The Outer Edge

The Friendly Computer Club Helping Make Computers Friendly. On the Web at www.cipcug.org

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Attendance at the
October general meeting:
**56 members and guests.
We welcome one new member.**

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On Facebook: Facebook.com/groups/cipcug

apcug
**Medium Group
1st Place
2012**

COMMAND.COM
By Jim Brown, President
"Promoting the Harmony of Computer Education, and Camaraderie"

For those of you who have signed on to Facebook, our editor sent a small questionnaire or survey to help your board understand what programs or instructional sessions would be of interest to you. I hope you take the time to send your responses to your board via Facebook or through our website. It is increasingly difficult to get representatives of programs or hardware to come to meetings simply because of the many ways of communication other than coming in person to a meeting. However, we are trying our best to make meetings as interesting and compelling as we can.

Brown

For our November meeting we will continue to explain and demonstrate the new Microsoft operating system, Windows 8. As I read about this completely new system, I feel that Microsoft is on to something which has the potential of causing big changes in the PC world. Be sure to attend and learn.

Remember that the November and December meetings are held on the THIRD Saturday of the month.

Wishing all of you a Happy Thanksgiving

Root Directory

CIPCUG NEWS

GENERAL

ADVERTISEMENTS

2006 Southwest User Group Conference: second place in both the newsletter and Web site contests.

2011 APCUG first place in the newsletter contest (medium groups).

Channel Islands PC Users Group

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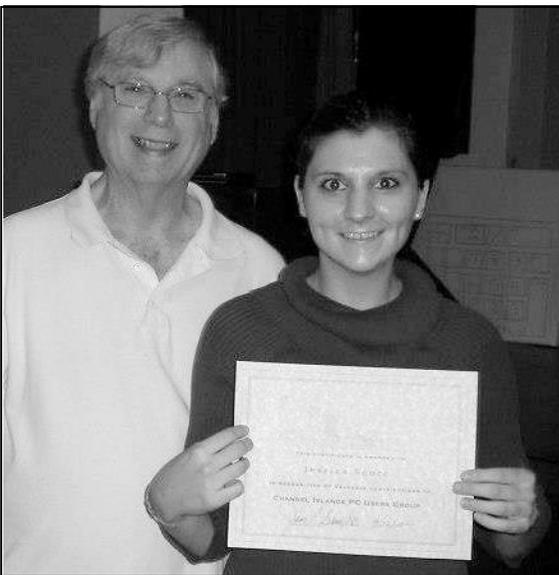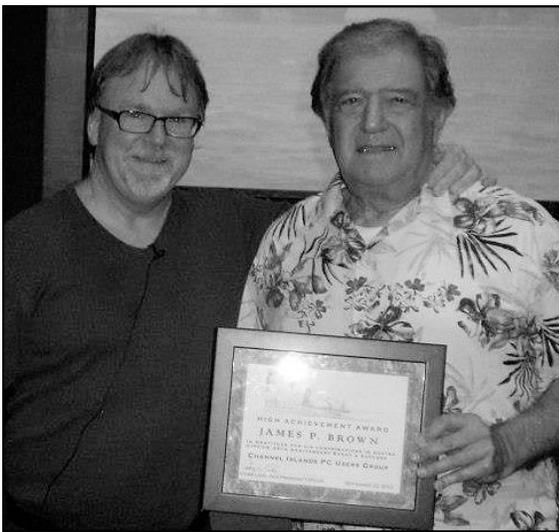
CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Corrections

Gremlins caught up with us in the last issue, resulting in several embarrassing typos and omissions in the report on the 25h Anniversary Event.

In the list of awards, Kathy Slyke should have been Kathy Van Slyke; Bob Burnet should have been Bob Burnett; and Roberrt Provart should have been Robert Provart.

Jim Thornton was omitted from the list of people who received certificates.

Photos of Jessica Scott and Jim Brown receiving their certificates were omitted and appear below.

The editor apologizes for the errors.

Photos by Jerry Crocker
Top, Rick Smith gives Jim Brown his award. Bottom, Craig Ladd presents Jessica Scott's award.

Coming events
Windows 8 — Part 2 is topic for November

Programs

Toby Scott and Michael Shalkey will continue their discussion of Windows 8 at the Nov. 17 meeting at the Camarillo Boys & Girls Club, 1500 Temple Ave. (Ponderosa Drive and Temple Avenue), Camarillo (see the map on the last page). The doors will open at 8 a.m. and the program will start at 8:45 a.m. We expect to have both the Internet and Connectivity SIG led by Toby Scott and a Social Media, Alternative Devices SIG (smartphones, tablets, etc.) led by Jessica Scott.

More information about Windows 8 is available at http://res2.windows.microsoft.com/resbox/en/6.2/main/c41a3f15-615e-4aca-a9a7-dca6fe967005_31.mp4 and many non-Microsoft sites.

The Dec. 15 program will feature Julie Hanson, Vinpower digital sales and service representative, who will discuss Vinpower's bundled archival media kit, a solution for anyone looking for long-term storage of important digital files. The kit includes a modified external writer drive, connectable to a computer via a USB connection, and a quantity of Vinpower's M-DISC archival media.

Door prizes

We have two types of raffle tickets: one for prizes offered by the presenter and one for club-provided prizes. The tickets for the presenter's prizes are free and limited to one per member.

The tickets for the club-provided prizes are $1 each, $5 for six tickets, $10 for 13 tickets, $15 for 20 tickets and $20 for 27 tickets and are available to anyone. Those who can't stay until the drawing may sign their tickets and give the person selling the tickets a list of the prizes they would like in the order they'd pick them. Winners' prizes will be held until the next meeting.

Consignment table

A consignment table is set up at every meeting. Anyone can buy, but only members can sell.

The club gets 10 percent of the sales price. Sold items must be picked up at the end of the day's meeting.

Any items not picked up will become the property of CIPCUG and will be subject to disposal at the club's discretion.

CIPCUG is not responsible in any way for items bought or sold at the table. Each item is sold as-is unless otherwise stated.

Meeting, SIG notices

If you would like e-mail notices of regular meetings and SIGs, go to www.cipcug.org, where you'll find a link on the home page to sign up. The URL is cipcug.org/listserv.cfm.

You will need your membership number, which is on the back cover of TOE, to complete the sign-up.

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Internet SIG, Q&A
VCC's domain name server company attacked

Unless otherwise noted, Toby Scott answered the questions in the SIG and the regular Q&A, assisted by Michael Shalkey, who also handled the computer duties for both sessions.

Internet and networking SIG

Email problem at VCC

Q: I just had another odd email experience with my CIPCUG account. I could receive, but not send, email. I restarted the computer, and that seemed to fix the problem.

A: For those of you who use the Ventura County Computers mail server, the Doman Name Server we use suffered a Distributed Denial of Service attack from about 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday (Oct. 26).

As we've explained before, the Internet works with numbers, not words, so every time you type a URL into your browser, it must be translated into a set of numbers, such as 66.134.163.66 (our mail server). DNS servers keep track of IP addresses. Hackers who want to cripple such servers use zombie computers they've loaded with malware to send a flood of requests for information to the servers, which can't handle the numbers. Such attacks are usually on large compa- nies like Microsoft and Network Solutions, but for some reason, hackers went after the domain name server company that we use. Companies that are attacked analyze the data and start blocking domains where the requests are coming from.

When the servers came back up in this attack, mail could come in, but items in the queue wouldn't go out. Rebooting seemed to solve the problems for most people. If you still can't reach our servers, it probably means you are infected.

More on coming events ...

Keeping backups on optical media is becoming more and more important as it's the safest method of storage. Optical discs are the only medium that cannot be altered or infected with viruses after data have been stored on them. Flash media like USB or hard drives, even with encryption software, can be altered, or infected with viruses or spyware that can compromise the information stored. Also, and even worse for the casual consumer, the data stored can be erased. Cloud storage can be hacked or subject to exposure.

Even traditional DVD or CD media is not completely safe as time and environment could cause saved data to eventually erode and potentially disappear or the disc can become unreadable.

More information about the product can be found at http://runtechmedia.com.

Other meeting dates for this year and next year:

Dec. 15 **(third Saturday)**
Jan. 26
Feb. 23
March 23
April 27
May 25
June 22
July 27

Aug. 24
Sept. 28
Oct. 26
Nov. 16 **(third Saturday)**
Dec. 21 **(third Saturday)**

SIGs

The Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are sponsored by CIPCUG and led by volunteer club members. They are free to CIPCUG members.

Other than those presented during or just after the regular meeting, the SIGs run from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Ventura County Computers, 2175 Goodyear Ave., Unit 117, Ventura; phone 289-3960. From the 101 Freeway, exit at Telephone, take Telephone south to McGrath, turn left and go one block. Turn right on Goodyear and right again into the second driveway. Unit 117 is the back, right corner of the building.

The pre-meeting SIGs are at 8:45 a.m. at the Boys & Girls Club. The after-meeting SIG when one occurs is at a location to be announced on the meeting day.

The general schedule:
Fourth Tuesday: Linux.
Fourth Saturday (or the regular meeting day): Social Media SIG (Jessica Scott) and Internet and connectivity SIG (Toby Scott), 8:45 a.m. The location of Michael Shalkey's after-meeting SIG, on days there is one is announced at the meeting.

The November and December schedules:

November
Saturday, Nov. 21: Pre-meeting SIGs on Social Media and Internet and connectivity at 8:45 a.m..

Tuesday, Nov. 27: Linux SIG. Moderator: Bill Wayson. We will be discussing issues, answering questions, and trying to help anyone with a computer problem. At the same time, we'll be dealing with the death and possible resurrection of the CIPCUG PC, which refused to start at October's meeting.

December
Tuesday, Dec. 25: Linux SIG. Moderator: Bill Wayson. Topic TBA. (This is subject to change.)

Saturday, Dec. 15: Pre-meeting SIGs on Social Media/Other Devices and Internet and email at 8:45 a.m.

Be sure to check the calendar on cipcug.org for updates on event programs, dates and times.

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Indications of a zombie computer

Q: How would I know if my computer is a zombie?

A: Good anti-virus programs should be able to catch such problems, but sometimes they don't. If you're getting a lot of high CPU use messages when you're not doing anything on the computer or if your router lights are flashing a lot when you're not sending or receiving, those could be clues that you're infected. Router use is not a good indication if you have lots of computers, however.

If Norton Antivirus tells you that your CPU use is at 100 percent, you might have a rootkit.

Michael Shalkey: Kaspersky has TDSSKKiller, which can be found at http://tinyurl.com/653zsu6, and which is a good root kit detector. It takes about 45 seconds to download and a couple of minutes to scan your computer. We use it regularly at the shop.

Caught in a loop

Q: When I try to go on the Internet, I get a message that says I can't get on because of a loop.

A: In programming, a loop keeps going through the same series of steps over and over again. The question here is what's causing it, what's wrong with your network? I can tell you there is a problem, but I can't tell you what it is.

As is true of many computer problems, you don't want to ignore this because it won't just go away. Problems in computers almost never heal themselves.

Spybot

Q: Is Spybot still a good anti-malware tool?

A: It's OK, but its real power is in the advanced tools that most people don't use.

Malwarebytes is still the best, but it's getting harder and harder to find the free version to download. You have to look at the site (http://www.malwarebytes.org/products/malwarebytes_free) carefully to find it and not download the paid version by mistake.

Michael Shalkey: Be sure to read all the pages as you install any program. Don't just click OK because lots of companies are adding other things, such as the

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Internet SIG
Email problem at VCC
Indications of a zombie computer
Caught in a loop
Spybot
Email addresses
Online radio
Attacks on other devices
Cookies

This month's Q&A topics:
Excel files don't copy properly
Registry checkers
Passwords
Loading .swf files
Email addresses
Slow connection
Favorites toolbar in Firefox

Ask toolbar, to the software downloads. Ask is not an especially good search engine, but it will add its own toolbar to your browser and change your home page. The Java and Flash updates are adding other things that you need to uncheck.

We used to recommend Download.com as a good source for software, but it's adding all kinds of things to its downloads that you don't want. Don't use it anymore.

Toby Scott: Java now installs the Ask toolbar if you don't read the instructions carefully.

Audience: I had a problem with Malwarebytes asking for payment, so I uninstalled it and installed an older version from the CIPCUG flash drive.

Toby Scott: You can find the free version, but sometimes it's grayed out. (Someone else said the option is a different color.)

Email addresses

Q: If I establish an email address for home, can the bad guys get into my computer through it?

A: Hackers found many email passwords from a hack of Sony PlayStation, which asked users to use their email address as their user name. Many people used their email passwords as the password rather than picking a different one. Hackers got those logins and passwords and posted them on the Net. People would log in to the accounts, change the passwords and then send letters to everyone in the address books asking for money because they had supposedly been mugged and robbed in a foreign country.

As a result, many companies started forcing regular password changes. Your email password should be unique, as

should passwords to any financial sites. Other passwords can be variations of a basic password with changes specific to each site.

There have literally been thousands of sites that have suffered password hacks, including Department of Defense sites.

If a hacker gets the password to your email account, all he knows for sure is the password to that account. It's possible for computers to be hacked in Starbucks. If you're using XP on a computer you use in Starbucks, you've probably been hacked. If you're using Vista or Widows 7, when you log in you'll be asked what kind of network it is. Be sure to say Public because the computer uses tighter security on public networks.

In April 2014, Microsoft will stop updating Windows XP. Hackers will find ways to break into it and keep writing a variety of viruses using still undiscovered holes. Anti-virus people tell Microsoft when they find holes and what the holes are, but. when Microsoft stops writing updates. any XP machine that goes online is going to be toast.

Audience: You could use a secure VPN (virtual private network) with Hotspot Shield (http://www.hotspotshield.com).

A: Yes, VPNs are an excellent way of keeping your communication private.

Audience: My AARP laptop running XP was upgraded to 1.5 Gigs of memory, and Windows 7 was installed. It seems to be working fine.

Toby Scott: The Windows 7 upgrade costs about $150 per copy. If you'd rather have Windows 8, you can upgrade for $40 until January. (For more on Windows 8, see the report on the October program

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

starting on page 7.)

Online radio

Q: Can I get a virus listening to online radio like Pandora?

A: Pandora is reputable, but there are other online radio sites that will try to put viruses on your computer. Spotify is also safe. But we have had clients who got malware along with their online radio subscription. Stick with reputable companies.

Q: The local paper's computer guru said don't download anything free.

A: Mostly that's true, but a big exception is open source software. Open source means the software and the source code are free and can be downloaded, revised and recompiled. Many companies customize open source software in perfectly legitimate ways. Sourceforge (http://sourceforge.net) and some other download sites won't let people post programs with viruses. The worst that will happen is that you'll get the Ask toolbar if you don't read everything before clicking OK.

Shareware can frequently contain viruses. Open source is safer than shareware.

Attacks on other devices

Q: Are the public Wi-Fi issues the same for smartphones?

A: Yes. With all the devices (iPads, Androids, smartphones and more), the hackers look for what's common about them. The answers are Flash, Java and Acrobat Reader. Ninety-something percent of today's viruses target those common programs.

Michael Shalkey: You don't get floppies with viruses on them anymore. You get the viruses on infected websites.

Toby Scott: Anything you do that makes computers more useable makes them less secure.

Q: What's the best anti-virus for such devices?

A: I don't have any recommendations yet. It's still too early. They are apps written by people you don't know yet. When I was a sysop on CompuServe, there were similar problems. It was the early days of computing, and the good developers of anti-virus programs hadn't risen to the surface yet. That's the stage we're in now

with the other devices, but the best programs will rise to the top as times goes on.

Jessica found one program for her Android, but it's quirky and she has to jump through hoops to do what she needs to do.

Cookies

Q: I run Norton Antivirus and Spybot regularly. Why do I get mixed reports and actions on cookies?

A: Cookies are text files. In and of themselves, there's nothing they can do to you. They're inert. People got upset because of ads on websites. Ads put cookies on computers that are specific to the ads, not the site. Companies can track where you go on the Web but not who you are. Privacy advocates expressed concerns, but the companies don't identify you, just an IP address.

Michael Shalkey: What's happening is ad personalization. Companies want you to see ads on things you might buy, and knowing sites you visit gives them some clues. The New York Times had some infected ads on its site, but the Times wasn't at fault because the ads come from other servers. I'd much rather see ads for things I'm interested in than random ads for feminine care products.

Toby Scott: The New York Times hacks were not cookies. The ads put something else on the infected computers.

Q: Some of us think the government is putting things on our computers to track us. Is that possible?

A: The government has lots of infrastructure tracking people who go to certain sites and communicate with certain people. They're looking for terrorist cells. The government might get interested in you if you visit such sites, but if you visited a questionable site just once, there's less likelihood.

The government is probably not putting stuff on your computer. The government recruits its experts from colleges and universities, and those are just the people the government would probably be interested in watching, but they're also the people who could tell they were being tracked. It's security through obscurity.

Q: How about using the "incognito tunnel" to observe certain sites?

A: You can turn off tracking. The Windows 8 default in Internet Explorer is to not track, and the advertisers are screaming bloody murder. I'll probably turn it back on to see ads for things I might be interested in. Having targeted ads is not the end of the world.

Michael Shalkey: "Incognito mode" doesn't mean websites can't see you. They have to because they send information you've asked for. The "incognito mode" washes cookies at the end of each session. If you're really concerned, use a live distribution of Linux.

Part of the problem is the term "tracking cookies." If they were called "ad personalization cookies," people would be less likely to be so worried.

Toby Scott: You could also use Portable Apps on a flash drive. They run in a Portable Apps sandbox. That doesn't protect you if you use XP and have shared files on.

Regular Q&A session
Excel files don't copy properly

Q: I have Excel 2007. Recently my spreadsheets won't cut and paste data to a new file. I can copy as text, which loses all the formulas, but the data doesn't copy properly. My IT people say my files are corrupted. I can start a new workbook with no problems.

A: How old is the hard drive? (About 11 months.) I would still run a check on the hard drive. Here's what makes me think it is file corruption: You can't copy a file. If you create a new file it copies correctly. That means there's some difference between the old and the new files.

If a bad update prevented the thing from copying over, it would have stopped both of them. Before you start retyping the files, run Chkdsk and see if it can find and fix any problems. If you want to bring it in, we'll look at it.

Michael Shalkey: Are they xls or xlsx files? (I believe they're xls.) You might try saving them to the other format and see if that works. That might be faster than retyping them.

Toby Scott: It's certainly faster than retyping, but you still need to find the problem. Don't let it go.

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Program: Windows 8 — Part 1

Microsoft's new OS is drastically different

By John Weigle
jweigle@vcnet.com

Windows 8 is "unlike any Windows you have ever used," Toby Scott said during the October program, the first of two sessions on Windows 8. "It is all upside down and backwards" and has left many techies screaming about how bad it is.

But many of those who give Mi-

More on Q&A ...

Registry checkers

Q: I went to MajorGeeks.com to download a program that Michael had recommended, and before it would let me do the download, it said I needed to run a registry cleaner. I stopped there and unplugged it.

A: Don't let anybody do a registry clean, not even the ones like CCleaner.

Michael Shalkey: They're snake oil, promising things they can't deliver.

Toby Scott: That kind of thing is becoming more common as costs of running Internet sites keeps rising. All those guys, even if they're pretty well intended, have to do some things to bring money in.

You can avoid these on MajorGeeks, but Download.com has gotten really bad. It runs another program to install its junk before it lets you download whatever you asked for.

Michael Shalkey: I'm using Orbit Downloader for downloads now.

Passwords

Q: You and others are recommending we use lots of different passwords. Is there a good program to generate and store passwords?

A: KeePass and LastPass are both good. Some people still use Roboform. You can put the programs in the system tray and put hot keys on your user name and password. You open the program when you start, and when it's open and running you use the hotkeys to paste in the user names and passwords. Getting the hotkeys to work will take a little effort. If your computer is hacked, key loggers can pick up what it types. That's not true of KeePass or LastPass.

I have LastPass on Dropbox and run it from there.

Loading .swf files

Q: I needed to put an .flv file on Oracle porter at work but could not. My IT people said they had to put it in a wrapper, and you've used that term before. What is a wrapper? (The file is going on a website.)

A: A wrapper is a program that runs a program. SWF is a Flash file. You can't run it directly because you don't have the program.

Michael Shalkey: It's what plays the program that is different.

Toby Scott: It's the same procedure that others use to run things before the program you want. Wrappers can change homepages and do other bad things, too, rather than simply running the software you want to run.

Email addresses

Q: I've noticed that some email addresses and URLs have dots in them. What are they for?

A: They're separators, and you have to be careful that they're in the right place.

In a URL such as http://www.google.com, the http indicates it's for a website, as does the www (which can also be ww2 or some other number), google is the name of the domain and com generally indicates the type of site (commercial, in this case, although not all sites follow this pattern). The dots after www and google are separators.

In an email address, spaces are not allowed, so some companies and agencies use first and last names separated by a period (such as toby.scott). Everything to

the left of the @ sign in an email address is a user name; everything to the right describes the site. In a URL, more information sometimes shows the location of a specific file. Companies like Microsoft might have several servers for specific needs, such as msdn.microsoft.com. The msdn points to a server for Microsoft Developer Network.

Slow connection

Q: One of my computers connects quickly to the Web, and one does not. I have to admit that the slow one doesn't have a lot of free space on the hard drive.

A: The lack of free space is the answer to the problem. Computers need at least 15 percent of the hard drive to be free because the operating system must create temporary files as it performs certain functions and erase them when it's finished. If there isn't room to do that easily, the computer will run slowly.

Gmail spam filters

Q: I use Gmail. How do I add messages to the spam filter?

A: Open the email involved. Click on More in the menu, click on Filter messages like these and complete the form showing what you want done. You can also use Report Spam (the exclamation mark icon on the top of the message) to tell Google the message is spam. If it gets enough such reports, Google will treat such messages as spam.

Favorites toolbar in Firefox

Q: My Favorites toolbar disappeared in Firefox. How do I get it back?

A: Go to View > Toolbars > Favorites bar. If you don't see the toolbar, click the Alt key to restore it.

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

crosoft's new operating system a chance soften their criticism as they get used to the changes. And the program is an "existence-preservation move by Microsoft," Scott added, because the company has been slow to enter the smartphone and tablet markets but must do so now because the sale of desktop computers continues to slip.

"The shift from XP to Vista is nothing like the change to 8," Scott said.

For many people, smartphones, tablets and similar devices are replacing desktop and laptop computers, and Microsoft is betting that users would like to have a single operating system that runs all their devices and allows easy synchronization of the files on all the devices. Windows 8 will operate everything from servers to phones, he said.

Corporate users are a main target for Windows 8 because IT workers will have much easier jobs if the same operating system is on all devices a company must support, Scott said.

"There are some huge advantages" for consumers, too, because as they buy new devices they won't have to relearn everything for each new device. "You are going to be using some other operating system than the 20-year-old Windows" as you buy new machines, he said.

The most obvious visual change is the screen you see after logging on. Instead of today's desktop, it shows a batch of tiles, which can be resized and moved to new locations. Some of these are live, meaning that they will change as you get new email, instant messages and Skype calls or visit new Web pages. The live feature can be turned off if a user doesn't want it. You can use Windows + D or the desktop icon to get to the old-style desktop, which has had much of the eye candy removed.

Microsoft encourages users to log on with the user name and password of one of their Microsoft accounts (Windows Live, Hotmail, etc.) Doing so automatically opens the Microsoft accounts. Windows 8 integrates a user's contacts list with Mail, People, Calendar, Messenger and Send To so users can easily send email and instant messages and make

This window of tiles appears after users log in to their computers in Windows 8.

Skype calls. Scott's OneNote files, stored on Microsoft's SkyDrive, are available to him anyplace he can get on to the Internet and no matter what devices he's using. Microsoft did a "really, really nice job of consolidating that," he said of the contacts list.

Another obvious change, which has prompted lots of complaints, is the disappearance of the standard Start menu. On the other hand, it's easy to find most programs just by starting to type the program's name on the desktop, which can be reached by using the Windows + D keyboard shortcut. "The desktop is going to go away," Scott said. "The desktop is an albatross."

Users who decide to upgrade to Windows 8 should make a complete image backup of their hard drives so they can easily restore them if they decide not to keep Windows 8 or if the upgrade fails, Scott said. Those upgrading from Windows 7 or Vista should have no trouble finding drivers for their hardware, but that does not hold for users of Windows XP.

Apps run in their own sandboxes, and,

if they're infected, can't reach the operating system or other apps, Scott said.

Windows 8 offers no visual clues to where to find various functions, Scott said, because such clues would be difficult to use on a phone screen. Everything is done by gestures. The Charm Bar has tiles for Search, Share, Start, Devices, and Settings. It can be accessed by moving the mouse cursor to the bottom right hand corner of the screen or by using the Windows + C keyboard shortcut. There are also faster ways to get to files and programs.

Asked if Windows 8 would extend the life of XP machines, Scott said that most XP machines are older ones that face hardware problems in the not too distant future. Any machine that runs XP acceptably will run Windows 8 acceptably, too, he said. (Microsoft's recommended minimum system requirements are listed in a sidebar to this report.)

Windows 8 restores the Ctrl-Print Screen key, which will make a copy of the full monitor screen so it can be pasted into other programs. The Snipping Tool

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

remains in Windows 8.

Michael Shalkey noted that Windows 8 allows administrators to set quotas for hard drive space for users.

"The operating system is lean, it's fast — once you get used to stuff that you do all the time, it works really slick. It's cool. I am telling you, though, the learning curve will eat your liver," he said. "It's the preconceived notions that kill us. We think it's got to be there, and it's not there. Well, it's got moved. And it's in a logical place if you don't have any preconceived notions. It's in a logical place, but it ain't where you thought it was going to be because you have an illogical preconception."

Applications — programs we're used to using that are installed on our computers, such as Microsoft Office — are going away, Scott said. Apps run off the Start page, are run in a sandbox, and don't interface with the operating system. Apps are smaller and faster than applications, but are generally less powerful than their full-blown counterparts.

Windows 8 for phones will work only on Windows phones, not Androids.

Asked if both Windows 8 and 7 could be run on the same machine, Scott said that dual booting is going away, but both systems can be on the same machine, with one running in a virtual drive. Another option is to install the systems on separate hard drives and choose the boot drive at each boot.

Shalkey noted that Push Button Reset

Minimum requirements

From http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-8/system-requirements

If you want to run Windows 8 on your PC, here's what it takes:

Processor: 1 gigahertz (GHz) or faster with support for PAE, NX, and SSE2.

RAM: 1 gigabyte (GB) (32-bit) or 2 GB (64-bit).

Hard disk space: 16 GB (32-bit) or 20 GB (64-bit).

Graphics card: Microsoft DirectX 9 graphics device with WDDM driver.

Additional requirements to use certain features:

To use touch, you need a tablet or a monitor that supports multitouch.

To access the Windows Store and download and run apps, you need an active Internet connection and a screen resolution of at least 1024 x 768.

To snap apps, you need a screen resolution of at least 1366 x 768.

Internet access (ISP fees might apply).

Secure boot requires firmware that supports UEFI v2.3.1 Errata B and has the Microsoft Windows Certification Au-

thority in the UEFI signature database.

Some games and programs might require a graphics card compatible with DirectX 10 or higher.

Microsoft account required for some features.

Watching DVDs requires separate playback software.

Windows Media Center license sold separately.

BitLocker To Go requires a USB flash drive (Windows 8 Pro only).

BitLocker requires either Trusted Platform Module (TPM) 1.2 or a USB flash drive (Windows 8 Pro only).

Client Hyper-V requires a 64-bit system with second level address translation (SLAT) capabilities and additional 2 GB of RAM (Windows 8 Pro only).

A TV tuner is required to play and record live TV in Windows Media Center (Windows 8 Pro Pack and Windows 8 Media Center Pack only).

Free Internet TV content varies by geography, some content might require additional fees (Windows 8 Pro Pack and Windows 8 Media Center Pack only).

lets users restore the hard drive to its original state or to save data and replace the operating system.

On the Net:

Toby's notes for the program are at http://www.vccomputers.com/programs/win8.cfm. They also explain the difference between Windows 8 and Windows RT. The information is essential if you're considering a phone or tablet, and, according to a recent Windows Secrets, the differences are not clear to many people selling the products. With all the questions, we didn't have time to cover the difference between Windows RT and Windows 8, but do not buy a device without understanding the differences.

Windows 8 Compatibility Tool: http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-8/upgrade-to-windows-8.

Versions and pricing

From http://www.vccomputers.com/programs/win8.cfm

Windows 8 Versions

Windows 8: What used to be the Home version. But missing the Media Center. It's an add-on pack.

Windows 8 Pro: What used to be the discontinued Ultimate version. In Windows 7 the distinction between Pro and Ultimate was the inclusion of Bitlocker and multi-language support.

Windows 8 Enterprise: Essentially for large corporations with site licenses. Features very similar to Pro.

Windows RT: Not really Windows at all. Looks and acts like Windows to make the user experience homogeneous, but a different operating system behind the mask.

Downloads & Pricing

All apps can be reached from the apps tile in the interface. No URL is necessary.

Upgrade from Windows 7 to Windows 8 Pro for $15 if you purchased Win7 between June 2, 2012 and January 31, 2013.

Windows 8 Pro Upgrade: Upgrade from XP, Vista or Windows 7 for

$39.99. You will need a Windows Live account. This is a limited time offer and expires Jan. 31. This is a download only offer. Disks cost $14.99 extra.

Windows Media Center: Ignore the upgrade from Windows 8 to Windows 8 Pro. You can get the upgrade for less.

The normal price for retail copies of Windows 8 Pro is supposed to be $199.

With all the deals around now, no one is selling at that price. Who knows after Jan. 31?

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Minutes of the October board of directors meeting

By Diane Mortensen

CIPCUG Board of Directors held its monthly meeting on Oct. 27 2012. Members in attendance were Jim Brown, John Weigle, Ken Church, Craig Ladd, Art Lewis, and Helen Long.

The meeting was called to order by President Jim Brown.

September board minutes: There was no Board of Directors' meeting in September due to the 25th Anniversary event.

Windows 8 program: Board members all agreed that the Windows 8 program presented that day by Toby and Michael was so well received, with many questions asked, that a Part 2 Windows 8 program will be given for the Nov. 17 meeting.

Mortensen

Dec. 15 program: Craig announced that December's program will feature Julie Hanson, Vinpower digital sales and service representative, who will bring a presentation which sounds like fun and will be informative for us. Vinpower's bundled archival media kit is the perfect solution for any individual looking for long-term storage of important digital files. The bundled kit includes a modified external writer drive, connectable to a computer via a USB connection, as well as a quantity of Vinpower's M-DISC archival media.

Solid state drive: Toby indicated that a solid state hard drive for the club's computer is needed. The board approved $80 for solid state hard drive. Toby also indicated that his company would donate a computer and labor.

Business cards: The Board is considering supplying officers with CIPCUG business cards to hand out to prospective people interested in the club.

Camera club: Jim Brown mentioned that the Thousand Oaks Camera Club is doing very well. It was his understanding that the camera SIGs are more popular than the club's regular meetings. Jim suggested that CIPCUG start a very basic Photo SIG, such as how to download photos into a computer. A volunteer is needed to lead this group.

E-mail requests: There was some discussion about doing a mass e-mailing to club members notifying them of meetings and asking them to share their preferences and suggestions as to what subjects, type of meetings, workshops, etc. they are interested in. Further, what information they are interested in that the club is not currently providing.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Back up, back up, back up … and test the backup to be sure it worked.

Treasurer's report for September 2012

By Art Lewis
treasurer@cipcug.org

Lewis

9-1-2012 through 9-30-2012

Category Description	
INFLOWS	
Coffee income	-6.00
Donation	6.00
Memberhip Income	
New members	40.00
Renewals	405.00
Total Membership Income	445.00
Publication Sales	60.00
Raffle	856.00
TOTAL INFLOWS	**1,361.00**
OUTFLOWS	
Corporate Expense	331.74
Equipment	17.25
Raffle prizes	153.75
Rent Paid	150.00
Speaker Fee	200.00
TOE	257.79
TOTAL OUTFLOWS	**1,110.51**
OVERALL TOTAL	**250.49**
Unrestricted Funds	4,465.20
Restricted funds	0.00
Bank Balance 9-30-12	**4,465.20**
Year to Date Income	2,301.00
Year to Date Expense	2,639.76
Net Year to Date	-338.76

2012 contributors to The Outer Edge

Your name can appear here, too. Share your knowledge with other members by sending an article, letters or computer tips to editor@cipcug.org.

CIPCUG MEMBERS
Ken Church
Rick Curry
Bob de Violini
Craig Ladd
Art Lewis
Helen Long
Diane Mortensen
Toby Scott

Michael Shalkey
Rick Smith
Andy Toth
Jim Thornton
Bill Wayson
John Weigle

OTHERS
Steve Baer (APCUG)
Nancy DeMarte (APCUG)
Rick Eblaw (APCUG)
Larry Mobbs (APCUG)
Leo Notenboom (APCUG)
John Somers (APCUG)
Judy Taylour (APCUG)

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Facebook page has poll on members' desires

By John Weigle
jweigle@vcnet.com

There's a lot of activity on the CIPCUG Facebook page, even though I forgot to plug it in the last issue.

Since President Jim Brown mentioned this in Command.com, here's the text of my poll — which, as of Sunday, Nov. 4, has had no responses:

"The CIPCUG board is considering a survey of members for ideas on programs and raffle prizes, among other things. Let's start one here, although this group is not large enough to be fully representative.

"1. What types of programs/events would draw you to meetings?

"2. What types of door prizes would make you more likely to buy raffle tickets?

"3. Would you be more likely to attend meetings if they were on a different day and time and/or in a different place? If yes, what day and time would you prefer?

"4. Should we have more social events (i.e., quarterly potlucks)?

"5. Do you have any suggestions to improve CIPCUG?"

As you've probably noticed, CIPCUG isn't growing as fast as it once did, and some members are leaving before the programs start. These are not good signs. The board needs to know what the members want. Some members have offered a number of suggestions — some possible, some not — but it would help if a larger percentage of members would speak up. Comments from those of you who don't attend meetings are welcome, especially if some change could persuade you to attend.

Some ideas I've heard: change the meeting place and day, start a photo SIG, have better door prizes (whatever is meant by better), have better programs (again usually with no suggestions of what they'd be), get more publicity, bring back the annual garage sale, concentrate more on Windows computers, and concentrate more on smartphones, tablets and similar devices, and concentrate more on social media.

Other postings on the page (https://www.facebook.com/groups/cipcug) include the following:

● A security hint for seniors (it's too good to reveal the punch line. Check it out.)

● Sony, Sharp and Panasonic report significant losses.

● Microsoft reports that sales of Windows 8 are running higher than Windows 7 for the same number of sales days. Who would have thought it given all the negative press Win8 has received?

● 10 Windows 8 apps you should download first.

● Online bookmarks manager, bookmark manager software, online bookmarks.

● Google introduces new emergency resources in response to Sandy.

● Like Apple, Google's Android devices now come in three sizes.

It should be obvious, but in case it's not, CIPCUG does not necessarily endorse comments made by posters or made in stories, columns or blogs by those whose material is linked to.

Ubuntu Linux and the update cycle

By Bill Wayson
bwayson@gmail.com

I think I finally understand the rationale of the various releases in the update cycle of Ubuntu. If my understanding is correct, the logic of it makes some sense to me, and it may affect your decision on whether or not to move to the most recent update. I am going to explain my understanding of the purpose of each step of the Ubuntu update cycle and why the Linux SIG members decided to forgo the latest release of Ubuntu.

The update cycle of Ubuntu is affected by a

Penguin's Lair

Wayson

couple of key goals of the project. The first is the mission of the Ubuntu project, which is to create a freely available complete distribution of an operating system and applications that are simple to install and use and which provides a computing experience which works out of the box. It is this emphasis on usability that has helped make Ubuntu one of the most popular Linux distributions for desktop and notebook PCs.

The second project goal is to balance the incompatible goals of two key audiences for the Ubuntu project: the archetypal "Linux geek," the user who is technically savvy, loves to tinker, isn't afraid to deal with problems, and demands the latest and (arguably) greatest software available; and the enterprise "IT department," the user, and he or she who sup-

ports users, who desires stability, usability, and a long time between updates that they are responsible for (in this group, I include the individual PC Linux user who also prefers stable software over the most recently available). Ubuntu handles this balance in a manner similar to the way other Linux distributions handle it, such as Red Hat with its Fedora free distribution and its subscription Red Hat Enterprise Linux, and openSUSE with its free openSUSE distribution and subscription SUSE Enterprise Linux. Ubuntu releases new versions of its distribution every six months in April and October of each year. Within this cycle, Ubuntu brands one update every two years as a Long Term Support release, or "LTS" for short (the last LTS version was 12.04, released

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Next two meetings switch to third Saturday

By Helen Long

D on't forget that November and December meetings are held on the third Saturday of the month. Be sure you come on Nov. 17, and Dec. 15.

Toby and Michael scored big with their presentation of Windows 8 in October. There were lots of questions so they will do Windows 8 — Part 2 in Novem-

Bits & Bytes

Long

ber. There is a ton of information as well as "how to get a cheaper copy of the program." Don't miss this program, and write down your questions so you won't forget them.

I hope that you all read last month's newsletter. There were letters from Bob Bur-

nett (no longer living in Ventura), and Arline and George Lakes, as well as interesting articles on just how the club grew. It was a very interesting newsletter and I hope you all read it.

In December, Craig indicated we will hear from Julie Hanson about Circuit Vin Power Digital. Check out http//:runtech media.com.

Have you run your anti-spyware programs lately?

More on Penguin's Lair ...

in April of 2012). Each semiannual release, except for the LTS releases, is supported with security fixes and updates for at least 18 months and targets the Linux geek. The LTS version targets the IT department community, guaranteeing security fixes and update support for five years after release. The Ubuntu project distinguishes itself from other distributions by never charging for any of its releases, including the LTS versions.

These two goals interact in an interesting way that results in each release having different general characteristics. The LTS release (which we will call the first release in the update cycle), by definition, tends to be vary stable and long-lasting. The next release in the cycle is pretty similar to the preceding LTS release. So much effort went into troubleshooting and stabilizing the LTS version, there appears to be a reluctance to mess it up. Rather, a great deal of work goes into the artwork — things like the wallpapers, themes, login screens, desktop layout, window decorations, buttons, menus, and such, that give the distribution the characteristic look that distinguishes it from other distributions and makes it recognizable as Ubuntu. But there isn't a whole lot in it that differs with the contents of the LTS version. The third release in the cycle gets interesting. It has been a year since the LTS release, the open source software world has released

newer versions, and it is time to start preparing for the next LTS release in 12 months. So the software gets updated, new software is tried, old software is dropped, and the distribution tends to get less stable. The developers hope to receive lots of feedback from the users of this release so they can start fixing what is wrong and homing in on a supportable set of software. The fourth release may be the most interesting, and maybe in the Chinese meaning of "interesting." This is the last version in the cycle before the next LTS release, so whatever is not included in this version has almost no chance of making it into the LTS. Developers and programmers are jamming to make their programs good enough, and sometimes up to the last minute, to be included in the release. For this reason, this version often is the most unstable version in the cycle. But for the six months after the fourth release in the cycle, the project members work on troubleshooting and fine-tuning it, preparing the next stable LTS version. The project developers want maximum feedback and bug reports from users who, they hope, have discovered every possible problem in all possible circumstances. Whatever cannot be fixed in the release and made to just work is a candidate for jettisoning before the LTS is completed. After all, the next LTS will be supported for five years. And back again we come to a new LTS version, which starts the next update

cycle. Very little, if anything, that is radically new will be introduced into an LTS release. It has been honed to be stable and supportable for a long period. After its release, the emphasis will be on fixing any issues that are reported post-release while looking forward to the development effort of the next upgrade cycle.

Given the characteristics of the four releases in the Ubuntu update cycle, users can decide on whether or not to upgrade at each of them, depending on where they fit in the Linux geek-IT department spectrum. Because most participants in the CIPCUG Linux SIG prefer usability and stability over the bleeding edge, they have decided to forgo the upgrade to Ubuntu 12.10, which was released last October, and stick with the most recent LTS version.

If you have questions or would like to learn more about Linux and FOSS, come to the November CIPCUG Linux SIG meeting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday the 27th at Ventura County Computers in Ventura. We will be discussing issues, answering questions, and trying to help anyone with a computer problem.

At the same time, we'll be dealing with the death and possible resurrection of the CIPCUG PC, which refused to start at October's meeting. If there is something you would like the Lair or Linux SIG to cover, drop me a line at bwayson@gmail.com.

Until next month, happy computing.

Obituary: June Waverly Graham-Segesman

June Waverly Graham-Segesman, 75 years, of Camarillo went to heaven on Oct. 2, 2012, while in the loving care of her family.

She was born in Los Angeles, Calif., on Sept. 10, 1937, to Clyde Johnson Cortner and Gladys Russell Cortner.

She attended Oxnard High School, graduating in 1959.

She was active in community sports and loved to play tennis. She was an active member of Island View Tennis Club and the Camarillo Tennis Club and organized the club's tournaments and other competitions. She served as president and secretary of the Port Hueneme Tennis Association from 1982 to 1985.

June worked at Ventura High School as the admin for the dean of boys/girls from 1963 to 1974. She retired from the Ventura County Community College District in 2001 after 18 years of service at Oxnard Community College. June was committed to helping students and supportive of public education.

June was the backbone and enduring strength of her family, and left to cherish her memories are her three loving sons, James Nolan Graham of Madeira Beach, Florida; Steven Joel Graham of Ventura; Timothy Neal Graham of Camarillo; her devoted sister, Linda Lenoff of Los Angeles; her beautiful granddaughter Cassidy Hope Graham of Fairview, North Carolina; and joins in heaven her loving husband, C. Frank Segesman.

Call (805) 403-1483 or (813) 546-0089 for information.

Published in Ventura County Star from October 7 to October 17, 2012

Frank Segesman was a founding member of CIPCUG and technical adviser for several years, handling the regular Q&A session. — Editor

Beware of messages purportedly from your bank, PayPal or other financial sites asking for personal information, such as your login name, password or Social Security number. They are almost certainly from scammers. If in doubt, go to the site of the institution <u>by typing in a known URL, not by clicking on the email link,</u> and look for messages there.

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Membership report:

Is it time to renew?

By Ken Church
email address: *membership@cipcug.org*

CHURCH

Welcome –
New member: Irving Bergman

Attendance at the October 2012 general meeting:
56 members and guests (who signed-in)

Total membership: 182

MEMBER RENEWAL INFORMATION
$30 for single membership,
$35 for two or more family membership.

NEW MEMBER INFORMATION
$40 first year for single membership,
$55 first year for two or more family member-
ship in same household.

Please send your payment to:

CIPCUG MEMBERSHIP
P.O. BOX 51354
OXNARD, CA 93031-1354

Or bring your payment to the sign in table for
the Nov. 17, 2012, meeting.

September 2012 renewals payment due:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Dt
1240	Bowman	Steve	201209
0006T	Burnett	Bob	201209
1241	Jensen	Elaine	201209
1093	Kincaid	Carla	201209
1037	Lerner	Robert	201209
1244	Rosenthal	Mark	201209
1235	Shaw	Wayne	201209
1036	Smith	Howard	201209
1150	Thomas	Ray	201209

October 2012 renewals payment due:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Dt
0034	Campbell	Gordon	201210
1107T	Carlson	Gordy	201210
0160B	Collier	Shay	201210
0160A	Evans	Brook	201210
0385	Forder	John	201210
1236	Hauge	Doug	201210
0990	Mehr	Steve	201210
1209	Nachian	Paul	201210

November 2012 renewals payment due:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Dt
0388	Armstrong	Bob	201211
1074	Chaison	Doris	201211
1061	Churchyard	Martha	201211
0915	Clayton	Phil	201211
0944T	Coon	Donn	201211
0635	Godwin	John	201211
1212	Hollander	Gary	201211
0789	Knauer	Wolfgang	201211
0145	Lee	Bill	201211
0272	Provart	Robert	201211
0542	Salisbury	Wayne	201211
1194	Tsutsui - Trujillo	Sandy	201211
0046	Wood	Bart	201211
0863	Zapf, D.P.M.	Michael	201211

General news, commentary

Review: ZTreeWin beats Windows Explorer

By Jim Thornton
(jasthorn@gmail.com)

I'm a longtime user of ZTreeWin, a popular fast and flexible file and directory manager for all versions of Windows. ZTreeWin is popular because it provides many more useful features than Windows Explorer. For example, the opening screen of ZTreeWin is divided into four parts compared to Windows Explorer's, which has only has two parts. The largest part of the ZTreeWin screen is at the upper left side of the screen showing all the directories on your selected drive or other storage device. Below this large screen is a listing of all the files in the selected directory showing the file names, extensions, size, attributes, dates, and times installed or modified. On the right side of the screen is displayed the amount of available space on the drive, and the quantity and size of files in the selected directory. At the bottom of the screen is a list of 26 commands you can select. When you depress the Ctrl key on your keyboard, eight of the previous of more frequently used commands will reappear as well as eight new commands, and when you depress the Alt key, seven of the original commands will reappear again as well as 16 new ones. The total commands are 50, which is many more than Windows Explorer has.

ZTreeWin shows what your directories and files actually look like and doesn't show the duplicate copies of the same directories that Windows Explorer shows if you are using Windows Vista or Windows 7. When using these newer Windows Explorers, these duplicate large directories are shown as being outside of your selected drive. These duplicate directories are AppData, Contacts, Desktop, Documents, Downloads, Favorites, Links, HomeGroup, Libraries, Music, My Documents, My Music, My Pictures, My Video, Pictures, Saved Games, Searches, Videos, your computer's name, etc.

ZTreeWin shows all directories and all subdirectories at the same time. When you click on a directory, all the files, including all hidden files in the entire directory and subdirectories, will appear. These useful features include viewing, searching, and organizing files and directories and the quick viewing of the internal contents of files. Another nice feature: You can split your screen so you can view one drive on the left side and a different drive on the right side. Or you can view a folder and all of its files on the left side and on the right side view the same drive but a different folder and all of its files.

Another interesting feature is the ease in chagning the file attributes. For example, using ZTreeWin, select the file and at the bottom of the screen, depress the Ctrl key and click on Attributes, and the choices appear where you can change the attributes of the file. The plus symbol is used to add and the minus to remove the attribute and the attribute choices are RASH (R -

Members' classified ads

Classified ads are free to members. Each ad is limited to 105 characters, including spaces and to one ad per member per month. Copy has to be to John Weigle, editor of TOE (editor@cipcug.org), within the week after the regular meeting. Otherwise, the ad is held to the following month.

Free

For sale
I have the following Free/For Sale (contribution to CIP-CUG):
One SHARP UX-300 FAX machine with Handset

Manual (.pdf) http://pdf.textfiles.com/manuals/FAXMACHINES/Sharp%20UX300%20Plain%20Paper%20Fax%20Machine.pdf — David Minkin

I have the following For Sale (contribution to CIPCUG):
2 each Microsoft Mouse, $2 each
Internet Scrollin Mouse (COMP USA), $2
Video Selector Switch (5 inputs/2 outputs), $5 — David Minkin

Wanted

Other categories as needed

The Outer Edge is printed and prepared for mailing by:

General news, commentary

Read Only, A - Attributes, S - System Files, and H - Hidden). Click on your choice and the file is immediately changed. You can use your mouse or keyboard to make these changes as well as any other changes in ZTreeWin. For example, in selecting Attributes, you can depress the letter A on your keyboard or point to Attributes on the screen with your mouse and click its button, etc.

Another useful feature is the easiest and quickest way to find files. For example, press B (Branch) and all files of the whole branch, including all subfolders will show up in less than a second. Press F (Filespec) and then *.doc and you will see only your Word files. And if you still can't find the file that you are searching for, press Alt and S (Sort), D (Date & Time) and all are displayed by date.
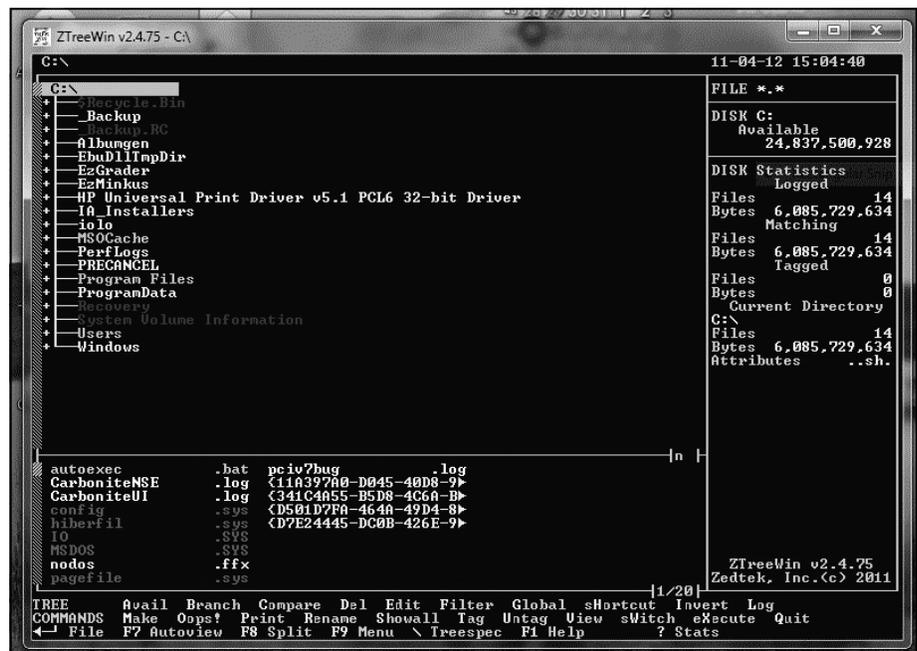
Another useful feature of ZTreeWin is the ability to find, tag, and delete files and the ability to rename multiple files and/or folders. ZTreeWin displays the size or number of files of each folder or branch. When you depress S (Showall), all files in the whole branch with all subfolders will show up in less than a quarter of the time that Windows Explorer takes.

Another feature that I really like is the ability to print all or only the selected tagged files from many different folders and what is printed is the file names, extensions, sizes, attributes, dates, and times.

Another interesting feature is the ability to display all of your, for example, photograph files, even from different drives, in a common totally alphabetized format. This is easily done by tagging all of your photo files and then depressing Ctrl and S (Showall), which will show all the tagged files.

Another nice feature is that by using ZTreeWin you can recover your deleted files that don't appear in Windows Explorer Recycle directory. For example, if you deleted any Microsoft Word files using Microsoft Word, they don't appear in Windows Explorer Recycle directory, but by viewing the Recycle directory using ZTreeWin, all those deleted files are visible and can be easily recovered.

Another nice feature is that ZTreeWin

This is the opening screen of ZTreeWin. The top left frame shows the directory for the C: drive, with the frame just below shows the files in the root directory. Statistics are on the right and commands are on the bottom. Long -time computer users will recognize the similar to the old XTree program.;.

displays all of the Windows hidden or system files, which cannot be viewed using Windows Explorer. Plus ZTreeWin does not restrict you from accessing all of the directories and files, as does Windows Explorer.

One of the interesting things about ZTreeWin is that its opening screen does not fill the screen; it fills only about 90 percent. But this is easily corrected by momentarily depressing your Alt and F7 keys, which makes ZTreeWin fill your screen. If you need only to widen the ZTreeWin screen, use ALT and F8 keys or to increase its height use the Alt and F9 keys. To permanently set the screen size, use Alt and F10 keys with options page 2 A and B. There are other features to change the font size, etc.

There are numerous other features that I have not described, and some of the more popular ones follow: You can individually color-code your files based on their names or attributes and you select the color; you can easily open and display ZIP (really compressed) files; you can easily compare sections of your working data with that previously backed up to a

CD; you can run ZTreeWin from a USB flash drive or even from a floppy disk without previously installing the program on a different computer, etc.

The history of ZTreeWin is interesting because the general idea of this improved service relates back to 1985, when XTree was first introduced. It was originally designed to work with DOS and, in 1992, the first Windows version of XTree was released. However, three years later, in 1995, all production of XTree was stopped. The first version of ZTree was introduced in 1995 as an improved clone of XTree and the current version of ZTreeWin was released on Dec. 6, 2010.

There are two versions of ZTreeWin available: 2.2 for Windows NT, 2000, XP, Vista and 7 (both 32-bit and 64-bit), and 1.74 for Windows 95, 98, and ME. These versions may be downloaded from http://ww.ztree.com/html/download.htm. The cost of version 2 is $29.95 and of 1 is $19.95. There is a 30-day free evaluation period. In addition, if you have an earlier version, you may continue to upgrade free as long as you upgrade using the same version.

General news, commentary

Writer shares experiences with shopping websites

By Steve Baer
*Featured Writer, Hilton Head Island
Computer Club, SC
February 2012 issue, Island Computing
www.hhicc.org
Baer (at) ieee.org*

There is still no new tablet at gadget central. I'm still waiting for a good ice cream Sandwich device like the new Asus Transformer Prime. But, with the holidays over, I had a chance to reflect with Mrs. Gadget about our recent web shopping experiences. *(Note that this article was written almost a year ago. — Editor)*

This was stimulated by a frustrating session with hotels.com, where I searched for things, made a selection, entered credit card data and then received an email back from them first saying the location was sold out at that date, and then a few minutes later saying there had been a computer error.

I contrast that with my amazon.com experiences where they know who I am, offer reviews of products, show what others bought who looked at this type of product, and execute flawlessly. Even a recent event in buying an old book (from a sub-merchant) that arrived smelling of cigarette smoke resulted in an immediate refund.

Based on the above, there seem to clearly be rankings in the quality of web shopping sites, just as there are for everything else. Below are a few of our family experiences and approximate ratings. Hopefully, others will pass along their experiences.

A — Very Good (Favorites I would use again)

Amazon.com — The standard to which all should aspire. Good in all aspects: search, reviews, pricing, execution, problem resolution.

Shoemall.com — Quite good in search, selection and execution.

Buy.com — Quite good in execution and price. But sometimes the price is not as low as the competition.

Target.com — Good execution.

Partsexpress.com — Good for electronics and home theater parts, including the obscure. Good search, review, and return policy. Shipping may be a bit high at times.

Nordstroms.com — Good for clothing. Free shipping and returns. No minimum purchase required. Should prices go down after purchase of an item, a simple phone call to customer service and a credit for the difference is issued to the customer.

Potterybarn.com — Good for home accessories. Items arrive well boxed and in a timely fashion.

Crateandbarrel.com — Excellent site for kitchen utensils, dishes, cookware and bake ware. Items arrive well boxed and in a timely fashion.

Talbots.com — Good for women's clothing. Approximately once a month they have free shipping with no minimum purchase required for 24 hours, but it is never advertised. One must visit the website to find out.

Belks.com — Complete department store. A gift for someone else was ordered. Item was lost and never received by recipient. Customer service refunded money, no questions asked. They have come a long way in the past few years.

Kayak.com — I use this site only to get an idea of the range of airline prices and schedules. Usually going directly to the airline site provides slightly lower prices.

B — Medium (Worth a try, if nothing better around)

Bedbathandbeyond.com — Interesting website for home accessories. During "check out" an error was made, but unfortunately the software was not specific enough to explain the problem. Purchase had to be completed via phone.

C — Needs Improvement (Not worth another visit, unless I have no other choices)

Hotels.com — Posted inventory not as good as that of individual hotel sites.

Homedepot.com and Lowes.com — Both seem designed to steer you to their local stores as opposed to providing a central place from which to order online.

Remember, these comments are based only on a small sample. Your experience may vary. I thank Mrs. Gadget for her input to this article.

Discount offered on WinX DVD Ripper Platinum

This information was provided by Vice President Craig Ladd. — Editor

Fifty percent discount on Digiarty's WinX DVD Ripper Platinum (regularly $45.95). http://www.winxdvd.con/dvd-ripper-platinum.

Buy at https://secure.avangate.com/order/checkout.php?

PRODS=1412049&QTY=1&CART=2.

Coupon code IJ76XDOCB.

This DVD ripper brings the No. 1 fast DVD ripping solution in the market thanks to the cutting-edge technology to support multicore CPU (maxmm 8-core processor) and Hyperthreading.

Rip both homemade and encrypted DVDs to AVI, MP4, MPEG, WMV, FLV, 3GP, iPhone/5, iPad/3, iPod/5, Apple TV, PSP, Zune, Zen, Android, HTC, Samsung, XOOM, Galaxy tablet, YouTube compatible videos, etc. 1:1 backp DVD to PC, USB within 5 minutes.

Free lifetime technical support via e-mail, guaranteed reply within 24 hours. Free lifetime update to latest version.

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS / GENERAL NEWS, COMMENTARY

F1—Your Help Key

(Revised Sept. 7, 2008)

COMMUNICATIONS/INTERNET (GENERAL)
World Wide Web   DM

DATABASES
Access   BR

DOS   RP

E-MAIL
Outlook   MS
Outlook Express   BR, DM
Thunderbird   MS

GRAPHICS PROGRAMS
IrfanView   MS
Paint Shop Pro   DM
Photo Shop Elements   BR
Print Shop   BR

SPREADSHEETS
Microsoft Excel   DM

WORD PROCESSING
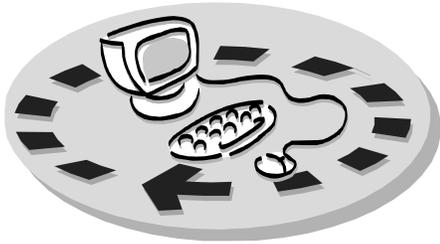Microsoft Word   DM
WordPerfect   DM

WINDOWS
Windows 98, 95   DM, MS (98)
Windows 2000   BDV
Windows XP   DM

Initials	Name	(805)
BDV	Bob de Violini	rjddev@gmail.com
BR	Bill Robinson	389-2997 (b) bill@bzus.com
DM	David Minkin	469-6970 (cell); 484-2974 (home); dddave@cipcug.org
MS	Michael Shalkey	mshalkey@cipcug.org
RP	Robert Provart	498-8477 (b)

 Phone: (d) = days; (e) = evenings; (b) = both

If you would like to volunteer to help others, please send your contact information and programs you're willing to help on to editor@cipcug.org.

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WEB HELP SITES (Updated 10-02-12)
    Steve Bass TechBite Newsletter registration page: www.techbite.com
    DSL reports: www.dslreports.com
    Steve Gibson: www.grc.com
    Kim Komando: www.komando.com
    Leo Laporte: www.leoville.com
    Jeff Levy: www.jefflevy.com
    Linux distributions: www.DistroWatch.com
    Microsoft: www.microsoft.com
    OnGuard Online: http://www.onguardonline.gov
    PCMag: www.pcmag.com
    PC Pitstop: www.pcpitstop.com
    PC World: www.pcworld.com
    Recalled products: www.recalls.gov
    SANS Institute — Computer Security Education and Information Security Training: www.sans.org
    Smart Computing: www.smartcomputing.com
    Spyware Warrior: www.spywarewarrior.com
    User Group Relations (Gene Barlow): www.ugr.com
    Ventura County Computers (Rick and Toby's shop): www.vccomputers.com
    Virus Bulletin: www.virusbtn.com/index
    Windows Secrets: www.windowssecrets.com
    Windows The Official Magazine (UK): www.officialwindowsmagazine.com/

If you have a favorite help site on the Web, please forward it, so we can expand the section. If you find a link that doesn't work, please tell us that, too.

Why join Channel Islands PC Users Group (CIPCUG)?

Every month, members of the Channel Islands PC Users Group have access to:

♦ The Outer Edge newsletter, which includes a list of members willing to help other members.

♦ The general meeting, featuring a question-and-answer session and program on new software or hardware.

♦ Special Interest Groups — special meetings held monthly.

♦ Door prizes and raffle at the regular meeting.

Other benefits include:

♦ Special user group discounts on books and software.

♦ A flash drive containing many useful freeware programs.

♦ A chance to make friends with people who have similar interests.

♦ The ability to put your knowledge to good use by helping other members. The whole concept of user groups is members helping members.

Please clip the coupon below and send with payment to CIPCUG-Membership, P.O. Box 51354, Oxnard, CA 93031-1354.

Please make checks payable to CIPCUG.

Dues for new members

Individual member, $40.

Family membership (same address), $55.

Renewals are $30 and $35 per year respectively.

TOE subscription only (in the U.S.), $20.

CIPCUG E-MAIL ADDRESS

Members who would like to have an email address through CIPCUG in the form of YourName@cipcug.org may obtain one for $20 per year.

CIPCUG MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Can you help the club as a volunteer? If so, what would you be interested in working on? Please list on separate sheet. If necessary.

Amount enclosed: _____

Please Print the following information:

For CIPCUG use:

Date _____

Member # _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____,

State:_____ ZIP Code: _____

Phone (Home): _____(Work): _____

E-mail address: _____

User level: Novice ____; Intermediate _____;

Advanced _____

Channel Islands PC Users Group Inc.

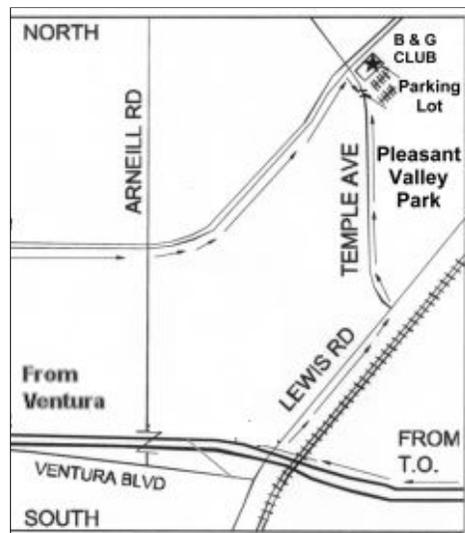P.O.Box 51354
Oxnard, CA: 93031

DATED MATERIAL
Please Do Not Delay

DUES REMINDER

If the code above your name is 2012 NOVEMBER, your membership dues are payable in NOVEMBER 2012.

NOVEMBER 2012 MEETING
OF THE CHANNEL ISLANDS PC USERS GROUP

The map shows the easiest route to the Boys & Girls Club, but if you prefer, you can take the Carmen Drive offramp to Ponderosa Drive, which leads to Temple Avenue.

Saturday morning, Nov. 17, at the Boys & Girls Club, 1500 Temple Ave. (Ponderosa Drive and Temple Avenue), Camarillo.

Meeting schedule:

Time	Event
8:00 a.m.	Doors open
8:30	SIGs (Depending on available space we will have a connectivity and email SIG and a social media/tablet/ smartphone SIG
9:30	Business meeting
10:00	Q&A
10:30	Break
11:00	Program (Toby Scott and Michael Shalkey on Windows 8 — Part 2). Drawing