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Reports

Volume 23 Issue 1

First Quarter 2012

Association of Personal Computer User Groups

UGLS

The old saying that good things come to those who wait! Well, the waiting for a useable and functional UGLS is truly around the corner.

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Reaching Out

A number of user groups have reported that they reversed a loss of membership by expanding their focus and covering not just computer topics but also other areas of technology.

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Virtual Conference 2

APCUG will hold the Second Virtual Conference on February 25, 2012.

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Making Money for your User Group

During the years in my local User Group, we have come up some super ideas for making money for your User Group, and I would like to take this opportunity to share them with you.

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Need Help Finding Presentation Topics?

Check out the APCUG Speakers Bureau.

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APCUG Member Survey Results - November, 2011

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Website

Have you seen the APCUG.NET website recently? It has undergone a makeover, and we now have a column for User Group News

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APCUG REPORTS

APCUG REPORTS is published quarterly by the Association of Personal Computer User Groups, Inc. (APCUG), 13940 Cedar Rd. #447, Cleveland, OH 44118-3204 to inform and educate officers of member user groups. It shares information about the activities of APCUG and related opportunities for the benefit of APCUG members.

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Upcoming Conferences

2012 FACUG Technology Conference Bahamas Cruise (and APCUG Annual Meeting) Four-night/five-day Bahamas cruise, sailing from Miami, FL January 23rd through January 27, 2012

APCUG Second Virtual Conference Cyberspace February 25, 2012

Computer Technology Conference Scottsdale, AZ March 22 - 25, 2012

Southwest Technology & Computer Conference San Diego, California June 22, 23 & 24, 2012

APCUG/CAMUG 2012 Regional Computer Conference Canton, Ohio Jul 12 - 14, 2012

2013 FACUG Technology Symposium @ Club Med Port St Lucie, Florida Feb 25 - 28, 2013

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Submission of Articles

The absolute deadline is shown below; copy received after the deadline will be considered for the next quarter's issue.

| Issue | Published | Deadline |
|------------------|-----------|----------|
| Q1 = Jan/Feb/Mar | Jan 1 | Dec 15 |
| Q2 = Apr/May/Jun | Apr 1 | Mar 15 |
| Q3 = Jul/Aug/Sep | Jul 1 | Jun 15 |
| Q4 = Oct/Nov/Dec | Oct 1 | Sep 15 |

President's Message

by David Steward

As we welcome in the new year, I would like to welcome each of you, to the new year of APCUG. As is customary, the new Board of Directors has seated, and the Election of Officers has taken place. This year, I was asked to be President of the organization, and have willingly accepted the position. Marie Vesta was elected to serve as Vice President, Patty Lowry was elected to be Secretary, and Sandra Hart was elected to be Treasurer.

On behalf of the APCUG Boards, I would like to extend our deepest Thanks to Kathy Jacobs for her service to the organization as last years President.

Most of you already know me, but for those of you that don't, let me take this opportunity to introduce myself. I have been serving on the Board of Advisors for the past 11 years, and during that period, have held the Advisor Chair position for a number of years. I have served in various capacities, such as Committee Chair of various committees within APCUG. Those of you that went to the conferences in Las Vegas will recognize me as the "loudmouth that loved to give stuff away."

Suffice to say, I am proud to have been selected to lead this organization for the next year.

Most of the time, new Presidents like to list their wants and goals in the first article. And, most of these goals are not realized in the time of their Presidency, and in some cases, never at all. I do not want to make a lot of promises to you that may or may not become reality. I will, however, promise you one thing. I will, as I have for the past 10+ years, do everything in my power to insure that this organization is as much a part of the user group community as it can be. We have a great bunch of people that have volunteered their time to just that end. With that said, there are a couple of things that will be changing this year. One, we will be getting a new website, that will be informative and full of features for our members. Second, there will be greatly improved communication from us to you, as our new database is coming online as we speak.

Over the years, I have watched this organization metamorphise through a number of different directions. Some of these were good, and some were not. I want to see us return to our core mission statement of "offering help and resources" to our members. I'd like to see this as "users helping users"

But, we cannot do it alone. We need your help and support. We need your input into the wants and needs of your individual organization. By knowing what you need, we can task the correct people into developing these key benefits.

Each of you reading this has an Advisor assigned to your group. Make use of them. Believe me, they enjoy hearing from the groups that they are assigned. Ask them your questions. If they do not know the answer, I can virtually guarantee that someone in this organization does, and is willing to step forward and help.

Each quarter, I will try to keep you informed as to the state of the organization and to keep you up to date on any changes that are taking place, that might affect you. Throughout the year, we will

be endeavoring to create new benefits and reinforce those that we already have. Keep checking the website for the last news.

For those of you that are attending the 2012 Annual Meeting, being held in conjunction with the FACUG Annual Conference, I look forward to meeting you and spending some time picking your brain, so to speak.

Again, thank you for allowing me to serve you as your President. And, please feel free to contact me (president@apcug.org) at any time, with any of the 3 C's, ie...criticism, complaints or compliments.

Reaching Out

by Don Singleton

Director, APCUG

A number of user groups have reported that they reversed a loss of membership by expanding their focus and covering not just computer topics but also other areas of technology. This makes sense. If you are going to buy a new smart phone or tablet, ask the fellow members of your user group what they use. You may even find enough interest to start a Special Interest Group (SIG) or "birds of a feather" to focus on these devices and that group could be the source of a presentation or two for the monthly meeting.

Perhaps there is already an independent group in town that focuses on them (check Meetup.com, Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn). Reach out to them and see if they would like to become a SIG in your group or even a partner group.

Why do this? Besides synergy and sharing of information, there are economies of scale in play where they can use your group's secretary, treasurer, newsletter editor, webmaster, publicity person, etc. to help deal with those areas where they may lack expertise and they can focus just on what interests them. In return, they can provide presentations for your meetings and offer advice in their area of expertise.

This same synergy concept can work with other computer platforms such as Mac and Linux, plus topics like Genealogy, Digital Photography, Graphics, Multimedia, Social Media, IT Pros, etc. If there are people in your group with interests in those areas, encourage them to start a SIG and reach out to the community to attract new members because of that SIG. Every SIG you have gives your publicity person one more opportunity to get your group mentioned in the local media, and this includes social media.

APCUG want to help its member groups with this, but to do it we need to identify people with interests in these areas to serve on committees of Evangelists/Champions to help us:

- Find articles related to the topic and get us reprint permission to include in APCUG Reports and/or Push
- Find speakers willing to do remote presentations on the topic and include them in our Speakers Bureau
- Identify other benefits/services that would be of interest to people interested in the topic

If you would like to be an Evangelist/Champion in one of these areas, contact your Regional Advisor.

Final 2011 President's Message

By Kathy Jacobs

This is my last President's message. I choose not to rerun for the board at the end of my term for many reasons. While I still believe in APCUG and will always be a friend of the organization and its groups, it is time for me to take a break.

My years on the APCUG board of directors have been hard ones. We have seen internal strife. We have worked through most of it, but still have a ways to go. I could have just disappeared. Not written this note. Let David answer the questions. I felt you all deserved an explanation.

I love user groups. I believe in them. Without a peer to peer place to get help, most of the world will never move up from a novice user of the computer. Without the knowledge shared by user groups, the web can be a scary and dangerous place.

But APCUG has a problem. Our groups are aging out. They are becoming irrelevant in today's world. APCUG and the user groups of the world need to find a new direction and a new focus. We need to reach out to the next generation. I don't mean the kids or the 20 or 30 year olds (though they are welcome as well). I mean the 40-65 age range. And I don't mean as casual members. I mean as leadership.

User groups need to find their place in today's world. We need to rediscover ways to tell people we are out there. We need a better way to tell people who we are and what we do. We need to reconnect to potential member groups and members of those groups. We need to reach out to new groups. We need to become relevant again.

But that's only part of the reason I am leaving. The other part has to do with APCUG itself.

It is hard to lead an organization without feedback. Without knowing what you, the membership, want from us. Without knowing what you need, unless you tell the APCUG leadership what you want, we have to guess. And, as with many volunteer organizations, when we guess we end up disagreeing. Those disagreements are a lot of what made it impossible for me to continue as president.

The leadership of APCUG doesn't do a great job of reading the minds of you, its member groups. And the harder we try, the more likely we are to get it wrong. We need to hear from you. We need to know what you want. We need you to look at who represents us and whether what they believe is what you want for the organization. Without that input, we will not survive.

And so, I offer an opportunity to the member groups of APCUG. I have a \$500 flight certificate from Southwest Airlines. I will be using it in the first six months of 2012 to visit a couple of groups. If you want me to visit your group, let your advisor know. If we don't hear from any of you, that will tell us a lot about this organization.

Virtual Conference 2 February 25, 2012

by Don Singleton, APCUG Director

APCUG has been holding conferences in various cities in the United States since it was initially formed in 1989; this will not stop. On January 23-27 APCUG is having its Annual Meeting at the FACUG 3rd Computer and Technology Conference@Sea on the Norwegian Sky Bahamas Cruise, and July 12-14 we will have the APCUG/CAMUG Regional Conference in Canton, Ohio. APCUG is augmenting the Regional Conferences in the real world with a series of Virtual Conferences in Cyberspace via iLinc.

At a virtual conference you don't have the face-to-face networking experience you have at a physical conference but in the virtual conference we are going to have the same type of presentations you would attend at a physical conference, and you don't have the travel, hotel, and eating out expenses. You sleep in your own bed, and eat food you cook in your own kitchen.

We held our first Virtual Conference on November 12, and circulated a survey among the attendees to see when to hold the next one. The results of that survey are available at <http://apcug.net/virtual/feb25/when.pdf>.

Virtual Conference 2 will be on Saturday, February 25, 2012, and will run from 1:00pm-6:00pm Eastern time, 12:00pm-5:00pm Central time, 11:00am-4:00pm Mountain time, and 10:00am-3:00pm Pacific time.

The Virtual Conference will have two "Tracks," or two "Conference Rooms," so you will have a choice of two presentations you can attend at any time. You can pick one of those presentations and "go to that room" and watch and listen to a 45- to 50-minute presentation and ask questions of the speaker by typing your questions into a "public chat area." The presenter may respond to questions during his/her presentation or he/she may choose to wait until the end of the presentation. At the end of the presentation you will have 10 or 15 minutes before the next event starts. You can take a bathroom break, get a cold drink or cup of coffee from your own kitchen, and then return to your computer to watch the next presentation in that track. If a presentation in the other track interests you more, you can close your current connection and click on the link for the other "Conference Room" and reconnect to iLinc in that webinar session.

The Virtual Conference will also have Brainstorming sessions, which are always in Track 1. They will involve a short presentation on something of interest to User Group officers, and then we will invite each attendee to unmute their microphones and participate in the discussion.

Ideally, every attendee should use a headset with attached microphone, but iLinc has the capability to check a box to indicate your microphone and speakers are separate, and you keep your mike muted except when you want to speak, unmute

to speak, and then mute again to listen. Regardless of which you use, it is a good idea to test it with iLinc ahead of time. We will have a test webinar the week before, on Saturday, February 18, from 3:00pm-5:00pm Eastern time, 2:00pm-4:00pm Central time, 1:00pm-3:00pm Mountain time, and 12:00pm-2:00pm Pacific time.

Cyberspace is growing more important in the world of technology and we hope you join us in this innovative adventure.

In order to attend the Virtual Conference you will need to go to <http://snipurl.com/apcugwebinar> and register. Register for the February 18 Test for Feb 25 Virtual Conference and also for both Track 1 and Track 2 - Second Virtual Conference, and go to <http://apcug.net/virtual/> for further information.

UGLS

APCUG User Group Locator Service

By Marie Vesta

The old saying that good things come to those who wait! Well, the waiting for a useable and functional UGLS is truly around the corner.

At the December Board of Directors meeting a contract was approved to have an engineer/graphic designer complete this project that has been in the making for over two years. After many discouraging starts and finishes, we are on the correct path for completion.

Many meetings with the engineer have been completed with the effort to accommodate both Board of Directors and Board of Advisors wishes concerning this project. It is my guess that 90% of those wishes will be available upon completion. One of the most exciting parts is a completion time frame that has been written into the contract so now we are no longer guessing when or if this project will be completed. Within a few months, everything will be a go.

With all this in mind, I am in the process of creating PowerPoint Presentations for Directors, Advisors, and User Groups on how to use the UGLS to get the most current information available. Not only will there be PowerPoint Presentations, but with the help of Hewie Poplock (Director), and Don Singleton (Director), there will be live demonstrations on using UGLS via iLinc. The goal for this will be the first of February and will be offered not only to board members but also to any User Group that would like to have this information.

The User Group Locator Service can be an invaluable tool when used correctly to all involved in User Groups and one that has been missed during the past few years. Let's take advantage of this opportunity and give this new tool a chance to prove itself as a valuable part of APCUG and a huge benefit to all User Groups.

Making Money for your User Group

By Marie Vesta

In today's economy it is sometimes difficult to keep the treasury in the black. Now more than ever it is important to come up with ideas for fund raisers. During the years in my local User Group, we have come up some super ideas and I would like to take this opportunity to share them with you.

1. A win-win situation is a 50/50 drawing. The drawing lets the winner receive half the money raised and the club keeps the other half. I would recommend that this not be done more than once a month.
 - a. 1 ticket for \$1.00
 - b. 3 tickets for \$2.00

Keep it fun and have a guest to the drawing.

2. CDs of clubs newsletters
 - a. Make cd's of the past few years of your clubs newsletters and use a special cd label with your clubs logo on it. Put them in either cases or cd envelopes and sell each one for \$5.00
 - b. This is really useful to new members as they can get a feel of the club they have joined and read the tips that are printed each month.
3. CD of free software and computer tips
 - a. Free software and computer tips are available at:
 - i. www.tucows.com
 - ii. Worldstart.com
 - iii. APCUG's website

Sell these cd's for \$5.00 – again a good bargain for beginners

4. Personalized mouse pads
 - a. Take orders for a personalized mouse pad. Everyone enjoys using a pad with a picture of their grandchild or pet on it.
 - b. The mouse pad kids are available at stores such as Office Depot, Staples, etc, as well as online.
5. Calendar Kits
 - a. Personalized calendars are very popular. Watch for sales on the kits and then purchase a certain amount of them. Then resell them at a slight profit.
 - b. A class on their creation can also be offered also.
6. Door Prize Drawings
 - a. At each general meeting (we have one a month), have at least 12 (new) items to have for door prizes. Sell tickets, 1 for \$1.00, 3 for \$2.00. At the end of your meeting have your drawings.
 - b. It is amazing how excited your members will be about a software program that you got on sale. Our small club

raises approximately \$50.00 per general meeting using this idea.

- c. Not only software, but paper goods like photo paper, jump drives, anything related to the computer hobby are good items for the drawing.
7. Auctions – Chinese or Regular. Someone's junk is someone's treasure!!!
 - a. Collect donated items from membership, yard sales, and thrift shops.
 - b. Determine how old software acceptance will be, i.e. nothing before Vista will be accepted.
 - c. Have a committee to clean up some of the hardware, i.e. monitors and such.
 8. Chinese Auction: every item has a bowl placed in front of it and members can place purchased tickets in the bowl in hopes of having their ticket drawn. Our club usually makes several hundred dollars each year with this idea. Keep in mind we are a small club.
 - a. 1 ticket \$1.00
 - b. 6 tickets \$5.00
 - c. 12 tickets \$10.00
 - d. 24 tickets \$20.00



PACUG'S ANNUAL AUCTION



9. Date you were born/married certificates.
 - a. The date you were born software is a very inexpensive program that costs about \$30.00, which our club found on sale for under \$10.00. Our club has made quite a bit of money by using this program and letting members order certificates for their children/grandchildren.
 - b. We use special document paper, and charge \$2.00 per certificate.
 - c. These are particular popular during the holiday season.
 - d. The software can be found online at: http://corporate.digitalriver.com/store/driv/en_US/ContentTheme/pbPage.Homepage/sectionName.home or you can always do a Google search for Date you were born software.



10. Digital photo contest
 - a. Charge participants \$2.00 per picture for their contest entries. Limit to 3 entries per person
 - b. Request software prizes from businesses that you think would have the kind you want for prizes in exchange for advertising. Or use digital software that was purchased on sale.
 - c. We print all entries with a small.jpg and title of the picture.
 - d. At a general meeting, we let our members look at a slide show presentation of the entries and while comparing with the printout. Members vote for the winners.
11. Photo Shows
 - a. If your group has someone that enjoys creating photo slide shows, let them be in charge of creating these family shows for club members at a reasonable charge.
 - b. Put them on a cd and the member will have something to enjoy for years. Naturally the club provides all supplies and charges a reasonable amount for each cd.
12. Club T-shirts
 - a. Purchase t-shirts with the club logo on them and re-sell for a small profit.
 - b. Remember to get a variety of sizes.
13. Water and Soda
 - a. Purchase water and soda and resale at a small profit.
 - b. Remember to include diet in the choice of beverages.

These are a few ideas that have worked for my local computer club. We all work hard together to come up with fun ideas that will make money for our treasury and that members will enjoy participating in.

I hope your club can use some of these money making ideas and help increase your treasury.

A User Group Disbands, Why?

by Don Singleton, APCUG Director

The **Colorado Senior Net User Group** (CoSNUG) in Colorado Springs disbanded in December 2011 for a very interesting reason. As Larry O'Neill wrote "The seniors who started it filled an acute need for an entity that offered free classes and instructions on using a computer and the programs that proved so useful to the senior population, such as Word, Quicken, Excel, etc." But today's folks 60 and over and the Baby Boomers, who are now retiring, have developed computer skills on their own or at work. The group, which once had waiting lists for its classes and packed meetings on the fourth Friday of each month, has seen attendance drop off.

During its heyday, CoSNUG presented programs and provided a forum for members to get answers to their computer questions. Members received a monthly newsletter, CoSNUG News Bytes, and access to the group's library of books, shareware and public domain programs. Dues topped out at \$18 a year for a family membership.

"The only remnant left for diehard members will be one class a month at the Center being put on by perhaps our two most gifted instructors, Ann Titus and Marty White," O'Neill says. "They'll be doing this under the Senior Center banner."

This is probably the reason most of our groups were formed, to help each other learn how these complicated computers work. But as they have gotten more powerful, computers have gotten much easier to use.

We can all remember how if you wanted to connect a computer to a modem you needed to know how to set internal jumpers to select the right port and interrupt level, set up the dialing string for the modem to work properly with a particular communication program and many other things before your 300 bit per second modem would work.

In those days we needed a computer user group to make sense out of computer communication, but today all we need to know is whether to get DSL or Cable, and connect a wire from the modem the company provides to a network card jack on the back of our computer, and everything else is automatic.

But, if this is the reason most of our groups were formed, does this mean we all are destined to dissolve as CoSNUG did? Not necessarily. If groups are willing to evolve and think creatively, they can still flourish.

Part of CoSNUG will live on in classes some of their members teach at the **Colorado Springs Senior Center** (<http://www.csseniorcenter.com/>) which was originally set up in 1982 by the city. In 2009 budget cuts forced the city to drop their support (<http://snipurl.com/215rwv0>) so now they need to get their funding elsewhere.

Many cities have Senior Centers or other programs for seniors.

Tulsa is one of several cities in Oklahoma to have RSVP (**Retired Senior Volunteer Program** <http://www.rsvptulsa.org/>). The **Computer Club of Oklahoma City** (<http://www.ccokc.org/>) has a **SeniorNet** (<http://www.seniornet.org/>) chapter as one of its SIGs (<http://snipurl.com/215sb4t>). Does your city have a Senior Center? If so, you should contact them and see if they have classes for seniors. If yes, ask if it is OK for someone from your group to make a presentation about your UG. Some of the attendees of those classes might join your group to learn even more.

Would some of your members enjoy teaching seniors who might not have learned computers when they were working, but who would now like to be able to email and have Skype video calls with their grandchildren and great grandchildren? You might approach the senior center to begin offering classes.

Several members from the **Sarasota PCUG** in Florida volunteer to staff a table at a local library to answer questions. They bring along a laptop for additional help. This has resulted in many visitors and some new members.

Does your group have a Computer Refurbishing SIG like the **Tulsa Computer Society** does (<http://helpingtulsa.org/>)? They provided so many computers to Senior Centers that a special senior backup image was developed to be restored on the computers (<http://helpingtulsa.org/images/senior.htm>), and at one time had a special Daytimers SIG for Seniors to attend and learn about computers without having to drive at night.

The **Sarasota PCUG in Florida** (www.spcug.org) and **Rockland PCUG** (www.rpcug.org) in New York also have refurbishing programs. If your group is interested in starting one, contacting the Tulsa, Sarasota, or Rockland group would be a good start.

If you want to test the waters reaching out to Seniors, you might want to try what the **Valencia Falls Computer & Technology Club** (<http://www.ariesmart.com/vfcc/>) is doing and hold one medical technology presentation a year. In December they had a presentation on medical robots doing minimally-invasive surgery by a doctor that regularly uses the robots and a rep from the company who manufactures them.

Reaching out to seniors is not the only way to revive a declining membership. The Reaching Out article on page #3 has many other ideas, but as we all get greyer and find it harder to get around, we should be able to identify even more with the need to help seniors.

"Work can wait while you
show a child the rainbow.
The rainbow won't wait while
you do the work."



Need Help Finding Presentation Topics?

*by Don Singleton, APCUG Director
and Judy Taylour, Chair, APCUG Advisors,
Graphic by Linda Gonse*

Who presents the programs in your group? With vendor travel budgets being as limited as they are, if your group is like most, many programs probably come from either one person, or one of a very small group of your members, and that person (or small group) is probably getting tired of giving a presentation each month and your members are probably tired of seeing the same person giving the presentation.

How about inviting a presenter to speak from another group? But, if yours is the only group in the area and with the high cost of gasoline, you may find no presenter is going to drive far just to do a program for your group. Do you have access to the internet? A presenter from a group across the country can do a remote presentation for you, from the comfort of their own home, and if you usually take guest presenters out to eat after your meeting (some groups call this a Pig Sig), you will not even have to buy him or her dinner.

APCUG has put together a list of speakers who are available to make remote presentations to APCUG Member Groups via the internet. If you have wired DSL or broadband Internet access available where you meet, this should be easy. If all you have is Wi-Fi we recommend a test be run before scheduling a presentation to be sure there is sufficient bandwidth for a presentation. If your group would like to do a test run, please contact Don Singleton (dsingleton@apcug.org)

If you do not have adequate internet access where you meet, you may still be able to participate in this membership benefit. You might want to take a look at the results of tests the Fox Valley PC Association did of various alternatives (<http://bit.ly/vss3oT>). You may also find that one of your members has invested in Wireless Access for his/her laptop for business purposes, and who might be willing to let you use that laptop and Wireless Access on meeting nights. Most of the presentations are done via Skype.

Don Singleton has made presentations less than a week apart on Google Calendar to his own group in Tulsa as well as the Western New York Computer Society (www.wnycomsoc.org) while sitting at home in his lift chair.

Local groups form to share ideas and help other computer owners in your local area. But with the APCUG Speakers Bureau you can share ideas and help other computer owners all over the country (and in some cases even in other countries). Doesn't that cast a new light on what User Groups are all about?

Kudos for remote presentations:

Judy Taylour, President, SCV Computer Club, reported "My group had its second presentation via Skype (the first one was Gene Barlow). The second was recently and everyone enjoyed it. Skype is so easy to use and it's just like the presenter is in the room! We had Q&A during the presentation. I bought a small Logitech mic on a stand and just turned it toward the audience and the presenter heard every question asked. We had the opportunity to see her go out on the Internet and record a TV show, video on YouTube, music, and talk from a radio station and more.

"I won't be at my meeting in January and I asked my members if they wanted another presentation via Skype and they enthusiastically said Yes! (They said I could do one from Las Vegas, but I said no thanks,)"

The Pikes Peak Computer Application Society in Colorado Springs has had several presentations via Skype by Jere Minich in Florida. Here's a comment about his latest presentation to their group. Bonnie Snyder introduced the program on Cloud Computing, another of those excellent Jere Minich instructional talks that came to us via Skype. Jere said this system of networking started in the late 80's and early 90's, but by now a multitude of subscribers who must store vast amounts of data (for example, the city of Los Angeles) are using cloud computing, as are private individuals. Of the latter group, he gave the example of a woman he met who took so many pictures she had filled up the hard drives on three computers. He has also presented to their group on Saving \$\$ on Your Printer and Spring Cleaning Your Printer.

Why don't you take a look at the Speakers Bureau list at www.apcug.net/speakers/. You will find presentations from these categories: Cloud computing, digital photography, eBay, ergonomics, free software, VOIP, games, general, Internet, operating systems, printers/printing, preventive maintenance, refurbishing computers, security, social media, software programs, video, virtual machines, and websites.

Would you like to be added to the Speakers Bureau List and give presentations to other User Groups? Just send an e-mail to Don Singleton (dsingleton@apcug.net) or Judy Taylour (jtaylour@apcug.net).

**If you must
choose between two evils,
pick the one you've never tried before.**

September -December 15, 2011 Financial Summary

by Sandy Hart

| | | | | |
|--|--|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| Balance September 15, 2011 | | | | \$20,341.84 |
| Income: | | | | |
| Membership - checks | | \$2,050.00 | | |
| Membership - PayPal | | \$1,600.00 | | |
| F2F Hotel Refund | | \$688.80 | | \$4,338.80 |
| | | \$4,338.80 | | |
| Expenses: | | | | |
| Microsoft Office 365 | | | -\$363.45 | |
| iLinc-Speakers Bureau | | | -\$108.21 | |
| Hosting Services | | | -\$590.91 | |
| E-Novative - UGLS May-Nov | | | -\$1,154.58 | |
| Merchant Services | | | -\$56.50 | |
| Authnet Gateway | | | -\$105.00 | |
| OH Conference | | | -\$102.77 | |
| F2F - M Vesta hotel refund | | | -\$45.91 | |
| Paypal Fees | | | -\$47.10 | |
| | | | -\$2,574.43 | -\$2,574.43 |
| | | | | \$22,106.21 |
| Opening Balance 1-1-11 | | \$38,769.72 | | |
| 12/15/2011 Balance | | \$22,106.21 | | |
| Loss to date for 2011 | | \$16,663.51 | | |
| | | | | |
| Net Worth Dec 15, 2011 | | | | |
| Checking | | \$22,106.21 | | |
| Savings | | \$17,953.70 | | |
| CD | | \$101,558.78 | | |
| Total | | \$141,618.69 | | |
| iLinc was acquired by Broadsoft and is redoing their payment system. | | | | |
| Accrued amount is \$486.93 due in late December. | | | | |
| Merchant Services has been closed. PayPal replaces it at a lower cost. | | | | |
| Microsoft Office 365 was considered as a SharePoint replacement and tool to help create teamwork as a free Beta. An account was opened when the Beta ended. Usage did not justify the cost and the account was closed in December. | | | | |
| Respectfully Submitted, | | | | |
| Sandra Hart, Treasurer | | | | |

For every action, there is
an equal and opposite
government program.

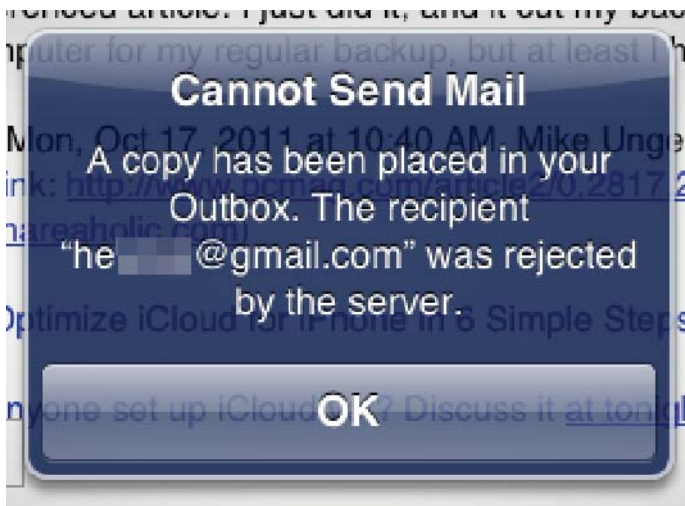
Any connection between
your reality and mine
is purely coincidental.

Cannot Send Mail

A copy has been placed in your Outbox

By Hewie Poplock
Vice President, Central Computer Society
Director, APCUG

I was excited to be able to upgrade my iPad2 to the new iOS5. The upgrade went well, and it was a day or 2 before I realized that I was having email issues. My default account changed to an AT&T address. When I changed it back to my main email account I got the following error message:



"Cannot Send Mail. A copy has been placed in your Outbox. The recipient xxxxx@xxxxx.com was rejected by the server"

I did some searching and found that I might have to change some settings. In the end, I discovered that of the 39 email accounts that I check, those that were not Gmail accounts could not send email. All were able to receive mail, however. After searching and checking my settings, I realized that during the iOS upgrade, the accounts were all reinstalled, but the settings either disappeared or changed.

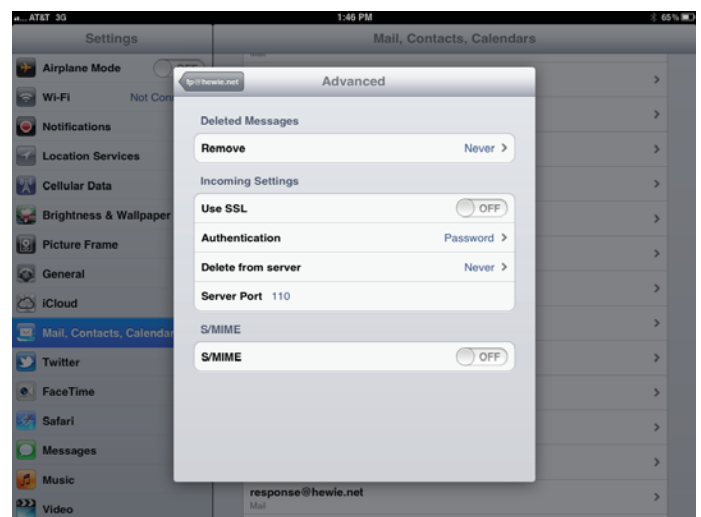
I had to go to the "Mail, Contacts, Calendars" setting and go individually through each of my accounts. I checked the settings, corrected them, and then tested each account. It was time consuming, but once I finished, I changed my default account back to my main account and can was able to send & receive using all 39 accounts.

When I found some suggestions on how to fix the problem, all of the forums left out at least one critical step, so it took a while to determine the correct settings and where they were. What I show below may not be true for your accounts, but most of my accounts are on GoDaddy and this worked for me.

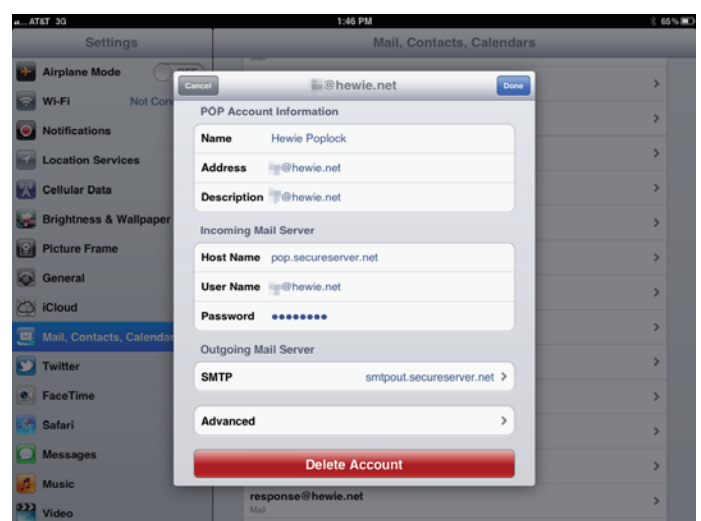
First I chose one account from the list.



Then I made sure that all of the info was correct on that screen. I then clicked on "Advanced." I do not use SSL and the port 110. I had to make sure that Authentication was set at "Password."

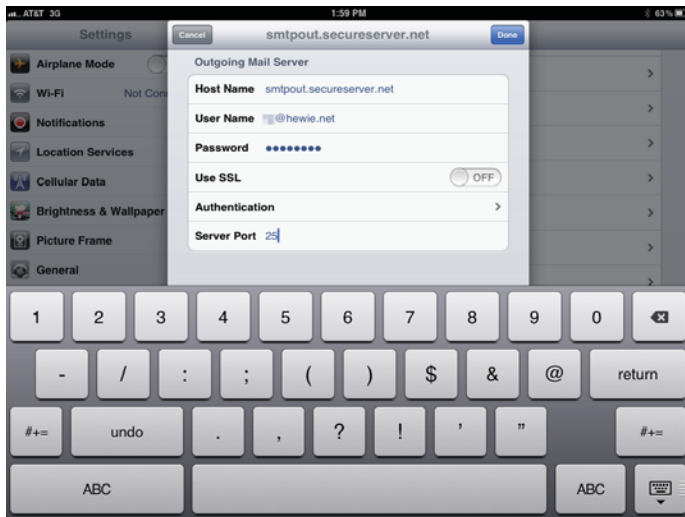


Then I went back and clicked on SMTP.

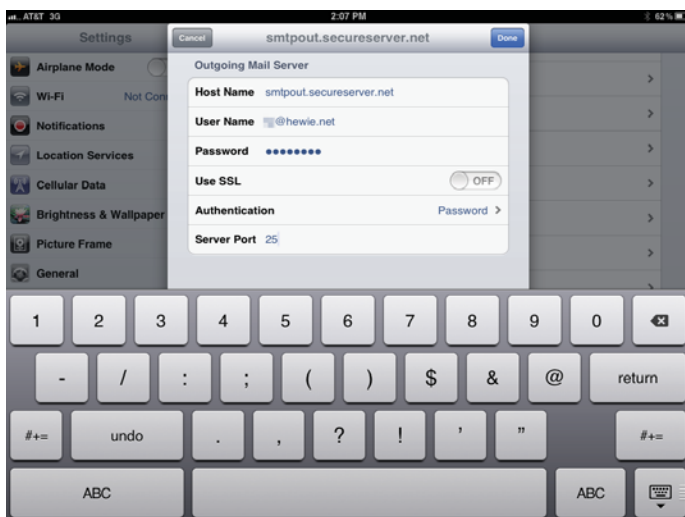
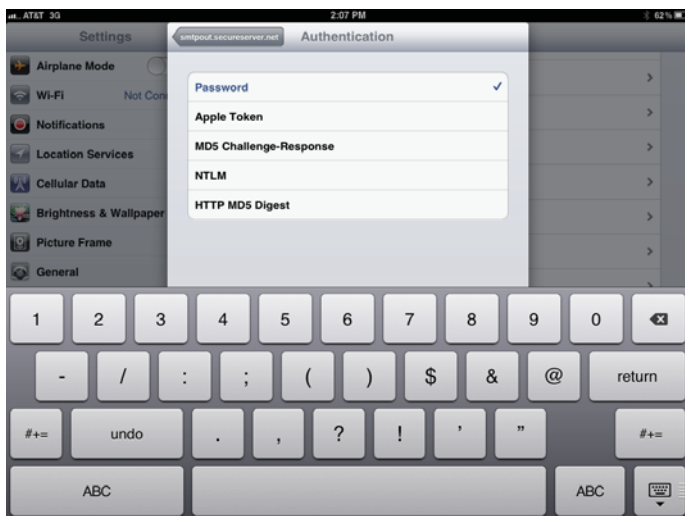


In some cases, The Primary Server was set "On", but I found out if I set it to "Off" and clicked on it, I got the dialog box that I needed. This was the step left out in descriptions that I found on

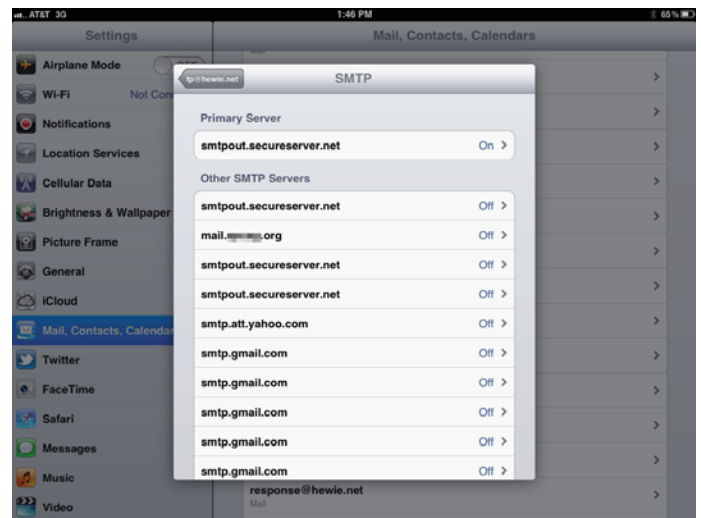
line. Then I was able to get to the Outgoing Mail Server dialog box.



In most cases I had to fill in the User Name and Password, I also had to correct the Server Port. I then clicked on Authentication to make sure that it was set to Password.



I then made sure that the Primary Server was turned back on.



Once I clicked on Done, the system wanted to verify my settings and this took from 3 to 9 minutes each time. If it did not verify because I didn't get the setting right, I had to make the changes again and then wait once again for verification.

I double checked all of the settings and then tested by sending a message to one of my Gmail accounts and CC'ed the account I was testing. If I got two messages, one for each of the accounts in the message, I knew it worked, and I went to the next account. If not, I went back to discover which setting I missed.

Once I had all of the accounts working, I changed my default account and all was fine. Two weeks later my new iPhone 4s arrived to replace my original iPhone. As I expected, I had to repeat the above exercise on the new phone. Needless to say, it was time-consuming and tedious, but now both the iPad2 and the iPhone4s are handling all of my emails.

Do You Have A Question?

By Hewie Poplock

*Vice-President, Central Florida Computer Society
Director, APCUG*

As a member of the Computer User Group community for many years, I frequently receive an email which starts out, "I have a quick question." The question is usually quick, but the answer can be quite involved. A little bit of information can cut down on the number of emails between us and help with the solution that is needed.

The problem we have when answering questions is that there is not always enough information in the question and we have to either assume what the person is trying to do or answer with something that may not give the desired result. To be accurate, one needs enough information to have a solution for a question or a problem.

When asking a question:

- Be specific
- Explain the issue that you want solved

- Explain what you want as a result of solving the issue
- Do not simplify the question to keep it short

Sometimes it is impossible to give all of the info, so links, screen shots, or a quick explanation of the results you want will help the person or persons that may answer your question. You may be unsure, not familiar with the items in question, etc. so the more background that you give helps get a good response.

“Should I buy a Chevy or a Ford?” That question can be answered by writing a book and never giving the answer that the questioner is looking for. Before answering, the following would have to be determined.

- What are you going to do with the vehicle? (to determine the size of the vehicle, or a hatchback, SUV, Pickup, etc.)
- Do you have a budget?
- Are you concerned about the looks?
- Are you concerned about the repairs?
- More

I think you get the idea. A simple question does not always mean a simple answer. Your ability to figure out how to follow the directions may differ from the respondent. Sometimes including contact information with the question will allow others to ask some follow-up questions to solve your issue. Be sure to answer them promptly and as completely as possible, while the helper is in the research mode to help you.

Always include your first and last name, your email address, your phone number, and how you know the person that you are asking. If you are a member of the same group, mention the specific group, as we may belong to several groups. If you refer to my website, tell me which one, as I may have several.

We want to answer your question. We just need some help determining exactly what you desire. We want to avoid spending hours looking for an answer for you and find out that what we are looking for was not what you wanted. Also, if you get the answer from someone else before we get back to you, let us know. We may be still looking, and have not completed our research before answering you. Finally, if it solved your issue, let us know. We are interested!

Membership

by Patty Lowry, Membership Chairman

APCUG offered an Early Bird Membership Renewal prize. Three lucky groups will be the winner of a Kindle eReader. O'Reilly was kind enough to donate \$300 worth of eBook which will be preloaded on each Kindle. The winner will be drawn at the annual meeting on the Conference at Sea. Thanks to Jim Evans and Judy Taylour for putting this deal together. The winners will be notified and posted on the APCUG website, www.apcug.net

The response for renewals has been good. We have had at least nine groups that were not members last year added to our membership. Thank you to all.

I sent an information form to the Presidents of the groups to fill out so the information about their group was accurate and up-to-date. APCUG is trying to re-establish communication with all groups. If you have not filled out your form, please fill it out and hit the “Submit” button at the bottom of form. The information in the ucls for some groups is a little sketchy.

Social Media Information

by David V.P. Williams
APCUG Director
 [515] 957-1339
dwilliams@apcug.org
about.me/dvpwjr
twitter.com/dvpwjr
apcug.posterous.com
tungle.me/dvpwjr

Did you know that APCUG maintains a strong presence on most of the social media sites?

We are active on Twitter, maintain several blogs and media sites (Blogger, Posterous, Flickr, Vimeo , just to name a few).

The APCUG Daily <http://bit.ly/nlljle> lists the top stories on a daily basis of the people/groups that APCUG follows on Twitter – always some great reading.

Our Facebook page is always very busy: it is a page that you ought to be checking out on a regular basis (<https://www.facebook.com/APCUG>).

Please make sure your user group follows us on Twitter (@apcug) and likes us on Facebook.

Also make sure you and all your friends and clubs follow us twitter (@apcug) and “like” us on Facebook.

If you or someone you know has a User Group event that should be shared with non-user group people please send an email to social@apcug.org with details so the information can be distributed to the proper people/places to get posted. If it is a local event, you should post it on your site and we may repost.

Social Media is not meant to replace your current marking but to supplement what you are doing.

We hope to have several training sessions for user group officers on how to use Social Media to benefit your user group. Other topics include how to build and maintain a Facebook page for your group, how to use a blog to share info and how to track the success and improvements from your social media efforts.

If you have a specific topic you would like a training session on, let me know. If you have any suggestions or questions, please let me know.

What Works

by Judy Taylour

Chair of Board of Advisors

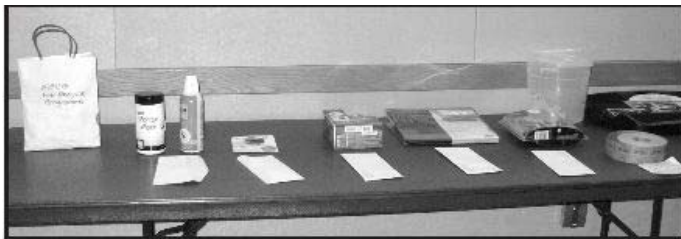


Does your group collect & recycle cartridges?

The Monterey Bay Users Group – Personal Computer, CA, has a clever way to publicize the program.

Do you give credit to members who take photos at your meeting? MBUG-PC does.

photo: Nelson French, MBUG-PC



The ink cartridge recycle bag awaits donations of empty cartridges beside a few of the raffle items purchased with proceeds from the recycle program.

www.mbug.org



Do you honor your volunteers?

Congratulations to ELEANOR WHELAN who was awarded PC Users Group (ACT) Inc., Australia, VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR 2011.

Nominated by Gordon Urquhart, the award was announced, and proudly presented to Eleanor at PCUG's Beginners Special Interest

Group [BSig] on Thursday 27 October, 2011 by PCUG's Secretary, Lawrie Brown.

Membership Incentives

Tucson Computer Society, Arizona

Member Incentive Program

What is it?

It's YOU! a current member of the Tucson Computer Society sharing the value of your membership with others.

Have you ever posted a question to the ListServ and received an answer that saved you money (or time)? Or maybe learned something by just reading others' postings?

Have you ever enjoyed a presentation at a SIG or General

Meeting? How many times have you learned something you'd not otherwise have known or discovered tricks in your own software – all due to your TCS membership?

Be honest now – surely you aren't the only person you know with that same curiosity, the same questions or a similar need. Help others you know by giving them the gift of knowledge. Members with three new members to their credit in a twelve-month period will receive a reward.

Your reward?!?

(besides that warm fuzzy feeling?)

A \$50 Gift Certificate.

So share TCS. Your friends will thank you and you gain \$50!

– Grow the Society –

WIN– Expand Others' Knowledge –WIN!

www.tcsaz.org

Clever Meeting Title

- Construction Extravaganza
- How to build your own PC

Durham Personal Computer Users' Club, Canada

www.durhampc-usersclub.on.ca/

Unique PR for your UG KIPCUG

(Kentucky-Indiana PCUG)

What an easy way to advertise your group! KIPCUG has bumper stickers that are available for members to put on their cars.



Komputer Enthusiasts Group, Washington

It looks like 2011 with end with 55 members in KEGS. I'd still like to recruit some more folks to join us this year but I also want to remind you that you can renew your membership now for next year and earn the designation of an Early Bird member. This designation gets you an additional, free drawing ticket each month when you sign in at the General Meetings.

Lastly, I want to remind all current KEGS members that you can earn \$8.00 credit toward next year's dues for each new member that you recruit to join KEGS. If you can entice three new members to join this year, your dues for next year will be waived. Isn't that a great deal?

Ron Cowger, President

www.kegs.org

Brookdale Computer Users Group, New Jersey Recruiting New Members has its rewards!

Bring in three new members within a year and win a 16 Gigabyte SanDisk Cruzer Micro USB flash drive (or equivalent brand). The new members must join at a general meeting and must write in on their membership application which member recruited them. The SanDisk Cruzer® Micro features:



- USB 2.0 and 1.1 compatibility
- Windows/Macintosh compatibility
- Plug & Play
- Bright Amber LED Retractable USB Connector
- U3 smart enabled; loaded with U3 programs (Win)

www.bcug.org

Computer Users of Erie, Pennsylvania New Members Wanted

Existing CUE members, for each new PAID member you get to join CUE, you will receive \$5 off your renewal for the following year. Thus, if you get 4 new members to join, your renewal for the next year is FREE!! Start saving today...get your friends to join CUE!!

www.cuerie.com

Northeast Ohio PC Club offers Help Desk service to the public

NEOPC has expanded its service to the community by opening the "HELP DESK" to the public. Anyone can register as a "Guest" with "Limited" capabilities. If you need any assistance with computer problems, or would like to communicate in the various other categories: Fundamentals, Digital Photography, eBooks, eMusic, Computer Games, Genealogy, Home Networking, Investment, Social Networking, or Trivia – come ahead.

You reach this service by going to our www.neopc.org website and selecting the link to our HELP DESK. You can then select "Register" on the top Menu selection and follow the procedure to establish yourself as a "Limited" member of NEOPC. This is a FREE service. It requires that you verify who you are by providing a valid email address for return verification. After that the Login and Password remain active and available for your continued use.

Since you are special guests and/or cousins of NEOPC we hope you will enjoy this new feature.

www.neopc.org

Got Your Ears On?

By Don Singleton, APCUG Director

When you are participating in one of our iLinc Brainstorming sessions, whether it is one your Regional Advisors sets up, or one at one of our Virtual Conferences, we would really urge you to use a Headset with a built-in microphone; they are not that expensive. In just a few minutes online I found headsets with microphones that had 3mm jacks for under \$10, such as <http://bit.ly/rScT5w> for \$6.99 from geeks.com.



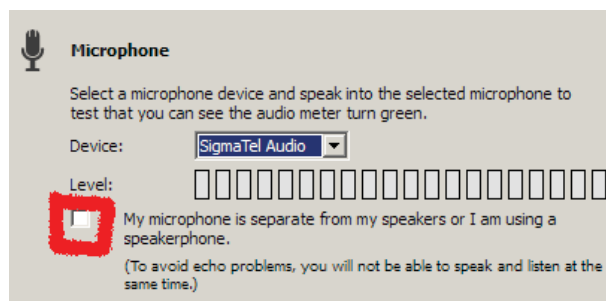
Headsets with a USB jack cost a bit more, but Geeks had <http://bit.ly/utOw3B> for \$18.74, Walmart had <http://bit.ly/sVA7L3> for \$21.88, and Office Depot had <http://bit.ly/shG3gH> for \$29.99.

Amazon had <http://amzn.to/rY0cy8> for \$4.30 that came up on a search for USB Headphone with Microphone, but it did



not have a very good rating, and I could not see the end to be sure it was USB. There certainly are more expensive units, and they may last longer, and/or be more comfortable, but wherever you get it, and whatever it costs, it will be a good investment.

If you only have a microphone that is separate from your speakers you can still participate. In the upper left corner of your iLinc screen click on Audio Settings and then click the box "My microphone is separate from my speakers."



This will automatically mute your microphone.



When you want to speak, just unmute it, and talk.



This will mute your speakers, so that others will not hear what you are saying, and then a couple of seconds later hear it again, which is really confusing. When you are finished talking, remute your microphone, and this will unmute your speakers.

Even if you are using the recommended headset with a microphone, it is a good idea to keep your microphone muted except when you want to talk. My headset has a hum that annoys some people, and there is always the chance that the telephone will ring, or a dog will bark, or kids may run through the room yelling, or any number of other things that will detract others on the webinar.

During the presentations of our Virtual Conferences it is best to type your questions in the Chat area so the speaker can decide whether to answer them right then, or wait until later. Sometimes they may open up the presentation to questions from the audience, and then you can unmute and ask your question.



Restart Romania

by Don Singleton, APCUG Director

User groups with Computer Refurbishing Projects are probably familiar with Tech Soup. One thing Tech Soup does is sponsor four NonProfit Commons sims (Plush, Aloft, Health, and Eco) in the Virtual World called Second Life. Many dismiss SL as “just a game”, and while many use it as that, many companies with offices all over the world use it as an inexpensive way of getting their leaders together for online meetings. APCUG has a Virtual Office on Plush (154, 19, 26). We have two “conversation areas” with three couches each that APCUG member User Groups are welcome to use for SIG meetings or to meet with Avatars from other User Groups. We have had several such meetings in the past.



There is also an Ampitheater where NonProfit Commons holds weekly meetings on Friday (my “avatar” is the one in the lower center with the yellow shirt), and I can request access to it for special occasions. If we get more User Group people interested in Second Life, I sometimes fantacize about holding a meeting in Second Life, perhaps in conjunction with an actual conference in Real Life. Our iLinc Virtual Conferences and Brainstorming sessions are not the only way we can meet in Cyberspace.

I “pay” for the APCUG Virtual Office, plus an office (239, 24, 26) for the Tulsa Computer Society’s HelpingTulsa computer refurbishing project through community service work at NonProfit Commons, including being a member of its Mentor group, and attending the weekly Friday meetings. Something happened at the December 16 meeting I thought you might be interested in. The complete transcript is available at <http://reports.apcug.org/2012q1/npc.pdf>, but here is a quick summary.

Restart Romania

TechSoup’s office in Romania was involved with an initiative called “Restart Romania” which involves 9 awesome websites that fight against bribery and inefficiency. They allow, for example, citizens to report bribery incidents. They have a strong partnership with the most important online media outlet in the country which drove users to their platform through dedicated editorial content. They were hoping for 25 proposals; they got 144, and at least 30 projects were very very good. The finalists included random people, journalists, tech people, students, a housewife, a business owner, etc. Each of them got a tech team and an advertising agency working pro bono, then help from online businesses, legal, political advisers, an embassy, etc. Then they had to play the part of the idea lead and go to TV and radio shows to promote their effort. They say Restart Romania is like American Idol for Social Change. A blog with English versions of the postings is <http://www.localphilanthropy.szka.org/> and a facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/pages/TechSoup-Romania/151784688196032>.

At the end of the transcript you will see a discussion of a Generic Booth Generator. This is an example of the sort of work I do for NPC, and here is the Generic Booth PR package they requested, and I will be giving the Generic Booth Generator away to attendees in the Mentors Corner segment at the NonProfit Commons meeting January 6.

Generic Booth Generator

Non-profit organizations frequently have an opportunity to display a poster or a booth to promote their NPO, either at a special event held by NonProfit Commons, or on some other sim which wants to do something to support the NPO.

Often there is very little time to put together something, and frequently there is very limited number of prims allowed. This is an ideal situation to use the Generic Booth Generator.

All you need are some pictures (when uploaded to SL these are called Textures) and some words about the NPO (which can be written in a Notecard).

The Generic Booth Generator consists of a notecard plus an object with a white pyramid that points toward the direction that visitors will enter your booth.



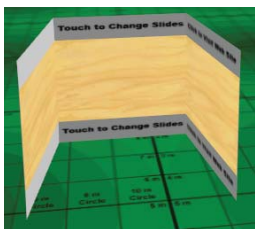
The notecard specifies the size of the three walls of the booth and what you want each wall to display:

- A static image
- An image that changes every “n” seconds (where you control “n”)
- An image that changes when the wall is touched

You also specify in the notecard what you want to happen when that wall is touched:

- The image displayed changes
- A “pay window” is displayed, allowing the visitor to donate to the non-profit organization
- The visitor’s web browser is taken to a web-page with information about the non-profit organization
- The avatar visiting the booth is teleported to another location (either the NPO’s office or another sim with land owned by the NPO)
- The avatar is given any combination of
 - Landmarks
 - Notecards
 - Objects (shirts, etc)
- The avatar sees a dialog box from which it can select
 - To see a new slide
 - To see the pay window to donate to the NPO
 - To visit a Website
 - To have the wall deliver a mixture of Landmarks, Notecards, and Objects

To generate a Gereric Booth the user rezes the object, and rotates it as desired, and drops the filled out notecard on the object.



The three prim booth is rezzed, and with permission it is linked and rotated to the desired orientation.

All that is needed now is to edit the booth, and then select each prim in turn, and drag in any textures to be displayed, and any Landmarks, Notecards, and Objects to be given.

The booth is then ready for visitors.

Conceivably the user could unlink the three prims, and use them individually in the NPO’s office.



Community Service

by Hank Feinberg

Author and painter Betty Reese once wrote “If you think you are too small to be effective, you have never been in bed with a mosquito.” A tiny, light almost no measureable weight insect can make a 200 lb person move, and feel discomfort, even keep him up for hours.

For our purpose today this statement really means that the smallest act one does for his fellow man can have a profound effect. One person can move many and spread good throughout their community.

Every little thing we do in service to our community has a cumulative effect, especially in refurbishing computers for those who are in need. Refurbishing and gifting to someone who doesn’t have a computer can change lives. The single parent or student who can’t afford one needs to do homework on line.

Some APCUG clubs have done this type of work for years. It may be just one person or many working together. I know of groups that do 25 units while some do 500 or more a year. Others have thought about it but don’t have a supply of computers or know who needs them within their community.

Probably all our groups have at least one person with the talent to fix them and the ability to run a program in your community that will be effective on many levels. Teaching this skill to others will expand membership within your club. Hands on experience is one of the reasons people come to meetings. This can be done in someone’s home or developed into a full blown program with community workshop and volunteers working together reaching out to many charities and non profits locally.

APCUG has had a relationship with the National Cristina Foundation for many years. Check out their website at www.cristina.org. Yvette Marrin, their founder, has served as a judge for the Jerry awards and been a quest speaker at national and regional APCUG conferences. My project PC ReNew, run by the Rockland PC Users group has been a partner with NCF for nearly 10 of their 27 years. Over 4 years ago as a liason between both organizations we started to discuss how we could work together throughout the USA to do community service on a grassroot level.

While there are many ways to do community service and give back, this is one proven channel of need.

With funding and website design provided by NCF they created a relational database on a new web portal that will help any group to find donations of computers and electronics that can be refurbished and reused. You will also be able to locate non-profit organizations in your community that may be looking for specific donations but don’t have the talent or manpower to properly refurbish them. After more than 2 years of professional development this on line program is finally out of beta and being rolled out now.

In 2012 we will be working together to roll this program out to current and new Cristina partners. All APCUG groups that are 501c3’s are being invited to sign up as Community partners. Please go to their website for more information or contact me at hfeinberg@apcug.org.

There are many forms of community service and as the year progresses I will be sending information on other programs that may be of interest to your members.

Welcome to the User Groups that rejoined APCUG this year

by Judy Tylour, Chair, Board of Advisors

Lancaster Area Computer Club

Lancaster Area Computer Club, Lititz, Pennsylvania (Region 3). Their website lets visitors know that if they are considering purchasing, have already purchased, or use a PC at work or home, LACC can be the resource they have been searching for. If they want to keep up-to-date on what is happening in the computer world, visitors are encouraged to attend a meeting and socialize with people who enjoy computers as well as learn to resolve their PC problems. Computer Geeks are encouraged to join them and contribute their expertise! <http://laccpa.wordpress.com/>

Cajun Clickers Computer Club, Baton Rouge, Louisiana (Region 8). The Clickers are 22 years young and still clickin'! On their Homepage, you will find an invitation to visitors: "If you are tired of sitting home alone struggling with your PC platform



and all those complicated programs it came with, don't understand the latest jargon such as "cloud computing," can't open attachments or watch your children's streaming videos, not social networking with your friends, maybe it's time you

joined the Clickers. We can help you get the most out of your computer." They have 10 Special Interest Groups (SIGs): Book Recording, Corel Draw, the Digital Camera Club, Digital Scrapbooking, Digital Video, Genealogy with Family Tree Maker, Hardware Repair, Linux Software, Open Source, and Paint Shop Pro. They add new workshops and new SIGs as members propose them and are willing to lead them. They are currently taking a survey to determine which Blogs their members follow, and if there is an interest in a Blogging SIG. You might want to take a look at the many workshops they offer their members. There 1 on 1 Help for Beginners in their newest workshop. Visitors may attend one, space permitting. www.clickers.org

Milwaukee Computer Society

Milwaukee Computer Society, West Allis, Wisconsin (Region 7). The MCS assists the membership in achieving their individual personal computer objectives through the utilization of membership expertise as well as other resources. They provide companionship, camaraderie, and the opportunity to increase computer knowledge, computer skills, computer expertise and computer applications. <http://mcs.wauknet.com/>



Lehigh Valley Computer Group

Lehigh Valley Computer Group, Schnecksville, PA (Region

3). They are a group of computer enthusiasts who like to learn more about computers. Some of them are beginners, and some are advanced users. All levels of expertise are welcome. Their Question and Answer sessions are a great way to learn. Most of the answers come from their members in attendance and they understand that some of the questions are going to be very basic. After all, they were all beginners once. So come out to a meeting and participate with them, and bring your questions.... they love trying to answer them. You can also ask a question via e-mail. A handy reference for their members is a link to many Custom Guides to make their computing experience easier. <http://www.lvccg.org/>

P · A · C · U · G

PASCO AREA COMPUTER USERS GROUP

Pasco Area Computer User Group, Zephyrhills / Dade City, Florida (Region 5). PACUG was founded in 1991, inactivated in 2010 due to loss of venue, and then reactivated in late 2011. They are located in the Zephyrhills, Dade City, Florida area. They meet once a month at a different restaurant locally. At this time they have chosen not to reactivate their website but do have a newsletter that is distributed via email to members every month. During their meetings they discuss the latest happenings in the computer world, and offer tips to one another and help if someone is having computer problems. They rejoined APCUG thinking it would help with their declining membership.

COMPUTER CLUB AT SUN LAKES

Sun Lakes Computer Club, Banning California (Region 11). The SLCC is affiliated with the beautiful Sun Lakes Country Club. They have several mentors who are available to answer member's questions: software and general problems, investment, and video editing.

Rancho Bernardo Community Computer Club, San Diego, California (Region 11). The Rancho Bernardo Community Computer Club (RBCCC) is dedicated to helping members of all skill levels increase their knowledge of home computers through formal presentations, informal discussions and the exchange of technical information. Some of their 2011 presentations



included: the San Diego Tribune IT manager showing how the newspapers uses computers; useful disk drives that make life easier by a representative from the Computer Factory; the latest crimes in Rancho Bernardo, with focus especially on Internet scams, by a member of the San Diego police department; and one of their members presented a photo tour of the metal sculptures of Galleta Meadows in Borrego Springs. <http://rbccc.wikispaces.com/>

Mid-Nebraska Users of Computers, Grand Isle, Nebraska (Region 7). MUC was started in 1984 by a group of students who wanted to acquire software for their computers. In the beginning, the group was called Mid Nebraska Users of Commodores. Today, the group boasts support for users of all types of computers and users. Whether you use a computer



for work or entertainment, the club has something to offer you. Their purpose is to bring together people with the interest of computing, offer assistance, share knowledge and further the understanding of the use and/or programming of personal

computers. Other goals include informing their membership of the latest news in IBM compatible computing, and making available Public Domain Software. <http://www.mucgi.org/>

SCV Computer Club We're User Friendly

SCV Computer Club, Santa Clarita, California (Region 11). The group was launched in 1988; their membership ranges from novices to experienced technology users. Novices are especially encouraged to join the group and learn with them. They participate in an occasional 2nd week of the month tour that enables the group to have vendor presentations at their meetings = more bang for the vendor's buck. Their website includes a list of other technology groups in southern California, from Big Bear to San Diego, with information about the group and a link to their website. It also features a list of Helpful Links and special offer and discount information for members.

Cash, check and . . . what about credit card?

By Jim Evans

And you say, just check or cash (and maybe PayPal on your group's website). The Square mobile card reader (<https://squareup.com/>) might be something you want to take a look at for your group. You can use it for membership dues, raffle tickets and other items you might sell.

Sign up for their service and they will send you a free reader or you can buy one at Best Buy, Walmart, Target, Radio Shack and Apple stores. Sign up for the service and they will give you your money back. The reader costs \$10 and comes with a \$10 redemption code.



How big is the unit? One inch square. You've got postage stamps bigger than the card reader.

How do they get their money? They charge 2.75% per transaction. If you need to enter credit card number manually, the rate is 3.5% plus

15 cents per transaction. But, there is NO monthly or yearly service fee or contract.

What do you use? Your cell phone and the very small card

reader plugged into your phone's audio connection. The reader is compatible with Apple iOS devices running 4.0 and up and Google Android devices running 2.1 and up. It also works with various tablets.

Which cards can you swipe? MasterCard, Visa, Discover and American Express.

Is the transaction secure? According to their website, "Security is one of our biggest priorities at Square. To protect Square users and their customers, all information by our users has been encrypted and submitted to our servers securely. Our software and hardware meet (and in most cases exceed) all PCI-Compliant regulations as well. As per our User Agreement, Security Policy and Privacy Policy, we will never sell information to third party vendors." "Square requires sensitive data to be encrypted using industry-standard methods when stored on disk or transmitted over public networks." It's encrypted to the 128-bit standard.

How do you get your money? You register a checking account with Square and your money is deposited each evening. They will do a test to verify that the routing and account number are correct by depositing two very small amounts and then withdrawing the same amounts. You will need to go online and enter the two amounts.

Can you give a receipt? Yes, you can e-mail or text a receipt after the transaction, either immediately or later via History. Just like the Apple Store and other major retailers. With the iPad you can print a receipt immediately after the transaction or later via History. You will need a Star Micronics receipt printer.

Legalese. You will need to sign a Square User Agreement, a legal agreement between you and Square, Inc. Part one explains all the terms that govern your use of the payment processing service and Part two contains provisions that limit their liability and information about arbitration for potential legal disputes. You will need to sign this agreement to use the service and you do it electronically.

The mobile card reader is Twitter co-creator Jack Dorsey's latest venture.

Check out their website at www.squareup.com for more detailed information. There are many how tos and tips on the website as well as videos.

Are you interested in making \$\$\$\$ fast?

Here's an incredibly simple way to do it and there is nothing to buy, no investment to make, no money to lose!

TRY it now! Follow this simple procedure:

1. Open a new text or word document
2. Hold down the shift key.
3. Hit the 4 key four times.

WebSite

by Don Singleton
Director, APCUG

Have you seen the APCUG.NET website recently? It has undergone a makeover, and we now have a column for User Group News as well one for APCUG news. We urge you to check it frequently, since we expect frequent changes to both columns, and each column has a "Show earlier items" link at the bottom, to see even more articles. And stay tuned for more news, because we have a committee working on a new Drupal based website.

User Group News

Learning Institute for Elders



Hewie Poplock, Vice President of the **Central Florida Computer Society** and APCUG Director did a presentation at LIFE @ UCF. **LIFE** (Learning Institute for Elders at UCF) has 500 members, with a waiting list. They meet once a week during the University's school year, with 2 classes every week. There were approximately 400 attendees for this class about Skype. During the class, Hewie promoted User

Groups, CFCS, and APCUG as sources for computer help. He passed out CFCS brochures. Several showed people showed interest and some have already joined.

Good News To Share!

Seniors Computer Group in San Diego makes 1st page of the Union Tribune

Melvin Weekly, **Seniors Computer Group** in San Diego, reports that there was a lot of excitement in at their meeting yesterday (October 29). An **article on the SCG made the front page (PDF)** of the Union Tribune newspaper and they had the largest attendance in three years. They are looking at statistics in light of this and discovered that they have done much better than they thought this year. They have received 33 new members this year and there are still two months to go. There is a lot to be said for having a PR person active on their board.



Helping Tulsa



about Helping Tulsa [here](#).

Helping Tulsa was featured on Tulsa, Oklahoma's, Fox 23 TV station when Don Singleton, Editor, APCUG and founder of Helping Tulsa was interviewed by Janna Clarke. The interview was over 2 hours, but it was edited down to a short clip; you can watch it [here](#). HelpingTulsa has been refurbishing computers since 2002 and through 2008 had refurbished approximately 2,000 computers that were given to schools, churches, and non-profit agencies, Senior Citizen Centers, Tulsa Housing Authority facilities, and HUD Section 8 facilities. Read more

Use Multiple Channels to Publicize Meetings and Activities By Gabe Goldberg, Advisor, Region 2 DC, DE, MD, NJ, VA

If you're not using Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, MeetUp, and other online social media tools to publicize and market your user group, you're missing out on a lot of modern "bandwidth". Days are long gone when meeting rooms are filled just by listing events on user group calendars, supplemented by (remember these?) elaborate mailings by vendors promising star-studded presentations, company executives, and monster giveaways.



I'm an active LinkedIn user, a Twitter dabbler, and a toe-dipper in Google+; I'm still resisting Facebook.

APCUG News

December 2

APCUG Announces New Membership Benefit

O'Reilly and APCUG have partnered to offer member groups the opportunity to have 5 'books' sent to them each quarter (2 books and 3 eBook certificates). These books may be used as door prizes, a volunteer thank you, etc. The first set of books will be sent sometime in January. To take advantage of this new membership benefit, groups need to complete the Google form at <http://tinyurl.com/apcug-oreilly>.

Here are a few Kudos from member groups:

- Thank you APCUG and O'Reilly. The Temecula Valley Computer User Group signed up for this amazing and generous offer and can't wait to start getting books. What a great way to learn and share information. Every group should take advantage of what APCUG brings to our technology groups! President, Dana Stallings
- Just signed us up! Another great reason to be a member of APCUG! Jon Mazur, President, CPUUser Group, PA
- Thanks for sending the heads up on this new offer. I will follow up on it. Barbara Kreiss, Webmaster, APCUG Rep, Amador Computer User Group, CA

December 1

Election Results Announced

APCUG is pleased to announce the results of the recent election for Directors and Advisors whose terms will begin January 2012. Directors: Don Singleton, Patty Lowry and Hank Feinberg. Advisors: Gabe Goldberg, Judy Tylour, Bob Vance, Sam Wexler and Greg West. Thank you to all of the member groups that voted.

November 12

APCUG's 1st Virtual Conference a Success!

Thank you to everyone who attended the beta test of the virtual conference. Don Singleton and Hewie Poplock spent a lot of time putting the conference together and, in my opinion, it was very successful and could very well become a part of APCUG's benefits line.

David Steward, APCUG Vice President

Congratulations to Hewie and Don for a job well done on their virtual conference. I don't think I truly understood the magnitude of their endeavor until today after attending one of the virtual sessions. I truly believe this could be an opportunity for APCUG to reach out to their membership without any cost to the user groups. Not having to travel and spend monies for registration, hotels, and travel is definitely a plus. The opportunities are there for the taking.

Marie Vesta, Tampa Bay Computer Society

October 22

Beta Virtual Conference

APCUG will hold a beta test of its new Virtual Conference in Cyberspace on November 12. [Click here](#) for more information.

October 21

New Directors and Advisors Appointed

Thanks to David Steward, long-time APCUG Advisor and Advisor chair for all of the time and effort he has put into the Board of Advisors. David was recently appointed to the Board of Directors, as was David Williams, Advisor for Regions 10 and 11. They were appointed to take the place of Dave Gerber and Marie Vesta. Thank you to both of them for their efforts as Directors.

Judy Tylour was recently appointed as the Region 8 Advisor and is the current BoA Chair. Cheryl Wester was appointed to be the advisor for Regions 10 and 11.

APCUG/CAMUG 2012 Regional Computer Conference

URLink To Digital Technology @ <http://camug2012.apcug.org/>

July 12 – 14, 2012

Robert Lee Vance (Bob)

APCUG Region 3 Advisor

The Canton Alliance Massillon Users Group (CAMUG), co-host of the 2012 Regional Computer Conference have identified more than 20 different topic sessions and are currently lining up presenters.

Whether you are a computer user or a mobile device user you will find a session that will be beneficial to you. It could even be said that APCUG might stand for Alternative Platform Computing Useful Gadgets. Additionally, the co-host CAMUG might stand for Computers and Mobility Unique Gadgets. If you are using a Windows-based, Linux, Mac or mobile device many programs and applications have cross platform functionality.

The early bird registration for this conference will be announced some time in the first quarter of 2012. The fee for the early bird registration is \$50, the regular registration fee is \$60, and an on-site or registration after the 1st of July 2012 will be \$75.

Opening in January of 2006, the Barrette Business and Community Center will be the venue site for the 2012. The Community Center and the Francoeur Conference Center is located on the Walsh University campus in North Canton, Ohio.



For additional information about the Barrette Business and Community Center or the Francoeur Conference center, please visit the following link.

<http://www.walsh.edu/barrette?quicklinks>

For those of you who might be flying in for the conference there will be airport shuttles from the Akron Canton Airport <http://www.akroncantonairport.com/> to the Hampton Inn Broadmoor

Circle NW North Canton, where the conference committee has made arrangements for a special pricing for conference attendees. Additionally the hotel will provide shuttle service to and from the conference.



Directions from the Akron Canton Airport to the Hampton Inn can be found on this link to google maps: <http://snipurl.com/2146deu>

If you choose to fly into Cleveland Hopkins Airport some additional transportation arrangements will need to be made other than those from the hotel. Additional information about the Cleveland Hopkins Airport can be found on the following web sites:

<http://www.clevelandairport.com/>

<http://www.ifly.com/cleveland-hopkins-international-airport>

For those of you who fly in or drive to the conference and are staying at the Hampton Inn, you will find that they have a complimentary breakfast and beverage area. Additionally you will be pleased to know that they have free wifi connectivity through out the hotel. For those of you who want to check out of the hotel on the last day of the conference, the hotel offers baggage storage for registered guests.

I'll be at the conference and I am looking forward to seeing many of my friends and user group associates at this conference.

Computer Technology Conference

March 22 – 25, 2012

A computer conference is coming to Arizona! The Computer Technology Conference will be held from March 22 – 25, 2012 at the beautiful 4 Diamond Radisson Fort McDowell Resort and Casino. The conference web site is updated constantly. Check it often!

This conference is for computer users of all capabilities. Early adopter? Interested in current and future technology? Computer club leader or member? Enthusiastic supporter of consumer technology? Want to learn more about what's available in the marketplace? Come to the conference.

Whether you use a PC, MAC, tablet or any other device, there will be something of interest for you. Join other users to share your experiences. Windows? Come to the conference. Linux? Come to the conference. Mac OS? Come to the conference.

- All platforms
- Learn about the latest technology by attending informative seminars and workshops
- Lunches and dinners included
- Hospitality Suite Thursday through Sunday
- Digital Photo Contest
- Keynote addresses from industry leaders
- Friday & Saturday Electronic Recycle Day
- Attend the Vendor Expo and purchase the latest and greatest the industry has to offer
- Microsoft workshop and store tour
- Get up close and personal with vendors who can't wait to tell you about their latest product
- Network with leaders in the field
- Raffles, door prizes, special pricing and goodie bags
- Conference fee

\$50 if registered at resort for 3 nights by March 1

\$99 if payment received by March 1

\$125 if payment received March 2 through the conference

Use your PayPal account. Don't have one? They'll accept your credit card without opening an account.

Resort Amenities:

- 30% discount for attendees = \$139/night, single or double (by March 1)
- \$10 resort fee waived

- 24-hour fitness center
- Free valet and resort parking
- Hotel/Casino/Conference Center within short walking distance
- Complimentary WiFi throughout the resort
- Complimentary in room coffee and bottled water
- Complimentary daily newspaper
- Sleep number beds

Registration questions?

Contact Sandra Hart, registration@CompTechConf.com

General questions?

Contact Patricia Hill, director@CompTechConf.com



Photo editing hits the Net

By Kim Komando

These days, many programs will help you edit your photos. You can download these programs for free. Or, you can purchase one at the store.

But, despite the multitude of choices, one dominates the market. I'm talking about Adobe Photoshop.

Photoshop is a powerful program that offers many features. This means it is difficult for beginners to learn. It also means Photoshop has a hefty price tag.

Don't want to spend \$900 on Photoshop? How about if you get it free?

OK, it isn't a full version. But there's a lot to love about Photoshop Express. For example, you don't need to install it on your computer. Rather, it is a Web-based program.

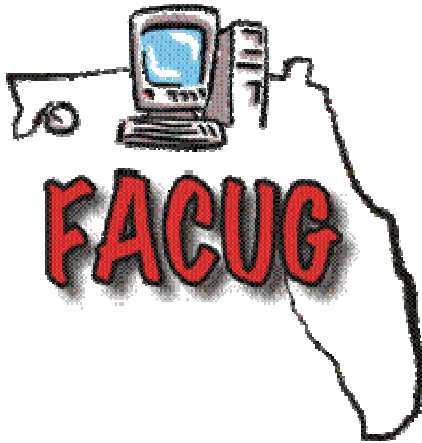
After you upload photos, you edit them. The controls are easy to use, and there is a variety of fun options.

Once you've edited your photos, you may want to share them. That's a snap, too. E-mail them from the program or share them in your personal gallery.

Additionally, Adobe gives you two gigabytes of free photo storage. That's awesome! Get started with Photoshop Express today by opening a free account.

<https://www.photoshop.com/express/landing.html>

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<http://www.komando.com>



FACUG leads the nation in providing outstanding Computer and Technology Conferences for the past 3 years. We have already looked ahead and have an absolutely uniquely spectacular event planned.

We have the opportunity to rent an entire luxury resort. It is the only all-inclusive resort in the US and the cream of all-inclusive resorts with over 60 year's experience. It is called Club Med, Sandpiper Bay Resort, in Port St. Lucie, Florida; easily accessible from most areas of Florida and less than an hour from Palm Beach International Airport. All the rooms have just been remodeled, as part of a nearly \$30 million dollar renovation of the entire resort. You will get an unbelievable deal that will provide you with an experience you will talk about for years to come.

We have been offered the unique opportunity to hire the entire resort for 3 nights, from February 25-28, 2013, at the height of the season.

Enjoy a full fledged, all inclusive resort, for the same cost as a room only in Florida hotel during the high season.

Some Advantages of a Buyout

- We are getting much better rates and many more perks than if we went as a group.
- We have full access to all meeting rooms and all facilities.
- We can help select the menu, meal times and evening entertainment.
- We can have cocktail parties each day, even around the pool.
- There will not be any small children
- There will be little or no waiting as only our members will be taking FREE group golf, tennis and sailing lessons.
- For more information, check the Club Med (www.clubmed.com) and FACUG websites (www.facug.org) or send questions to clubmed@ariesmart.com.

2013 FACUG TECHNOLOGY SYMPOSIUM

@ CLUB MED REGISTRATION FORM

Mon Feb 25, 2013 – Thurs Feb 28, 2013

1- FACUG (Florida Association of Computer User Groups) has been offered an opportunity to buyout 4 days/3 nights at Club Med's luxury resort in Port St Lucie, Florida, about an hour's drive north of Delray Beach. This is the **only** all-inclusive luxury resort in the United States.

2. We are able to offer the first 120 people (60 rooms) an incredible opportunity to secure their conference registration and resort reservation at a bargain basement price. **The first 60 room deposits:**

- get a guaranteed rate of \$390/person for 4 days/3 nights, all inclusive (gratuities, taxes and insurance) (All registrations must include 2 people per room and no children under 18 years old)
- get an unheard of quadruple upgrade from Club Room to Club Family Bay View Room (valued at more than \$185/person per night)
- get a special conference registration rate of \$130/couple (or 2 unrelated people) This is an early bird conference registration and will cover conference registration, \$120/couple Club Med membership fee good for a full year at any of their resorts and travel insurance.

3- In order to secure the exclusive use of the resort, we must have deposit checks representing enough attendees by February 14, 2012. **We need your deposit NOW.**

4 - If we do not reach our goal by February 14, 2012 your checks will be returned.

5 - To secure your reservation at this early bird rate, you must issue 2 post-dated checks (dated February 14, 2012):

Check #1: \$130/couple (or 2 unrelated people) This is an early-bird conference registration and will cover conference registration, Club Med membership fee good for a full year at any of their resorts, and travel insurance. **Make check payable to FACUG 2013 - CONFERENCE** (NOTE: FACUG will refund \$50/couple for early-birds upon signing in at Club Med)

Check #2: To cover Club Med deposit is **\$100/person payable to FACUG Club Med.**

Advantages of Buyout

- 1- We have full access to all facilities.
- 2- We have full access to all meeting rooms.
- 3- We can help choose meal times.
- 4- We can help select menus.
- 5- We can help select evening entertainment.
- 6- We can have cocktail parties each day; even around the pool.
- 7- There will not be any small children.
- 8- There will be little or no waiting as only our members will be taking **FREE** group Golf, Tennis and Sailing lessons.
- 9- Best of all we are getting much better rates, **AND MANY MORE PERKS** than if we went only as a group. Check the Club Med website (www.clubmed.com) for more information. Send questions to clubmed@ariesmart.com.

(Cut here, complete and return form below)

I understand that I am including two checks post-dated for February 14, 2012. If the buyout does not occur, the checks will not be cashed. If there is a buyout, the deposit is non-refundable after February 14, 2012. If you wish to cancel before February 14, 2012, send an email to president@facug.org and vicepresident@facug.org.

Please fill out the following form then place it into an envelope with your two checks. Mail to **John Witmer; FACUG Treasurer, 3312 Sheehan Drive, Land O' Lakes, FL 34638-8036**. Once this is done, send an email containing the completed information below to president@facug.org with copy to vicepresident@facug.org to time-stamp your submission.

DATE: _____ **COMPUTER & TECHNOLOGY CLUB:** _____
NAMES OF TWO PEOPLE: _____
EMAILS: _____ **PHONE #:** _____

Check #1 - FACUG 2013 – CONFERENCE
Check #2 - FACUG CLUB MED

Total _____ **Check #:** _____
Total _____ **Check #:** _____

APCUG Member Survey Results - November, 2011

1. Overall how satisfied have you been with APCUG?

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----|------|
| Very satisfied | 11 | 21% |
| Somewhat satisfied | 18 | 35% |
| Neutral | 10 | 19% |
| Somewhat dissatisfied | 10 | 19% |
| Very dissatisfied | 1 | 2% |
| Other, please add a comment | 2 | 4% |
| Total | 52 | 100% |

2. How long has your User Group been a member of APCUG?

| | | |
|------------------|----|------|
| Less than a year | 0 | 0% |
| 1 - 6 years | 2 | 4% |
| 6 - 10 years | 9 | 18% |
| Over 10 years | 40 | 78% |
| Total | 51 | 100% |

3. Which of the following events have you attended? Select all that apply.

| | | |
|-------------------|----|-----|
| Regional Events | 20 | 87% |
| Annual Conference | 19 | 83% |

4. Would your club like to receive special offers from Vendors?

| | | |
|-------|----|------|
| Yes | 42 | 86% |
| No | 7 | 14% |
| Total | 49 | 100% |

5. Which APCUG benefits does your User Group use? (check all that apply)

| | | |
|--------------------------|----|-----|
| Advisor NOOZ | 27 | 56% |
| APCUG Reports | 31 | 65% |
| APCUG Website | 19 | 40% |
| Presentations in a Box | 14 | 29% |
| PUSH Newsletter Articles | 39 | 81% |
| Speakers Bureau | 6 | 12% |
| Website Hosting | 8 | 17% |

6. How likely is your club to continue its membership with APCUG?

| | | |
|-----------------------------|----|------|
| Very likely | 34 | 64% |
| Somewhat likely | 10 | 19% |
| Neutral | 2 | 4% |
| Somewhat unlikely | 3 | 6% |
| Very unlikely | 3 | 6% |
| Other, please add a comment | 1 | 2% |
| Total | 53 | 100% |

7. What is most important to you in attending an APCUG event? (Select the top 3 that apply)

| | | |
|--|----|-----|
| Convenience of event location | 34 | 79% |
| Cost | 27 | 63% |
| My interest in the scheduled speakers | 12 | 28% |
| Topics covered are useful to me | 23 | 53% |
| Time of year | 4 | 9% |
| Networking with other User Group members | 16 | 37% |

8. How often do you use the following benefit: PUSH Newsletter articles

| | | |
|--------------------------|----|------|
| Regularly | 36 | 68% |
| Seldom | 10 | 19% |
| Not aware of benefit | 3 | 6% |
| Do not have a newsletter | 4 | 8% |
| Total | 53 | 100% |

9. What is your level of satisfaction with the following benefit: Website hosting?

| | | |
|-----------------------|----|------|
| Very satisfied | 6 | 11% |
| Somewhat satisfied | 3 | 6% |
| Neutral | 3 | 6% |
| Somewhat dissatisfied | 3 | 6% |
| Very dissatisfied | 0 | 0% |
| Do not use | 33 | 62% |
| Not aware of benefit | 5 | 9% |
| Total | 53 | 100% |

10. What is your overall satisfaction with APCUG Reports?

| | | |
|-----------------------|----|------|
| Very satisfied | 9 | 17% |
| Somewhat satisfied | 19 | 37% |
| Neutral | 17 | 33% |
| Somewhat dissatisfied | 5 | 10% |
| Very dissatisfied | 2 | 4% |
| Total | 52 | 100% |

11. How often do you read APCUG Reports?

| | | |
|------------------|----|------|
| Frequently | 26 | 50% |
| Sometimes | 15 | 29% |
| Rarely | 8 | 15% |
| Don't receive it | 3 | 6% |
| Total | 52 | 100% |

12. How relevant do you find the information in Reports?

| | | |
|-------------------|----|------|
| Very relevant | 9 | 19% |
| Somewhat relevant | 32 | 68% |
| Not relevant | 6 | 13% |
| Total | 47 | 100% |

13. How frequently do you visit www.apcug.org?

| | | |
|---------|----|------|
| Daily | 0 | 0% |
| Weekly | 7 | 13% |
| Monthly | 15 | 28% |
| Rarely | 28 | 53% |
| Never | 3 | 6% |
| Total | 53 | 100% |

14. How relevant do you find the information on www.apcug.org?

| | | |
|-------------------|----|------|
| Very relevant | 5 | 10% |
| Somewhat relevant | 34 | 69% |
| Not relevant | 10 | 20% |
| Total | 49 | 100% |

15. What other benefits would you like to see APCUG offer? Comments (Please elaborate) Remember you must hit the SUBMIT button for your input to count.

Question 1. Overall how satisfied have been with APCUG?

1. Unable to correct Club Officer Listing

APCUG is in process of developing a new Club data base called UGLS. It should be fully operational in the 1st quarter of 2012 where groups will be able to access to update their Officers information.

2. Does not meet the needs of our senior center club.

Question 6 – How likely is your club to continue its membership with APCUG?

1. We are leaving APCUG for several reasons, but a major one is that we have received no articles such as PUSH (which might have been useful), only Gabe's NOOZ

If your club is not receiving the APCUG PUSH articles for your newsletter, please contact APCUG. We may not have an updated Officer Listing for your group.

Question 15 – What other benefits would you like to see APCUG offer?

1. Shared webinars whereby a vendor make real-time presentations to multiple user groups simultaneously.
2. As International the the benefit is access to a larger base and information but it is the articles for use in the newsletter that is of most importance. Any experience on meeting format and topics for presentation would be of value.
3. More vendor interaction and presentation opportunities.
4. Virtual speakers and software for our virtual speakers
5. We like the PUSH articles but have a hard time getting them. We have aske for them but each time a change of people is made we do not get the articles. APCUG needs to be more consistent in sending articles. These articles need to be sent to our newsletter editor.
6. I am Secretary, newsletter editor, and program director for [our user group]. I do not receive the PUSH Newsletter articles from APCUG but still get them from Judy Taylor who I do not believe is any loger associated with APCUG. I have asked for the articles from the man who took over Judy's job for APCUG but still do not receive them. I also do no receive all the messages my husband receives. At one time we were very happy with APCUG but it seems it not the same with the people who are now in charge. We no longer receive a newsletter, which helped keep us connected. Was that discontinued? I do not receive them by e-mail either.

If you are not receiving any communications for APCUG or you are the only officer that is receiving communications for APCUG, then there is a problem with the Officer contacts that we have on file. Please contact APCUG. Judy Taylour is now serving as Chair of the APCUG Advisor Board and also is in charge of sending out the PUSH articles.

7. We joined to learn what others were doing, and even won an award a few years back. That produced some interest but answered our curiosity. With the recent turmoil at APCUG, few communications from APCUG other than from Gabe, and our own club (based in a senior center) having different objectives, further membership would seem unproductive.
8. We are always in need of meeting topics & I wish

there were live speakers/vendors available. We have used the Presentation in a Box just once & were not overly impressed.

The APCUG is ex[anding the Speakers Bureau. There are a number of webinars available to groups. All that is required is an Internet connection and Skype. APCUG is also testing iLinc and another means of communicating with vendors and UGs. Please contact APCUG about your needs and wants.

9. Programs and Presenters

11. I as the president of the group see no use for the APCUG. We pay \$50 a year for what, to be on your web site. But our newsletter editor gets articles from the APCUG. Articles he could get anywere off the internet free. The last time I looked at the presentations in a box there was nothing different then what we already did or the other is presentations that the members wheren't interested in. And as for web hosting, where were you when we were looking for a webhost? Now we are signed up for 3 more years. Do you charge any more for hosting and domain? Our new website name is -----.org, in case I haven't changed our info.

APCUG has been offering Webhosting for a number of years. I'm not sure why you were unaware of it because it is not a new benefit. There is no additional charge for hosting or the domain. I would recommend that you look at our Speakers Bureau as an alternative to Presentations in a Box.

12. What happened to the PUSH articles? Where are they?

PUSH articles are sent to your Newsletter Editor, Contact APCUG to ensure that your contact informaton is up-to-date.

13. Keep the website current, deleting old info on the home page. Shorten Reports and make it more relevant. Get more sponsors for UGs to work with.
14. The only benefit we've used is Windows Live Meeting Hosting and we've dropped doing that because it it's too hard for large groups of members.
15. Provide representatives from various software companies to make live presentations for scheduled user group meetings.

This is the intent of the Speaker's Bureau

16. The Speaker's Bureau is a great idea; we've had Kathy Jacobs do a well-received demo on PowerPoint, and have John Kennedy scheduled in December. Keep up the good work.

Region 1

(CT, MA, ME, NH, NY, RI, VT)

By Sam Wexler, Advisor

swexler@apcug.org

A Little Computer Quiz Stuart Rabinowitz Hartford User Group Exchange East Hartford, CT <http://www.huge.org>

For each of the following individuals, what is their tech creation?

Question 1: Ralph H. Baer

Answer 1: The Video Game

Question 2: Willard Boyle

Answer 2: The Digital Camera

Question 3: Vint Cerf and Robert Kahn

Answer 3: The Internet (and you thought it was Al Gore!)

Question 4: Martin Cooper

Answer 4: The Mobile Phone

Question 5: Bill Moggridge and Adam Osborne

Answer 5: The Laptop

Question 6: Henry Edward "Ed" Roberts

Answer 6: The PC

The Other Side of the Story Bill Hart, TPCUG www.tpcug-ct.org

Something funny happened on the way to "The Program". I misspelled the title of my article a while back – and it stuck! Originally I had intended The Other Side of the Street to imply Linux rather than Windows, but things have changed and now it is just a name, so really I guess either would do as well. Anyway, I receive a lot of spam, and among all the offers of low-cost drugs and physical distortion of my body, recently one or two have been quite insidious. So this article is in the form of what I like to call a Wildlife Report. First came a message from the I.R.S.

Your tax return

From: Internal Revenue Service <notification+qzllr29@irs.gov>

To: wdhart@attglobal.net

Date: 10/11/11 03:43 AM

Notice ID: MMSIKYQID XK28551

Notice: CP01H

Tax year: 2011

Notice date: Tue, 11 Oct 2011 14:43:50 +0700

Page 1 of 1

Important information about your tax return

We are unable to process your tax return

We received your tax return. However, we are unable to process the return as filed.

Our records indicate that the person identified as the primary taxpayer or spouse on the tax re-turn was deceased prior to the tax year shown on the tax form. Our records are based on information received from the Social Security Administration.

Based on this information, the tax account for this individual has been locked.

What you need to do

Visit review page on irs.gov

Keep this notice for your records.

Department of Treasury

Internal Revenue Service

Looks very official. My wife died a few years ago – but not so recently that this would be the first time the I.R.S. had noticed it. Several years' returns have been accepted without trouble. As you can see, the line above, "Visit review page..." was a hyperlink, so I carefully hovered over it, and found I would be guided to a site called cpsystems.com/reviews/return, with a long ID reference after that. No thank you! Using Linux, I checked out cpsystems.com, which was translated to cpsys.com and reportedly is a consulting firm in Hartford, CT. The web-site apparently has no page named reviews, and I am certainly not going to wave the long ID reference about on the web. They will have to write to me before I am going to take notice...

Then lastly (for the moment), this

USPS Invoice copy ID57648393

From: "Postal Service" <help@usps.com>

To: wdhart@attglobal.net

BCC: vtv@vnet.ibm.com, soccer2005@pasties.net,

alim@chartermi.net

Date: Today 01:55:43 AM

Attachments: Post_Label_#2180.zip

Good afternoon,

Your parcel has arrived at the post office on October 14.

Our Driver was unable to deliver the parcel to your address.

To receive a parcel you must go to the nearest USPS office and show your post label.

The post label is attached to this letter.

Thank you.

USPS Customer Services.

Post_Label_#2180.zip

This sounded suspicious because I was not expecting a parcel

at this time, at least via USPS. So I very carefully highlighted the file-name on the last line, selected "Open with" and then an unzip program. This showed the name of the compressed file before actually opening it. The name was "Post_Label.exe"!!!!!! It wasn't a picture or document at all; it was an executable file! I am NOT touching that any further. I must say I am not at all clear why the other addresses would be offered a Blind Copy of the message addressed to me. Very odd...

The trick seems to be to send you a message which (a) sounds urgent, calling for immediate action, and (b) requires you to click on a link or open a file. But bear in mind that, despite the modern world, there is still something known as Snail Mail, and people like the I.R.S. and the Post Office are surely not going to use email to send you something really important. Also, never click directly on a link shown in the message. Even if it reads innocuously, under it may be a completely different address. Banks and other financial institutions, also, will write to you about something important, not leave your problem to the vagaries of the electronic frontier.

So, as the sergeant used to say on Hill Street Blues, "Be careful out there!"

Lights (and everything else) Out

Jim Smith, President

www.bpmug.org

As I write this, we just made it through the Halloween snow storm, although many are still without electricity. When the power went out at our home, I dragged our heavy generator out the basement door and onto the deck. With a little coaxing, it started and lit our house, allowing us to continue to live our lives with minimal inconvenience. After running it for several hours, the house fell dark again, indicating that without a steady supply of gasoline, we would not be able to continue to enjoy our creature comforts. I put the last five gallons of gasoline in, started it again, and went from marveling over our good fortune to wondering if we would be able to find any place to buy more gasoline. We have a full tank of 15 gallons of gas in our automobile but with one of those fancy anti-siphon devices wedged in the neck of the gas tank, I wasn't able to get a hose in to access that fuel source (note to self... go to Internet and find way to circumvent that pesky "feature").

To make a long story short, we were able to locate a gasoline station open a couple of towns away. It was the luck of the draw that we were able to get power restored after a couple of days on the generator. Many of you were not so fortunate. When the storm Irene came through, we were among those in the dark for a week. That was when the generator didn't work. So I guess we deserved a bit of a break this time.

It makes me realize how dependent we are on gasoline and electricity for our existence. At our November meeting, John Yearsley will be entertaining us with an array of gadgets and techie fun stuff. I suspect many of us will be dazzled by the new stuff but with the recent memory of power outages still fresh in

our minds, we also will temper that with thoughts of what life was like when even the basics were temporarily snuffed out. For me, this is going to be a Thanksgiving in which I'm very thankful for the technology that we do have and a time to reflect on what can happen when we are left in the dark.

I hope you are all getting your lives back together after the power outages we suffered through. And as you put things back together, don't forget about the magnificent technology that we do have. And like myself, ponder ways to make power outages a bit less stressful in the future. And hope all that planning is never needed again!

Region 2

(DC, DE, MD, NJ, VA)

by Gabe Goldberg, Advisor

ggoldberg@apcug.net

What's in a Name?

Two Region 2 member user groups are exploring deepening their current longstanding partnership (partially overlapping members/directors/officers, co-owned equipment, etc.) and perhaps merging. I'm a relative newcomer on one group's Board of Directors. A Board meeting discussed the potential merged group's name.

I favor this merger, creating a group stronger than the two individual organizations. And think it's sweetly amusing -- not surprising -- that we might pick a name reflecting the two groups' names, rather than seeking a forward-looking identity. Though with all that's changed -- and continues to change! -- in technologies these groups discuss and use -- the quest for solid unchanging identity puzzles me a bit.

But really, maybe that's the answer -- so much changes that it's appealing to retain some of the past. And there's nothing wrong with that!

Here's a note I received after the meeting, followed by my response:

Reference APCUG Web site: APCUG uses the name "Users Group" or (UG) to define all clubs that have joined APCUG. Attached is a word (97-2003 .Doc) file with all clubs (268) in APCUG. The list provides name use info:

User Group = 135 clubs
Computer Club = 65 clubs
Computer Society = 26 clubs
Computer Association = 5 clubs
User Club = 4 clubs
Computer Group = 2 clubs
Pro Association = 2 clubs
Use of Computers = 2 clubs
TUG = 2 clubs

During the WAC BOD, I proposed the name "Washington

Area Computer Technology User Group" (WACTUG) with the following logic:

1. Washington Area = Defines the area club members live in;
2. Computer Technology = Defines what club members talk and brief about;
3. Computer Technology User = Defines what club members buy and use (desktops, laptops, iPads, iPhones, GPS devices, cameras, sound equipment, software, Internet, etc.);
4. User Group = Defines that club members are a group of computer technology users.

Note: WACTUG.org got no hits from an Internet search.

I am confused with Gabe's comment in the BOD meeting about using "User Group" in the new club name. My review of APCUG members indicated that "User Group" is still used by a large percent of clubs in APCUG.

I suggest that the new club's Newsletter keep the WAC Newsletter's name (Cursor). I think this still applies to all new computer devices on the market.

And I replied:

APCUG is working on rebranding itself. Everything about it -- everything the outside world sees -- is up for potential redefinition. It's too soon to tell what changes will be made, but changes are needed for it to survive, let alone grow. I doubt that "user group" will have the same prominence.

The term "user group" reflects when -- 1970s/80s -- people organized for mutual support regarding technology. It's not necessarily meaningful -- understandable -- to people groups must now attract to survive. It resonates with people -- like us -- deeply familiar with it. It's NOT necessarily meaningful to anyone else.

Times have changed -- look at massive changes in topics our groups discuss, not to mention technologies used for meetings -- like yesterday's remote presentation. Isn't calling our organizations "user groups" like calling podcasts and MP3 files "records"? ;-)

The question is whether group names should look backward or forward. Tabulating names of APCUG member groups reflects history, not current or forward-looking names chosen to be appealing in today's world. Limiting renaming to what reflects WACUG/NCTCUG 30+ year-old names seems unnecessarily restrictive, considering the world we're in.

Isn't OLLI -- Osher Lifelong Learning Institute -- a better name than Osher Knowledge User Group would be? Look at company name changes like ESSO to Exxon, reflecting complete rebranding. In the tech world, companies make major name changes to reflect new identities. This opportunity to be creative doesn't come along very often -- why restrict choices to what can be spelled from NCTCUGWACUG?

Regarding name "Cursor" -- my iPad, a vastly better computing device than the computers around which WACUG/NCTCUG

organized -- has no desktop cursor. Times change.

If we pick WACTUG and keep Cursor, that's fine. We'll preserve much that's valuable and familiar. But -- in my opinion -- we'll likely miss an opportunity to change and grow in ways that would be better for the new organization's long-term prosperity and survival.

WACUG Views APCUG Speakers Bureau "Free Software" Presentation

The December meeting of Washington Area Computer User Group -- www.wacug.org -- featured the well-received webinar presentation "Free and Alternative Software" by John Kennedy of Licking County Computer Society (Ohio).

John's presentation shared the many free programs he uses or recommends that replace popular paid programs. His motto is "try it, you might like it - especially the price!" And if his free software doesn't meet your needs, then he guesses you'll just have to pay the piper.

The remote presentation proceeded nearly flawlessly, with just one minor glitch briefly preventing changing graphics displayed. WACUG will explore booking other presentations from APCUG's Speakers Bureau; choices listed on www.apcug.net/speakers/ are available as an APCUG membership benefit.

NNCUG Meeting and Newsletter Highlight Rural vs. Urban "digital divide"

A recent Northern Neck (Virginia) Computer User Group meeting and newsletter highlighted the increasingly critical rural vs. urban "digital divide". Charles Wrightson, former Rappahannock Community College adjunct professor in computers, presented commentary on the general state of broadband Internet access -- or lack thereof -- in the Northern Neck, and proposed Federal Communication Commission (FCC) changes to the Universal Service Fund (USF). The following paragraphs quote the longer article, available online at www.nncug.org/pages.asp -- where you'll see the group's clever motto, "If you don't know computers, you need us; if you do know computers, we need you".

After defining broadband as high-speed transmission with low latency, Wrightson noted that "The problem on the Northern Neck centers on the small size of the backbone or "pipe" out to the Internet. In essence there are too many people trying to use the pipe to get data, thus exceeding the limited capacity; this results in high speed being lost. This is not the same issue as getting a signal from one's home to the phone company central "office" or hub."

So users can get Internet service in the Northern Neck area; however, it is slow, and often frustrating. Trying to download a movie with dialup, or even some local "broadband" is not fast!

Wrightson noted that 80 percent of companies now want applicants to fill out job applications online, and 50 percent of current jobs require that data be obtained from the Internet. Schools and colleges offer online courses: frequently students are expected to get course materials on line. Information sent in Adobe format can take hours to download. Skype's video and audio do not work well.

Another area where broadband is essential is medical facilities where records can be viewed online. Broadband would allow doctors to consult by video with patients. In the Northern Neck, it is also important that people involved in agriculture and fishing have easy, instant access to radar and weather information via the Internet for planning and safety reasons.

Wrightson feels that having a broadband platform in the Northern Neck is essential to a healthy economy, and will be the "platform" for future economic development. Broadband capability also has implications for homeland security, law enforcement, and firefighters. The main data pipe needs to be expanded to accommodate the needs of business and private individuals.

He also discussed the FCC role and funding in broadband communications. The FCC is supposed to regulate interstate communications, including broadband programs. Local communication is exempt from their regulation. However, the Internet is interstate in nature at the very least.

The USF was originally established to connect people in rural areas to the telephone system using copper lines, where it was not cost-effective for private companies to do so, and to support public agencies such as libraries. Funding came from placing a small surcharge on long distance phone calls. There have been enormous changes in how Americans communicate by phone. Thirty percent of families no longer rely on landlines: cell phones have replaced them. This is one reason why telephone companies are not fixing aging infrastructure, especially in rural areas. The USF fund paid a subsidy to fund installation of rural copper phone lines. However, the Fund has not been used to update telephone lines.

The original goal has been met, and now the desire is to shift some of this USF funding to a new fund called the Connect America Fund (CAF), to substitute the copper wire subsidy to cover costs of connecting over the "last mile" wirelessly to customers. In other words, to connect rural America to wireless broadband networks in areas where it is not cost-effective to do so now.

The proposal being considered is to set up the CAF, funded by a small surcharge on long distance calls. The proposal would remove the mandate for copper lines. This envisions a wireless infrastructure. This proposal is aimed at the "little" guys, small town USA, rural telephone companies; it would subsidize rural localities. In order to effectively implement a rural wireless infrastructure, the main data pipe and the connection to the user issues will have to be resolved. The timeframe for implementation has not been addressed.

There are many complaints about this proposal; it is seen as

a city versus country issue. Furthermore, establishing a rural broadband capability is not particularly cost-effective. However, looking at our history, this country has subsidized building railroads, canals, rural electrification, as well as interstate highways, miles of which go through sparsely populated areas. This discussion also brings up considerations about the role of government. Is it to do what corporations and citizens cannot do for themselves? What is the role of the state government? Charlie believes that they are to be a "partner" with the Federal government (FCC), and funding may be received in the form of a grant program.

What's In a Name? (Part 2)

Recent New York Time Article "Boomers in no rush to join 'senior' centers" (<http://tinyurl.com/bqcgply>) notes that baby boomers -- 76 million of us born between 1946 and 1964, and 7,000 turning 65 day by day! -- have mixed feelings about anything labeled "senior", let alone "old". The article's key point is...

"There's no doubt that senior centers have an image problem", said Dianne Stone, a member of the Connecticut Association of Senior Center Personnel. "If you haven't been to one lately, you think it's a glorified bingo hall," said Stone, who is also director of the Senior and Disabled Center in Newington.

Ch-ch-ch-ch-Changes

But in reality, she said, that's far from the truth. "Many centers are changing to meet the needs of the generations we serve," she said. "It's a matter of figuring out what the boomers want."

And just as APCUG is rebranding -- that is, redefining and reinventing -- itself, so must what have for decades been called "user groups". How meaningful is that term to people who haven't been in the technical community? Might "technology club" be more appealing? Or "Internet resources community group"? Or whatever you envision would appeal to YOUR local community members of all ages.

Speaking of Outreach and Rebranding...

The Computer Learning Center at Ewing, New Jersey, a non-profit organization offering computer skills courses to older residents in central New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania, announced three new avenues to broadcast important information about its activities to its students and the public in general.

First, the CLC launched a new website at <http://clcewing.org>, expected to simplify accessing news about classes, the CLC's free monthly Computer Tips and Tricks presentations, and other information about its many activities. Since it was established in 1993, the CLC has offered a broad range of courses, from basic to intermediate, all taught by and designed for mature adults eager to expand their computer skills.

The CLC also launched its free-subscription blog at <http://clcewing.wordpress.com>. Visitors find information about new course offerings, monthly class schedules, and topics scheduled for upcoming free "Computer Tips and Tricks" programs.

Finally, the CLC is now found on Facebook. Current Facebook users can simply become a friend to the "Computer Learning Center at Ewing." Not on Facebook? Find the CLC at <http://tinyurl.com/7c52qo4>.

How's Your Group Doing?

How do people like your meetings, newsletter, website, SIGs, etc.? How do you KNOW? If you don't use meeting session evaluations and member surveys to elicit feedback, can you be sure that your efforts match people's preferences and needs? It's too easy to get in a rut, doing the same-old things because ... that's what's always been done. As I communicate with and visit Region 2 member groups, I like asking "What's new?" If the answer is a sigh and "Not much", I suggest revisiting basic assumptions and traditions to explore livening things up with innovation and creative initiatives. Members often respond well to brainstorming sessions -- before or after a regular meeting, or done as a meeting theme. And people with ideas are often gratified to be told their proposal has merit and that they should pursue it. Wouldn't your group like new/enthusiastic volunteers? Remember, though, how easy it is to extinguish the flame of a new idea with sometimes too-reflexive responses: "We've never done that before" and "We tried that and it didn't work". Don't let your group's motto become, "Never do anything for the first time!"

Please Highlight APCUG Membership!

I'm always happy to see APCUG membership mentioned in user group newsletters and on websites. It's important for user group members to know that their group is part of a larger - nationwide! -- community which shares valuable resources such as newsletter articles, presentations, vendor contacts and discounts, etc. FPCUG -- Fredericksburg PC User Group -- highlights membership with, "We sometimes talk about APCUG -- but what does it do? Find out by clicking at the left on our website to read APCUG NOOZ. We get a regular letter from Gabe Goldberg frequently telling us what APCUG is doing."

You Don't Want to Hear "You've Lost Your Non-Profit Status"

by Leo Mazur
Independent Inventor and President,
Inventors Society of South FL
<http://snipurl.com/217prq9>

In the background, I could hear the old Righteous Brothers song "You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling", which expressed my own feelings as I read the words, "Your organization's tax-exempt status has been revoked..." Apparently, I am not alone. There are 270,000 organizations that have received the same notice, but we are the lucky ones. At least we know we have a problem to fix.

Many non-profits around the country, including many inventor

groups, were formed years ago by people who are no longer involved. In some cases, legally required procedures may have been passed down. Only some realized the need to change contact information with the authorizing agencies.

Some understand that these non-profit organization are considered a business entity by the IRS and the State and are subject to almost all the rulings, regulations, and fines that any other business would encounter along with some special ones just for us.

For example, it is our duty as a business to keep abreast of any changes in the law concerning us and abide by them.

Relationships Support User Group Activities

Have you reached out to kindred nearby public/private/non-profit organizations to explore mutually beneficial partnerships? Here's a stellar success story:

The **Newark Senior Center Computer Club** (Senior Surfers) continues to mature from the social enterprise that started in 1998. The emphasis remains on assisting seniors in handling the newly developing tools for this age of information.

Statistically, we seem to be succeeding -- at least if you look at our turnover. We usually start the fiscal year on July 1 with 300 members, and end with nearly 450 as we are doing once again. Those who now have a useful grasp of the technology, at least for their purposes, may feel little need to invest another \$5 in annual dues, and drop out. But during the new year we see newbies coming in on schedule and the process repeats itself. I see it all as a sign of success.

That pretty well describes our raison d'être, and sets us apart from most computer clubs. In fact, I think it significant that the club president, John Bray, has for years taught at the very scholarly Wilmington Academy for Lifelong Learning. (As did Dick Scott, who was instrumental in orienting our club towards education, but with an ear to what members wanted to learn, not to a rigid textbook approach.)

However, as we mature, we continue to grow more like the user groups with which you are familiar. If you click on either the calendar or the month at our home page of www.nscseniorsurfers.com, you will see that we now have specialized groups meeting monthly to discuss their interests in Apple Macs, eBay, and Adobe Photoshop Elements.

Our two gurus, Bob Bloom and Doug Irish, guide us expertly both in Thursday afternoon presentations, and in the one-on-one work sessions every Monday afternoon. In fact, I just had an old XP desktop successfully cleansed of several registry errors this past Monday when Bob Bloom used a bootable CD and applied Microsoft's CHKDSK to the disabled C drive.

And now we see progress at the Thursday presentations. Club members have begun spelling Bloom and Irish by taking over an occasional hour to cover specialties they have developed during their membership.

At one time, Gabe, you remarked that we were unusually

advanced as a computer club. There may be some reasons not immediately obvious to a visitor. First, the Newark Senior Center itself has excellent management and is well-supported locally. Even our 20 computers in the lab have their Internet connection provided cost-free by the University of Delaware. And although the minimum age for membership at NSC is 50, I would guess that 80% to 90% of our club members are retired. We have both the time and facilities to enthusiastically participate and contribute in club activities. Nonetheless, I enjoy pointing out that all equipment in the Computer Lab has been furnished by the club and we contribute services and donations to the Center as well.

That said, it remains that we are extremely fortunate to have highly knowledgeable instructors willing to devote so much of their time to this group. Without them, we would quickly revert to our origin as a social group.

The lesson here is NOT to replicate what NSC Senior Surfers did -- but to explore YOUR community for likely partners. That's what Virginia's WACUG (www.wacug.org) did, creatively partnering with a large senior-oriented continuing education organization, resulting in joint meetings in a lovely/free meetings site, drawing 50 or more people to joint meetings.

User groups can partner with county senior centers, churches, government agencies, fire departments, stores, vendors to solve basic problems, freeing user group volunteers to develop value and member benefits. User groups not presently offering genealogy resources can partner with independent genealogy organizations, trading technical expertise and support for genealogy content and presentations. Outside groups like this can often be recruited to become user group SIGs (special interest groups) under user group umbrella, benefiting both.

Relationships can also bring in new members -- who's more likely to recruit new members than current members? So campaigns like "Each one, bring one" can aim to double membership, since doesn't each member likely know one person who'd benefit from membership? Or who'd enjoy a gift membership? Members recruiting members can be rewarded -- with technology such as thumb drives or flashlights (can anyone have enough of either?) or with membership extensions such as www.lacspc.org did, offering three months free membership for every new member.

Finally, look for corporate partnerships/sponsorships. I recently publicized www.coxcharities.org to groups in Cox service areas in Virginia's Fairfax and Fredericksburg; similar resources exist everywhere, with corporate and government grants available.

Highlight User Group Expertise to Get on Community Radar

As a freelance technology writer, I often need to interview sources on a variety of topics. And I can't keep turning to people I know -- they'd get tired of answering my questions and my readers would be bored repeatedly hearing from the same people. So I turn to the wonderful free website, www.helpareporter.com, a matchmaker for journalists and experts on everything from architecture to zoology.

How can this help user groups? The website is a two-way street: people willing to answer questions receive three mailings daily with a few dozen queries, divided into categories:

- Biotech and Healthcare
- Business and Finance
- Education
- Entertainment and Media
- General
- High Tech
- Lifestyle and Fitness
- Public Policy and Government

So user group members/volunteers/leaders can scan for relevant queries and chime in when motivated. A few juicy quotes/comments on local/regional/national media can lead to multiple follow-up interactions, leading to -- who knows what? New members? Potential sponsors/donors/partners or meeting sites? I've used it from both sides, posting queries and answering them; it's low-effort and fun.

Watching the User Group Lifecycle

I'm encouraged that the computer club in a Region 2 senior community is exploring joining APCUG. The immediate lure is PUSH articles -- which many of you have surely seen -- 20+ articles every month for use on club/group websites or newsletters. More APCUG membership benefits will appear in 2012 but many groups join JUST for PUSH. APCUG dues are a bargain; club members LOVE the articles, contributed by user groups nationwide plus professional writers -- I've had many articles in PUSH.

A sadder note is the farewell letter printed in NOVACOM (VA) newsletter Random Bits: "A Final Word From the President Karl Johnson". It begins:

This column is the hardest I have had to write in the time I have been associated with NOVACOM. There is no easy way to preside over the closure of an organization that has been of service to so many over the years. But, the saying that "all good things come to an end" has become a reality for us.

It has become increasingly difficult to sustain the monthly programs with content of interest and to expand the cadre of persons able and willing to make presentations and to staff the officer positions so that "burn out" could be avoided.

It is with regret that I announce that NOVACOM will be closed and the final meeting will be December 7. Maybe we can characterize that meeting as a "wake."

But he continues on a more pleasant note:

Other User Group Opportunities

All is not lost with the demise of NOVACOM. Quite to the contrary. I call your attention to two other user groups I am aware of that meet in Northern Virginia. I recommend that you attend a meeting or two of both groups and check out their web sites for more details about the groups.

...and he described two nearby healthy long-running groups,

WACUG and NCTCUG. In fact, these groups are exploring a creative opportunity to strengthen their mutual presence. Recent notes to members from the two groups' presidents announced that they are jointly discussing ways to enhance cooperation and reduce duplication of effort by the two organizations, including the possibility of a merger. Quoting the joint announcement:

NCTCUG and WACUG have been cooperating for ten years, sharing and jointly owning expensive equipment that would have been beyond the means of a single group, sharing meeting presenters, and publicizing each others meetings and activities.

The groups each have slightly more than fifty members, and share nine members who belong to both groups. Of the shared members, six serve as Directors of one or both groups.

There are no plans to change current group meeting schedules and locations. The primary goal of the discussion is a jointly-produced newsletter to reduce overall production costs and effort while improving content with more unique articles. The discussion includes how to fairly compensate members (with due consideration for the shared members) for differences in newsletter/membership benefits. If the Boards achieve a merger agreement, the Boards anticipate consolidation of the groups by June 30th, 2012. Each Board will update its respective group members on the progress of the discussion.

In summary, while it's sad to see groups like NOVACOM disband, it's gratifying that nearby groups are available for its members. And my discussions with senior centers/communities indicates that there's plenty of interest in PUSH articles for informing members about technology, easily justifying APCUG membership. So all user groups can help strengthen APCUG by chatting with centers/communities -- and not just seniors! -- to let them know APCUG resources available. And finally, the WACUG/NCTCUG relationship can be a model for building stronger organizations, by groups affiliating/partnering/collaborating/cooperating -- or being even more intimate -- with each other.

Region 3

(OH, PA, WV)

Robert Lee Vance (Bob), Advisor

Is your attendance at your general meetings on the decline?

That seems to be the case with a number of user groups. Although the answer to this problem is not clear, the **Licking County Computer Society** www.lccsohio.org has decided to change their general meeting dates from the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00pm to the third Sunday of the month with their meeting starting at 2:30pm. This decision was not taken lightly. The (LCCS) executive committee put it before the members at the annual banquet on the 9th of December. The vote to change the meeting time and dates passed overwhelmingly to hold the meetings on the 3rd Sunday of each month starting

with the January meeting which will now be held on the 15th of January 2012.

The **Exton PC Council** www.ExtonPC.org is facing a similar problem with attendance. Although they strive to provide timely, informative and interesting programs, their greatest attendance has continued to be there open house meetings. At the Open House they set up tables where various programs and applications are demonstrated and explained. Among them being Genealogy website researching, elements and features of Windows 7, digital camera and computers using techniques to enhance and share family pictures. Additional topics include Q&A of how to deal with computer problems and an offer to bring in the members laptops for problem solving at future meetings. Last but not least was a demonstration of free applications that you can use for sending e-mail, receiving fax, and reading some e-books.

One of the things that a couple of user groups in Region 3 are doing which I find interesting is that they have monthly trivia contest. This of course provides an incentive to search the web for answers as well as having a reward of winning a prize. Two of the clubs that are running trivia contest are the **Exton PC Council** www.ExtonPC.org and the **Northeast Ohio PC Club** <http://www.neopc.org/>

Since the last quarter was the holiday season many people were looking for the latest and greatest new devices in digital technology. If you were looking for that perfect gift that fit the needs of your techy friends and family members you missed a great opportunity by not attending the Holiday Tech Gadgets IV presentation. This was the 4th year that **The Greater Cleveland PC User Group** <http://www.gcpcug.org/> had this type of presentation which provided their members and guests with a marvelous opportunity to view the latest products and have them demonstrated.

I would personally like to thank the user groups who have renewed their affiliation with APCUG. Currently a little of 65% of Region 3 clubs have renewed. Of particular interest is that one of the former user groups has decided to rejoin this organization. Special recognition goes out to the **Lehigh Valley Computer Group** (LVCG) <http://sites.google.com/site/lvcgsite/Home>.

Their general Membership Meeting is held on the third Tuesday of each month. The location is Rothrock Library (room AC107 & 108, Alumni Conference Room) on the campus of Lehigh Carbon Community College (LCCC) in Schnecksville, PA.

Special Interest Groups (SIG's) include Novice SIG, Internet SIG, Linux SIG as well as Linux Lab, Hardware and Digital Photo SIG's continue to be a good draw to maintain membership.

The **Lehigh Valley Computer Group** is a 501(C)(3) charitable organization, specializing in teaching members about computers in a group (not individual) environment.

All of their meetings are free and open to the public, if you enjoy the meetings they encourage you to come back and join their group.

LVCG is a group of computer enthusiasts, who like to learn more about computers. Some of the members are beginners, and some are advanced users, all levels of expertise are welcome.

For those of you who do not know, The **Lancaster Microcomputer Users Group** (LMUG) changed it's name to Lancaster Area Computer Club <http://laccpa.wordpress.com/>. So if you have been searching the internet for the old name of the club you will find a link however that link is no longer relevant.

The **Lancaster Area Computer Club** (LACC) still meets at the same location that it did when known as (LMUG). It is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating and supporting computer users in Central Pennsylvania. They have approximately 70 members from Lancaster and the surrounding areas. Membership is open to all individuals, families and businesses. If you are considering purchasing, have already purchased, or use a PC at work or home, LACC can be that resource you've been searching for.

At meetings you'll find a wide variety of interesting features such as:

Open Forum – users are encouraged to bring their questions and answers to gain and share from the experience of fellow members.

Tips & Tricks – shortcuts and undocumented features of Windows operating system and applications.

Presentations – representatives from leading technology companies or LACC professionals educate them on the latest in computer hardware, software and services.

SIGs – They also support (Special Interest Groups) and annual workshops.

Member Networking – LACC members enjoy the opportunity to socialize and discuss common interests.

Computer Club meetings provide the opportunity for beginners and experienced computer users to meet and share experiences, ideas, problems, and challenges. Meetings are open to the public; there is no fee to attend. Hopefully, after attending a meeting you will decide to join. The November and December meetings are combined and usually held at the beginning of December due to busy holiday schedules.

ilinc Brainstorming Session for Region 3 User Groups

If you are interested in sharing the experiences of your user group by discussing what does and does not work, I would like to invite your user group representative and officers to join me in an online webinar through one of the latest tools that APCUG has to offer. Contact me at bvance@apcug.org or rllevance.apcug@gmail.com and let me know some of the topics you would like to discuss, and go to <http://snipurl.com/apcugwebinar> and register for "Region 3 Brainstorming Session" and the system will send you a link to join the meeting on 5 February 2012 at 9:00pm on the first Sunday in February. See <http://apcug.net/virtual/> for additional details.

Region 4

Judy Taylour, Chair, Board of Advisors

Plateau PC Users Group, Tennessee



"Join Us for Fun and Learning at Crossville's Computer Club"

The PPCUG has a FREE table at their meetings to share "extra" goodies with other club members. If they have something to give away, members bring it in and put it on the FREE table and it's help yourself, first come, and first served. Their Photography Club, a PPCUG SIG, discusses various topics at their meetings plus they show and discuss member's photos each month. One or two "People's Choice" photos are submitted to the Fairfield Glades Community newspaper, the Glade Vista, each month for publication. www.ppcuginc.com/

Mountain Computer User Group, Georgia



Their buffet holiday dinner was followed by a charity auction, door prizes, the raffle, and good conversation. Attendees were encouraged to bring an unwrapped child's toy (\$5-\$10) for the local Marine Toy Drive for the special mystery prize drawing entry (one entry per member per toy). The proceeds of the silent auction will be given to several charities within the local counties of both North Carolina and Georgia. The silent auction had some special items in addition to the regular auction led by George Donegan in his red hat. They also had their usual raffle (Flip Video Camera) and door prizes. Needless to say, a good time was had by all! www.mcug.org

Tellico Village Computer Users Club, Tennessee



Technology Access Program (TAP). "We want everyone in Tellico Village and our Community Area to enjoy all the benefits that a Computer and the Internet have to offer. We are a computer club with over 400 members dedicated to helping all of our membership get the most out of their computers and surfing the Net." The Technology Access Program (TAP) is the most successful community service project the club has ever undertaken. As of August 2010 TVCUC has given away over 575 computer systems, mostly to needy families in their greater community. They have provided access to a computer to over 1000 children. TAP began in June of 2007 and now gives, on average, 20 computer systems away each month.

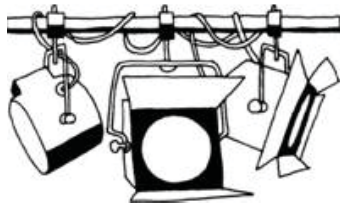
TAP is pleased to announce that it has received a \$5,000 grant from the Best Buy Children's Foundation. In the letter accompanying the check, Susan Hoff, Chairman of the Best Buy Children's Foundation said, "This Foundation donation is made possible through the contributions of Best Buy Co., Inc. retail store operations and special event fundraising. The Foundation is committed to providing access to opportunities for teens through technology." Store Manager Wayne Rader of the Turkey Creek Best Buy location was instrumental in assisting Janet Trimbath, TAP's Grant Writer, in filing the proper grant application paperwork. www.tvcuc.org/

Region 5

Stu Silverman
Region 5 Advisor
stusilv@gmail.com

There are many unique types of user groups, with a variety of different structures which exist within the state of Florida. The size ranges from a handful of members to over 1300 in the Tampa Bay Computer Society.

For this edition of Reports, I would like to highlight one of our oldest groups The Buttonwood Bay Bytes. I spoke with long time FACUG and APCUG supporter Betty Bayliss, who was very proud to share some of the activities of their User Group.



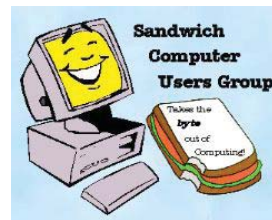
Buttonwood Bay Bytes was formed back in 1994. It currently has 150+ members. They are a community based group and function under a Master Activities Committee. They only charge \$5 a year dues and provide great service to their members. Three days a week, for 2 hours each day they have several of their leaders, provide help for individuals in solving all sorts of computer related problems and repairs. They have been provided with a room, just for this purpose. They turn their dues money over to the Master Activities Committee and they in turn provide Internet access and whatever funds they need to operate, in return, for the services they provide to the community.

They have had a couple of interesting programs this year. One that was very popular was having a representative from Verizon come and demonstrate various Smartphone's, tablets, wireless hot spots, etc. She indicated that they were very well received. They will attempt a different sort of meeting this month, where they are requesting people to bring their laptops and all work on a similar themed project. This seems to resemble a program that is offered at the FACUG Conference, whereby, a Corel representative selects a project, such as creating a video of their experiences at the conference and the people walk away with a highly personalized DVD. This seems like a very interesting concept for User Groups to explore. It sort of is a mashup of a regular meeting and a SIG.

Buttonwood Bay has been had quite a presence at the FACUG Technology Conferences. She told me that this year they are providing their own bus to bring 26 of them down to the Port of Miami. Betty also indicated that she seemed quite interested in attending our next conference at Club Med, which is right in their backyard. Keep it up Buttonwood Bay; you can serve as a fine role model for many other groups.

Region 6 (KY, IL, IN, MI)

by Roger Laurel Tesch, Advisor
rtesch@apcug.net



The **Sauk Computer User Group** in Sterling, Illinois celebrated its 20th Anniversary in the fall of 2011. Each month's general meeting begins with a Question and Answer session that is followed by a refreshment break, a short

business meeting and a presentation by a guest speaker or one of the members. In September, the general meeting featured a program on Microsoft Office 365 and Cloud Computing. In October, interested members volunteered to pack boxes for President Joe's Operation Christmas Child outreach project. Children from around the world, in more than 83 countries, receive the boxes. www.saukcomputerusergroup.org

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts, IL

Lake County Area Computer Enthusiasts

LACE had several exciting raffle prizes at their annual holiday party: 1st prize – HP 17.3 notebook; 2nd prize – Apple iPad 2 Wi-Fi, 16 GB, white tablet; 3rd prize – HP Laserjet P2035 printer; and 4th prize – One year membership in LCACE. Raffle tickets were sold at the party; the person who sold the winning first prize ticket and also the person who sold the most tickets also received

prizes. Those attending the party had the opportunity to have their picture taken with that special visitor from the North Pole, Santa Claus, courtesy of club founder and professional photographer, J. J. Johnson. <http://www.lcace.org>



C o m p u t e r O p e r a t o r s o f M a r y s v i l l e a n d P o r t H u r o n , M I

COMP is a group that eats together quite a lot. They have a PIG SIG prior to their general meeting and a Donut SIG after the meeting. It's bring-your-own-dinner prior to the Executive Board meeting as well as bring-your-own-meal prior to the Video SIG and they go out to dinner before the Explorer SIG.

The club is celebrating its 30th birthday in 2012 and they are thinking about ways to rejuvenate some of the SIGS. Instead of meeting monthly, they are looking at having a mini-seminar

series of three weekly meetings in a row. The format would allow a presenter to show a technique and answer questions from the attendees. Then they would have a week to try out the ideas and bring their product back a week later.
www.bwcomp.org

Region 7 (IA, MN, MO, ND, NE, SD, WI)

by Roger Laurel Tesch, Advisor
rtesch@apcug.net

I visited the **Northeast Wisconsin PC Users Group** in Appleton, Wisconsin for their Christmas party on December 15th. There were plenty of sub sandwiches, cookies, refreshments and conversations shared by all. We discussed challenges faced by many user groups such as aging membership, attracting new members, finding presenters and increasing meeting attendance. I found a group of people who are committed to making a difference with computer users so that they can get more value out of doing their tasks at home and work, with the variety of computers and other electronic devices now available. One of their suggestions is for user groups to create and share with APCUG short YouTube videos about solving computer problems, generating program ideas, starting a user group or SIG and development/training resources for user group leaders.



At a recent meeting, officers from the county sheriff's department spoke about the dangers of putting photos and personal information on the Internet. They also looked at how you can protect yourself against Internet scams and identity theft. At other meetings, they talked about identifying and removing computer viruses, how computers have changed over the years and what to do if your computer is so far gone that you can't do anything and are ready to give up. newpcug.org

The **Wisconsin All-Computer Users Club** in Milwaukee, Wisconsin provides its members relevant and useful information



at the monthly general meetings such as using Facebook. The group has several special interest groups that cover a variety of topics and provide a great resource for hands-on demonstrations and getting questions answered. There are currently

SIGs for Microsoft Excel 2007, Internet, Investment Tracking and Mac. Earlier this year, officers asked members for suggestions on how to increase the turnout at SIG meetings and what SIG topics would be of interest. The executive board continues to review activities that would increase membership participation and benefits. The monthly WAUC Luncheon also provides opportunities to socialize, to discuss and to eat in a fun and relaxing setting.

www.wauc.info



Madison PC Users' Group On-Line

The October meeting topic was Keeping Up With Technology – Are you one of the Baby Boomers or older generations who laments the way everything used to work around the home or office? Did you grow up with computers becoming available during your teens? Or, have you always been around smart phones, MP3 music files and portable electronic game devices?

Mayur Ragha of PC Medic talked about what's happening in the ever-changing world of technology. He explored the latest tech news, looked at what is coming within the next few years and provided a peek into the future. Mayur also reviewed the common problems and challenges faced by people dealing with their technology on a daily basis. He recommend ways you can survive technology pitfalls and be prepared for the unexpected.

When Mayur started PC Medic in the Fitchburg/Madison area, his mission was to create a neighborhood business with a new theme of technology. He made a commitment to provide IT services that were personal, dependable, reliable and honest. He covered how he got started with his own business and what lies ahead. The company's website is www.pcmedicwi.com.

Do you have a small tech repair business in your area? Why not ask them to give a presentation, giving the owner the above ideas if they say....I don't know what type of presentation I can give. It's always good to not need to recreate the wheel. Let's learn from other APCUG-member groups. www.mpcug.com

Region 8

Judy Tylour, Advisor

New Orleans PC Club, Louisiana

Their December meeting featured 60 Tips in 60+ Minutes. It was back by popular demand with a new version of the fast-paced program. Attendees heard tips that included the speakers' favorite web sites, favorite ways to use and buy software and hardware – and other tips they could take home after the meeting and implement immediately. They also learned about free online ways to solve their hardware and software problems.

Guru Jerry Seregni of Fox Channel 8 gave several of his own tips and other club leaders filled up the remainder of the 60 with favorites of their own. Members of the audience also gave their own suggestions. And virtually none of the suggestions will cost a penny to use.

Where did I find this meeting information?
It was on their homepage with a link to
more that took me to their Meetup page.
www.nopc.org



Topeka PC Users Club

Many groups have holiday parties in lieu of their December meeting and TPCUG is no exception. Members were invited to attend the annual Yuletide get-together and one of the perks of the party is the opportunity to visit with members they don't have a chance to visit with at the regular meetings. As they have done for several years, attendees were encouraged to bring those items for which they no longer have a use (except for old software or computer parts that they wouldn't use on their best day), but hate to see packed away. People have donated notepads, small fancy soaps, computer paper, gift cards, cups, glasses, computer cords, usable zip drives, computer books, calendars, newer software ~ these are only a few of the items that have been brought to other holiday get-togethers. www.topekacusersgroup.org

Caddo-Bosser Windows User Group (We Do Windows...Come Do Windows With Us) Louisiana

They had a very interesting program in November broken down into two parts. The first part covered tips for social network safety; president Bernie Conradi showed ways to stay safe and how to protect yourself on social network sites. The second part of the program covered Tips for Monthly PC Maintenance. Bernie showed the features that are included in the Windows operating system to help you perform PC maintenance on a regular schedule. www.cbwug.com/map.htm



October. Many of the groups participated in the User Survey. The results are published in this issue of Reports. The survey shows some areas where we are successful and other areas where we need improvement. It is our hope that we can meet your expectations in the coming New Year.

Region 9 is losing two important UGs this year the **Las Vegas PC User Group** and **CoSNUG**. CoSNUG is an important UG that serves seniors in the Colorado area. They held their final meeting on December 16th along with publishing their final newsletter. It is sad when we lose a UG. Losing a group means that some user is unable to find a support group to help them become a competent computer user. Many groups are facing low membership, members that are not interested in serving in an office or giving a program. These kinds of problems are life threatening to a UG. This is where the APCUG can offer help and assistance. APCUG has many programs in the way of its speaker's bureau. We are also offering links to webinars either offered by vendors or other APCUG members. Information regarding all of these benefits can be found on the APCUG website.

The **Las Vegas PC Users Group** is also dissolving at the end of this year. The reason for dissolution is very similar to CoSNUG, declining membership, difficulty in finding presenters and affordable meeting locations. So after December 31st this club will no longer conduct any meetings and will cease all operations by April 30th, 2012. If your club is facing a similar fate, APCUG offers many presentation opportunities. Good presentations will keep your current members as well as allow membership growth. If your club needs presenters consider using the **APCUG Speaker Bureau**, the new iLinc enables remote presentations. APCUG can't help with all of your problems, but we surely can offer advice that will enable you to look at alternatives. Just remember APCUG is here to help, so take advantage of this important member benefit.

We are also offering a means for UGs to communicate their issues and concerns through a new tool called **iLinc**. With iLinc we can set up an **online meeting with UG Officers** and discuss means of sharing information, ideas, and solutions that can help other UGs. One of my goals for 2012 will be to hold such a forum. It will probably take place in the early spring. I will send out an email to each UG with some dates and times that will best meet everyone's needs.

When I write this article I always check out the Region 9 User Groups websites so I can share with the other UGs what our groups are doing. Need an interesting meeting idea, the **Prescott Computer Society (PSC)** has a Q&A session called 'Stump the Geeks'. This is a great way to pull a meeting together if you find that a presenter has backed out. Call on a number of whom you consider the most knowledgeable members to participate. They take center stage and take questions from the audience. What a fun and educational way to hold a meeting. The **Sunland Village East Computer Club** is hosting a Fix-it Workshop where member bring their computer in for minor repairs, updates, program installation and RAM installation. Here is an opportunity for your members to learn more about the inner workings of their computers. This also could be a

Region 9

Bill James, Region 9 Advisor

It has been an exciting and productive year for APCUG. A number of initiatives have been addressed to improve the organization. Improvements hopefully that will help our user group members. As your Region 9 advisor I remind you to provide me with any issues or concerns that you have. Our New Year will begin with us having an APCUG Conference on-board the NCL Norwegian Sky. This conference has a record number of attendees for an APCUG event. There will be a number of sessions that will be dedicated to following up on some of the ideas that were discussed at the F2F in Cleveland. I will be on-board and looking forward to an exciting opportunity to discuss problems and solutions that benefit User Groups. APCUG conducted a User Group Survey in

membership building opportunity if you open the activity to the public. However, there are a number of things you need to keep in mind when you take on this task. Advertise that you will do only certain things. To keep things moving the tasks have to be simple and on a first come first serve basis. Find knowledgeable folks in your club to assist the user with their repairs. Have a dozen or so helpers to work. This is a hands-on opportunity for both the installer and the user. Sunland Village East Computer Club will also be holding their 3rd Annual Photo Contest in March. The **Pikes Peak Computer Application Society** (P*PCompAS) has a great interactive website <http://ppcompas.apcug.org/>. On their site they offer a video on the Computer Item of the Week. They also have a Welcome Message Video from their president. These videos are attention getting and will certainly draw folks to their site which will ultimate help booster their membership.

So that is What's Happening in Region 9, Happy New Year and Happy Computing!

Region 10 and 11

Cheryl Wester

Hello, everyone! Happy New Year. I hope this finds all of you ready for a great new year and lots of speakers for your group to learn from.

Suggestions for getting speakers from within your group. This works every time for me! I ask people if they have a favorite program they use all the time. When people respond I then ask them to do a presentation on it. This normally gets me a presentation or two. With the entire group listening it is hard to say no. A favorite gadget is also a great idea. I call it "Show and Tell". People bring a favorite technology toy or two and the meeting races by. With tax time see if you can get our favorite IRS to speak about seniors and tax advantages they can take

Judy Taylour and I had a great virtual meeting with California members. We were able to share ideas and get suggestions for making all meetings better and to help groups grow. A suggestion was to go to the local high school. See if they have an anime or robotics group and have them speak about it. Feed them and they will come. In Temecula, CA we are having the Centennial High School Microsoft Academy students speak on what they are learning about technology.

California is getting ready for the yearly conference we have in San Diego, CA. Judy Taylour as always has some great ideas up her sleeve so put it in your calendar and be there. On the Thursday before she even has a tour set up for the Microsoft Store that is in the great mall behind the store. Southwest Technology and Computer Conference-I can't wait. Hope to see many there. Friday June 22 to June 24. <http://www.theswcc.org/>



When you leave a meeting ask yourself if you learned one new thing. If the answer was yes then it was a great meeting. Bring a friend to your next meeting and share your knowledge.

Region 12

Judy Taylour, Chair, Board of Advisors

KEGS (Komputer Enthusiasts Of Greater Seattle), Washington



Their scheduled November General Meeting presenter was unable to attend the meeting and Buzz Bruggeman of ActiveWords stepped in at the last minute. Their president, Ron Cowger, reports that he was

very impressed by his demonstration of ActiveWords and his explanation of how it increased a user's productivity. It can be configured to save a PC user a lot of navigation clicks and typing as he/she moves from task to task. He plans to obtain a copy of the program and try it to see if he can make it work as well as it worked for Buzz. The program is free; they also offer ActiveWords Plus that can be installed wherever you need it, on any computer, for the price of a single license. www.kegs.org

Idaho PC Users Group

The IPCUG has a no-host breakfast each month at the Golden Corral, a buffet-style breakfast with lots of choices. This is always a great time for just friendly social talk and even occasionally there is some talk about computers. After their monthly meetings, attendees adjourn to a nearby Denny's for a meeting after the meeting for conversation and refreshments. Their board meeting is held at Elmer's and all members are invited to attend the no-host dinner, great food, and conversation. Sounds like they really like to eat and talk....a great way to keep a user group going, in addition to the monthly meeting and SIGs. One of their recent meetings featured a presentation by Clint Tinsley, Secretary, Editor & Webmaster, demonstrating Adobe Photoshop Elements 10. First he's in the picture, then he's not, and he showed how easy it is to do this with Elements. <http://idahopcug.apcug.org/>



Olympia Microcomputer User Group, Washington 2011 Rose Garden Picnic

The sun is shining, the sky is blue, and the OMUGGERS are



preparing for their annual picnic. President Fred and Director at Large, Arin Seldomridge are raising the OMUG banner. Fred is short so Arin's extra height came

in very handy. We had a large thermos of coffee for those so inclined, lots of soda pop on ice for the others. The grill is set up just waiting for those hot dogs, hamburgers, and even veggie burgers. Thanks to Sr. Dorothy for the great job of making the hamburger (ground sirloin I believe) into perfectly shaped patties so the grill master didn't have to get his hands all sticky. A beautiful array of food including Greek, tossed, and potato salads, a gigantic casserole of jambalaya, and cookies, scones, shortbread AND homemade cream puffs for those needing their sugar high for the day. At the end of our day, some members stayed and helped with the cleanup and OMUG left the spot cleaner than when we arrived. Next year is looking good so we should make reservations ASAP. www.oly mug.org/

Big Blue and Cousins Victoria BC, Canada

Kudos go to Ken Beattie who arranged a joint venture for the photography group at Heritage Acres. Participating were the Victoria Camera Club, Sidney Shutterbugs and BB&C's Camera SIG. There was an opportunity to vote online and the winners were:

Rolande Kimmons (BB&C SIG) First place for "My Bedroom"

John Lockyer (VCC) Second place for "Finished"

Scott Laird (VCC) Third place for "HA1"



"My" Bedroom by Rolande

BB&C also has a Jing SIG where they are learning to use and share Jing, the free video and screen-capture program, to help us learn how to do things on our computers.

Want to know how to do something? Sit down beside someone who knows it, ask him to step through it and explain what he's doing, and bing (I mean Jing) you've got it, forever, in a talking video. Forget how to do it later? Watch the video, stop it, back up & check it, and you've got it. Jing has a lot of power and by far the best help system of any competing system. As well as being cousin to the most powerful program which some of us use already: Camatasia Studio. Instead of talking, you can easily send a screenshot of your computer to your friend -- yes, even on his cellphone. We're going to learn and teach how to use Jing at the JingSIG. Check out this site: <http://www.jingproject.com/> <http://bbc.org>



Melbourne PCUG Moorabbin, Victoria, Australia

"Making Money on the Internet" is a Special Interest Group based in Melbourne, dedicated to helping its members make an online income. Come and learn how to make money on the web. The group meets regularly and is made up of enthusiastic web designers interested in turning their websites either into profitable businesses, to boost traffic or to simply make some pocket money. Club meetings cover the following topics:

- All aspects of Affiliate Marketing
- Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)
- Building and marketing your own web sites
- Current affiliate offers and commission structures
- Optimizing advertisement placements to maximise returns
- Useful software to assist in website building, promotion and maintenance
- Regular Q & A sessions for intermediate and advanced topics relating to web layout and affiliate marketing
- Ecommerce (including selling products via eBay)
- Domain name buying / selling www.melbpc.org.au/

International Region

SIGS & Training Opportunities

By Judy Taylour, Chair, Board of Advisors



PC USERS GROUP (ACT) INC.

Training with PCUG (Holder ACT, Australia) is definitely a unique experience for each of us, as we have varied skills and knowledge, therefore seeking varied levels of information and support. A more appropriate question is 'What Learning Opportunities exist at PCUG?' Our members come to the group with varied skill levels. Some are beginners. Some are advanced. But at some stage or another, everyone can learn something. We learn from each other, hence our motto "Users Helping Users" is as much about what you can give, as what you can get.

PCUG Centre has facilities to experiment and develop skills 'hands on' via a variety of specialised and general equipment for members to access. This may support teaching, or practising of skills.



The training room is equipped with one trainer and eleven student computers, with an overhead

projector and whiteboards. It has a newly installed hearing loop for those with a hearing disability. The operating system uses a virtual environment which is easy to manage, so we can cater for users with a wide variety of interests.

A media room has digital media and sound equipment. Just being at the centre can bring unknown opportunities via who you may run into. Drop in and join us for a cuppa.

www.pcug.org.au/

New Advisor for Region 6 and International

Gregory West
519-331-5067

gregory@alternatcloud.com



My experience with APCUG goes back about ten years to when I was editor for the Sarnia CUG (scug.ca). I read and reprinted articles from APCUG and user group newsletters. This gave some insight to what other groups around the globe were doing at meetings etc. As well, I followed APCUG news on its website and newsletters. In 2008 I attended the APCUG convention in Las Vegas

and it was there I knew I wanted to help out on that "team".

With my background being in communications, I am impressed with the progressive route APCUG executive is heading in recreating ties between the executive and APCUG user group members. APCUG has gone over a rocky road and today I must say the road is straightening out and is becoming busy once again.

As the Advisor for Region 6 and International, my first task is to contact each APCUG rep in the user groups in my regions, in order to introduce myself and get to meet their executive members. I believe communication is foremost in problem solving and one main key to success.

Don Singleton, the APCUG Director, will assist me with connecting with user group members via live "Virtual Conference" in a sort of "Town Hall" meeting. The key here will be to brainstorm ideas to help all user groups become the best they can be by sharing information that works for them, sharing problems to resolve and simply getting everyone together.

Over the next while I plan on setting up a communications network, with the user groups in Region 6 and International, so that everyone will know what's happening with APCUG and especially ideas that help to make a user group successful.

I look forward to meeting members in Region 6 and International. One of the most important issues we are facing, is how we all can share and prepare user groups for the now and for the future. We need to look to new and innovative ideas, ideas that not only enhance the user group member's experience, but will invite new members to our groups.

California has First Town Hall Brainstorming Virtual Meeting



In early-December, 15 officers and members took part in the 1st regional live Virtual Conference brainstorming meeting via iLinc. Cheryl Wester,

advisor for the California region and Judy Taylour, Chair, Board of Advisors co-facilitated the meeting. Technical help was provided by Don Singleton, Director.

Participants were not only from California but included Arizona, Florida and Canada. The meeting featured ideas to help all user groups become the best they can be by sharing information that works for them, sharing problems that needed to be resolved and simply giving them the opportunity to meet people from other user groups.

Three new presidents participated in the meeting as well as four officers from one group in northern California. The meeting was scheduled for one hour but ideas were being shared for a little over 1-1/2 hours.

Comments / Discussion Topics

- APCUG's website, www.apcug.net, is being updated more often during the past 60 days.....they liked it.
- One group has a 12-year-old who is eager to learn.
- Several plan to take advantage of the Speakers Bureau to supplement their monthly presentations that are mostly done by members.
- It's very easy to have a meeting via Skype.
- Program ideas in case the presenter doesn't show
- Some of the PUSH articles can be used for meetings
- Offering something for all levels (novice, intermediate and advanced users)
- Smart Computing is no longer supporting UGs; they are welcome to use information found on their website or in their magazines to put a meeting together
- Recruiting new members
- Contact adult education computer class teachers and ask to give a short presentation on the UG. Attending a meeting and joining a UG is a natural place to further their computer education. Give them a free ticket to attend the meeting and receive one raffle ticket. Most meeting are free to guests but everyone likes something that is free and it brings out laughter during the presentation.
- Have a guests-only raffle; don't forget to introduce them. Have members who wear an Ask Me badge so guests feel free to ask them questions (where is the restroom, whatever).

- Give members business cards with website URL, meeting location and info + SIG meetings, etc. so they can give them to prospective members when they are talking with them.
- Check with the local library to see if club members can staff a table once a week, twice a month, etc. to answer questions. Take a laptop and go online to answer questions more in depth. Have UG brochure, newsletter, application, etc. packet to give to each person.
- Member retention
- Show a looping PPT at the beginning of each meeting that features the user group's membership benefits (SIGs, current / past meeting topics, leadership team, etc.) Idea from the Greater Cleveland PCUG.
- Give a State of the UG presentation at the January or February meeting. Recap the 12 presentations given during the year, information about what the SIGs are doing, etc. Idea from Fredericksburg PCUG, VA.
- PR
- Send meeting announcement in a PR release format. Get to know the people at the local newspaper who are responsible for getting information into the paper.
- Give presentations to other non-profit groups: Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.
- Make sure photo stores, tech repair people, etc. know about UG...ask them to come and talk about what they have to offer. Ask if they will give a discount to UG members.
- Thank a vendor who gives a presentation....dinner before meeting, dessert after meeting, certificate (at a minimum)...get wood frames at Dollar or \$0.99 store.
- Make sure vendor gets a copy of the newsletter announcing the meeting as well as the newsletter that contains the meeting recap. Send photos with thank you e-mail.

All of this and much more was discussed at the meeting.

We look forward to the other advisors having this type of virtual meeting with their groups in 2012. Don't miss out! When you receive an e-mail from your advisor announcing the meeting, respond that you will be attending. You will be glad you did.

It is very easy to set up and use iLinc; Don is always available to do a test run with you to make sure your microphone, etc. works for the session.

Thanks for the kudo....

"We really enjoyed getting to be part of the online conference. Thank you for including us. There were some good ideas shared, no doubt! It is wonderful to see how APCUG has come together in the past year. Though it's a tougher world for user groups, I see APCUG as a stronger partner than ever, with only good things to come." Katherine Malone, President, San Francisco PCUG. (SFPCUG's president, vice president, treasurer and a Steering Committee member participated.)

What's the safest way to archive data?

By Kim Komando

Q. What is the best way to archive data for 10-plus years? I am told that writeable CDs will disintegrate internally in a few years or if they get too warm. Also, the state of the art changes so rapidly that in 10 years the means to read something archived today may not exist. What suggestions do you have?

A. A lot of people are facing this question, Louis. There are no simple answers.

The people who manufacture hard drives and recordable CDs claim nearly endless lives for their goods. However, we have had several hard drive failures in the office recently. One is really bad because the person who was using it never made a backup! Okay, it was my husband's computer!

And all of us have had problems with CDs and DVDs, both the recordable and rewriteable varieties. Personally, I think recordable (one-time) media are more reliable than rewriteable, but I wouldn't bet on either!

If you are archiving data that will be removed from the computer, I suggest you use at least two media. For instance, you could use a CD or DVD, a tape, a Zip drive from Iomega, or a small Flash drive. You also could back up to an online service, although they are expensive.

The second part of your question also is a valid concern. Things change very rapidly in the computer world.





I have known situations where people had important documents on 5.25-inch floppies. When did you last see such a drive? Finding a computer with one today is nearly impossible. Ten years ago, they were still around, as were the disks.

If I were archiving important data, I believe I would use a flash drive. These are very common and relatively inexpensive. They have no moving parts, so they are less likely to break. And the technology is very modern. I would also use a recordable CD or DVD. I would keep both in a cool dark place.










Furthermore, I would re-do the backup every few years. I wouldn't trust anything in computerdom for 10 years.

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