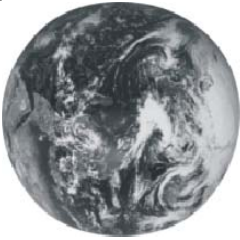
- **It's secure** (messages are monitored by MBUG's Webmaster ensuring messages are computer-related, virus-free and sent by Members only — no outsiders, no spammers!)
- **You get current MBUG announcements**
- **You get up-to-date virus & scam warnings**
- **You can ask and answer computer-related questions**
- **You can make computer-related announcements**

Register at www.mbug.org or go to <http://listserv.redshift.com/mailman/listinfo/mbug>



FEBRUARY

GOOGLE EARTH & OTHER SEARCH ENGINES



Clive Sanders

Workshop Leader

Wednesday, February 8

7:00 to 9:00pm

**Hilltop Park Center
Monterey**

Clive will help us visit some of the more spectacular places on our planet. **Google Earth** combines satellite imagery, maps and the power of Google Search to put the world's geographic information at your fingertips. Not all systems are able to use Google Earth, so this may be your chance to fly by or encourage you to buy a new computer! Questions? (831) 375-5376 or simbacli@pacbell.net ♦

SCALE 4x

The Fourth Annual

Southern California Linux Expo

February 11-12, 2006, Los Angeles



Linux Expo of Southern California is a non-profit organization that puts on a conference every year in Los Angeles. Oriented towards educating users rather than being aimed at businesses, Linux enthusiasts want to get the word out about Open Source software (a programming code generally available at no cost and open for modification). Proponents say it is better than **Windows** because its cheaper, more secure and doesn't crash as often.

Questions? Go to www.socallinuxexpo.com or contact **Orv Beach** at info@socallinuxexpo.com . ♦

ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR SIG UPDATE



- ◆ This Special Interest Group (SIG) usually meets every 3rd Monday of the month at **Carmel Foundation**, Computer Learning Center, on Lincoln between 8th/9th Streets in Carmel. **Space is limited: advance reservations are strongly recommended.**
- ◆ Fee: **\$3.00** (payable at the meeting). Next meeting: **MONDAY, February 27, 2006** 10:30am -12 noon (the 4th Monday of the month due to the holiday schedule).
- ◆ Previous knowledge of Illustrator not required.
- ◆ To be on the SIG mailing list (receive information/announcements),

call **Carolyn Lake** at (831) 643-2023 or e-mail lakelyn@ix.netcom.com.

Coming in MARCH

SELLING ON eBay



Sirie Thongchua

Guest Speaker

Friday, March 3

7:00 to 9:00pm

Adult Education Center, Pacific Grove

Sirie Thongchua first came to MBUG as a guest speaker in February of last year. Her comprehensive understanding of **eBay**, the online marketplace, makes her generally admired (she is an education specialist for eBay and puts on

programs about eBay at **Sally Griffin Senior Center**, Pacific Grove).

We're happy to have Sirie back by popular demand to cover more information you need to know on buying and selling items on eBay and becoming a recognized seller.

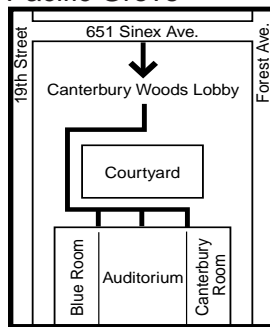
If you're not familiar with eBay, it's the website where people buy and sell electronics, cars, clothing, apparel, collectibles, sporting goods, digital cameras, and everything else. Think of all that junk you don't want in your closets, attic, basement or garage. Put Sirie on your calendar and bring along some friends who also need to do some Spring cleaning!

Questions in advance? E-mail siriet@yahoo.com or phone (831) 658-0211 ♦

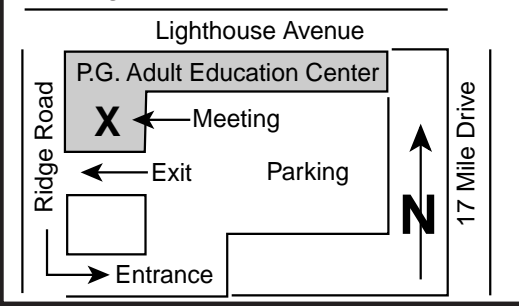
MBUG - PC Calendar of Events - February 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 "Whittle's Picks for the Digital Home" Adult Ed Center PG 7:00 - 9:00pm David Whittle	4
5	6	7	8 "Google Earth" Hilltop Park Monterey 7:00 - 9:00pm Clive Sanders	9	10	11
12	13	14 VALENTINE'S DAY	15	16	17	18
19	20 PRESIDENT'S DAY	21	22 "Windows XP" Hilltop Park Monterey 7:00 to 9:00pm Jim Anway	23	24	25
26	27 "Adobe Illustrator SIG" Carmel Foundation 10:30am to noon Carolyn Lake	28 DIRECTORS' MEETING Canterbury Woods PG Begins at 7pm Everyone Welcome!				

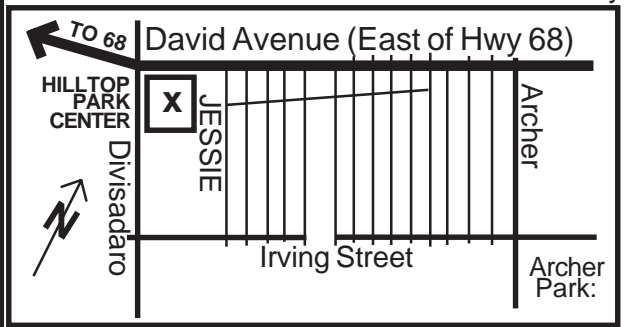
Canterbury Woods
651 Sinex Avenue
Pacific Grove



General Meeting Location
Adult Education Center, PG
1025 Lighthouse Avenue, Pacific Grove



Hilltop Park Center
871 Jessie Street
Monterey



Tentative Calendar March 2006 *Please Check the March Newsletter for Final Dates & Times*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 "Selling on eBay" Adult Ed Center PG 7:00 to 9:00pm Sirie Thongchua	4
5	6	7	8 "Topic to be Announced" Hilltop Park Monterey 7:00 - 9:00pm	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 "Adobe Illustrator SIG" Carmel Foundation 10:30am to noon Carolyn Lake	21	22 "Topic to Be Announced" Hilltop Park Monterey 7:00 - 9:00pm	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



monterey bay users group-pc
PO Box 51611
Pacific Grove CA 93950



Non-Profit
Organization
U. S. Postage Paid
Monterey, CA
93940
Permit No. 273



INK UPDATE

Joyce Elisha
Video Team &
"The Ink Lady"



We know that you now have the choice of recycling your empty ink jet cartridges to selected office supply stores (for a small discount on your purchase in return) or directly to private companies by mail (for a little cash). Instead, we ask you to kindly donate your empties to MBUG! We collectively claim these little reimbursements for our educational programs. Just drop your cartridges into the brown box or give them to any Board member at general meetings or workshops. Remember — our recycler is selective about brands they accept: original equipment **HP, Sharp, Xerox, Dell, Canon** and **Lexmark** are OK, but not **Brother, Epson** or **HP#14**.

E-mail me any helpful titbit of computer information that you would like to share in this space! ♦ ellias@msn.com

Check your (upside down) label.

Does it say "Exp: February / 2006"?

Don't miss an issue. Renew today!



Check the expiration date of your MBUG-PC membership & newsletter subscription: Electronic \$20, US Mail \$25, both \$35.

Additional tax-deductible donations welcome!

Send your name, address, phone number, e-mail address and check to:

Monterey Bay Users Group-PC, PO Box 51611, Pacific Grove CA 93950

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

MBUG-PC's Membership is now close to 200! Let's try to increase our numbers to strengthen the "users helping users" philosophy. Bring your friends and family to the next general meeting or workshop, or tell them about our great computer educational activities and sign 'em up!



Don Slaiter

Vice President,
Assistant Treasurer
and Membership
Chair



photos: Bill Hylet, MBUG-PC

THANKS FOR RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIPS

name	member number
John Pitta	657
Lorraine Kendall	1264

THANKS TO OUR DONOR

name	member number
Jack Lewtschuk	914