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AWARDS

- 2004** APCUG: Large groups first place for website.
- 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).
- 2012** APCUG first place in the newsletter contest (medium groups).

**Channel Islands
 PC Users Group**
CIPCUG mailing address:
P.O. Box 51354, Oxnard, CA
93031-1354

Executive Committee

(Elected members of Board of Directors)

President.....Sandy Tsutsui-Trujillo
president@cipcug.org
 Vice President/Program Chairman
Craig Ladd
vicepresident@cipcug.org
 Secretary.....Diane Mortensen-Henderson
secretary@cipcug.org
 Treasurer.....Art Lewis
treasurer@cipcug.org
 Immediate Past President
James Brown
shapeshifterjpb@aol.com

(Appointed members of Board of Directors)

Technical Adviser.....Toby Scott
 Web Page Editor.....Andy Toth
webmaster@cipcug.org
 TOE editor.....John Weigle
editor@cipcug.org
 Membership Chairman.....Ken Church
membership@cipcug.org

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 Robert Provart.....1995-1997
 Toby Scott.....1997-1999
 George Lakes1999-2001
 Andy Toth.....2001-2003
 David Harris.....2003-2005
 Lois Evans de Violini 2005-2007
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 Rick Curry.....2009-2011
 James Brown.....2011-2013

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

Life members

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



**An International
 Association of Technology
 & Computer User Groups**

The Outer Edge

Editor.....John Weigle
 P.O. Box 6536, Ventura CA 93006
 485-7121.....jweigle@vcnet.com

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Make all checks payable to CIPCUG.	

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CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Best wishes to all

On behalf of the CIPCUG board and volunteers, let me wish you all a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah or Happy Kwanzaa, depending on your persuasion, and a Happy New Year. My guess is that 2014 will flash by as fast as 2013 seems to be doing.

If the predictions turn out to be valid, we'll see lots of changes in the computing world. Some predict that the world of laptops and desktops will be taken over by smartphones and tablets because most of our work will be done in the cloud. But I'm not convinced that people who

Editor's corner



Weigle

have to do a lot of typing — secretaries, writers, keepers of databases, and Web page designers, to name a few — are going to give their keyboards and do all their work on tiny keyboards or with a stylus. I accept Toby Scott's prediction that cloud use will increase, but that laptops and desktops aren't going to disappear in the near future.

Michael Shalkey's discussion of CryptoLocker at last month's meeting spread quickly, as you know if you've read this issue's Command.com. President Sandy Tsutsui-Trujillo put it to good use at work throughout the week, proving that we can have many effects outside our immediate membership.

If we didn't learn anything else during the November meeting, we should have taken away at least these three points:

Be careful about opening attachments to emails or clicking on links in them. Return addresses can be spoofed, and email accounts can be hacked.

Don't use the same password for all your accounts, especially those that involve finances.

Regular backups are essential for many reasons, not just because of CryptoLocker, although its danger should be reason enough to convince you.

To borrow a line from "The Fly," "Be afraid. Be very afraid."

To close this last column of the year, I'm going to do something I don't do enough: thank all the people who write for TOE, check the SIG and Q&A reports, and sometimes the program reports, for accuracy, keep track of changes to the mailing list so copies go to the right people at the correct addresses and post the final products on cipcug.org.

Of course, I'm happy when our combined efforts win awards in the APCUG newsletter contest, but I'm even happier when we seem to be meeting the needs and desires of our readers.

— John Weigle, editor

Coming events

'Health Care Not Obama Care' topic for December

Programs

Dr. Gary Sexton, the president of the Greater South Bay User Group in Torrance, will discuss "Health Care Not Obama Care" at the Dec. 21 meeting. Note that this meeting is on the **third** Saturday, not the normal fourth Saturday — at the Camarillo Boys & Girls Club, 1500 Temple Ave. (Ponderosa Drive and Temple Avenue), Camarillo (see the map on the last page).

In an earlier presentation, Sexton discussed "Medical Facts: Where to find them and how to evaluate them."

Barring unusual problems, the doors will open at 8 a.m. and the meeting will start at 8:45 a.m. with the pre-meeting SIGs on the Internet and connectivity and on Android devices and their apps. The business meeting will start at 9:30, followed by the Q&A session at 10 a.m., coffee break at 10:30 a.m. and the program at 11 a.m.

Dates of other coming meetings:

Jan. 25

Feb. 22

March 22

April 26

(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

General SIG, Q&A**VLC Media Player, Gmail passwords and more****Pre-meeting SIG**

(Toby Scott was at a Lions Club event, so Michael Shalkey conducted the pre-meeting SIG, Q&A session and program.)

VLC Media Player

Q: I use VLC Media Player and normally have had no problems with it, but recently, I've had problems opening .PPS files.

A: That's a PowerPoint Slideshow. You can get a free viewer at Microsoft.com.

Web site: <http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/download/details.aspx?id=6>

Search for PowerPoint Viewer and pick the latest version. The free LibreOffice and OpenOffice also open the files.

I'd bet that you have a slimmed down version of Office with just Word and Excel, and the viewer doesn't come with that version.

Spacing in Word

Q: I'm using Word 2010 and having a problem with the spacing between para-

graphs. I do a newsletter and don't want an additional line between paragraphs, but my Word keeps defaulting to that.

A: Raise that question during the regular Q&A and we'll cover it so everyone gets the information.

Gmail password

Q: I want to change the password for my Gmail account but can't remember how to do it.

I have not forgotten my password; I just want to change it.

A: Click on the gear in the upper right corner of the opening Gmail page. Go to Settings > Accounts > Change Account Settings > Change Password. You'll be asked for your current password and the new password.

Audience comment: You could also do a Google search on "how do I change my Gmail password."

Questioner: I did that, and it seemed overly difficult.

Michael Shalkey: Remember that you'll need to use the new password on all your devices the first time you try to open Gmail on them. When I change my

password, I try to log in quickly on my tablet and other devices so I remember to change the password right then. It is important to remember that your Gmail password is your Google identity for MANY Google services.

Downloading videos

Q: I periodically download some videos. I have a slow connection, and I understand the videos are buffering, but is there some way to get the entire video at one time?

A: Start the video and let some of it download. Then hit pause. Consider this a commercial break and go get a cup of coffee or a snack. When you come back, start the video again. If you're lucky you will have downloaded enough to keep ahead of the buffering.

If you have a very slow connection, you might have to wait for the whole thing to download and then play the video.

Apps for Roku and similar devices

Q: If Roku-like devices show just

(Continued on page 5)

More on coming events ...

(Continued from page 3)

May 24

June 28

July 26

Aug. 23

Sept. 27

Oct. 25

Nov. 15 (third Saturday)

Dec. 20 (third Saturday)

SIGs

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are sponsored by CIPCUG and led by volunteer club members. The SIGs 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 general schedule:

Fourth Tuesday: Linux.

Fourth Saturday (or the regular meeting day): Internet and Connectivity SIG (Toby Scott) and Apps for Tablets and Smartphones (Jessica Scott), 8:45 a.m.

The December and January schedules:
December

Saturday, Dec. 21: Pre-meeting SIGs on the Internet and Connectivity and Tablet and Smartphone Apps at 8:45 a.m.

The December Linux SIG has been cancelled because it would have fallen on Christmas Eve.

January

Saturday, Jan. 25: Pre-meeting SIGs on Internet and Connectivity and Tablet and Smartphone apps at 8:45 a.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 28: Linux SIG. Moderator Bill Wayson. The topic is anything and everything about Linux and open source software that is brought up, as well as ask, and answer, any questions that may come up.

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

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(Continued from page 4)

Netflix and Hulu does that mean I can't get anything else? Is the box limited to just the programs it shows or can others be added?

A: It depends on whether the company making the device will let the other companies add themselves. Roku was originally going to be a Netflix box, but they decided not to do that. The decision was to keep Roku a separate company and to keep it open to everyone. Roku has the largest number of other apps in my opinion. It really depends on the companies involved.

Conduit

Q: I have Conduit on my computer. I removed every file containing "conduit" or the company name as part of its name, but it's apparently still there. When I start the computer, it says it can't load that file. It doesn't give me a path to the file.

A: Use MS Config (type the name in the search box in the Start menu to find it) and look at the Startup tab. Check on the Selective startup radio button. Now, just for you — don't anyone else listen — disable all the startup items. Click apply and OK and restart the computer. If the problem is gone, go back to MS Config and look at the items. Program files in the Programs folder are usually safe to re-check. When we get to the program portion of the meeting, I'll discuss Crypto Locker and you'll see why you need to know where programs start from (the Start folder, the registry, Temp folders and so on). I would bet that the one you're looking for is in Users/username/AppData/Local or Roaming or in a Temp folder.

The questioner says he's using AVG Anti-Virus. Michael says he recommends Microsoft Security Essentials for a free anti-virus program and Norton Anti-Virus for a paid one. Personal behavior trumps anti-virus programs every time, however. If you consciously click on a link in an email or say OK to install a program, the anti-virus program assumes you know what you're doing. Feel free to throw away anything in a Temp folder; Temp stands for temporary.

(More information about Conduit — what it is, what it does and how to re-

<p>This month's topics</p> <p>SIG</p> <p>VLC Media Player</p> <p>Spacing in Word</p> <p>Gmail password</p> <p>Downloading videos</p> <p>Apps for Roku and similar devices</p> <p>Conduit</p> <p>Sandboxes and XP</p> <p>Email on TV</p> <p>Molto email app</p> <p>Chrome and security cameras</p> <p>Email attachments</p> <p>List of files</p>	<p>Opera and AOL mail</p> <p>.TIF danger</p> <p>Q&A</p> <p>Adobe breach</p> <p>Spacing in Word</p> <p>Moving text down</p> <p>Intel cores</p> <p>YouTube email attachments</p> <p>Internet Explorer 11</p> <p>Phishing attempt</p> <p>Windows 8.1</p> <p>Yahoo mail</p>
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move it — can be found at <http://botcrawl.com/how-to-remove-conduit-search-malware>.)

Sandboxes and XP

Q: A question on the Facebook page asks if running everything in a sandbox would make Windows XP safe to use after April 8 next year.

A: You can be safe if you don't go on the Internet. I wouldn't recommend going on the Internet with any XP machine after April 8. We will all have to wait and see what is really going to happen, but I know the bad guys are hoarding exploits and vulnerabilities just to make money on unsuspecting XP users next year.

Email on TV

Q: I got a new TV. I can browse the Internet on it. When I go to the Internet on my computer, I can get my email. Can I do that on the TV?

A: I'm not sure. You'd need a keyboard for most email use and the browser might be a special one for use on the TV. Some browsers are limited to let you go only to certain sites. Try to plug a USB keyboard into the TV and see if it works.

Molto email app

Michael Shalkey: Molto is a beta email program for Androids. If you're interested, look at screen shots of it because the appearance of software is often the key to a user's experience. Website: <http://moltoapp.com/en>.

I'm also interested in PushBullet, which lets you send files, links and more to your phone and back. Chrome to Phone is similar. Website: <https://www.pushbullet.com/>

One of the reasons we attend user groups is to continue our educations. I listen to 12-14 hours of computing-related podcasts each week. Some of it goes over my head, but I keep learning from them.

The Khan Academy, which is being used in some public schools, is also a good learning tool, breaking difficult subjects into 10-15-minute segments. Website: <https://www.khanacademy.org>.

Chrome and security cameras

Q: Chrome is messing up the security cameras' program at the Santa Paula Oil Museum. We ask people not to use Chrome and to use Internet Explorer because of the problem. It happens when people use the Wi-Fi at the entrance desk.

A: That sounds strange. There shouldn't be any relation between Chrome and the security cameras because they should be separate. (Questioner says it's on a Santa Paula city network.) There's some kind of technical glitch. I'd try to find someone who will donate a router and set up a separate subnet for the museum.

Email attachments

Michael Shalkey: I want to renew our regular warning about email attachments. Don't open attachments that you aren't expecting, even if they appear to be from a friend because email addresses can be spoofed and accounts can be hacked. If you feel you must open the attachment, save it to your hard drive and scan it with your anti-virus program first. And don't click on email links, especially if the mes-

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sage is so general that it could apply to anyone.

List of files

Q: I got a new Dell and can't find a list of my files.

A: In Windows 8.1 go to the bottom of the tiles screen at the bottom left. You'll see an arrow. Hover over it, and you'll see a list of all your apps. You can get rid of the tile view in Windows 8.1.

If you want to see a list of all your files, hold down the Windows key and the E key at the same time to open Windows Explorer (not Internet Explorer). This is probably the view you are looking for.

Opera and AOL mail

Q: I use Opera, and when I look at my AOL email, it doesn't display properly.

A: You might need to use a different browser just for the AOL mail. (Questioner says he does.) I won't do what Toby would and ask why you're still using AOL. We had an interesting experience with AOL at the shop. A woman brought in her computer, and it was infected with all kinds of toolbars and other malware, but she didn't know it because none of it showed up on her AOL browser. No one is writing malware for it.

.TIF danger

Michael Shalkey: There's another danger to Windows users. A new Zero Day vulnerability in Microsoft's graphics component could allow remote code to be executed on your machine. Users of Office 2003, 2007 and 2010 are subject to the danger. A Tagged Image Format (TIF) file on a website or in an email can take over your computer. The only fix at the moment is to turn off the ability to open TIF files, but many people involved in graphics prefer TIFs to other formats. Microsoft has prepared a Fix-it as a temporary solution. Go to <http://smallbusiness.support.microsoft.com/en-us/kb/2896666> to find it. If that link does not work, search for KB2896666 at Microsoft.com.

A patch to create a permanent fix should be available in December. You don't have to have Office open to be infected if you visit an infected website.

Support for Office 2003 ends on April

8, the same day support for Windows XP ends. This is not as significant as the end of support for XP, but it does mean that if you get a new computer you probably won't be able to activate a new installation of Office 2003.

Regular Q&A

Adobe breach

Michael Shalkey: Before we start the Q&A, I want to discuss a major news story that is scaring technical folks and should scare you. Hackers broke into Adobe's database and obtained the email addresses, passwords, credit card numbers and password hints of 130,324,429 customers. If you've registered or paid for an Adobe product, your information might be at risk. To find out if any of your email addresses were on the list, go to <https://www.lastpass.com/adobe> and type the addresses into the search box there.

The LastPass site says that anyone whose address is on the list should go to www.adobe.com/go/passwordreset and change the password. If you used the same password on any others sites, change those, too. And if your password hint makes the password obvious (for example, "color of sky" for the password "blue") change the hint, too.

The site also says that LinkedIn, eHarmony and Last.fm accounts were compromised and has links to check them, too.

LastPass has a copy of the hacked database, which has been posted on the Internet.

During the regular program, I'm going to discuss another danger, Crypto Locker, and some ways to protect yourself from it. These include creating image backups of your hard drive, which can be accomplished with tools included in Windows 7 and 8. You also need an external hard drive to protect the backup from being locked. I'll also discuss the differences between cold and hot backups. A hot backup is made on a drive that is always on. Cold backups are made on drives that are plugged in to create the backup and then unplugged from the computer.

As we go forward, things will only get worse in the world of malware.

Among other things Adobe did wrong on its database, it did *not* encrypt the user names and password hints. Adobe "just did everything wrong," Shalkey said.

He also noted that people continue to pick bad passwords, such as the following top 30 from the Adobe hack (from <http://stricture-group.com/files/adobe-top100.txt>):

1. 123456
2. 123456789
3. password
4. adobe123
5. 12345678
6. qwerty
7. 1234567
8. 111111
9. photoshop
10. 123123
11. 1234567890
12. 000000
13. abc123
14. 1234
15. adobe1
16. macromedia
17. azerty
18. iloveyou
19. aaaaaa
20. 654321
21. 12345
22. 666666
23. sunshine
24. 123321
25. letmein
26. monkey
27. asdfgh
28. password1
29. shadow
30. princess

Spacing in Word

Q (from the pre-meeting SIG): I'm using Word to create a newsletter, and it keeps defaulting to putting an extra space after each paragraph. I don't want the space. How can I fix it so it won't be put in?

A: One way to fix it for just one document at a time is to highlight the paragraphs you want to change, right click on the highlighted area, pick Paragraph and change the spacing there (see illustration

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at right).

To make the change permanent, edit the normal.dotm template in Users/username/AppData/Roaming/Microsoft/Templates. Instructions on how to edit the file can be found at <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/word-help/change-the-normal-template-normal-dotm-HA010030756.aspx>.

Moving text down

Q: How do I move text down?

A: Go to the beginning of the line and hit Enter as many times as you want.

Intel cores

Q: Can you explain the differences between quad cores Intel i3, i5 and i7?

A: If we were in the world of cars, the equivalents would be a four-cylinder, six-cylinder, and eight-cylinder engine. This is a VERY rough analogy, because the i5 is more like an eight-cylinder engine with the i7 being an eight-cylinder with turbo.

The new Haswell chip or fourth-generation core processor family has some of the graphics processing on the chip rather than on a separate card. This is fine for most home users, but not for high-level gamers, who need lots of video processing and a separate video card. If you're just using Word and going to the Internet, you don't need that kind of power.

The newer chips also use less power, and, therefore, produce less heat, which is important on laptops.

Q: What would the equivalents be for AMD chips?

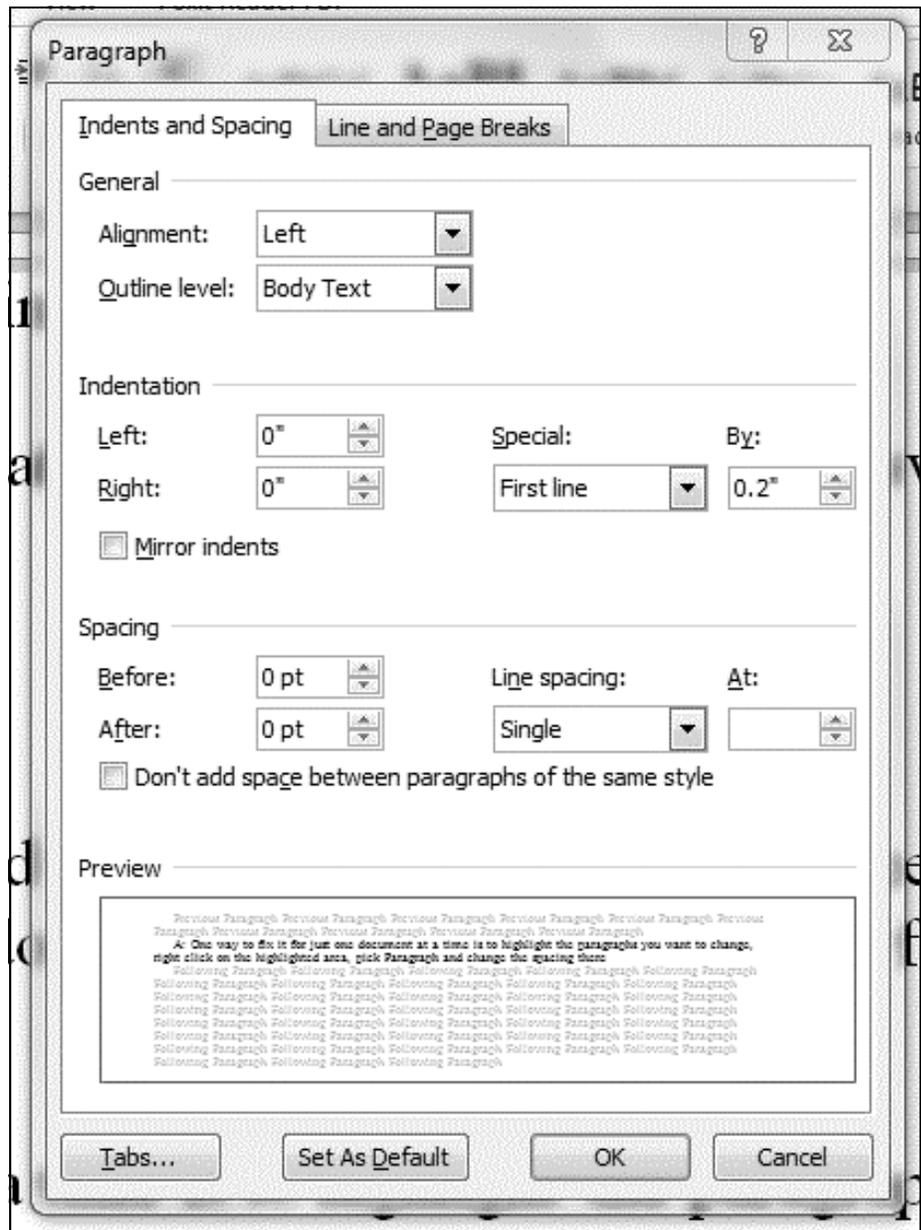
A: The AMD chips are always cheaper, and the company has dropped out of the higher-end wars because of the costs. AMD is making the cheaper ones, probably the equivalent of an Intel i3.

If the number of cores on a chip doesn't help you, none of this matters, but companies make products that look good on paper to get better reviews. How much do you care about the details of your car's engine if it works and gets you where you want to go?

YouTube email attachments

Q: I'm getting YouTube material as email attachments. Am I going to get in trouble?

A: Maybe. Right click on the attach-



The screen shot shows where to change the spacing and indents in Word.

ment, and you should see a Web address with a number. Copy that Uniform Resource Locator (URL), go to YouTube and paste it in to the address box.

Two current scams are emails purportedly from the U.S. Postal Service or Federal Express. Neither one of them emails you. Neither do your banks or other financial institutions.

Internet Explorer 11

Q: Microsoft forced Internet Explorer

11 onto my machine. What should I expect from it?

A: It's not much different than 10. This is the last time you'll see the version number. Internet Explorer is finally catching up to Chrome and Firefox and will now be updated in the background automatically.

You won't even know the version number unless you check.

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CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Program: CryptoLocker**'Terrifying' malware extends across networks**

By John Weigle

jweigle@vcnet.com

CryptoLocker, the latest ransomware to infect computers, "is terrifying everybody across the world who is in the computer field," Michael Shalkey said at the November meeting, "partly because it is using well understood state-of-the-art asymmetric key encryption technology."

Unlike earlier forms of such malware, which locked up the computer and demanded money to unlock it, CryptoLocker encrypts most document files and can infect the files on any device the computer can see — other computers on a network, external hard drives, flash drives and servers.

Ransomware has been around for some time, with the earlier versions purporting to be from such law enforcement agencies as the FBI, Interpol and California Cyber Command, which had supposedly found illegal activity, usually child porn, on the targeted computer. These messages said the computers would be

CryptoLocker malware encrypts these file types

The Malwarebytes report on CryptoLocker (see the uniform resource locator at the end of the main article) lists these file types that the malware targeted and encrypted at the time of the posting:

```
.3fr, .accdb, .ai, .arw, .bay, .cdr,
.cer, .cr2, .crt, .crw, .dbf, .dcr, .der,
.dng, .doc, .docm, .docx, .dwg, .dxf,
.dwg, .eps, .erf, .indd, .jpe, .jpg, .kdc,
.mdb, .mdf, .mef, .mrw, .nef, .nrw,
.odb, .odm, .odp, .ods, .odt, .orf,
.p12, .p7b, .p7c, .pdd, .pef, .pem,
.pfx, .ppt, .pptm, .pptx, .psd, .pst,
.ptx, .r3d, .raf, .raw, .rtf, .rw2, .rwl,
.srf, .srw, .wb2, .wpd, .wps, .xlb, .xls,
.xlsb, .xlsm, .xlsx
```

unlocked as soon as a payment — thus the name ransomware — was received. One version turns on your computer's

camera if you have one and shows you your picture.

CryptoLocker displays a message saying "Your personal files are encrypted" (see Figure 1 on the next page). You're given 72 hours to pay the ransom — which starts at \$300 and can rise to \$2,000 if the payment is delayed — or the sender will destroy the key that could unencrypt the files, and you'll never see your files again.

So far, CryptoLocker encrypts only certain files (see sidebar in column two for a list) but does not encrypt program files, so users can still create documents, go to the Internet and play Solitaire, for example. So far, if a victim pays the ransom, the files have been unencrypted — unless the FBI or another law enforcement agency has shut the servers down, Shalkey said.

Some anti-malware programs can detect and remove the CryptoLocker program, but they can not decrypt the files. Some programs can detect and block the

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More on Q&A ...

(Continued from page 7)

Phishing attempt

Q: I've been getting some phishing emails that purported to be from Wells Fargo, where we have the CIPCUG account. I tried to forward it to the Wells Fargo report phishing site, but it was rejected because the bank's server recognized the executable file in it.

We also got the fake phone call from Microsoft.

A: The Microsoft call, as you know, was a scam. Microsoft won't call to tell you it found a virus or other problem on your computer.

If you ever need to call Microsoft for support for a virus or Windows update problem, call 866 PC SAFETY.

Windows 8.1

Q: There's a post on our Facebook

page that says there have been some Central Processing Units (CPUs) that can't handle Windows 8.1. Do you know anything about that?

A: Most people who got Windows 8 got it when they bought a new computer, so those machines should be able to handle 8.1.

If you want to go to 8 or 8.1 and are currently on an XP machine, just get a new computer.

Yahoo mail

Q: When I read my CIPCUG account mail, I get a preview pane that lets me look at enough of the message to see if I really want it, but I don't get that with Yahoo mail.

A: Yahoo is changing something every week, it seems. Not everyone likes the changes because some of them don't dis-

play properly in some browsers. Try a different browser and see if that makes a difference.

(Questioner uses Firefox and Chrome, but Firefox asks for a higher resolution on Yahoo.)

Michael prefers Chrome to Firefox because Firefox won't start until it completes an update. He also noted that Firefox showed a screen that said Firefox was up to date, even though it was not. The message was grayed out, but that was difficult to notice at a quick look, and there was nothing that said "click here to check for updates" or "download latest version here."

He advised the questioner to be sure the Firefox version was up to date.

Web sites: Mozilla.com or getfirefox.com.

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

(Continued from page 8)

program before it causes any damage, but the danger level remains high.

Following some generally advised precautions will provide some protection, but the only full protection is to make regular image backups of your hard drive (s), Shalkey said. An image backup is an exact copy of a complete drive, including all the software.

General precautions

First, Shalkey said, don't open attachments to emails that you did not expect. Even if you expect an attachment from the purported sender, it's best to save the file to your hard drive and scan it with your anti-virus program before opening it. An infected file "claims to be something. What it *is* is an executable," he said. A file might have a name like "dogpicture.jpeg.exe," but you might not notice or be able to see the .exe part of the name. Any file with a name with more than one extension should be considered dangerous, he said. If the file is opened, the program communicates with a command server somewhere on the Internet that creates public and private keys to encrypt your personal files on your computer. It does this in the background, and you may not be aware of it for 24 hours or more. By that time, the damage is done.

Similarly, don't click on links in emails. If you have the purported website in your bookmarks, go to it by using the bookmark. If it's a site you never heard of, it's probably best to ignore it.

Image backup best protection

Short of paying the ransom — and hoping the key is still available — the only way to get your encrypted files back is to restore the unencrypted versions from a backup, which again emphasizes the need for, and value of, regular backups. Some cloud backups can be encrypted, some reports say, so it's best to have at least one backup on a device that is connected to your computer only when it's making the backup.

If you don't use a separate program to create backups, Windows 7 and 8 have a backup program in the Control Panel that is built in and that will make an image of your hard drive(s) if you have data and



From <http://blog.malwarebytes.org/intelligence/2013/10/cryptolocker-ransomware-what-you-need-to-know/>

Figure 1: This is the notice from CryptoLocker that files on a computer have been locked.

software on different drives, Shalkey said. The default Windows backup time is 7 p.m. every Sunday, but it must be activated before it will make any backups. The backup times can be changed.

Instructions for the Windows 7 version can be found at <http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows7/back-up-your-files>. When you create your first backup, the program will ask if you have a system disk and offer to make one if you don't. Accept the offer because you have to boot from the system disk to restore the backup. (Based on my computer, it appears that Acronis True Image might block your access to the Windows backup program. In that case, create the image backup with Acronis or, if you prefer to use the Windows program, uninstall True Image. — Editor)

An image backup might take an hour or more depending on the size of your drive(s). If CryptoLocker or similar malware infects your computer, you'll lose everything done since the last backup, but "it's a tiny risk vs. everything you own,"

Shalkey said. This is another reason to create regular backups.

CryptoLocker is "a network-aware virus," Shalkey said. Every file your computer can see will be encrypted. "Now you see why people are shaking in their boots about this thing. It is really serious," he said. One secretary in a business who clicks on a suspect link can encrypt every one of the selected files that her computer can see.

Some cryptology background

An additional frightening aspect of CryptoLocker, Shalkey said, is that "there's no reason this couldn't be embedded in a website where victims could be infected just by visiting."

Asymmetric cryptography for a computer requires two keys, Shalkey explained. One is the public key (it would be comparable to the safe deposit box key the bank has) and one is private (comparable to the key the box owner has). Unlike the safe deposit box, howev-

(Continued on page 10)

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

(Continued from page 9)

er, the public key is used only to encrypt or “lock,” files while the other (private key) is used only for unencrypting or “unlocking.” Shalkey could post his public key on a website so people could use it to encrypt messages to him. He would use his private key to open the messages when they arrived.

To save space here, we will not print the whole explanation of asymmetric cryptography, including Alice, Bob, Eve, paint, clocks and modular arithmetic. The Video can be seen at <http://gizmodo.com/5888567/how-to-understand-encryption-using-paint-and-clocks>.

Information technology personnel are likely to become much more strict about regular backups, Shalkey said, because if encrypted files can not be unencrypted and there are no backups, “you can be out of business.”

Foolishit.com — that’s “foolish IT,” not what it looks like in print, but spaces can’t be used in domain names, Shalkey noted — has developed a program called CryptoPrevent. There are two versions of the program, a free one and a paid one that is always updating. What it does is edit the group policy of a Windows machine so the current version of CryptoLocker will not run. The program may also stop unwanted programs or toolbars from running from temporary folders like `appdata/local/temp`.

“If you’re using a Mac, the virus doesn’t apply to you — yet,” Shalkey said. It also does not infect Linux or Android devices — yet. “It’s an arms race,” Shalkey said, because the program’s abilities have been proven.

“Don’t do stupid things, and don’t visit potentially dangerous websites, and be careful with free programs or music,” he added. “This isn’t a virus. ... It’s a bad piece of software, yes, but it’s not a virus, which is one reason antivirus programs

On the Net:

There’s lots of information on the Internet about Crypto Locker. Here are some sources.

<http://blog.malwarebytes.org/intelligence/2013/10/cryptolocker-ransomware-what-you-need-to-know/>

<http://www.pcworld.com/article/2060640/cryptolocker-creators-try-to-extort-even-more-money-from-victims-with-new-service.html>

<http://www.us-cert.gov/ncas/alerts/TA13-309A>

<http://nakedsecurity.sophos.com/2013/10/18/CryptoLocker-ransomware-see-how-it-works-learn-about-prevention-cleanup-and-recovery/>

<http://techguylabs.com/episodes/1026/steve-gibson-and-cryptolocker>

<http://www.bleepingcomputer.com/virus-removal/cryptolocker-ransomware-information>

<http://www.foolishit.com/vb6-projects/cryptoprevent/>

<http://stricture-group.com/files/adobe-top100.txt> (hacked Adobe passwords)

aren’t addressing it yet.”

A sandbox is one answer to such problems, he said. If you could open your email in a sandbox or virtual machine, you’d be in good shape, he said. “The problem is it’s (a virtual machine) a little geeky. It’s hard to get running. We have discussed the program Sandboxie before, and we will probably discuss it more in the future.”

A member of the audience asked if servers could be programmed not to send executable files via email. Shalkey said he doubted that all the email providers could be persuaded to do that and added that it might not be a good idea anyway. What if, he asked, he wrote legitimate software and wanted to send someone else the program.exe for the person to try?

Asked about Carbonite, he said it keeps versions of files, so users would restore versions of the files created before Crypto Locker was installed (its opening screen says when it was installed so users can determine when the 72-hour deadline is).

Carbonite is discussed further at [http://www.buckeyeit.com/blog/2013/10/29/how-carbonite-can-help-](http://www.buckeyeit.com/blog/2013/10/29/how-carbonite-can-help-protect-against-cryptolocker)

[protect-against-cryptolocker](http://www.buckeyeit.com/blog/2013/10/29/how-carbonite-can-help-protect-against-cryptolocker). It says:

“Carbonite (and other online backup solutions) can help protect your files because the backed up files are not attached to the computer. They are backed, but not through the typical file transfer protocol a network-attached hard drive would.

“The only problem is that Carbonite might backup the encrypted files and overwrite the good files. Some Carbonite plans have versioning, meaning that it will keep every version of a file (the good copy and the encrypted backup). Restoring the good copy then solves the problem after the system is virus-free.”

Another person asked how to move a picture file from a desktop to a laptop computer. One approach is to use an external hard drive, Shalkey said. Plug it into the computer with the pictures, copy the pictures to it (highlight the pictures and drag them to the external drive). Then take the drive to the other computer, plug it in and drag the pictures to wherever you want them on the new drive. This method is called “sneaker net.”

If you’re on a network with proper permissions you can transfer them over the network.

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 by typing in a known URL, not by clicking on the email link, and look for messages there.

CIPCUG NEWS AND EVENTS

Minutes of the November Board of Directors meeting

By Diane Mortensen-Henderson

CIPCUG Board of Directors held its monthly meeting on Nov. 16, 2013. Members in attendance were John Weigle, Sandy Tsutsui-Trujillo Craig Ladd, Art Lewis, Ken Church, and Diane Mortensen-Henderson. Missing were Toby Scott, Jim Brown and Andy Toth.

President Sandy Tsutsui-Trujillo opened the meeting asking if there was any old business. There being none, the meeting was open to new business.

Future meeting plans: Various topics and speakers for CIPCUG's future meetings were discussed. In the spirit of the holidays, Sandy informed board members that she would be willing to bring luncheon food to the Dec. 21 meeting. Suggestions were made about what type of food, drinks, charging a minimum fee and how the luncheon affair could be set up.

As to available speakers for December's meeting, Craig has tried several possibilities. Again, it is getting more difficult to find interesting topics and speakers who are willing to share their knowledge. Even more difficult is to find someone willing to come on the weekend before Christmas.

Some suggestions made by Sandy and Craig were: topics on robotics (drones), contacting such hospitals as Los Robles in Thousand Oaks to have a speaker come and talk about using the hospital's website and discuss the hospital's privacy policy; presentation on Skype, its purpose and how to use it. Jim Pearson from the Thousand Oaks club might be willing to come and advise CIPCUG on its audio equipment. Craig plans to contact the APCUG Speakers Bureau but does not have the password to the Speakers Bureau's website.

Treasurer's report: Art Lewis read the treasurer's report, which is published elsewhere in TOE. October's treasurer's report shows a \$116.87 monthly loss after all expenses for the month. Due to losses over the past several months, there will be more discussion of fundraising ideas in the New Year.

TOE: CIPCUG's treasurer reports over the past year have shown the greatest expense has been the preparation, printing, and mailing of TOE. For a small club, it has become exceedingly expensive. The board agreed a decision must be made as to putting TOE on CIPCUG's website, where members could go to read and print out a hard copy if they wish.

There being no further information to discuss the board meeting adjourned at 12:45 pm.



Mortensen-Henderson

Treasurer's report for October 2013

By Art Lewis
treasurer@cipcug.org



Lewis

10-1-13 through
10--31-13

Category Description

INFLOWS	
Coffee Income	7.00
Donation	2.00
Membership Income	
Renewals	180.00
TOTAL Membership Income	180.00
Raffle	378.00
TOTAL INFLOWS	567.00
OUTFLOWS	
Membership expense	50.00
Raffle prizes	114.80
Rent Paid	200.00
TOE	319.07
TOTAL OUTFLOWS	683.87
OVERALL TOTAL	-116.87
Unrestricted Funds	3,444.29
Restricted Funds	0.00
Bank Balance 9-30-13	3,444.29
Year to Date Income	1,921.15
Year to Date Expense	2,858.21
Net Year to Date	-937.06

2013 contributors to The Outer Edge

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

- Rick Smith
- Jim Thornton
- Sandy Tsutsui-Trujillo
- Bill Wayson
- John Weigle

CIPCUG MEMBERS

- Ken Church
- Brook Evans
- Art Lewis
- Helen Long
- Diane Mortensen-Henderson
- Dick Maybach
- Tony Pizza
- Toby Scott
- Michael Shalkey

APCUG

- Steve Baer
- Sandy Berger
- Jim Ceray
- Steve Costello
- Nancy DeMarte
- Terry MacLennan
- Dick Maybach
- Nancy Preffitt
- Bill Sheff

Back up, back up, back up ... and test the backup 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 –

Welcome Back: Billy Cantarini

Attendance at the November 2013 general meeting:
36 members and guests (who signed in)

Total membership: 177

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 Dec. 21, 2013, meeting.

October 2013 renewals payment due:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to
1236	Hauge	Doug	201310
1250A	Linderman	James	201310
1250B	Linderman	Usha	201310
1251	McCarthy	Neil	201310
0990	Mehr	Steve	201310
1209	Nachian	Paul	201310

November 2013 renewals payment due:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to
0388	Armstrong	Bob	201311
0915	Clayton	Phil	201311
1155	Cronkite	Bob	201311
0635	Godwin	John	201311
1212	Hollander	Gary	201311
0789	Knauer	Wolfgang	201311
0145	Lee	Bill	201311
0863	Zapf, D.P.M.	Michael	201311

December 2013 renewals payment due:

Mbr#	Last Name	First Name	Pd to
1044	Cohen	Jerry	201312
0908	Cronin	Richard	201312
1130	Hollingsworth	Don	201312
0037T	Hosford	Victor	201312
0993	Ladd	Craig	201312
1115	Nagy	Marlene	201312
1079	Schrum	Jerry	201312
1253	Smith	Ken	201312
1001	Toth	Andy	201312
1001A	Toth	Lisa	201312
1048T	Ulam	Frederick	201312
1237	Wishon	Bill	201312

GENERAL NEWS AND COMMENTARY

A tribute to William Lowe, father of the PC

By Bill Wayson

bwayson@gmail.com

We have reached the time where the pioneers of personal computing — indeed, of computing as it is generally known today — are passing on. The modern personal computing ecosystem owes its existence to many people. Arguably if any one of them had not

existed or had not succeeded in the role they played, the personal computing landscape as we know it probably would have developed much differently. The contributions of one such person, William C. Lowe, steered personal computer design in a profoundly fruitful direction, which PC users

take so much for granted that its significance is largely lost on them. Lowe led the team that developed the first IBM personal computer in 1981, which placed most PC development on the path of interchangeable parts and software. It is because of his success that we even refer to PCs as “PCs.” Lowe died in October of this year, and he is owed a tribute.

IBM certainly did not invent personal computers. By 1980, several companies were marketing computers for the home and hobbyist, companies like Apple, Tandy (Radio Shack), and Atari. But each of the various computers was developed by their respective companies with not only no thought of interoperability, but were purposely made to be incompatible. In fact, different computer models made by the same company were usually incompatible in both their hardware and software. If and when you upgraded to a new model, you usually started back at square one, which for the most part was the company’s intention.

Lowe’s team changed all that. In 1980, IBM designed and built all of its computing products in house. Their computers were largely incompatible with

each other, and there was only a modicum of interoperability of their software. In this light, it was a radical departure when Lowe’s team suggested that they build the new personal computer using already available off-the-shelf parts, parts that were well documented and available to anyone. Lowe must also have had a part in another unusual but equally game-changing decision by IBM. When IBM unveiled its first PC, it also sold the complete source code of the PC’s Basic Input/Output System, or BIOS. For a very nominal cost, anyone could see exactly the programming interface between the commodity hardware and whatever software was to run after the hardware was booted, namely the operating system, which brings us to another of Lowe’s far-reaching decisions.

Lowe’s new PC needed an operating system. Again, bucking IBM’s normal procedure to develop software in-house, Lowe decided to shop for one. He wanted to use Digital Research’s CP/M, which was the dominant personal computing operating system of the day. Several factors led to the failure of this effort, one of which may have been the legend of Gary Kildall, president of Digital Research, snubbing IBM executives as they were cooling their heels waiting to meet with him by flying his airplane around DR headquarters at the scheduled time of the meeting. True or not, IBM abandoned its pursuit of CP/M and moved on to the next choice, a software tools company in Seattle, Wash., called Microsoft. IBM negotiated a deal with it to use the new 86-DOS, a deal which allowed each company to sell versions under its own labels. Microsoft, which did not actually have an operating system, in turn bought one from another company, Seattle Computer. Microsoft further developed the operating system it bought, releasing it as MS-DOS 1.0. IBM’s version was called PC-DOS. So IBM introduced, thanks to Lowe’s team, a product completely unknown at the time for both IBM and computer users. This was the first personal computer comprised of widely available compo-

nents with well-documented specifications and interfaces, a fully documented low-level programming interface, and an operating system that would run unchanged on any hardware that supported the same BIOS interfaces. Thus, the PC would run software that any other suitably built PC could run. Because the first and subsequent IBM PCs were so successful (Lowe estimated that 220,000 PCs would be sold in its first three years, a number which turned out to be, even though larger than the entire installed base of IBM computers at that time, a huge underestimate), the direction of future PC development was sealed. While some companies continued to attempt to lock in a captured customer base with proprietary hardware — many pseudo-clone companies died in the early to mid 1980s — we now have such a level of standardization that with a minimum of research, anyone can build their own computer out of parts, and we don’t think twice about running the same exact software on different PCs. Without Lowe, this effortless interoperability might be unthinkable. Perhaps the smartphone industry needs its own William Lowe.

We owe, as I do personally, so much to many people who made decisions in the early days of personal computing that still influence our lives today. William Lowe is one such person. He helped lead us to standardized computing. The effects of his decisions run far and wide, all the way to the world economy. Without him, would we have Google, Facebook, Twitter, or companies like them? Maybe not. So thank you, Mr. Lowe. Enjoy your well-earned rest and peace.

If you have questions or would like to learn more about Linux and FOSS, come to the January Linux SIG meeting on Tuesday, the 28th, 6:30 p.m., at Ventura County Computers in Ventura. Note that there will be no December meeting of the CIPCUG Linux SIG. At the first meeting of 2014, we will discuss anything and everything about Linux and open source software that is brought up, as well as ask

(Continued on page 14)

Penguin’s Lair



Wayson

GENERAL NEWS AND COMMENTARY

Windows Media Player keeps music coming

By Jim Thornton
jasthorn@gmail.com

I like to play popular Broadway musical songs on my Windows 7 computer using my Windows Media Player program whenever I'm playing my Pretty Good Solitaire games. The nice thing about Windows Media Player is that it displays the Broadway musical album cover, the individual song titles, and the time length of each song in minutes, and the size of each song in kilobytes and megabytes, etc. And there are

More on Lair ...

(Continued from page 13)

and answer any questions that may come up. See the CIPCUG web site for more information. If you have a question or topic you would like the Lair or Linux SIG to cover, drop me a line at bwayson@gmail.com. Until next month, happy computing.

many other items called columns that you can select to be shown: the name of the artist, the release date of the album, the last time that the album was played, etc. There is a choice of about 40 columns you can select to be displayed. In addition, the Windows Media Player can play many types of musical files, including the three types of my Broadway musical files: .MP3, .WAV, and .WMA.

I copied these popular Broadway musical files from individual music CDs and saved them on my computer's hard drive by using my Windows Media Player and the common process called "ripping." Microsoft provides a friendly website on how to "rip" the musical CDs onto your computer's hard drive. This website is windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/rip-music-from-cd.

My second largest group of musical songs is .MP3 files, which are 43 percent of my total of 505 files. Each day, when I start to play the first MP3 file, there is

always a waiting period of approximately 30 or more seconds before the music starts playing. However, none of the other musical file types of .WAV and .WMA ever have this delay problem; they always start playing immediately.

I found and tried three ways to eliminate this playing delay problem whenever playing any of my .MP3 files.

The first way was to have a Microsoft mfpmp.exe file placed into the Windows Media Player folder. But I found this didn't always eliminate the 30-second delay time when playing a MP3 file, so I went on to find another way to correct the problem.

The second way was to convert the .MP3 files into .WMA files. This sounded good and several programs were installed on my computer to eliminate this delay problem, but they caused several major changes to my computer, including changing my Google Internet

(Continued on page 15)



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Rick Smith, MCP
Toby Scott, MCP
www.vccomputers.com

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I might get excited about this if Rick practiced what he preached and gave me an SSD to get excited about. It seems everyone in the office has one except me. Rick, are you hearing me?

GENERAL NEWS AND COMMENTARY

New Pretty Good Solitaire is available

By Jim Thornton
jasthorn@gmail.com

Pretty Good Solitaire released its newest version, 14.2, on Oct. 11, 2013, and there are many new games that are playable on Windows and Mac computers. First, we'll describe the basic features of Pretty Good Solitaire, and then we'll describe the new games in the latest version.

Pretty Good Solitaire is a popular computer game that includes over 820 different solitaire games that you may play on your computer.

In my earlier review of Pretty Good Solitaire in the club's August 2011 TOE, I provided lots of information on playing the game of your choice. For example, here are a couple of items. To move the cards using your mouse, you can do the standard drag and drop or you can use your mouse's right but-

(Continued on page 16)

More on Windows Media Player ...

(Continued from page 14)

Explorer startup screen to a totally different and not friendly startup screen. A couple of times, I had to use a restore point to take my computer back to a date before the programs were installed, so I went out and found another way to correct the .MP3 playing delay problem.

The third way was very easy to use. All I had to do was to right click on my Windows Media Player icon and click on the Run after the Administrator listing appears. An option checkbox will appear listing Run as Administrator. Click on OK. Now Windows Media Player will always run in the Administrator mode, and there will be no delay in playing music from any of your MP3 files.

I also have found different websites that provide musicals that I really like. And by using my Total Recorder program, I'm able to copy the musical onto my computer and in the music format of my choice. For example, two of the music files that I copied using my Total Recorder are "Colonel Buffalo Bill" the movie music and "Monk" from the old popular TV program. I copied both from the youtube.com website. My review of the Total Recorder program is in our club's monthly TOE newsletter of July 2012.

As I mentioned earlier one of the games that I frequent play, you can see my reviews of these games in our club's monthly TOE newsletters — my original review of the Pretty Good Solitaire in October 2011 issue and the review of its current version in March 2012 issue. A newer review starts on this page.

Members' classified ads

For sale

I have the following Free/For Sale (contribution to CIP-CUG):

I have the following For Sale (contribution to CIP-CUG):

2 each Microsoft Mouse, \$2 each

Internet Scrolling Mouse (COMP USA), \$2

Video Selector Switch (5 inputs/2 outputs), \$5 — David Minkin

Contact Richard Quint, rquint@rain.org

1. Canon LiDE 30 scanner. USB supplies data and power. \$10

2. Canon PIXMA iP1600

printer, still sealed in box, plus extra black ink cartridge (PG-40). \$20.

3. NETGEAR DG8346 DSL Modem/Wireless G router combination with all accessories. \$10

4. D-Link ADSL2+ modem unused, in opened box with all accessories. \$20.

5. D-Link DIR-655 "XTREME N GIGABIT ROUTER" still in shrink-wrapped box. \$30..

Wanted

Other categories as needed

The Outer Edge is printed and prepared for mailing by:

Bob Weisensee
Production Supervisor



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GENERAL NEWS AND COMMENTARY

Tips from a coordinator of a novice SIG

By Bill Sheff

*Novice SIG Coordinator,
Lehigh Valley Computer Group, PA
January 2013 issue, The LVCG Journal
<https://sites.google.com/site/lvcgsite/>
Nsheff (at) aol.com*

Remove Malware

If you do not do a routine cleaning out of malware from time to time, you can be subject to system crashes, blue screens, computer slowdowns, and even hardware failure. You want to periodically clean out your cookie folder, Internet files and scan your computer. Unlike virus checkers, where you only want one program operating on your system, you can have more than one program to check for malware and spyware. There are various strengths and weaknesses with each one. There are several free ones, and there are others included within the security suites like McAfee, Avast and Norton as well as Microsoft Security Essentials. Some standalone programs are Malwarebytes, AdAware and AVG. I have been using CCleaner, which not only checks for malware and Trojans but will also search and clean your registry of orphan

shortcuts and other problems, for many years. One of the useful items included in CCleaner is the ability to select cookies — such as from your banks or shopping sites — and save them before you do a cookie cleanup, keeping your important ones so you do not have to re-enter data on sites you use frequently. Another important feature is making a copy of your registry before making any changes in case something was inadvertently removed. I have trusted CCleaner to do its job with no adverse results. Better yet, it is free. We have discussed this at the Novice SIG, but I thought it worthwhile to include it in my tip column.

Finding hidden files

You can use the command prompt to reveal hidden files.

Some viruses leave behind nasty side effects, even when your antivirus program has cleaned the actual virus from your computer. If your desktop icons are missing and your C: drive appears blank, don't panic, your files haven't gone permanently AWOL.

Common viruses, such as the Windows 7 Recovery virus, will hide your

files in an attempt to coerce you into paying for the virus's removal. When you view your desktop or click on your C: drive, it may appear that all of your files have been deleted, but they haven't. If this happens to you, here is how to restore them. Click the Start button in the lower left corner of your taskbar. Type cmd in the search box at the bottom of the menu and press Enter. If you're using Windows XP, click Run and type cmd into the Run box.

Type `attrib -s -h -r c:/*.* /s /d` and press Enter to execute the command.

Allow the command to finish executing (it may take a few minutes). When it's done, close the command prompt window and check your desktop — your files, hidden by the virus, have been restored.

You can use the same trick to restore files the virus may have hidden on other drives, including removable storage such as flash drives and external hard drives; just change the drive letter (c:) in the command above to the drive letter of the storage device with the hidden files.

(Continued on page 17)

More on Pretty Good Solitaire ...

(Continued from page 15)

ton, which will automatically move your card for you. Several other nice features are that you can select one of five different card sizes to be displayed on your computer's screen, and you can select the background color from a choice of 64 colors.

This review of Pretty Good Solitaire will briefly describe each of the new games issued during the last three months.

The earlier version, 13.6, which was released in January 2013 introduced three new games: Candike, a variation of Canfield with some elements of Klondike; Single Spark, a one-deck version of the backwards game The Spark; and Lancaster, an open Spider type game similar to Mrs. Mop.

A version in-between these two versions is 14.0, which was released in February 2013. Its two new games are Double Moosehide, a two-deck variation of the Yukon type game Moosehide; and Double Putt, a two-deck version of Putt Putt, similar to but easier than Double Golf.

The most current version, 14.2, introduces 10 new games: Carlton Cell, Carlton with a free cell; EastCliff, a variation of WestCliff; Forty Pirates, a version of Forty Thieves; Lake Victoria and Nile, both new addition type games similar to Pyramid; Osmosis Deal 3, a variation of Osmosis with a three-card deal; Persian Rug, a variation of Crazy Quilt; Quadruple Klondike Strict, a variation of Quadruple Klondike; and Rectangular and Triangular, both games that build down re-

gardless of suit.

The cost of the current version 14.2 of the Pretty Good Solitaire games to a totally new user is \$24.95 for immediate downloading. If you prefer to receive the game on a CD, the cost is \$34.90 and the CD will include all of the current extra back-of-the-card sets. The Pretty Good Solitaire website is <http://www.goodsol.com/order.html>. It's interesting that the game may also be ordered from Amazon.com for \$29.95, and it includes the CD. The Amazon website says shipping is free. Version 14.2 is a free upgrade if you originally ordered an earlier version of 13 after April 12, 2011. If you have an older version, the cost to upgrade is \$11.95. There is also a new Pretty Good Solitaire version for playing on your iPad.

GENERAL NEWS AND COMMENTARY

(Continued from page 16)

Defragging USB flash or thumb drives

Do we have to defrag a USB Flash or thumb drive?

The short answer is NO. Since they are solid state without any moving parts there is no reason to do a defrag. Additionally, you could even damage the device if you defragment it too many times. Each memory cell on a flash memory device has only a certain number of times you can read/write to it before it becomes damaged.

But don't panic; it will take quite a while for that to happen. With memory prices still falling, think of multiple backup scenarios to protect your data.

Re-name multiple files at once

I think I gave this one before, but it is a goodie.

The next time you have a bunch of files, folders, or pictures with names like DSC_5678 and want to rename them in a more uniform way, do this: Highlight all the files/folder in question, then Right-click, choose Rename and call it something that best describes them. For example: XmasParty2012. Now you have the name you want, and it numbers each picture. Note the file that the cursor is on when rename is selected. It will be the first on the list. So if you want to keep the order, put the cursor on the top file.

Android OS

Here is a new subject. More of us are getting or have smart phones. Here is a tip for the Android Operating System. I do not know if it also applies to the iOS, so check it out. You know that each phone or tablet comes with multiple

screens you can swipe to. After awhile there are icons and widgets spread across the four to five screens we have (actually, the new Samsung Galaxy S III has seven). Here is a way to make one of those screens your home screen without moving the icons.

First, pinch your screen with two fingers to zoom out. This "zoomed-out" view will show you all of the screens you're able to work with. On my phone I just have to tap the screen I want to be home. With some other phones you will find a little, tiny house icon in the upper right corner of each zoomed out screen. Tap that little house and it will set the specified screen as your new home screen. Going back to your original home screen is easy. Just do it again.

Tablet accessories worth buying

If a tablet is now part of your high tech items, be it the Apple iPad or the Amazon Kindle or anything in between, what accessories are worth buying and which should you avoid?

Cases: A case is a good investment. Find a case with a comfortable feel, along with a stand or a holder for other items you already carry. Avoid cases that weigh too much, though, as the combined weight of the tablet and case can get bothersome for your wrist.

Screen Protector/Cleaning Cloth: A screen protector film is very popular because they provide a scratch resistant, plastic-like coating to the screen. I use it on both my phone and tablet. A cleaning cloth or other cleaning device is great to remove fingerprints and smudges on the screen. A good microfiber or pad-based

cleaning device works best and will let you wipe the screen clean hundreds of times over.

Stylus: A stylus is very useful. You can buy one that will allow you to take handwritten notes or draw on your screen, and another that will allow you to do a one stylus typing. There are a host of note-taking applications available and a lot of coloring/drawing applications. Make sure you purchase a stylus that has a good tip and is designed especially for tablets with capacitive touchscreens, as they require special tips to work with.

There are also App Store Gift Card Applications, which are a great add-on to any tablet. There are a host of retailers who will offer gift cards to the store the tablet works with. For iPads, any iTunes gift card can be used. For Amazon Kindles, any Amazon.com or Kindle Gift Card can be used. For Google Android devices, any Google Play gift card works. During the holidays, some vendors offered discounts on bulk packages of gift cards, and some of them might still be available. Google it.

Extended Warranty: WATCH OUT! This can either be a good deal or a horrible waste of money, so get the specifics on terms, deductible (price you pay to make a claim), replacement rules, and period before agreeing to anything. Make sure you see it in writing, and don't just take the salesman's word for it. There are also third-party warranties, such as SquareTrade, who offer third-party warranties on most electronics, including tablets, usually at very fair prices. I myself do not go for warranties, since most items come with a one-year guarantee.

Recent headlines from our Facebook page

Here are some recent headlines from our Facebook page:

(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/cipcug>)

Failed attempt to help with a friend's computer that would not start Microsoft Security Essentials or allow a new installation

Phone scam resembles CryptoLocker ransom

Content Insider #310 — Hunters — Google Drive

Twitter toughening its security to thwart government snoopers

Acer drops Chromebook price to \$200

iPhones can be hacked while charging

Service providers don't want anti-theft cell phone 'kill switch'

F.C.C. chairman calls for transforming the technology used by phone systems

System Mechanic to release new version

How To Remove Citadel Malware Reveton Ransomware (Fake IC3, FBI Malware)

GENERAL NEWS AND COMMENTARY

Things to consider when buying an HDTV

By Sandy Berger

CompuKISS

www.compuKISS.com

[sandy \(at\) compuKISS.com](mailto:sandy(at)compuKISS.com)

For those of you who are thinking about buying an HDTV this year, here's a quick recap on the specs that you need to know about.

There are three main types of HDTV: Plasma, LCD and LCD with LED backlighting. Each is different in the technologies they use to light the screen. While plasma used to be the cat's meow, LCD technology has improved more over the last few years and with the addition of LED backlighting, it is now pretty close to an equal contender. Plasmas still have darker blacks and are better in dark rooms. As far as price goes, plasma can give you good bang for your buck if you want a really big screen. However, most of us don't want to keep the drapes drawn during the day, and many of us are happy with a 42-inch to 48-inch screen.

In that size screen, LCD and LED are more cost effective than plasma. An LED TV is simply an LCD with LED (light emitting diode) backlighting. You will pay a slight premium for LED over a plain LCD TV. LEDs offer better energy efficiency and are often thinner. Most, but not all, LEDs have slightly brighter pictures. If poorly done, however, they can have lighting uniformity issues. So let your eyes be your guide in that respect.

You will still hear about 720p and

1080P in the TV specifications. If you have 20/20 vision and sit 12 feet from the TV, you won't really notice much difference between a 720p and a 1080p TV. You would actually have to sit quite a bit closer to see any additional details. These days, however, 1080P TVs are becoming the norm and not adding much to the cost, so you may want to get a 1080p TV just because you can.

Two other common HDTV specifications are refresh rate and contrast ratios. You will see refresh rates of 60 Hz, all the way up to 480 Hz, and you will see a wide variety of contrast ratios. These two specs are often used to entice people to purchase more expensive TVs. In another article, I'll give you a rundown of exactly what these two specs mean, but my simple advice is that in purchasing an HDTV, you can pretty much ignore them both without detriment.

When buying an HDTV, the last thing to consider are the extras like 3D and Internet connectivity. I personally don't like 3D. Not only does it give me a headache, but I don't want to have to wear glasses to watch TV. If, however, you like 3D, go for it. Just remember that because of lack of 3D content, the only way to really take advantage of a 3D TV is to buy a Blu-ray player and 3D movies on disks.

As far as Internet connectivity, it can be a plus if you plan on using Netflix, Amazon videos, or other content from the Web, but don't pay too much of a premium for Internet connectivity because you

can always add a device like Roku, Apple TV or others to add it later fairly inexpensively.

OK, Betsy, that brings us to your TV cabinet, your choice of manufacturer, and sound. Building a cabinet around the TV is a bit old-fashioned and not really necessary with the new TVs. They are so thin and light that you might be better off to simply buy a small stand or hang your new TV on the wall.

Many of you mention to me that Samsung and Sony are the two brands that you feel are highly rated. Yes. They are both good brands, but even good brands are not perfect. I have a smaller Samsung that has been going without a glitch for about eight years. The 42-inch Samsung that I purchased a few years ago, however, has had two repairs that would have each cost more than the TV. Luckily, I took out a five-year service policy when I purchased the TV. A friend of mine has already had to replace the Sony that he purchased three years ago.

Bottom line is that if you pay more than \$700 for an HDTV, you may want to see if a service policy is cost effective.

As far as brands go, if you want to save some money, I also like Visio, which is a less expensive brand. My Black Friday purchase was a 26-inch Insignia LED 1080p 60 Hz TV for \$99. Insignia is a value-brand from Best Buy. I don't expect this TV to be perfect, but for \$100 I won't feel bad if I have to throw it away in three or four years.

Web help sites

(Verified 8-7-13)

DSL reports: www.dslreports.com

Steve Gibson: www.grc.com

Kim Komando: www.komando.com

Leo Laporte: www.leoville.com; techguylabs.com/ (among others)

Jeff Levy: www.jefflevy.com

Linux distributions: www.DistroWatch.com

Microsoft: www.microsoft.com

OnGuard Online: 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

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.virusbntn.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.
- ◆ The general meeting, featuring a question-and-answer session and program on software or hardware.
- ◆ Special Interest Groups (special meetings held each month). The alternative devices SIG (tablets, smartphones, etc.) is held before the regular meeting. The Linux SIG meets on a different day.
- ◆ Door prizes and raffle at the regular meeting.

Other benefits include:

◆ Special user group discounts on CIPCUG 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

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 below or on a separate sheet if necessary.

Amount enclosed: _____

Please Print the following information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ ZIP Code: _____

Phone (Home): _____ (Work): _____

E-mail address: _____

User level: Novice ____; Intermediate ____;

Advanced ____

For CIPCUG use:
 Date _____
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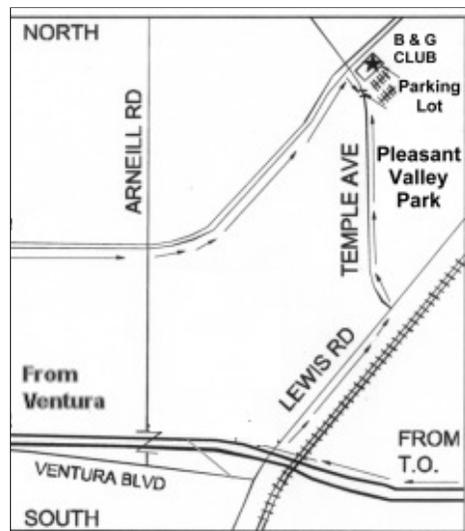
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Please Do Not Delay

DUES REMINDER

If the code above your name is 2013 NOVEMBER, your dues are payable this month.

December 2013 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, Dec. 21, at the Boys & Girls Club, 1500 Temple Ave. (Ponderosa Drive and Temple Avenue), Camarillo.

Meeting schedule:

8:00 a.m.	Doors open
8:45	SIGs (Internet and connectivity; Tablet and phone apps)
9:30	Business meeting
10:00	Q&A session
10:30	Break
11:00	Program: Dr. Gary Sexton, "Health Care not Obama Care"
	Drawing