



mbug-pc newsletter

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Microsoft Windows 7, Part 2:

The Continuing Story with Jim Anway

In November, **Jim Anway** (MBUG workshop leader, retired computer expert after a 31-year career with IBM, and active computer consultant), gave us “advice from a pro” on the new **Microsoft Windows 7** operating system, released October 22, 2009. This month, Jim returns to extend the discussion and cover additional features. Topics will include new views and functions of the Control Panel, Taskbar jump lists, Personalization options such as slide show backgrounds, the Action Center, additional Calculator and Paint functions, and the new approach to Gadgets for the Desktop. This will be all about the fun stuff that adds to the user’s enjoyment of this new system, which Microsoft says is “safer, more reliable, and more responsive.” Jim will also review pertinent topics from his last meeting, so here’s a second chance to find out more about aspects of working with Windows 7, to ask specific questions, discuss pertinent issues, and get useful professional advice.

For an overview of the previous presentation, see the Meeting Review article on page 8 of the MBUG December 2009 Newsletter. It contains some useful links to the Microsoft website, including links for video tours, comparison of Windows 7 versions, discussions of the Backup and Restore capability, and upgrade installation instructions. On page 7 of the same issue, there is a step-by-step discussion on upgrading from XP.

If you are interested in some advance preparation for this meeting, you can find out more about upgrading and where your current system stands by downloading the free **Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor** from www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/get/upgrade-advisor.aspx. The program will analyze your system and give feedback on non-compatible programs and areas where changes would be needed before upgrading.

Questions in advance? E-mail Jim at AnwayJ@comcast.net. ♦

How can a modern pirate attack, exploit, scare, and skim you on the high e-“seas”?



Why, by phishing of course! Captain Jack Lewtschuk explains it all, starting on page 3.

FRIDAY January 8, 2010

7:30 to 9:30 pm

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More about APCUG at www.apcug.org or e-mail Tom223@pacbell.net.

Meeting Reviewers and Columnists

Attend General Meetings/any ongoing workshops; write 500-word-or-less reviews or write a regular column on hardware or software review, favorite website, etc.

E-mail or call President **Jack Lewtschuk** at blacklion@royal.net

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Team & Photographer
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Team
Carolyn Lake Program/Publicity . . . 643-2023 lakelyn@comcast.net
Team & Newsletter
Co-Editor
Charlie Mehlert Hospitality 657-4125 mehlert@sbcglobal.net
Team Leader

MBUG-PC VOLUNTEERS

Jim Anway Workshop Leader/F1Help . . 625-5618 AnwayJ@comcast.net
Joe Asling Columnist 641-9560 jhasling@comcast.net
Bill Baumgardt . . . Workshop Leader 372-5500 ww2@comcast.net
Eileen Begley Workshop Leader 582-9336 eb@spyderbytes.com
Bill Bowles Columnist 375-3954 B@bowles.com
Norma Cocklin Canterbury Woods 657-4257 cocklin@att.net
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Lee Keely SIG Moderator/F1 Help . . . 233-6995 Lee@leekeely.com
John Laughton LegalAdvisor 649-1122 john@netlawyers.com
Gil Preston Library Coordinator 657-4111 gildix@mbay.net
Clive Sanders Consultant 375-5376 simbacli@pacbell.net
Bob Stephan Historian, F1 Help, 646-1373 stephan.bob@gmail.com
Columnist & Workshop Leader
Bill Stockton Recording Secretary 384-6130 N/A
Ed West Webmaster/Listserv Owner . . 372-6200 captain@mobie.com

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THINGS, THINGLETS & THINGASSOS

S. Jack Lewtschuk
MBUG-PC
Columnist



photo: Bill Hyley, MBUG-PC

The Bad Guys are After Your Money

Well, that's nothing new.

Just as knowing the "computer language" is good to assist communication when seeking help or offering help to others, so is knowing the definition of words to describe cybercrime.

Just to better understand the nomenclature of cyber assaults, one has to be able to understand the lingo. I researched the Internet (some very helpful "e-letters") and came up with this handy list:

"Adware"

A piece of software that displays advertisements on a computer after the software is installed. Adware can be benign, as in the case of a free program that displays ads in a manner that is agreed upon in advance. Or adware can be a nuisance, displaying unwanted ads with no apparent way to remove the program. The nuisance variety is often silently downloaded along with some other desired software, such as a game or toolbar.

"Arbitrary Code Execution"

When a security vulnerability is discovered in a piece of software, sometimes it is said that it allows for "arbitrary code" to be executed on the machine. This really means that the vulnerability can be used to cause that program to execute ANY set of commands or instructions on that computer.

"Black Hat"

A "bad guy" or hacker who breaks into computer networks, creates viruses, sends spam, or uses unethical tactics to influence engine results.

"Ethical Hacker"

A "good hacker" who uses a variety of techniques to test the safety of a computer network or system software. Typically an ethical hacker (also known as a "White Hat") is hired by a company to see if there are any flaws in its systems that might allow Black Hats to gain entry.

"Botnet"

A collection of ordinary home and office computers that have been compromised by rogue software. The term "botnet" is short for "robot network" and describes the situation rather well. Computers that have been caught up in a botnet have been effectively taken over and can be used to perform almost any task by the person or persons who control the botnet. Botnets are controlled by criminals and other miscreants whose motives include spewing spam to sell products, operating financial scams, and crippling websites through coordinated attacks. (See "Denial of Service Attack".)

"Buffer Overrun"

This is a flaw in a computer program that occurs when the length of a user input is not validated. For example, if a program is expecting a 9-digit social security number as input, it should discard any input beyond the 9th character. If the program blindly accepts a longer input string, it could "overrun" the input buffer, thereby trashing some other part of the currently-running program with the extraneous characters. In some cases, this flaw can be used to overwrite the existing program with code that comes from the input string. (See "Arbitrary Code Execution".)

"Denial of Service Attack"

A concerted effort by one or more remote attackers that attempts to flood a web server or network with meaningless requests. A sustained, coordinated attack can render the target unable to service the legitimate users who are attempting to connect.

"Exploit"

A method of taking advantage of a bug or security hole in a computer program. It is possible that a hole may be known to exist, but no exploit has yet been created to capitalize on it.

"Malware"

Any form of malicious software. This can include



computer viruses, spyware, worms, trojan horses, rootkits, and other software that is deliberately harmful, destructive, or invasive.

“Patch”

A fix for a software bug or security hole. When a bug is discovered, often there is a race by software vendors to provide a patch before an Exploit is created. Patches must be applied to the affected computers in order to prevent exploitation of the flaw.

“Phishing”

The act of stealing information using lies or deception as bait. Online scammers try to trick people into voluntarily providing passwords, account numbers, and other personal information by pretending to be someone they trust. An example of phishing is an e-mail that appears to be from a bank, asking recipients to log in to a rogue site that looks exactly like the real one. When the victim logs in, the operators of the fake site then have that person’s login credentials and can access his or her bank account.

“Rootkit”

A rootkit is a software tool (or a set of programs) designed to conceal files, data, or active processes from the operating system. Because of their ability to hide deep in the operating system, rootkits are hard to detect and remove. Although rootkits may not cause damage when installed, they are often piggy-backed with additional code written for the purpose of taking control of a computer, disabling certain functions, or spying on the user and reporting activities back to the rootkit creator.

Write a Hardware, Software, Service, or Website Review
Have a computer-related experience, good or bad, to share with MBUG?
Your hardware or software experiences with a favorite or most-hated website, program, OS, piece of peripheral equipment, cellphone, digital camera, or “toy” are welcome.
Contact **Regina Doyle**,
Editor MBUG Newsletter
at ReginaDoyle@aol.com.

“Scareware”

Software that is created for the purpose of tricking people into downloading or purchasing it, when in reality it is either unnecessary, marginally useful, or outright dangerous. Online ads that display fake warnings such as “Your computer may be infected—click here to scan for viruses” or “ERROR! Registry Damage Detected—click to download Registry Cleaner” would qualify as scareware. Scareware programs often run a fake or cursory scan, then present the user with a list of hazards that must be corrected. Fixing these “problems” then requires the user to pay a fee for a “full” or “registered” version of the software.



“Skimming”

The act of stealing credit or debit card information while a legitimate transaction is taking place at an ATM (Automatic Teller Machine). Skimming involves an unauthorized device that is attached to the card slot of the ATM, which reads the magnetic strip as the card passes through. A hidden camera may also be used to capture the victim’s PIN (Personal Identification Number).

“Spyware”

Spyware is a type of malicious software designed to take action on a computer without the informed consent of the user. Spyware may surreptitiously monitor the user, reporting personal information to a remote site, or subvert the computer’s operation for the benefit of a third party. Some spyware tracks what types of websites a user visits and send this information to an advertising agency. Others may launch annoying popup advertisements.

More malicious versions try to intercept passwords or credit card numbers.

“Trojan Horse”

A Trojan horse is a malicious program that is disguised or embedded within other software. The term is derived from the classical myth of the Trojan Horse. Such a program may look useful or interesting but is actually harmful when executed.

Examples may include web browser toolbars, games, and file sharing programs. A Trojan horse cannot operate or spread on its own, so it relies on a social engineering approach (tricking the user into taking some action) rather than flaws in a computer’s security.

“Virus”

A computer virus is a malicious self-replicating computer program that spreads by inserting copies of itself into other programs or documents, similar to the way a real virus operates. When the infected program or document is opened, the destructive action (payload) is repeated, resulting in the infection, destruction, or deletion of other files.

Sometimes the infected programs continue to function normally, albeit with the side effects of the virus; in other cases, the original program is crippled or destroyed.

“Worm”

A worm is a malicious computer program that is self-contained and does not need help from another program to propagate itself. It can spread by trying to infect other files on a local network or by exploiting the host computer’s e-mail transmission capabilities to send copies of itself to everyone found in the e-mail address book. Some even look in the cache of recently visited web pages and extract other e-mail addresses to target.

“Zero-Day Exploit”

An attack that tries to exploit unpatched security vulnerabilities. The term “zero day” derives from the fact that software vendors sometimes have a window of time to fix a problem before an exploit is developed or before news of a vulnerability is made public. But when the exploit already exists before a patch is released, the vendors have “zero days” to fix it because users are already exposed.



MBUG LENDING LIBRARY UPDATE

Those who are following the many features of Google through the MBUG Google SIG may find our latest volume from Peachpit Press of special interest: *Publishing a Blog with Blogger: Visual QuickProject Guide*. 2nd ed. Elizabeth Castro. Peachpit Press, 2010. 175 pages.

Blogger is Google’s blog-publishing system; find it a www.google.com under the “more” menu link. This manual won’t bog your blogging in details; it uses big, color illustrations and clear, concise step-by-step instructions for completing a project quickly. It covers starting up, writing tips, adding multimedia, working with templates, and more!

To borrow the manual or other items, members can e-mail our volunteer library coordinator **Gil Preston** at gildix@mbay.net. Include the title requested and your name, phone, address, and e-mail address. Books will then be available to you at the next MBUG meeting or as arranged with Gil.

For the full circulation policy and a complete list of current titles, see our MBUG-PC website at www.mbug.org. Click on the Library egghead on the Home page to view the listings.

Donations of new or gently used suitable books, CDs, and DVDs are appreciated. Turn in your donations at any MBUG meeting to Carolyn Lake or other Board member, and we will sort the items for use either in the Library, or in a raffle, or as a “back shelf” freebie. ♦

lakelyn@comcast.net

“Zombie”

A computer that has been compromised and can be controlled over a network to do the bidding of a criminal or miscreant. Computers that have been caught up in a botnet are zombies and can be used by the controller of the botnet to send spam or participate in a coordinated denial of service attack. ♦

blacklion@royal.net



THE FRUGAL COMPUTERIST

photo: Bill Hyley, MBUG-PC



by Bob
"I Don't Do
Windows"
Stephan

The following article is from *Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter* Vol. 14 No. 6 - February 9, 2009, and is copyright 1996 - 2009 by **Richard W. Eastman**. It is re-published here with the permission of the author. Information about the newsletter is available at www.eogn.com. Though it is presented here by Bob as Editor of *The Frugal Computerist*, he does not claim credit for writing about these products.

Why You Need a Second (and Better) E-mail Address

One of the worst situations I know of is having your e-mail provided by your Internet provider. If your e-mail address ends in "@" followed by your Internet provider's corporate name, your e-mail is being held hostage.

A case in point is going on in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont right now. Many of my friends in those states have been using **Verizon** as their Internet provider, and most of them had e-mail addresses ending in "@verizon.net." Verizon recently sold off the company's DSL and phone networks in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont to **Fairpoint Communications** in a deal worth \$2.72 billion. The deal involved 1.6 million local access lines in the three states. Once the sale was completed, the problems began.

The first problem was that all the customers were given short notice that their e-mail addresses were being converted to addresses ending in "@myfairpoint.net." Next, all the customers had to reconfigure their e-mail programs. Sadly, these customers were not given much time to notify their e-mail correspondents. Most only had a few days in which to notify friends and relatives

and to change their e-mail addresses on e-mail lists and thousands of web sites. One of my friends who runs an active **eBay** business suddenly found that the hundreds of listings he had on eBay now pointed to a non-existent e-mail address. He changed the listings on eBay to his new myfairpoint.net address, only to find out that it didn't work. He lost hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars, and his eBay reputation was ruined.

Next, the myfairpoint.net mail servers didn't work very well. I only have second-hand information about the problems, so I can only refer you to the thousands of messages posted on various online message boards. Apparently, Fairpoint was not prepared for the sudden growth in the number of customers. The online message boards are full of reports about mail server crashes, lost messages, and more.

Many people report that they can send mail but not receive it or vice versa. One of my friends reports that he can see the message headers in his in-box, but when he clicks on any of the message headers, he receives an error message of "unable to retrieve" or something similar. He says it is frustrating being teased like that: he can see the headers of new messages but cannot read the messages.

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Worst of all, messages being sent to the old Verizon addresses are not being forwarded to the new Fairpoint addresses. If they placed a message on a web site last year looking for relatives and provided their Verizon e-mail address, they will never receive any messages sent to them in the future.

Sadly, these latest reports are only the latest examples of such problems. In fact, Fairpoint and Verizon are only two companies that have created such problems. In the business climate of the last few years, many Internet providers have sold out or been forcibly acquired, resulting in customers scrambling to maintain e-mail capabilities.

Prevent E-Mail Problems When Moving or Leaving a Job

Users sometimes create further problems on their own: for instance, those who move. When moving to a new area, there is a high probability that you will have to switch Internet providers. It's a darned shame if you also have to change e-mail addresses. In fact, the problem could have been prevented very easily.

Another, similar, situation is using an e-mail address provided by an employer. What happens if you resign, get laid off, or if the employer is bought out by another company? In today's business climate, millions of people have their e-mail addresses forcibly changed every year. I went through this last year: I voluntarily switched from **Charter Communications** cable television and Internet service to **Verizon FIOS Fiber Optic** as my Internet provider. I did so in order to obtain faster Internet service. However, I never changed my e-mail address. It remains the same as it has for the past five years or so. For me, the change in Internet providers was a non-issue.

The solution is simple: never, ever use an e-mail address provided by your Internet provider. Get a separate, independent address that can be used from any Internet provider.

For most people, that means obtaining a **FREE Gmail** (Google Mail), **Yahoo Mail**, **Hotmail**, or similar service. Most of these services work better than the mail servers of most Internet service providers; plus they have the advantage of working from anywhere. If your Internet provider suddenly gets acquired or if you

move to a new area or if you are simply on vacation for a few days in some sunny climate, you can always use the same e-mail address.

My favorite is Gmail, provided by Google. The power, flexibility, and ease of use of this e-mail service always amazes me. Gmail even offers advanced e-mail capabilities at no charge, such as **IMAP** and **POP3** access, services that are not available on Hotmail or Yahoo's free e-mail service. With IMAP or POP3, the user never even sees advertisements. However, any user with a web browser will see ads in all three popular services.

NOTE: For an explanation of IMAP and POP3, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imap> and <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pop3>.

To be sure, there is never any guarantee that Gmail, Yahoo Mail, Hotmail, and the others will remain in business under the same banners, the same corporate names, and the same e-mail addresses. There is always a risk that even they will force their customers to change someday. However, the experience of the past five years shows that most of the turmoil has been in the arena of Internet service providers. So far, Gmail, Yahoo Mail, and Hotmail customers have seen no forced changes. The odds are that they will remain stable while the Internet service providers will remain in turmoil.

Don't Wait Another Year

I'd suggest that you start planning NOW. Do not wait until one day your Internet service provider gives you seven days' notice or less. Obtain a free e-mail address someplace else right now. Then you can slowly migrate your e-mail over at your leisure. You might start by writing all your e-mail messages in your new address right now, but you can continue to monitor your old e-mail address for incoming messages for another year or two or three. As a matter of fact, Gmail has a Settings tool that lets you specify other e-mail addresses you own – such as your "old" Internet provider's – so that those messages arrive in your Gmail inbox as well. This works with any old e-mail address that supports POP3 mail protocol. (AOL will not work as that company does not follow industry standards.) You also have the option of sending replies with either your old e-mail address or your new Gmail address, all from the same



Gmail account. In short, you can easily migrate all your correspondence to the independent mail system over a period of months or even years. I would suggest that such a plan is far better than waiting until you receive seven days' notice from your Internet service provider!

Everyone Should Have at Least Two E-Mail Addresses

If you have an e-mail address ending in verizon.net, comcast.net, BellSouth.com, aol.com, or any other Internet provider's "captive" e-mail addresses, the time to start planning is NOW.

In fact, you can sign up at all three: Gmail, Yahoo Mail, and Hotmail. And there are still others: **Apple** provides ".mac" addresses (to become ".me" addresses) for a fee, and there are many others as well. I use a commercial service that provides an e-mail address based on my name: richard@eastman.net. Even though I use a commercial e-mail provider and am happy with it, I also have a Gmail account that I use as a second account for situations where I do not want to use my primary address. I'd suggest that everyone should have at least two e-mail addresses. After all, they are free.

Experiment for a bit to see which service you like best, then settle on that one and start notifying all your friends and relatives. Of course, you should continue to monitor your old e-mail address for another year or two so as to receive messages from those who have not yet received the word of your change in e-mail addresses.

I like the idea of adding a "SIG file" that automatically appends a "signature" line or two of text on the bottom of every e-mail message you send: *"Please notice that my e-mail address has changed recently. Please send all future e-mail messages to..."*

Why Be Held Hostage by Your IP?

It's YOUR e-mail! You have a right to receive e-mail messages and not to be "jerked around" by corporate buy-outs. I'd suggest that you take control of your e-mail now. Obtain your own e-mail address today and start migrating your mail.

Finally, if you are immersed in the Verizon/Fairpoint problems right now, why fight it? Pick up a Gmail account and switch. You already have to notify all your

correspondents anyway; why not get an e-mail address that works and won't change for a while?◆


Other newsletter readers have already offered comments, questions or corrections to the above article at: http://blog.eogn.com/eastmans_online_genealogy/2009/02/why-you-need-a-second-and-better-e-mail-address-by-dick-eastman.html.

Now back to The Frugal Computerist, Bob Stephan

Rather than typing that long URL provided by **Richard Eastman** in the above paragraph, just use the "Tiny URL" <http://tinyurl.com/ccwj8y>.

One idea that Eastman did not mention is to use the auto-reply feature available from most e-mail providers. If you decide to change to Gmail for example, set up an auto-reply on your old e-mail address to notify senders that you have changed your e-mail address. This will automatically notify senders of your new address and you don't have to worry about spammers getting the reply because they do not use real e-mail addresses so the reply will just fall on the floor and generate an error response. Then you can also just have your old e-mail provider forward your e-mail to your Gmail, or other, new address, and you will seldom have to check your old address. Or you can have your new provider pick up the mail from your old address as Eastman suggests. I know that this works because I have already done it (as you might surmise from my own Gmail address).◆

Bob "I don't do Windows" Stephan has over 40 years of computing experience. He welcomes comments and questions that The Frugal Computerist can respond to by e-mail to stephan.bob@gmail.com. Bob's new home page is at bobstephan.com.

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Tales from the Trenches: We All Believe in Groupthink

by Gregory Anderson,
SmartComputing Tech Support

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June 2009 issue, Vol. 20, Issue 6 (page 93).

Visit www.SmartComputing.com/Groups
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You probably already know about **Google's** plans to take over the world. The ubiquitous "search" company already delivers **YouTube**, **Gmail**, **Maps**, an office suite, and an Internet browser. Believe it or not, however, there's one powerful piece of the Google Empire that you probably aren't using enough. Like the rest of the company's offerings, it can make life a lot easier. No, not Google Babysitter or GCarWash—though both would be nice, wouldn't they? I'm talking about **Google Groups**, a powerful tool for helping solve tech support issues. The best thing is, you probably already know how to use it.

You may be wondering what I'm talking about. Just as Google's famous search engine scours and indexes the World Wide Web, collecting billions of links to Web pages all over the world, Google Groups does the same for the world of newsgroups. Online message boards go way back before the Web, when **BBS** (bulletin board systems) and **Usenet** roamed the earth, and no one could imagine a good reason for putting anything but text online. Newsgroups contain ongoing discussion threads between their users, some of which can span years and assist people reviewing the conversation long after it ends. Because newsgroups tended to be a tool of "techies," a side benefit is that they often focus on technology issues, so you're likely to find plenty of discussion relevant to your technical problems.

Google Groups is easy to find. Go to www.google.com, click "More," and then "Groups." If you're looking to add a Favorite or Shortcut, you can go direct via groups.google.com. Enter your search terms (using all the same Boolean terms you apply to regular searches) and click "Search Groups." Alternatively, you can run a regular Google search and then click the "Groups" link to see results for the same query across the discussion group universe. Click the assembled results for live or cached newsgroup posts, just as you do for Web links.

There are plenty of ways to do more than just type in search terms and browse results. If you find a group focusing specifically on an issue you deal with often, subscribe to the group to keep a regular eye on what's going on. The "Preferences" link next to the "Search" box lets you select various languages to search in and control "SafeSearch" filtering. This is especially useful if you're interested in technical tips for amateur video editing and don't want to have to dodge all sorts of other, nontechnical discussion. You can also use the categories in the "Explore Groups" section to browse newsgroups looking for just the right forum topic.

Just like a discussion board or file-sharing site, you can only lurk so long, gathering community wisdom, before you start to feel like a leech. At some point, you'll want to let people know that their tips worked, or you'll want to record your own solution for the next poor sap that comes along. Moreover, if you can't find a solution that works, your next step is to ask for help. That's when it's time to speak up. Most of the newsgroups linked from Google Group's search results, and all official Google-hosted groups, let you post replies to existing threads or create new discussion topics. Sometimes you need to become a registered user, and some groups control membership more strictly than others (like political parties, but that's a different column). In any case, make a contribution every once in a while, and you'll make the whole newsgroup community a richer place.

The next time you're in a support pickle, think of that plucky little startup from **Mountain View, California**. Sure, they can find you 80 gazillion websites about whatever topic piques your curiosity. When you need help solving specific problems, though, going along with the crowd can be good after all. ♦

NOTE: *If you're interested in learning more about Google groups, join MBUG's Google Special Interest Group (SIG) moderated by Lee Keely. Details and contact information on page 14.*

Gregory Anderson writes for *Smart Computing* and other technology publications. He keeps a sharp eye on computing trends and enjoys working with geeks of all stripes. Share your own stories at [informationmining at gregory-anderson@smartcomputing.com](mailto:informationmining@gregory-anderson@smartcomputing.com). Also, see page 6 in this issue of MBUG-PC for FREE Smart Computing Tech Support.



MBUG-PC SUPPORTERS

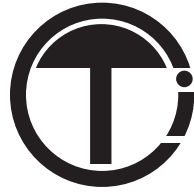
James W. Anway

Computer Consultant
Retired IBMer

Phone: 831 625-5618
Fax: Call first

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& training

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Bob Weisensee
Production Supervisor
bob@ctimls.com

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Carolyn S. Lake

798 Lighthouse Ave, #194
Monterey, California 93940

phone: 831-643-2023
email: lakelyn@comcast.net

In-home Computer Coaching

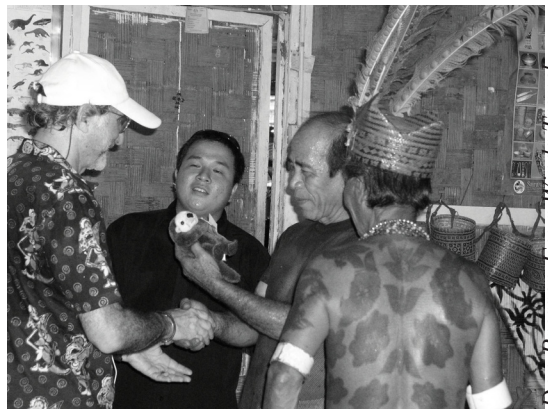
- Practical guidance to make your computer work for you
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Dan Presser in Borneo discussing conservation awareness with a local Headman.

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Fax (831) 622-9467 ■ CST #1000683-40

info@fourwindstravel.com

raffle items wanted

Cleaning House? Reorganizing? Getting A New PC?

Donate new or nearly-new computer-related items (books, hardware, or software)*

Call **Don Slaiter** (655-4443) or bring items

to any MBUG function. **Contact**, or tell us about, suitable vendors from whom MBUG might get raffle items. **Save** your money and buy lots of tickets at raffles!

All proceeds benefit our educational activities.

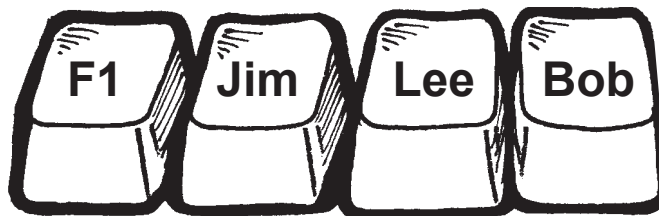
**Items will be sorted for the raffle, the "freebies" shelf, or responsible recycling*

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 F1 Volunteers will share their experience on software and hardware. To get computer help:

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



■ Jim Anway

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

■ Lee Keely

Prefers e-mail at Lee@leekeely.com
or call 233-6995

■ Bob Stephan

e-mail to stephan.bob@gmail.com
or call only between 9am-5pm
646-1373◆

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).

Computer Classes - 2010



1025 Lighthouse Avenue
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(831) 646-6580
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We offer classes and workshops that are designed for the busy adult learner: Dreamweaver, MS Access, Excel 1 & 2, Photoshop Elements, Selling on eBay, Genealogy Online, InDesign, Picasa, Windows Vista, and more.
Online registration available now:
www.pgusd.org



MEETING REVIEWS

photo: Nelson French, MBUG-PC



by Carolyn Lake
Program &
Publicity Team

Virtual Desktop Virtually Here Thanks to Michael Nall

At our December 4 General Meeting, **Michael Nall**, partner in **Your New Desktop, Inc.**, gave us a peek into the world of computer virtualization. Michael pointed out that virtual software is basically a program that pretends to be a computer... and why do we want this? A short answer is that, once installed on your existing base system, the program acts like another computer on which another, perhaps older, version of an operating system can be installed (sort of like those little Russian dolls with another smaller doll inside).

For example, on the virtual computer you could install **Windows 3.11**—provided you still have such hanging around—and then use it to run older software that is not compatible with your newer base system. So the virtual computer allows us to retain and run our older programs without constantly updating them to match operating system updates on our base (real) machine.

photo: Nelson French, MBUG-PC



Michael (*in photo at left*), also pointed out that **Windows 7** has an “XP mode”; that’s another example of virtualization.

The **XP mode** can be used to load versions of **Adobe** software, for example, that worked well with XP but which might not be compatible with Windows 7.

A potential downside is that the virtual system does not have direct access to hardware and uses generic drivers and cards, so you cannot do video editing, or burn CDs, or get full resolution over two monitors. However, it can access a local CD-ROM drive in read-only mode to load programs and files. Backup is easy by copying the whole system file off to an external machine.

The upside of the hardware limitation is that the virtual system is protected from the Internet. So it can be used for programs with sensitive data, such as financial software, or for other files with personal information that you want to be sure doesn’t appear on YouTube.

Michael recommended that it is preferable for the base machine to have a 64-bit OS, such as Windows 7. One example of virtualization software available is Microsoft’s **Virtual PC**, a free download that runs on XP, Vista, and Windows 7 platforms. Virtual PC has the limitation that, in turn, it can only load a Microsoft OS; however, **VMWare Workstation**, another virtual program, available from **VMWare**, can be used to load non-Microsoft OS. This meeting was a great brain-stretcher; many thanks, Michael!

Debbie Jones Introduces the Portable Lapworks Desktop

Debbie Jones (MBUG Publicity Team member), gave us pointers on keyboard ergonomics and the advantages of using portable desktops, such as those developed by **LapWorks**, at a workshop on December 9 at **Canterbury Woods**. Despite her rather odd-looking expression in the photo at right, Debbie really likes the easy-to-use device!

For more about the desktops and other LapWorks products, see their website at www.LapTopDesk.net. Attendees were treated to good information from Debbie, a mini-affle, and coffee and holiday goodies.

◆ lakelyn@comcast.net



photo: Carolyn Lake, MBUG-PC

Microsoft “Ribbon-Based” Word & Excel Tips

from Sharon Parq Associates

Microsoft is preparing to launch **Office 2010**. As it changes, the syndicated company called **Sharon Parq Associates** (MBUG’s newest partner in computer-related information-sharing), is following suit. They are rolling out new sites for **menu-based** and **Ribbon-based Word and Excel programs**. You can find thousands of free tips, for Ribbon as well as conventional Word and Excel programs online at Sharon Parq’s associated websites: <http://wordribbon.tips.net>, <http://excel.tips.net>, <http://excelribbon.tips.net>, and <http://excel.tips.net>.

Here are the first of many articles from Sharon Parq that we will be sharing with you.

Rounding to Even and Odd Values in Excel

Excel includes two functions

that allow you to quickly round a number up to the next highest even or odd integer values. For instance, suppose you have the value 26.3 in cell A7, and the following in cell A9: = EVEN(A7)

The value returned by this function is 28, which is the next highest even integer value. The following function will return a value of 27, which is the next highest odd value: = ODD(A7)

If the value in A7 were negative, then both the ODD and EVEN functions will return values that are further away from zero than the value used as an argument (but they are still odd and even).

“Jumping Back” in a Long Word Document

If you are editing a long document and you need to temporarily refer to another place in the document, you can use this tip to make yourself more productive. There are two

ways you can jump back and forth in your document. First, you can use the scroll bars to view the other parts of the document. The insertion point (the blinking bar that indicates where your typing will appear) is still at your old editing position, even though it is off-screen. When you are through viewing the part of the document you need to refer to, press one of the arrow keys or any printable character (including the space bar). You will be taken back to the exact place you were editing. Of course, if you press a printable character you need to delete it.

The other method is to use SHIFT+F5. This key combination is used to jump to the last three places in the document where you made edits. (Actually, it is four locations if you count the one where you first pressed SHIFT+F5.) When you use this key combination, you will return to where you were most recently editing. ♦

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Sharon Parq Associates, Inc.

Password Protect Your Account

by Kathy Frey, Webmaster,
Computer Club,
Green Valley, Arizona

This article is from APCUG and used with the author’s permission for publication by MBUG; all others require permission of the author (see e-mail address at end of article)

If you password protect your account for your **Windows** operating system, then you should create a password reset disk. It takes very little time and is easy

to do. In **Windows XP**, **Windows Vista**, and **Windows 7**, these steps are the same:

1. Click “Start”
2. Click “Control Panel”
3. Click “User Accounts”

Select the account for which you want to make the password reset disk. (Make a reset disk for each account.)

In Windows XP, on the left under “Related Tasks,” click on “Prevent a Forgotten Password” to start the “Forgotten Password Wizard,” and then click “Next.” Follow the wizard. You can use a floppy disk or

a USB drive for the reset disk. In Windows Vista, on the left click on “Create a Password Reset Disk,” then follow the wizard. The Password Reset Disk is essentially a small file that can be used to reset your password, even if you have changed your password since creating the reset disk.

In Windows 7, click on Create a password reset disk. If no media is installed, you will get a message that indicates you need a removable media, such as a floppy disk or a flash drive.

Otherwise the password reset
(continued on page 14)



JANUARY

MBUG SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP ON GOOGLE



Lee Keely

Google Group Moderator

Wednesday, 13 January

7:00 to 9:00pm

Canterbury Woods Auditorium, PG

At their second open face-to-face meeting, **Gsig** members will review successes and problems with using on-line communication tools, including discussion postings, e-mails, and shared documents. Meetings are open to all and prior attendance is not required.

Those new to Google will be updated on how to set up a **Google Account** and join the **MBUG.Gsig Group**. **Lee Keely** will demonstrate how to navigate in Google using tabs and links to access group activities and projects.

Group members will also have a chance to share their experiences in creating individual websites using the **Google Sites** program and/or editing the Gsig website at <http://sites.google.com/site/mbugsgsig/>.

Bring your laptop to the meeting and practice collaborating with assistance from the group!

Try out the link to view the **MBUG Google** site in progress. Also see the **Smart Computing** article on page 9 to learn more about the uses of Google Groups.

Questions in advance? Contact Lee at leekeely@gmail.com. ♦

(continued from page 13)

wizard comes up, and you again will need to follow the screens.

After creating your reset disks, store them in a very safe place, since the information can be easily used by anyone to reset the password and gain access to your account. There are other ways to change the passwords in all three operating systems, but the above is an easy and quick way to have that extra safety net in hand. ♦

<http://gvcc.apcug.org> and frey58@cox.net.

COMING in FEBRUARY

7 PHOTOSHOP STEPS TO IMPROVE ANY PHOTO

Greg Hyde

Guest Speaker

Friday, 5 February

7:30 to 9:30pm

Adult Education Center, PG



In addition to running his **Assimilated Multimedia** business, **Greg Hyde** carries on many other projects, including teaching **Photoshop** at the **Pacific Grove Adult Education Center** (see the PGAEC ad on page 11 for contact information).

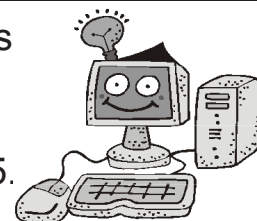
A welcome repeat speaker, this time Greg will share with us the essence of his PGAEC class, which is based on the book "**Scott Kelby's 7-Point System for Adobe Photoshop.**"

Greg will cover how to improve almost any photo using features such as "Camera Raw," "Curves," "Shadows and Highlights," "Lab Color Channel Secrets," "Painting with Light," and more. With the insights and basic steps from this session, you will find you don't need to know all the intricacies of Photoshop to produce great pictures.

Questions in advance? Contact Greg at ghyde@aaammm.com. ♦

*RUN YOUR OWN SIG!

2nd and 4th Wednesdays
are available for **Special
Interest Groups (SIGs)**.
See calendar on page 15.




*Present topics, conduct discussions, or
introduce speakers of your choice and
interest in the format of your choice: lectures,
demonstrations, tutorials, or discussion of
general computer-related topics.*

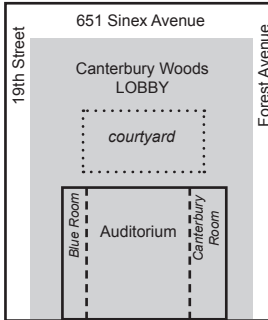
Contact **Jack Lewtschuk**, blacklion@royal.net or
Carolyn Lake, lakelyn@comcast.net.

We'd love to hear from you! ♦

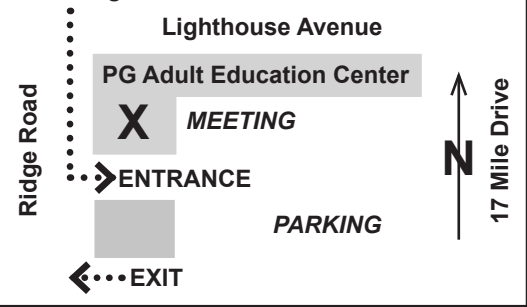
MBUG-PC Calendar of Events - JANUARY 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		DID YOU MAKE A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION YET? It's not too late to resolve to attend an MBUG DIRECTORS MEETING in 2010! (Usually held on the Tuesday before every General Meeting at Canterbury Woods, PG at 7pm) Or, make a resolution to attend more MBUG GENERAL MEETINGS in 2010! (Usually held on the first Friday of each month at the Adult Education Center PG at 7:30pm) Check the MBUG calendar for specific dates each month.			1 NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAY	2
3	4	5 DIRECTORS MEETING Canterbury Woods PG Canterbury Room Begins at 7pm <i>Everyone Welcome!</i>	6	7	8 Windows 7: Part 2 Adult Ed Center PG 7:30 to 9:30pm Jim Anway	9
10	11	12	13 MBUG Google SIG* Canterbury Woods PG 7-9pm Lee Keely, Moderator	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 This date is available for a SIG* at CBW 7-9pm	28	29	30
31						

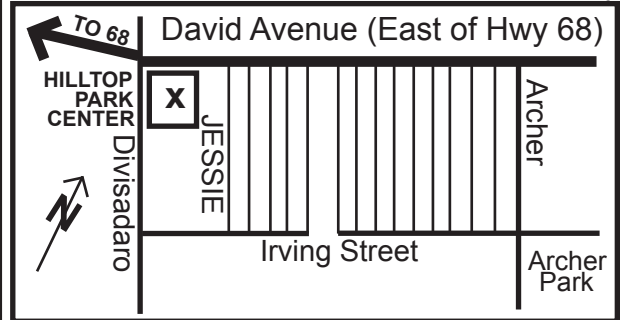
Canterbury Woods
 651 Sinex Avenue
 Pacific Grove



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



Hilltop Park Center
 871 Jessie Street
 Monterey



Tentative Calendar February 2010 Check the February Newsletter for Final Schedule

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 DIRECTORS MEETING Canterbury Woods PG Canterbury Room Begins at 7pm <i>Everyone Welcome!</i>	3	4	5 7 Photoshop Steps to Improve Any Photo Adult Ed Center PG 7:30 to 9:30pm Greg Hyde	6
7	8	9	10 This date is available for a SIG* at CBW 7-9pm	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 This date is available for a SIG* at CBW 7-9pm	25	26	27

Got ideas for a good computer-related meeting? Know anyone you want as a guest speaker? MBUG welcomes your ideas! Contact or join the Publicity Team: **Nelson French** nfrenchjr@aol.com, **Debbie Jones** debbie@debteaches.com, or **Carolyn Lake** lakelyn@comcast.net



mbug-pc newsletter

Vol 29, No 1, January 2010

PO Box 51611 / Pacific Grove
California 93950
info@mbug.com

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Monterey Bay Users Group-PC,
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MEMBERSHIP REPORT

photo: Bill Hyley, MBUG



Don Slaiter
Membership Chairman



THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

name	member number
John & Lee Ann Harris	950
Tony San Filippo	1199
Gail Stephan	663

WELCOME BACK and THANK YOU FOR RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN 2010!

James Emery	1259
Mary Faulkner	1301
Gail Stephan	663
John & Lee Ann Harris	950
Sadri Musavi	1302
Tony San Filippo	1199
Ed Whitworth	1258

MBUG LISTSERV: FREE & USEFUL

If you are an MBUG Member, you are entitled to **JOIN MBUG'S LISTSERV.**

This allows you to:

- Send messages to all MBUG Members on Listserv** (guaranteed to be secure, computer-related, and virus-free)
- Receive current MBUG notices, virus and scam warnings**
- Ask computer-related questions**
- Make computer-related announcements** (regarding donations of or requests for computer-related items)

Register at www.mbug.org

or go to

<http://listserv.redshift.com/mailman/listinfo/mbug>.