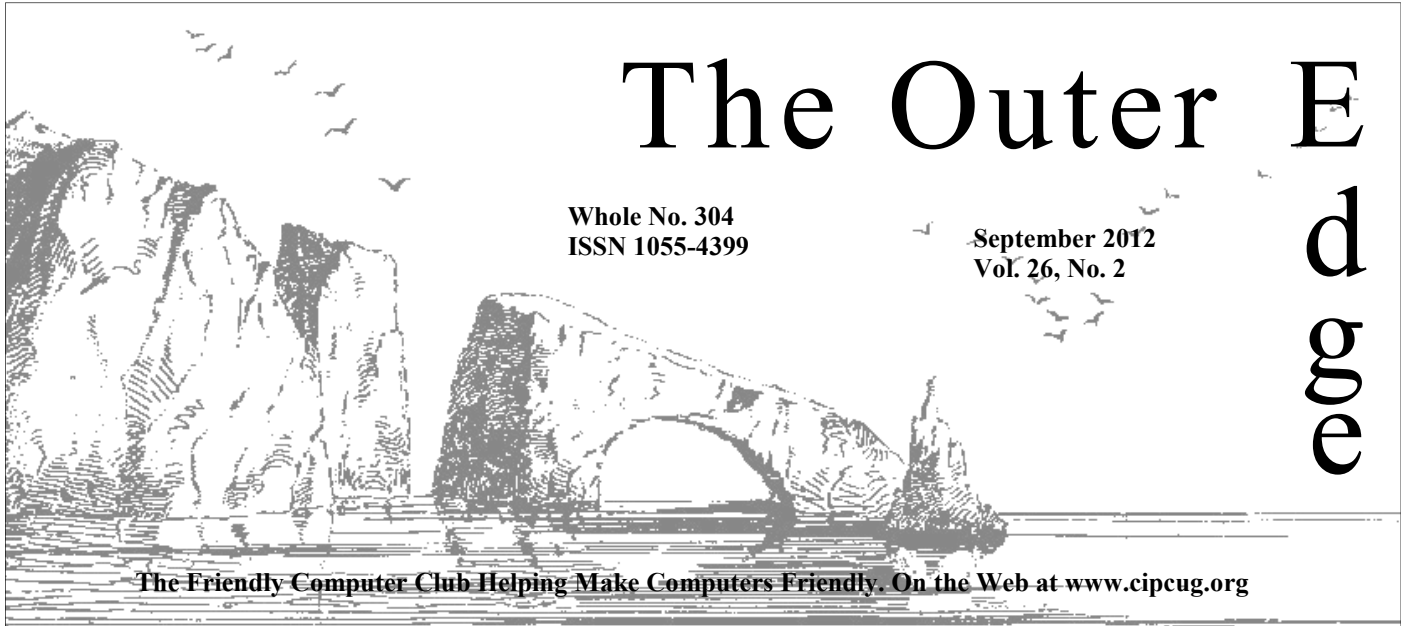


25th Anniversary Event issue

The Outer Edge

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

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★
 ★
 ★ Attendance at the
 ★ August general meeting:
 ★ **54 members and guests.**
 ★ **We welcome two new members.**
 ★
 ★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

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COMMAND.COM

By Jim Brown, President

“Promoting the Harmony of Computer Education, and Camaraderie”

I am writing this column with much joy and anticipation as we approach our September meeting date and our 25 (+1) Anniversary Celebration. Because of the dedication and hard work of a small group of individuals and families our computer group has evolved to the largest computer group in this area and has received many awards and recognition from computer associations — all due to the dedication, focus, and hard work of our members. We will honor the early members who had the foresight and dedication to succeed.



Brown

Our September meeting is a time to remember and celebrate our history and success.

This is an event that you bring your family members and friends to for the entertainment and ambiance as we remember where the computer club has been and what its future may be. Consider this event as a family event.

Here is what you should know. This is a celebration! This will not be our usual monthly meeting. This will be an event, a very special presentation with audio, film and humorous commentary from our own master of the rant and our master of ceremonies, Rick Smith.

Rumor has it that there may be a mystery guest. There will be a short photo opportunity with our mystery guest. We request a small donation.

The doors will open at 9 a.m., and the show will begin at 9:30 a.m. There will not be a member sign-in or badges. Ken Church will be available for those members who need to renew their membership and for those who may wish to join our ranks.

Craig Ladd will be at the raffle prize table where you can view the raffle prizes. You can still donate a raffle prize — please give your name and list the donation so Craig can keep this record. Our raffle prizes so far are com-

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TOE wins a top APCUG honor

The Outer Edge won the first-place award for medium size groups in the Association of PC Users Groups (APCUG) newsletter contest for 2012. Newsletters of 2011 were judged.

Twenty-one groups participated in the newsletter contest. APCUG also ran photo and website contests.

Second-place winner in our category was the Monterey Bay User Group-Personal Computers, and third place went to the Brookdale Computer User Group.

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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).

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**CIPCUG is a member of APCUG,
 The Association of PC Users Groups**

The Outer Edge

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Advertising is accepted for computer-related materials, businesses and services only. Rates are for Camera-Ready copy (clear, clean black and white masters). Typesetting and graphics are available at an additional fee.

SIZE	Cost/Issue
FULL-PAGE (9½”H x 7¼”W).....	\$50.00
HALF-PAGE (4½”H x 7¼”W) or (9½”H x 3½”W).....	\$30.00
THIRD-PAGE (3”H x 7¼”W).....	\$25.00
QUARTER-PAGE (4½”H x 3½”W).....	\$20.00
BUSINESS CARD ad.....	\$15.00
Discounts for multiple issues (3, 6, 9 and 12 months)	

Ad copy deadline is the 5th of the month of publication.

Make all checks payable to CIPCUG.

Members' classified ads are free but are limited to 105 characters, including spaces.

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 (With the exception of the immediate past president, past presidents are not board members.)

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 Toby Scott
 Lois Evans de Violini
 Art Lewis
 Helen Long
 *Deceased

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Work introduced me to computers

This is an issue to reminisce, so ... My first experience with computers was at The Star, when the paper switched from typewriters to computers (a mainframe with dumb terminals) at the old plant on Santa Clara Street in Ventura. Most of us were a bit jittery, a concern which wasn't alleviated one Friday afternoon. We were working on the Saturday morning paper when all the computers unexpectedly shut down. We all yelled "Stan!" (Stan Whisenhunt, our managing editor and the man who was heading the conversion for the editorial department). As he was heading to the computer room to find out what had happened, he ran into a representative from the company that was installing the system and asked what was going on. As I remember, the story, the answer was something like this: "I turned off the computer. It's Friday afternoon. You weren't doing anything were you?"

I don't remember Stan's exact response as he related it later, but I think it was to the effect, "Get out of here and don't come back."

I had earlier told Stan when he said that as a "Star Trek" and general science fiction fan I should love the idea of changing to computers that "I'm more like Dr. McCoy. I don't like the idea of my story being scrambled in space." That was almost the phrase that "Bones" used when he was about to enter the transporter to "beam down."

As time went on, we all got over our fears — or at least kept them better hidden, substituting anger and swear words when machines inexplicably failed or the lights dimmed just before a power failure. I got more interested in using a computer outside of work, started with a machine with two floppy drives (no hard drive) and worked my way up over the years to a machine running Windows 7 with an external hard drive, a laser printer and a scanner.

Thanks to co-workers, Rick, Toby, Michael and others, my skills have increased and I can solve some of own problems now. I'm even a guru for a friend.

Since sometime in the late 1990s, I've been combining my news writing and editing skills and my computer skills to first edit and now edit and design The Outer Edge and put up a website (which badly needs updating) for my high school graduating class. I also prepare newsletters for my stamp club, Optimist club and the Federated Philatelic Clubs of Southern California.

And, yes, I still periodically turn the air blue when something unexpected happens when I'm in front of my computer. — **John Weigle, editor**

Editor's corner



Weigle

Coming events

25th Anniversary Event scheduled Sept. 22

Programs

CIPCUG will celebrate its 25th anniversary at the Sept. 22 meeting with entertainment, a look back at our history, a computer archaeology display and lunch at the picnic area adjacent to the Boys & Girls Club.

"You really don't want to miss this one," Toby Scott said at the beginning of last month's Q&A session as he discussed the program. The entertainment is worth paying \$50 to attend, he said, but there is no admission charge.

The meeting will be in the usual place, 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 9 a.m. and the program will start at 9:30 a.m. There will be no pre-meeting SIGs, business meeting or question-and-answer session. Rick Smith, a partner in Ventura County Computers and a long-time supporter of CIPCUG, will be the master of ceremonies, so be prepared for some irreverent remarks along the way.

The program will include still photos of past meetings by Jerry

(Continued on page 4)

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

Q&A

How to change Gmail to a POP3 account

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**Changing Gmail to POP3 account**

Q: How do I change my Gmail account to a POP3 account?

A: Using the gear menu in the upper right corner of the Gmail account go to Settings > Forwarding and POP/IMAP. Enable POP (picking from the selections for all mail that has arrived since [select date], or for all mail (even mail that's

already been downloaded). Configure your email client (instructions are on the page for most email programs). Pick your choices on the remaining questions and click Save Changes.

These instructions are for people who prefer to download mail to their computers rather than reading it on the Web with a browser. If you get only a few messages a day, reading them on a browser might be satisfactory for you. If you get more than 100 a day, downloading them is much easier.

Q: I want to change the settings because when I download the messages and

delete them, they come back.

A: For IMAP there's a box to check on when to delete messages on the server.

"Do not shut down" messages

Q: I'm getting "do not shut down" messages when I log off. For the past few weeks the message has not been cleared.

A: The message usually indicates that a Windows update has failed. Go to Windows Update in the Start Menu and view the update history. Look for the one that says Failed and double click on it for details. You will often be directed to a Mi-

(Continued on page 5)

More on coming events ...

(Continued from page 3)

Crocker, memories of the group's early days by long-time members both in person and on video, and entertainment by actress Nicolette Holman, who has performed at such venues as The Edison, Carnegie Hall, Beverly Hills Hotel, Long Beach Hilton, Universal Hilton, Arrowhead Pond Stadium, Jonathan Club, the Beverly Hilton, Trump National Golf Club, Bel Air Hotel, and for more than 100 corporate, private, and celebrity parties.

There will also be a display of computer memorabilia from the old days. If you have something you'd like to show, please bring it to the meeting with some information about it.

We're hoping for additional publicity for the event as a way to attract new members. If you know any potential members, please invite them.

We'll have coffee and cake and after the program will adjourn to the nearby picnic area for lunch prepared by the Pleasant Valley Lions Club. The meal — hamburger or hot dog, salad, chips and a drink — will be \$7.

A special drawing will feature donated items, not all of which will be computer-related, and tickets will be \$5 each

rather than the normal \$1.

Invitations are being sent to other computer clubs in the area, so expect to see some new faces.

We are taking on unusual expenses for this event, so the board encourages all members to attend, take part in the entertainment and raffle and join the lunch, the cost of which will help defray expenses.

Other meeting dates for this year:

Oct. 27: Windows 8 (Toby Scott and Michael Shalkey).

Nov. 17 (**third Saturday**)

Dec. 15 (**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 is at locations 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) or 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 September and October schedules:

September

Saturday, Sept. 22: No SIGs at the meeting this month.

Tuesday, Sept. 25: Linux SIG. The topic is a bit up in the air. The group may be reinstalling Ubuntu 12.04.

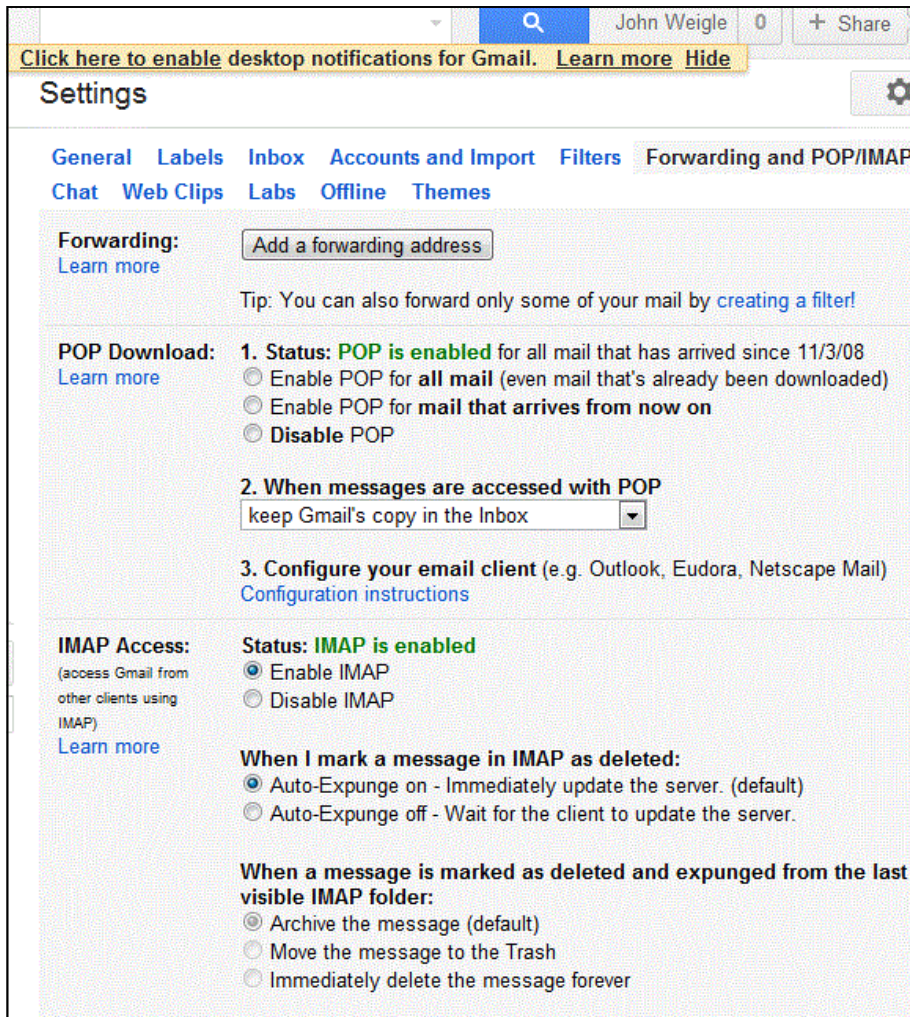
October

Tuesday, Oct. 23: Linux SIG. Topic TBA.

Saturday, Oct. 27: Pre-meeting SIGs on Social Media 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



This is part of the configuration page to convert Gmail to a POP3 account.

(Continued from page 4)

Microsoft's fix-it tool on Microsoft.com that usually solves the problem.

If that doesn't work, look through the failed updates to see if they're related (all .NET 3.5, for instance). Delete all the last successful update in the series and then use Windows Update to start over. That generally solves the problem.

Deleting files

Q: How do I delete Internet files for updates when I'm sure I don't need them?

A: Run Disk Cleanup. Go to Start > Computer and right click on the C: drive. Click on Properties and on the General tab click on Disk Cleanup.

Checking system files

Q: Is there a way to check for corrupted system files in Windows 7?

A: The System File Checker is the weapon of choice for this. Go to a DOS prompt (Start and type command in the search box or use the Windows key + R to open the run command. Type in SFC / scannow (note the space after the C in SFC) and let the program run. This can take a couple of hours. It will search for missing and corrupted files.

Michael Shalkey: If you're doing this in XP, you should have the Windows installation disk just in case. You should not need it in Vista or Windows 7.

Email attachments

Q: I have Windows 7 Home Premium. When I open email and there's an attachment, it asks if I want to view or download the attachment. It shows me a list of downloads, which disappears when I

Internet SIG
 Changing Gmail to POP3 account
 "Do not shut down" messages
 Deleting files
 Checking system files
 Email attachments
 Deleting files with strange names
 Email problem
 Upgrade to Windows 7
 Windows Update
 Printing passwords
 Advantages of Gmail
 Mac attacks

This month's Q&A topics:
 Power options
 Deleting update files
 Windows 7 Home to Pro
 Temporary files
 Read-only files in Excel
 Inexpensive computers
 Raspberry Pi
 Facebook group
 Solid state drives

open the attachments. How do I get that list back?

A: Michael Shalkey: Go to Start and click on your user name in the right hand pane of the Start menu. Depending on how your computer is set up you should find a Downloads folder in Documents or a Downloads folder under your name.

Toby Scott: You can also use Windows Explorer. Sometimes, downloads go to My Documents or a Downloads folder under your name.

You can add many fly-out menus to the Start menu by right-clicking on a folder and selecting Customize. Check the boxes of things you'd like to show as fly-out menus. You can show, for instance, documents, videos, photos and similar items.

Deleting files with strange names

Q: I have a lot of old files with strange file names. Can I delete them?

A: It's best not to mess with those because if you delete the wrong ones you can make your computer unbootable. If the file name tells you enough to deter-

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CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

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mine what it's for (a downloaded installation file for a certain program, for example), you can figure out whether you need it or not. If you can't tell what it is from the name, you don't want to click on it or delete it without more information.

Email problem

Q: I couldn't send email Sunday morning, but I could receive it and see Web pages. Was there a problem with the CIPCUG server?

A: No, we didn't have any server problems. [Several members reported they had no trouble sending mail Sunday morning.] Those of you with CIPCUG addresses should change the SMTP (Outgoing) setting from Port 25 to Port 2525 to send email. Some ISPs might be blocking the port because of a spam problem. If you can send on a server and someone else can't it's not the server that's the problem. If no one can send, it's the server. But that's difficult for a lone user to determine

Upgrade to Windows 7

Q: I upgraded from XP to Windows 7 recently, and I'm having trouble with Internet Explorer. When I click a link in Google I end up at a blank page. If I type in the URL, it goes to the page I'm seeking.

Audience: The same thing happened to me recently when I went to Staples' site to see next week's ad.

A: Michael and Toby suggest using F5 to force the browser to reload the page.

Toby: If it's a one-time event on Staples, it's not a major issue. You might have tried to load the page as it was being updated. If it cleared up soon, it's not a problem with your computer. There are billions of Web pages that won't display, but they're not noticed because they're not visited often.

Have you run a Malwarebytes scan?

Michael Shalkey: Check on what version of Internet Explorer you have. (It's an earlier one.) You might want to download IE 9 (Windows 7 comes with IE 7).

Windows Update

Q: Windows Update said last week a recent update was installed, but I was still getting a message that it did not. Now

that message has gone away.

A: Every once in a while an update will fail on some specific make or model of computers. When Microsoft determines that, it tracks down the problem and pushes out a revised update. If Windows says the update was successful you can usually wait it out and see what happens.

Printing passwords

Q: How can I print out the saved passwords in Firefox?

A: Go to Tools > Options > Security > Saved Passwords. If you can't see the passwords click on the show box. You probably can't print them because of security concerns, but you can use the Snipping Tool in Windows 7 and Vista, IrfanView in any version of Windows or any other screen shot tool to make a JPEG of the passwords. To find the snipping tool, go to Start > Search and start typing snip. An audience member also suggested Snagit.

Advantages of Gmail

Q: A friend of mine uses Gmail. Is there any advantage to it?

A: Michael Shalkey: I like Web mail, Toby does not. I say there are advantages, including the ability to check email from any computer at any location.

Toby Scott: You can do that with other email accounts, too.

Michael Shalkey: Yahoo was recently hacked again. The hackers broke in to its user name and password database.

Toby Scott: Gmail has also been hacked, as has AOL. Yahoo seems to have been hacked the most.

Mac attacks

Q: Do Macs get hacked and suffer from viruses?

A: Yes. The most common venues for hackers these days are Java, Flash and PDFs because they're used on PCs, Macs, smartphones and tablets. Macs are more vulnerable right now because most Mac users have been brought up with the idea that they can't be attacked and don't need protection. Most Windows users have some form of anti-virus, even if they haven't kept it up to date. Because smartphones and tablets are used for banking and most have no anti-virus programs, they are the major target for virus

writers now. Since Java, Flash and Adobe Reader are on most devices, they are where the viral effort is going.

Michael Shalkey: Yahoo has been the email provider for AT&T and others no matter what platform is being used. Links can take you to infected sites that will download malware to your computer.

Toby Scott: Let me warn you once again: Don't open links or attachments in email unless it's a specific message that makes sense to you. These messages can't be generic, like "this is funny" or "you have to check this out." They must be specific, such as "here are the photos of last week's family reunion" (assuming there was a family reunion last week and you were there).

Audience: Be especially careful of downloads from your granddaughter.

Q: Shouldn't your anti-virus program stop anything that's a problem?

A: The key words are "shouldn't it." In an ideal world, the answer is yes, but I had a server in 2001 that was fully patched and up to date and I got the Code Red virus, which shut down the computer every 15 minutes. Microsoft and Symantec had never heard of it because I was one of the first to receive it. It took 14 hours on the phone with Microsoft techs and others who had been infected for the engineers to gather enough data to write code to fix the problem. After 14 hours on the phone I had a cauliflower ear. Anti-virus developers have to see malware before they can protect against it, and someone is going to get hit before the solutions are distributed.

Hackers are delivering new viruses daily and using stolen passwords and logins to distribute the material.

Michael Shalkey: Links are also a problem. If you get a message asking if you want to download all the content on a Web page and say yes, you're giving permission to run all the scripts and software on the site. Some of them might be malware.

Toby Scott: There are Web pages you don't want to go to. Don't just think that your anti-virus will keep you safe. It keeps you safer, but you still have to use common sense.

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CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

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Regular Q&A session

Power options

Q: I updated to Windows 7 and tried to set times for it to blank the screen and turn off the computer, but they didn't take. My wife's computer has the same settings, and hers works.

A: Michael Shalkey: Let's step through this to see if it's what you did. Right click on the desktop and click on Personalize in the menu that comes up. Go to Screen Saver > Change Power Settings. In the left hand column (Windows 7) click on "Choose when to turn off the display" and select the time period you want. Save the changes. Then do the same thing with "Change when the computer sleeps," and save the changes.

The time periods you pick are based on the time your computer is not being used, but you have to understand that there are two meanings for that phrase. We think of the computer being in use when we're sitting in front of it typing, moving the mouse, browsing the Web, downloading something, etc. But things can be going on in the background even though you're not sitting in front of the computer that tell the computer it's being used. Look in the System Tray to see what's running (lower right corner of the screen unless you've moved it).

Toby Scott: Possibilities include an automatic backup, downloading of updates and automatic changes of your theme.

Deleting update files

Q: I have lots of files in the Windows folder related to updates. I think they're to uninstall updates if there's a problem. How can I remove them?

A: You can click on them and delete them, but every once in a while you'll delete something you need to run Windows. Tread very carefully when doing this. You can check the dates of the files, and generally it's safe to delete files that are three years old or older and maybe those that are two years old, but I'd leave anything else alone. Unless you are desperately short of space on your hard drive, don't get rid of any of them.

Michael Shalkey: If you use the Windows key + R combination and open the

Temp file, it's safe to delete all those items.

Windows 7 Home to Pro

Q: I have Windows 7 Home and am considering upgrading to Windows 7 Home Professional. Will I lose any useful features if I do that?

A: Toby and Michael agreed that the upgrade should not remove any features, just add some.

Temporary files

Q: Spybot tells me I have lots of temporary files and asks if I want to delete them. Should I?

A: Yes. It's always safe to delete Temp files and it will speed up the scan because Spybot won't have to check them for malware.

Q: What about archived files for error reporting?

A: Deleting them is not a problem. Microsoft engineers will look at them if they're trying to fix your machine, but few of you are ever going to have that occur, and the files are meaningless to almost anyone else. These are also called dump files. (For more information, see <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/315263>.)

Read-only files in Excel

Q: Excel is opening files in read only mode so I can't edit them.

A: Chances are good that these are not files that you created. They can come from a CD or DVD or email. Right click on the file in Windows Explorer and look at Properties > General. At the bottom of the page you'll see "Attributes." Uncheck the "Read only" box. You can't do this with a file on a CD. You must copy the file to your hard drive to change its attributes.

Michael Shalkey: The message might say that the file is viewable but not editable. Sometimes doing a "Save as" will change the attributes.

Toby Scott: If this is an attachment to an email you will probably have to save it to your hard drive before trying to change the attributes.

Inexpensive computers

Q: I need a secondary computer at home. Would one of the really cheap ones (\$300) be reasonable?

A: How often do you plan to use it?

(The answer was daily. It would be used for word processing, surfing the Internet and email).

Inexpensive computers cheap out at the hardware that doesn't spec out — power supplies, motherboards, video cards and quality of RAM. A really cheap power supply won't last a year of daily use, and when it goes it can take other things with it. The sweet spot for computers right now is about \$500. Get one that doesn't spec well: less RAM, a smaller hard drive and so on, but if it's a reasonable brand-name product it should have a better power supply. If this is a computer you're going to use for several hours a day, you should not buy one of the cheapest ones.

Michael Shalkey: And it might be proprietary hardware that can't be easily replaced.

Q: What about build-your-own kits?

A: There are good and bad build-it-yourself kits. The really expensive ones will let you build a great computer. The cheap ones won't. For the most part, the computer business is so cutthroat that prices pretty much indicate the value you're getting, although there are exceptions. If it's not costing very much it's probably not worth very much.

Michael Shalkey: PCper.com tracks hardware and regularly updates its recommendations for what combinations of parts to use to build various types of computers. The site starts its low-end systems at \$550; mid-range system at \$900; high end at \$1,500; and dream machine at \$2,558. Check the hardware leader board for the details.

Toby Scott: He's telling you what you can build at the cheapest prices while still using quality parts.

If this is a computer that you're going to put in the den for your grandchildren to use twice a month, you can probably get away with a cheap computer. If it's going to be on every day for several hours, don't buy a cheapie. You're just asking for trouble.

Raspberry Pi

Q: What about Raspberry Pi?

Michael Shalkey: It's an interesting idea (<http://www.raspberrypi.org>). It's a

(Continued on page 8)

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Program: Comodo and security**Anti-virus scanners obsolete, speaker says**

By John Weigle

jweigle@vcnet.com

The number of malware attacks is growing daily, and the old-fashioned anti-virus scanners are obsolete, a computer security expert said at our August meeting.

David Perry, whose contract with Comodo was not renewed a few days before his presentation, discussed computer security in general and Comodo programs specifically, saying they're among the best anti-malware products available.

Perry has more than 25 years in the technical support and education field and has worked for Toshiba, Trend Micro, Cybermedia, McAfee Associates and Symantec. He has conducted hundreds of print, radio and TV interviews and is the

*(Continued on page 9)***More on Q&A ...***(Continued from page 7)*

\$35 electronic board similar to the old Heathkit products, but you'll need a \$40 power supply. This is a base product, and you can do all kinds of things with it. It has its own programming language. It's for hobbyists and runs on Linux and has an ARM processor.

Toby Scott: "If you're thinking about using this for a production computer, you're nuts. ... You have yourself a tablet without a case." There's no display to take with you; you'll be tethered to a desktop computer or a TV.

Michael Shalkey: People working in robotics expect good results with it.

Facebook group

Q: Jessica set me up with Facebook on my smartphone during her SIG because I want access to the CIPCUG Facebook page. How do I get it?

A: Sign in to Facebook and search for CIPCUG in the Facebook search box. It will take you to the page, and you'll get a notice that it's a closed group and offer a chance to seek admission. Follow the directions, and the first administrator who sees the request will admit you. Doing this on the phone might be a bit more difficult than doing it on your computer with a larger screen.

Solid state drives

Q: Aren't solid state drives doomed from the start?

A: Solid state drives have a limited number of times they can be written to, but the best estimates are that they will last at least 10 years for typical use. That's longer than a spinning drive will

go.

Michael Shalkey: The mean time between failures is five years for spinning drives. A spinning hard drive has the same wear and tear with both reading and writing because of its moving parts. A solid state drive has no moving parts.

Toby Scott: Generally, the solid state drive will last longer than the spinning drives, but we've had instances of both solid state and spinning drives failing soon after they were installed. Statistically, the solid state drives are more reliable (a member of the audience commented that statistics are meaningless if *your* drive fails). Solid state drives are more expensive per gigabyte and so are generally more size limited than spinning drives. Solid state drives and flash drives use the same storage medium.

Q: Didn't you say you prefer Intel solid state drives?

A: Yes. I have an article on vcomputers.com explaining why (<http://www.vcomputers.com/intel.cfm>). Intel has great tech support and support for its sellers and quickly ships needed replacement parts. We had a case where we called them at 5:30 p.m. for a new motherboard, and it arrived by noon the next day from Lexington, Ky. Intel has way, way better support.

Michael Shalkey: We had a different kind of experience with OCZ, which makes RAM and solid state drives. In a period of about four months, we bought 10 solid state drives because of good reviews. Of the 10, four died. When a solid state drive dies, there's no way to access

it, and all the information on it is gone. When spinning drives start to fail we can usually recover the information. This happened within a month of selling the drives. Lots of companies offer 90-day or 1-year warranties on hard drives; Intel offers three years.

Toby Scott: If you're going to buy a solid state drive, buy Intel's. It will cost more, but the tech support is much easier to deal with.

Q: I have a solid state drive. Can I buy an Intel solid state drive and connect it as a USB drive?

A: Yes, but if you have an eSATA connection the drive will perform much faster because it will run at the speed of the drive rather than the much, much slower USB connection speed, including USB 3.0.

Q: I have an XP machine that boots in 4 seconds with a solid state drive rather than the previous 4 minutes. It's the same with shutting down.

A: That's an unusually high speed increase, but it's possible on an older computer. Typically, boot time is about half that of a spinning drive.

Q: What's the largest solid state drive now?

A: The 60 Gig drive costs about \$75; 120 Gig is about \$130; 180 Gig is about \$200; the 256 Gig is about \$275; and a 480 Gig, the largest I've seen, is about \$600.

Michael Shalkey: There is a 4 terabyte solid state drive — a card that goes in a PCI express slot — for servers that costs about \$20,000.

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

(Continued from page 8)

co-host of The Personal Computer Radio Show on WBAI in New York. He has been a speaker at many computer-related events, a college instructor (lab instructor for electronic music), a cabinet maker, a typesetter and a magician and held a position in the shipping department for an Atari magazine, among other jobs.

He worked with Peter Norton. “He’s my hero,” Perry said, explaining that Norton had nothing to do with writing the Norton Anti-Virus software and, in fact, didn’t believe in viruses. But he sold his company for \$170 million in stock and 85 cents for every use of his photo. That part of the deal brought in some \$1.4 billion, Perry said, because for years Norton’s picture appeared on the boxes for all the software bearing his name.

Perry described the several steps he said are necessary for complete protection:

1. Back up your system.
2. Reformat your hard drive and reinstall Windows. This is necessary, he said, because every anti-virus program misses some malware, and you must start with a clean system for the protection to work. If you won’t do that, at least download Comodo Cleaning Essentials, which makes a CD that boots in Linux to scan your machine and clean it if necessary.
3. Use default deny protection, which assumes everything is bad unless shown to be otherwise. The potential problem with this system, however, is that users can be nagged so much that they resent the questioning and turn off the protection. That’s what happened in Windows Vista, which requires administrative approval to install every program. The solution, he said, is to have programs that have enough support to make the proper decisions in the background and to run questionable programs in a sandbox — a protected area that does not allow the program to write to your hard drive — unless it’s cleared as safe. Such software should also include an anti-virus scanner, a continually updated white list, a firewall and good tech support. Comodo’s Internet Security offers all those features and a host-based intrusion protection system (HIPS), which watches for code that



Photo by Jerry Crocker

David Perry, formerly with Comodo, discusses computer security and the problems involved in detecting and blocking malware at the August meeting.

is trying to illicitly talk to a connection on the Internet, Perry said. Windows has a default allow system, which assumes everything is OK, but once you’re infected you can scan for malware and try to remove it. “There’s something wrong with this model,” Perry said.

“My generation has seen the rise of technology as a component of everyday lives,” said Perry, who will be 58 this year. “I still have a whole garage full of vacuum tubes,” he added.

He’s working on his AA and BA at Golden West College, where he was an instructor, even though he attended college earlier for several years. “I was a good student, but I was a very bad graduate,” he said, because he selected classes he wanted to take rather than those that led to a degree.

Early in his time on WBAI, he was told that a job title including director was important for public and media recognition, so he talked to his boss and was given the title director of public education. He called his wife, told her the news and listened as she pointed out that the acronym for the title is DOPE. His last title at Comodo was global director of education.

As he discussed security and viruses, he said there was “altogether too much

coverage of FLAME,” which was found in Iran in September 2011 and which is generally believed to have been a government job. But it infected only 611 computers worldwide. It was a targeted attack and did not replicate itself. It could track keystrokes and turn on microphones and webcams, said Perry, who suggested putting a sticky note over your webcam when you’re not using it.

In 1981, Professor Frank Cohen of Leigh University defined a computer virus as a program in the instruction set (of a mainframe computer) that makes copies of itself and reinserts them later in the instruction set. The first computer virus was not in a computer or computer publication but in the science fiction novel “Shock Wave Rider” by John Brunner, he said.

The Michelangelo virus was the best-known early virus, he said, and anti-virus writers had ample time to examine the code and write protective software. But in those early days, the updates were distributed by faxes, and users had to carefully type them into their computers. In some cases, Perry had to read updates over the phone to people who would type them in, he said. Within a few months, companies started sending updates out on floppy disks. For a time, McAfee distributed updates via bulletin boards, he said.

Those were the days when anti-virus companies received three to five new viruses per month or sometimes up to 100. Now they receive about one-third of a million per day, and most disappear in 24 hours because they’re constantly changing themselves.

The earliest viruses replicated themselves, making copies to add to floppies and distribute in other ways. But most of them were not destructive and would mainly post messages on computers to show how smart the developers were. Viruses still exist, but most of today’s malware works in the background and is more oriented to crime — stealing passwords and log-in information, copying keystrokes and only sometimes being destructive. And the malware tries to break anti-virus scanners so the malware won’t be discovered. Programs are being

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CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

(Continued from page 9)

developed by the Russian mafia, Brazilian credit card theft gangs, the Chinese government, corporations and the U.S. government, among others, he said.

“Spyware has almost gone away,” he added. “It’s been replaced by Facebook,” where people voluntarily give up all kinds of information about themselves.

Malware kits are developed by commercial companies and sold in many countries, he said. The software changes a bit with every sale, which helps make the search for signatures obsolete, he said.

Anti-virus scanners don’t prevent infections, he said. They find them after the fact. “Everybody is infected with at least three or four things,” he said. “Everybody — everybody, everywhere.”

Users who change anti-virus programs almost always find that the new software finds something that the previous program missed, he said. Security experts believe that only a small percentage — possibly as small as 3 percent — of malware is being detected.

Despite the malware threats, Perry said, they are not the cause of every computer problem. “The virus has become the all-purpose excuse for something going wrong with your computer,” he said. “I have news for you: Microsoft Windows crashes all by itself.”

Perry said, he has crashed his computer a couple of times when he changed software from one anti-malware company’s to another or when he’s been testing malware. “You want the perfect operating system for making things secure? Paper and ink,” Perry added.

“Every part of the Internet is compromised,” he continued, because security wasn’t a consideration as the Internet was developed. “We will get to a secure Internet in 30 years,” he predicted.

He also said that running more than one security program at a time can be disastrous. Two anti-virus products or two firewalls running at the same time can create major problems, he said. “Don’t ever install two security programs at the same time. ... It isn’t one thing that’s wrong with it. It’s thousands of things,” he predicted.

He said Comodo requires XP or higher, and he recommended upgrading to Windows 7. Windows 8 is likely to have some problems, he said.

Anyone interested in computer security should attend DEF CON (<http://www.defcon.org>), an annual hacking convention in Las Vegas, where security experts mix with hackers, sellers of lock picks and viruses and recruiters for U.S. intelligence agencies.

Perry said he has tried to infect his

computer while using Comodo Internet Security and was protected even at DEF CON. “I haven’t been able to infect it, not even browsing porn,” he said.

Perry said many companies, including Comodo, have outsourced tech support to other countries, but said Comodo support techs are competent and support is by typing (chat mode). Comodo’s Geekbuddy program lets the techs work on your computer as you watch — but only after you give permission.

It’s understandable if some tech support people get grumpy or frustrated with callers because some 88 percent of the calls are about the same issues. “If the people you talk to sound frustrated, it’s because you are the 9 millionth person who has yet to find out that they shipped a defective disc and you need to order a new one or that you are the 9 millionth person to have forgotten your password.”

Comodo is also a certificate authority, he said. For more information on what that means, see the Isat issue of TOE.

On the Net:

Comodo: www.comodo.com

Comodo CEO’s forum: <http://forums.comodo.com/melihs-corner-ceo-talkdiscussionsblog-b36.0/>

Woot (Perry recommended the sellout section for computer deals; it sells remainder products): www.woot.com.

Comodo products

Comodo's free programs (from the company's website; generally, phone support is available only for paid versions, although the company has forums and blogs for support):

Comodo Internet Security: Free security suite including antivirus and firewall protection. The pro version includes tech support and a \$500 guarantee that you won’t be infected by a virus. The company has never had to pay the reward, Perry said.

Comodo Antivirus: Free antivirus, which detects and destroys unwanted PC invaders.

Comodo System Utilities: Reach deep into your PC and destroy all space-

wasting junk.

Comodo Firewall: Award-winning protection that keeps your PC from all Internet attacks.

Comodo BackUp: Reliably stores your files and keeps track of changes to them.

Comodo Antivirus for Mac: Protect your Mac OS based computers from viruses, worms and Trojans.

Comodo Cleaning Essentials: Identify and remove malware and unsafe processes from your computers.

Comodo Antivirus for Linux: Comprehensive antivirus protection for your Linux OS based computer.

Comodo Rescue Disk: A powerful virus, spyware, rootkit scanner and cleaner bootable disk image with Comodo Cleaning Essentials for Windows embed-

ded.

Comodo Programs Manager: Completely remove unwanted software or Windows features.

Free Email Certificate: Allows you to encrypt and digitally sign messages before sending.

Secure Messaging: Protect and encrypt your instant messages with secure chat.

Comodo Dragon Browser: Chromium based browser with best speed and privacy enhancements.

Comodo Cloud Scanner: Cloud service that detects viruses, junk, errors and hidden processes.

Comodo IceDragon Browser: Light and fast browser based on Mozilla Firefox infused with Comodo's unparalleled level of Security.

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Minutes of the August board of directors meeting

By Diane Mortensen

The CIPCUG Board of Directors held its monthly meeting on Aug. 25, 2012. Members in attendance were Jim Brown, Craig Ladd, Rick Curry, John Weigle, Helen Long, Toby Scott, Ken Church, and Diane Mortensen. Invited guest, Veronica Niever. Members not in attendance were Art Lewis and Andy Toth. The meeting was called to order by President Jim Brown.



Mortensen

July board minutes: Acceptance by the board of July 2012 board minutes as printed in TOE.

Treasurer's report: Art Lewis was absent and copies of the treasurer's report for July 2012 were handed out. A copy of the July 2012 treasurer's report is located elsewhere in TOE.

Guest feedback: Veronica Niever, a new CIPCUG member, provided feedback to the board in the following areas: 1) provide classes, workshops at the Camarillo Library. At present, there are only one-hour, walk-in help sessions on Wednesday afternoons; 2) more public advertisement about CIPCUG's meetings; 3) more done to gain club members.

Members of the board welcomed Veronica as a new CIPCUG member and thanked her for the feedback she provided. Veronica was informed that all of the suggestions she made have been reviewed and discussed by the board many times. In response to Veronica's suggestions, the board reported that:

1) Attempts were made to move CIPCUG's meetings to the Camarillo City library, but there were too many conflicts, one being that the library could not guarantee that it could reserve the fourth Saturday of every month and complications as to security, time of the meeting vs. when the library opened. However, the head librarian was very interested in having representative from CIPCUG come and present various workshops/classes. Such classes were held on Tuesday evenings for four weeks. Additional classes/workshops could be arranged in the future.

2) Increased publicity about the club's events has been a core topic with the board. Rick Curry is now publicity chairman and will be in charge of putting CIPCUG's meetings, events in monthly publication.

3) More focus on increasing the club's membership has been one of board's top priorities.

CIPCUG's logo: Has the club ever had an official logo? Some did not remember any and others said they thought it was the arch rock similar to the one used on the front page of the TOE. Helen and Andy will send what they have to John to be used whenever needed.

TOE: The board has previously reviewed the matter of how

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Treasurer's report for July 2012

By Art Lewis
treasurer@cipcug.org



Lewis

7-1-2012 through 7-31-2012

Category Description

INFLOWS

Coffee income	0.00
ISP income	60.00
Membership Income	
Renewals	430.00
TOTAL	430.00
Raffle	134.00

TOTAL INFLOWS 624.00

OUTFLOWS

Raffle prizes	55.00
Rent Paid	150.00
TOE	200.00

TOTAL OUTFLOWS 530.00

OVERALL TOTAL 94.00

Unrestricted Funds	4,897.96
Restricted funds	0.00
Bank Balance 7-31-12	4,897.96
Year to Date Income	624.00
Year to Date Expense	530.00
Net Year to Date	94.00

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.

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

CIPCUG MEMBERS

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

OTHERS

- Nancy DeMarte (APCUG)
- Rick Eblaw (APCUG)
- Larry Mobbs (APCUG)
- Leo Notenboom (APCUG)
- John Somers (APCUG)
- Judy Taylour (APCUG)

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

It's time to celebrate 25 years of computing

By Helen Long

Sept. 22 will be the 25th Anniversary Event of the Channel Islands PC Users Group. If you miss this meeting, you will really be angry with yourself when everyone tells you what you missed.

Everything will be happening at the Boys & Girls Club — no trekking down the road to a restaurant. The doors will open a bit later than usual at 9 a.m., and events will start at 9:30 a.m.

There will be historical stories about

Bits & Bytes



Long

the club along with a fantastic slideshow of photos taken over the years. Grand prizes will be raffled off, and special entertainment will be provided by actress Nicolette Holman with possible photo opportunities. Rick Smith will

be the master of ceremonies.

The Pleasant Valley Lions Club will be serving lunch in the park adjacent to

the Boys & Girls Club. There will be hamburgers and hot dogs, salad, chips, and drinks for only \$7 per person. Bring your family, friends and guests — everyone is welcome.

For further and updated information, please go to www.cipcug.org. You will not want to miss this event. See you on the 22nd of September.

**HAVE YOU RUN YOUR
ANTI-SPYWARE PROGRAMS
LATELY?**

More on Command.com ...

(Continued from page 1)

puter-related and among other prizes are donations from restaurants, gift baskets and bottles of wine. We want to have plenty of variety. We want to have many members walk away with a prize. Toby Scott will conduct the raffle at the end of the show. Each ticket drawn will be for a specific item. Raffle ticket prices are \$5 each or five tickets for \$20. The raffle

items are significant.

There will be an intermission where we can enjoy coffee and cake, and we can use our meeting room. Let's try to keep the room clean.

After this coffee break our show will continue with more humor and special effects.

After the raffle, we will move to the adjacent picnic area, which we have re-

served, and enjoy a barbecue prepared by the Pleasant Valley Lions Club. The lunch will consist of a barbecue hamburger sandwich, salad, and a drink and will cost \$7. You and your guests can enjoy the end of a special event in the company of friends, and the warmth of the day.

Looking forward to seeing all of you on Sept. 22.

More on minutes ...

(Continued from page 11)

costly the publication and mailing of TOE has become. The pros and cons of switching from mailing TOE or putting the publication online were talked about. Unless the club's website was set up so only members could bring up the TOE by entering a user name and password, it would be available to anyone. The board will need to discuss this topic further.

CIPCUG's 25th Anniversary Event: The committee for the club's 25th Anniversary Event, gave a current report on what has transpired. Jim recognized the board members who have volunteered their time and participation in the event's success. Adjustments have been made to the program format; the event will begin at 9:30 a.m.; Rick Smith has volunteered to be the master of ceremonies; a slideshow of many past club activities

will be presented; publicity, which has been extensive, inviting the public to join in the festivities, is being handled by Rick Curry; and a special guest singer will be part of the entertainment; etc. Afterward, the Pleasant Valley Lions Club will provide lunch for a \$7 charge. The club has guaranteed that there will be 100 people and the Lions Club will bring enough food for 150. Craig is organizing the raffle with a lot of great prizes and a grand prize. Tickets will be \$5 each,

New flash drives: Unfortunately, Toby will not have the 16 G Kingston flash drives ready in time for the 25th Anniversary Event, but they might be ready in the next two months.

CIPCUG brochure: It was anticipated that CIPCUG's brochure would be updated and available for the 25th Anniversary Event. Diane showed the board the latest

version of the brochure that John had prepared. All the information and clip art was well done; however, there was a problem with the margins. When folded in thirds the brochure's first page overlapped. John noted the problem and said he would work on the margins so all parts will line up.

October meeting: Craig announced that Toby would be speaking on Windows 8 at October's meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

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

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Membership report:

Is it time to renew?

By Ken Church

email address: membership@cipcug.org



CHURCH

Welcome –

New Members: Ernest Spencer and George Koerlin

Attendance at the August 2012 general meeting:
54 members and guests

Total membership: 178

August 2012 renewals payment due:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Dt
0028	Fiedler	Art	201208
0806 T	Hurme	Seppo	201208
0867	Pryor	Dorothy	201208
0474	Pryor	John	201208
1222	Quint	Richard	201208
1223	Reed	Dan	201208
1125	Robinson	Bill	201208
0722	Smith	Gary	201208

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 membership 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 Sept. 22, 2012, meeting.

July 2012 renewals payment due:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Dt
1028	Burke	Jim	201207
1206	Ohrt	Juergen	201207
1158	Woodruff	Ayn	201207

September 2012 renewals payment due:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to Dt
1240	Bowman	Steve	201209
0714	Bryan	Bob	201209
0006T	Burnett	Bob	201209
1243	Fizzolio	Jim	201209
0613	Green	Gunnar	201209
1161	Greene	William	201209
0249	Greenway	Frank	201209
0373	Houle	Robert	201209
1241	Jensen	Elaine	201209
1093	Kincaid	Carla	201209
1037	Lerner	Robert	201209
0372	Pizza	Tony	201209
1244	Rosenthal	Mark	201209
1242	Sandoval	Judy	201209
1235	Shaw	Wayne	201209
1036	Smith	Howard	201209
1150	Thomas	Ray	201209
1230A	Tolian	John	201209
1230B	Tolian	Mary	201209
1181T	Toscano	Matthew	201209

GENERAL NEWS, COMMENTARY

Computers and church changed his life

By Rick Smith
rants@ycmail.net

You've come along way baby! Aaah, that brings back memories. If I still smoked I would probably take a long drag as I said that.

That slogan goes way back to 1968, way before the Leading Edge Users Group formed, but I think the slogan is appropriate. Phillip Morris introduced the brand in 1968 and marketed it to young professional women using the slogan "You've come a long way, baby." Virginia Slims were much narrower than ordinary cigarettes (hence, "Slims"), and are also longer than normal "king-sized" cigarettes, sold only in longer 100 mm and 120 mm lengths, to give



Smith

the cigarettes a more "elegant" appearance and ostensibly to reduce the amount of smoke they produce. Some believe this campaign was responsible for a rapid increase in smoking among teenage girls. A report by the surgeon general of the United States has interpreted these marketing strategies as attempting to link smoking "to women's freedom, emancipation, and empowerment." This report also tied the increase in smoking among teenage girls to rises in sales of Virginia Slims and other "niche" brands marketed directly to women.

Nowadays, I think more teenage girls smoke marijuana than tobacco. Go figure. At least the tobacco was grown here and not in some foreign country. Nowadays you wouldn't even know we had tobacco growing in North America. We may have made it socially unacceptable to light up locally, but around the world sales are brisk. **Nonetheless, you've come along way, computer users.** Let's take some

time and go back and look at the past 25 years of personal computers through someone's personal journey, namely mine.

I started using computers way back in the early '80s. I was attending Cypress College in Orange County and was taking computer science classes. The first PCs were coming out, and the ones I used were the Apple IIs that had two floppy drives. One was for your Disk Operating System or DOS, and the other was your programs. I was always getting the two confused and kept taking out the wrong disk. I was saving my money to buy one of the new Ataris that were being sold at Sears, no less. I was always hanging around the computer lab and got offered a job as a tutor for the other students, and just as that happened I also got offered a good job in Santa Barbara. It was one of those life-changing course changes, and I chose to go to Santa Barbara and chase

(Continued on page 15)



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Ventura County Computers
Congratulates
C.I.P.C.U.G.
For 25 years of
Helping people use and
understand computers.
Keep up the good work!

GENERAL NEWS, COMMENTARY

(Continued from page 14)

pretty girls instead of building a career.

Eventually I moved to Ventura County and became a bona fide born-again, Bible thumping, holy roller evangelical Christian. Since my new lifestyle required some adjustments, I gave up my 17-year addiction to smoking marijuana every day for Bible study. I was healed instantly while being prayed over, but that's another story. Anyway, now that I wasn't getting high all the time, trying to get high, or thinking about getting high — let alone the time spent getting the stuff — I had a lot more free time on my hands and my mind also started to clear. So I had to find something else to do with my time, hence my return to computers. My neighbor and church friend owned a company that used a lot of computers and gave me a 286 PC. I destroyed it in less than two weeks so he gave an IBM 386. Wow! 10 MHz with a turbo speed switch to boot. This one had a 10 MB hard drive with room for another. Well, it wasn't long until I filled it up and got a second drive. Installing that was my first computer repair. And back in the day putting in an MFM drive wasn't a plug and play as it is today. Come to think of it, Plug-N-Play hadn't been invented yet, or at least not the phrase. Next I went from a green monochrome screen to an honest to goodness CGA color monitor. Wow, now I could play with ANSISYS and make colorful DOS prompts and play crude games. I next graduated to an EGA display and eventually VGA. I signed on to my first BBS and started becoming a downloading maniac. At 14.4 k it was slog, but, hey, free software, what a deal. Dialup was king in the day. My benefactor and inspiration, Bill Anderson, had me come down to his office to see his brand new 486 25 MHz PC. He was amazed at the blinding speed that it could crunch numbers, and text would fly by on the screen. We thought we couldn't get much better than that.

Then again my church played a pivotal role in pointing me in the right direction. My friend Scott Silver called me over to help him with his Tandy (Radio Shack) 386 PC. This unit didn't have BIOS on the motherboard, and if you needed to change it you had to load it from a floppy disk. After working on it all day I got the POS, err, blessed PC working. As I was walking out the door, he handed me a \$100 bill. He said he never could have afforded expensive PC repair and appreciated all the work I did. As I reached out to accept the "tip" a light bulb glowed over my head just like the cartoons of the day as the idea hit me.

I COULD MAKE MONEY DOING SOMETHING I ENJOY! What a concept! It had never occurred to me to do something I really liked for pay. And so it began, from the roots of years of addiction bloomed a new life fixing computers. I first converted my large closet into a work-repair area. I eventually moved it into the garage as my skills and sales grew. With every PC I sold I was able to buy a little more stuff. My mentor, Bill Anderson, pioneered a company using a digital computer program to log the mud from oil well drilling. He needed a PC in every trailer at drill sites and was my best customer. I had computers offshore on Chevron's oil rigs in the Santa Barbara Channel. During this time I held a full-time job as a salesman for

(Continued on page 16)

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 CIP-CUG): 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

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GENERAL NEWS, COMMENTARY

Early version of Windows 8 creates problems

By Jim Thornton
jasthorn@gmail.com

I'm a longtime Windows user, starting when Microsoft first introduced Windows in 1983, and in the following years, I upgraded to Windows 95, 98, Me, XP, and 7. But during those years I didn't bother with the less popular Windows 2000 or Vista and currently I'm using Windows 7 Professional. And since I always want to use the most current version of all software that I use, I was interested in Microsoft's introduction of its Windows 8 titled Windows 8 Customer Preview or Windows 8 Release Preview, so I downloaded the program from its website (<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-8/download>) and installed it on my computer.

My first opinion of Windows 8 is that I didn't like how it has changed the viewing and selecting of programs from the

Start Menu. Whenever you click on the Start Menu icon, what appears on your desktop immediately are about 25 large squares, each listed with a general title of the related programs, like Eudora, IrfanView, Keyboard, Mouse, Microsoft Office, Norton, RoboForm, ZTreeWin, etc. I found this somewhat totally unnecessary for I like the current Windows 7 start menu display, and it's much easier to use.

I also discovered that my Eudora email program was completely replaced with Microsoft's Live Mail program, and I also lost all of my current and stored email messages as well as my Eudora address book.

In addition, I discovered that I had lost other programs, like Pretty Good Solitaire, Printkey-Pro, Titan Chess games, etc., plus my HP LaserJet printer and Epson scanner. In other words, I lost similar programs that were included in

Windows 8.

I uninstalled Windows 8 Customer Preview, but for some unknown reason my Windows 7 was no longer working. Apparently Windows 8 Customer Preview had overwritten several similar Windows 7 programs. So next I tried to reinstall Windows 7, but again without any success. So what I had to do was to totally replace the existing C: drive with a new hard drive and then I successfully installed Windows 7. And I had to install my other 21 non-Microsoft programs. And it took me a week or more to completely restore my Eudora e-mail program and to try to reassemble its address book with all of its nice features.

Microsoft is currently instructing potential users of its Windows 8 Customer Review program to first copy all of their programs, including Windows 7 or any earlier version onto either an external

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More on Rick's rant ...

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Granny Goose Potato Chips. Eventually Frito-Lay ran us out of business, and I found myself unemployed for the first time in my life. It was either go apply for a job at Amgen in the IT department with benefits, vacation, health insurance, retirement pension and a life being locked in a windowless room babysitting a bunch of servers and occasionally being let out to fix some idiot user's problem. Or I could strike out on my own with a life of uncertainty, random income, 7-day workweeks with no benefits, insurance or retirement. But I get to face new challenges every day and the personal satisfaction of helping people make their lives better with a well-running PC. The choice was obvious; I had to go for it.

Back in the day I was able to get most of my supplies from the local computer shows. I found that even if I opened up accounts with the vendors they still sold items at lower prices at the shows.

This is where I first met Thomas William Scott. He was helping out with a startup company called Ventura County Online, and they were buying stuff at the shows. He was part of a crew located on the 14th floor in Oxnard with "your friend in the diamond business." Somehow I wormed my way into George Thompson's good graces, and he set me up in a vacant office for giving him computer support. It seems Mr. Scott bought a monitor at the show and it died. He unsuccessfully tried to contact the company and even drove down to the address in east L.A., and it was a locked door leading up to a second-story stairway. He poked his head in my door one day and shared his tale of woe and despair. I took pity on his plight and offered to assist. I located the west coast distributor for SPECTRE monitors and arranged for an exchange, and within a week I had a brand new functional monitor back on his desk. I think that was probably the most impressed I ever made

Toby, and a friendship was born. I eventually made my way to sharing a couple of locations and had a failed attempt to work with another individual when the opportunity presented itself for me to have to move again, and this time I was ready to open up my own place. About this time Toby's stock market skills were having a diminishing return as most users switched to online trading, and he was looking for a career change. We got married and have been together ever since. Through the ups and downs, good and bad, feast and famine we've stuck together for 20 years. Toby's connection with CIPCUG brought benefits to us and the club. Our affiliation with the club has, for the most part, been to everyone's benefit. We've made some good friends, and a couple of enemies, but through it all we've all grown to see the world change quite a bit. Who knows what the next 25 years have in store, but you can bet on this: It will be exciting to live to see it.

GENERAL NEWS, COMMENTARY

25 years of computing: a retrospective

By Bill By Wayson

bwayson@gmail.com

The CIPCUG is celebrating its 25th anniversary. Congratulations to everyone involved, now and in earlier years, with keeping the group alive and vibrant. I realize that 25 years also marks a personal anniversary: the beginning in the mid- to late-1980s of my formal pursuit of a career in computing. I'll take the opportunity to look back on my involvement with computers and my growing interest in alternative and open source software.

During some career counseling around 1986, it became apparent to me that computer system analyst could be a good job for me, so I made it my goal to become one. This was supported when I thought back to my introduction to computing: a field trip to a local IBM site as a Cub Scout and a FORTRAN programming class I had taken in high school, complete with punch cards and line-printer output. The IBM people showed off their cool computer game, and I liked the programming class and did well in it. So, I began figuring out my first PC, a hand-me-down TRS-80 Model 1, and enrolled in various college computer science classes, all while working selling PCs, first at Radio

Penguin's Lair



Wayson

Shack then Computer Village. A class at UCSB introduced me to Xenix, a Unix clone sold by Microsoft long before Windows 3. Xenix and Unix were much more interesting than DOS, and, unlike DOS, they multitasked. I wanted to run Unix on my own PC. By 1990, I had purchased a new PC: a cranking 12 Intel Mhz 286-based PC with two floppy drives (I had to watch my pennies). I tore apart a discarded 10 MB hard drive on a card (it would not fit in my PC's case) and just let the bare drive lay on my desk. And I got my first real full-time job in the computer field supporting 24 computer users in the Treasurer/Tax Collector Department of Santa Barbara County, providing computers to the other 30 or so departmental employees and helping to automate their cashiering, tax receipting, and debt collection operations. It felt great to be part of the PC revolution in government, and there was plenty to do.

Unknown to me, on Aug. 25, 1991, a young Finnish computer science student posted a message on a newsgroup soliciting feedback on "a (free) operating system (just a hobby, won't be big and professional like gnu) for 386(486) AT clones." With this, a project began that would affect me personally and automation in general in profound and still growing ways. Meanwhile, I kept progressing, adding a proper 40 MB hard drive and a working 14.4K modem (I never was able to get the 300 baud modem working on my old Model 1) to my PC. And I searched for an affordable Unix to run. I first tried Minix, a Unix clone developed by the great computer scientist Andrew S. Tanenbaum. Later, I tried Coherent, another inexpensive Unix clone from the Mark Williams Co. Unlike Minix, Coherent included XFree86, an open source (though I remained unaware of the implications of open source) implementation of the X Window System. I even tried IBM's OS/2 (I had obtained a cheap user license when I sold IBM PCs and subsequently kept upgrading as new versions were released), which I still run today for a personal finance application. But at the time, none of these was really usable to

me. I did not know enough to get them to run well, I was still unaware of the news-group-based support systems, and my PC just lacked the power to run them well.

Somewhere in the mid- to late-1990s, at work I began to read mentions of something called "Linux" in the multitude of trade rags that fell on me like rain. (And, by this time, I had been promoted into my first system analyst job title.) Linux was described as a Unix-like operating system; open source (which I then understood to mean the source code was, and would always remain, freely available and modifiable); and developed, maintained, and enhanced by volunteers, I wanted to try it out.

I wouldn't have even tried to download Linux using my then-slow modem even if I knew where to download it from. But numerous bookstores carried the Linux Developer's Resource, a six CD set from Infomagic that included several Linux distributions as well as gobs of software. This introduced me to Red Hat Linux, which I chose for its use of RPM as an advanced software management tool. I played with it a while on a 486-based Gateway sporting 64 MB of RAM and two 320 MB hard drives. It was painfully slow but looked very interesting. Shortly, I ordered the then-current distro directly from Red Hat, carved out hard drive space on an 866 Mhz Pentium III based PC, installed it alongside OS/2 Warp, and pursued the goal of doing all my personal computing under Linux. My goal required that I learn much about how Linux is configured and ran, how to get and give support through the various online communities, that access to the Internet was critical, and that a local user group could be helpful. I discovered the Channel Islands Linux User Group, led by the late Ralph Frisbie, which later combined with CIPCUG to form its current Linux SIG.

And, here we are today. We use PCs, portables, heck, maybe smartphones that would rival most mainframes of 1987. CIPCUG has an active SIG on software, now used by millions and powering to-

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More on Windows 8 ...

(Continued from page 16)

hard drive or USB device. And due to the major problems that I experienced, I, too, strongly instruct that you make copies of all of your programs onto separate storage devices. Plus Microsoft is now informing all potential users of its Windows 8 Customer Review program to fully understand that you can't easily uninstall Windows 8 Customer Review and get back to your original programs in their good working performance.

GENERAL NEWS, COMMENTARY

Router's 'forced' update a disaster for some

By Bob de Violini
rjddev@gmail.com

Fresh from the “Sneaks ‘R Us” department comes the story of a prominent router manufacturer that decided to “force” its router users to go through the cloud to run their router’s firmware. OK, but therein lies the rub ... the router manufacturer also had the potential to see just where you’d surfed on the Net, and I mean *everywhere*. This upgrade was “forced” on the users of the Linksys by Cisco router model numbers EA3500 and EA4500. According to the Linksys/Cisco home router Web site, the EA2700 router also has cloud management capability, but it was not mentioned in this snafu. This little upgrade hasn’t gone over too well with quite a few users who’ve complained rather vociferously, and Cisco has listened. It has posted “downgrade” instructions to roll an affected router’s firmware back to the previous version that didn’t have the cloud management ability. If you have a Linksys EA2700 router with the Cisco Connect Cloud Service and you don’t care for it, you can downgrade your router just like those who have an AE3500 or 4500. See the last paragraph for details.

This upgrade created two issues that folks complained about on the Linksys forums. The first complaint is being forced to set up a new account for a new

service they didn’t even want to begin with. The second complaint was that, in the privacy policy for the new Cloud service, the language plainly stated that Cisco could keep track of how its Cloud Connect Service was used by collecting certain information from the traffic that went through the router. According to what was listed in the policy, that information included local network traffic and Internet traffic as well. That information could then potentially be added to other users’ data and subsequently given to third parties for their own use(s). Basically, the info amounted to a list of every Web site you or anyone using your network (router) visited in a given slice of time. However, the information would not identify any single user in any way, according to the policy. Understandably, folks were upset at such a loose-sounding privacy policy that made for a potential lack of privacy.

I used the past tense in the previous paragraphs because after a mere five days, the language had been removed. By the time I went to go see things for myself, the language about data collection that had angered so many users had been replaced with milder language stating that they may collect information about your network configuration or the traffic through the router for the purpose of technical support or troubleshooting. The only way the data can be linked to an individual user would be when a user

called tech support with a problem and provided a certain number given to them when they initially registered for the Cisco Connect Cloud Service.

On a similar note, you may have noticed I used the word “force” in quotation marks in the first paragraph. That’s because there is a setting within the routers’ firmware that helps enable automatic updates. That’s handy, because it makes for one less thing you have to worry about. However, in this case, it also opted users in to the newer firmware that then made them have to sign up for an online account they wanted no part of. By simply not putting a check mark in an automatic update box they would have avoided this situation entirely.

If you have been affected by this firmware update and you have decided you don’t like it after trying it for a while, or if you never wanted it in the first place, you’re in luck. There are instructions at the following link on just how to get your router back to the way it was before this upgrade. Please follow them to the letter, or you could wind up with a useless router. I have read them, and they are very straightforward. Here’s the link: <http://tinyurl.com/8tv9vwd>. Please read through them completely before attempting the downgrade, and don’t forget the *important note* between steps 10 and 11. The instructions are good for the AE2700, 3500 and 4500 routers from Cisco/Linksys.

More on Lair ...

(Continued from page 17)

day’s most powerful supercomputers, which began as a hobby. I’ve gone from tape storage and 8-bit processors to a career and resources that have been very good to me, and from punch cards to access to information that was imaginable to only a few in 1987.

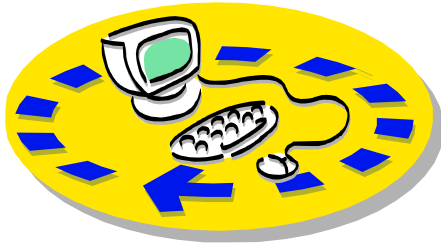
Twenty-five years from now? Who knows, but I feel confident that the old-timers of the future will wax nostalgic

about having to use keyboards on computers that had only 8 GB of RAM, ancient hard drives that held only 2 TB, and how long they had to wait for stuff coming over archaic wires at 100 Mb/sec. If the youngsters of 2037 even listen, they may appreciate how good things are then. Or, they may just roll their eyes and go back to doing ... what?

If you have questions or would like to learn more about Linux and FOSS, come

to the September CIPCUG Linux SIG meeting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday the 25th at Ventura County Computers in Ventura. The topic is a bit up in the air. We may be reinstalling Ubuntu 12.04. As always, we will entertain all questions and endeavor to answer them. 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.



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 several times a month.

◆ Door prizes 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.

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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.

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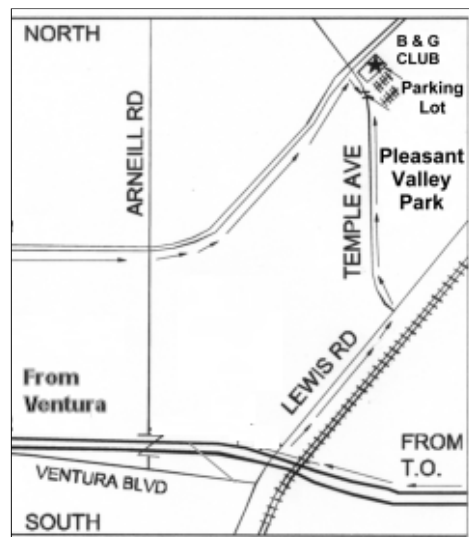
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If the number above your name is 2012 SEPTEMBER, your membership dues are payable in SEPTEMBER 2012.

SEPTEMBER 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, Sept. 22, at the Boys & Girls Club, 1500 Temple Ave. (Ponderosa Drive and Temple Avenue), Camarillo.

Meeting Schedule (this month only):

9:00 a.m.	Doors open
9:30	Program begins. Drawings will be held during the program time.
12:00	Lunch at adjacent picnic area