

Beginners to Intermediate Users  
Learning keeps the brain active

Q: Vista  
wants  
to

F1

Friends Helping Friends  
Expertise comes Incrementally

update while I'm working and closes me down



Helen Long  
Editor

or  
the

# INFORMER



turns off

An informal, helpful newsletter of the  
Ventura PC Users Group  
Web: [www.cipcug.org/vbpcug](http://www.cipcug.org/vbpcug) email: [vbpcug@yahoo.com](mailto:vbpcug@yahoo.com)

Volume 15 No. 1

HAPPY NEW YEAR  
January 9, 2010  
Susan Vincent — Spread Sheets

## WELCOME

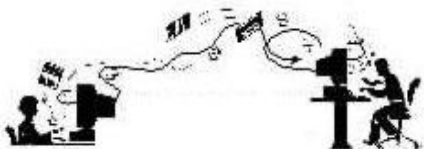
### SUSAN VINCENT & SPREAD SHEETS

Hope Santa was good to every one and that you have all survived the holidays. Our nights are 3 blankets and heating pad for tootsies weather but the days have been beautiful. When you hear what the rest of the country has been having it should make you grateful for living in California.

Our program this month will be Susan Vincent who will be showing us the mysteries of spread sheets and how they can help us.

*Susan* is an Educator and teaches computer skills at the Ventura Avenue Adult Center—550 N. Ventura Avenue in Ventura. Susan has classes on all aspects of computers. If you are a senior 50+, the classes are free. For the younger group, the fee is \$15.00 for a 8 week course. Some courses may require a textbook fee.

The price is right and the hours are M-W or T-TH 9:00 am—12.00 noon, M-W or T-TH 12:30 pm-3:30 pm. Friday 8:00 am—12:00 pm. The classes are Self paced, with some Special Group Activities. To register, call 289-7925.



## December Q & A

**Q:** My laptop is now dead. How and where can I dispose of it?

**A:** Take it to Toby at Ventura County Computers.

**Q:** How do I back up Windows 7?

**A:** Click Save As and send to a blank CD, external hard drive, or flash drive. Your computer should guide you through it. If you have programming discs, you don't need to worry. Call Toby if you have questions.

**Q:** What if a person doesn't have the programming discs (Dell) for my Windows XP?

**A:** Dell will send one one free disc if you contact them. You will need to give them the information on the sticker on the side of the computer.

**Q:** If you have a flash drive, why spend a lot more for a hard drive?

**A:** A vast amount more storage.

**Q:** My AVG says I am not now protected the the Update Manager forbids an update.

**A:** Try uninstalling your AVG and reinstalling or download Avast.

**Q:** The AT&T self-support tool now comes up (blank) when turning on. How do I get rid of this annoyance?

**A:** Call AT&T. They'll answer 24/7.

Continued on page 2

**Q:** Vista wants to update while I'm working and closes me down or turns off the computer.

**A:** Check the lower right-hand task bar to bring up the update tool. It is probably set to update automatically. Uncheck that.

**Q:** When do we eat?

**A:** Now! (Too bad so many of you missed out on that!)

**Marcie Maloney**

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### SUSAN VINCENT'S SHORTCUTS

Susan did such a good job of assembling this program and I thought I would make a suggestion to you. I have a list of the Newsletters that we ran her shortcuts. You could look them up and make copies of page 3 and keep them at hand to help you learn what they are. They are a wonderful assistance to your everyday computer usage.

July 11 CTRL +  
Aug 8 WINKEY +  
Sep 12 ALT + and (CTRL + ALT + DEL)  
Ocr 10 FUNCTION KEYS

If you haven't saved all your newsletters, you can pick up any back issues on the club's Web Site. (<http://cipcug.org/vbpcug/nl.html>).

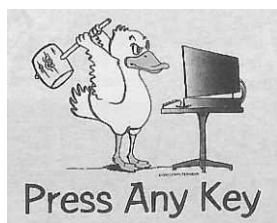
Helen

(Pardon me for repeating, but I wanted to be sure you were aware of where to find these very handy tips. They are such time savers!)

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### DUES ARE DUE

If you have not paid your dues for 2010, please do so now. We also ask you to fill out the application on page 5, as we are trying to update our Nembership Records. The dues are Single Memberships \$15 and Family Memberships are \$18.



### SMART COMPUTING

Does file fragmentation affect drive space? When do I need to defragment a hard drive?

File fragmentation is a normal (but undesirable) side effect that occurs when pieces of applications and data files wind up scattered across the hard drive platters. Fragmentation does not typically make a big impact on drive space, but it can potentially affect drive performance — the drive takes longer and works harder jumping around to read and write the parts of your files. Defragmenting the hard drive will reorganize files so that all of their parts are together contiguously on the drive platters. To run Disk Defragmenter in WIN XP click **Start, All Programs, Accessories, System Tools, and Disk Defragmenter**

**Q:** I use my desktop at home and my noptebok on the road, and I'm looking for a way to keep my documents synchronized between the two systems. Manually copying is time consuming and I'm likely to forget something. What's the best solution?

**A:** They have two recommendations for you. The easiest option is **Dropbox** ([www.getdropbox.com](http://www.getdropbox.com)). To use Drop Box, you sign up for an account. (2GB accounts are free) and download a small application. Once installed, a **My DropBox** subdirectory appears in you're **My Documents** folder. **DropBox** uploads any files and directories you add to your **My DropBox** directories to your online account and synchronizes those files and directories with other computers signed in to the same DropBox account.

DropBox is free (provided you're my Dropbox folder is less than 2GB), it's automatic and quick, and because files are uploaded to a Web site, your documents are accessible from any PC, and you can opt to share certain documents with other users. If you're looking to synchronize highly sensitive documents, however, you may not be comfortable storing those documents online even if they are password protected. Furthermore, DropBox does limit itself to files within one specific directory, which might make it a little difficult to keep your data organized on your PC's.

*(Continued on page 3)*

(Continued from page 2)

### SMART COMPUTING

If you need a more secure solution, check out Microsoft's **SyncToy** ([tinyurl.com/4yhbkr](http://tinyurl.com/4yhbkr)). SyncToy is part of a collection of individual tools called **PowerToys**. SyncToy allows you to synchronize data across a home network. While it's highly configurable and more secure than DropBox, (in so far as no data is sent out or stored on the Web) it is more limited. First, SyncToy does not automatically synchronize files the way DropBox does. Second, while not sending data out across the Internet might be safer, it does mean you cannot synchronize from the office or the road (absent, perhaps, some sort of remote access to the other PC). If you forget to synchronize before your next business trip, you might find yourself working with outdated documents.

**Q:** Do I really need to perform a full backup of my PC if I have all of my installation media still handy? What is the real point of a full backup?

**A:** The recovery tools that accompany most new PC's today are a great convenience — if problems occur, you can easily restore the system to its "factory fresh" state. However, over the years you'll have countless gigabytes of updates from Windows, new drivers for your hardware devices and patches for your important applications.

Creating a periodic full backup captures the current state of your PC, with every byte of storage and each configuration setting or option. You can save full backups to large external hard drives rather than slow, cumbersome tape devices. Restoring a full backup saves many hours of subsequent downloads and tinkering with new settings; it also preserves your important work that may otherwise be irretrievable. Many PC users choose to perform a full backup periodically (perhaps monthly) and then make daily copies of their current work files to DVD or flash drive devices for quick protection content that changes far more frequently than the traditional backup.

### Email Tip

Want to prevent yourself from accidentally sending out an email before you're finished writing it? I configure my email program to force a spell check before sending, and I start out my email with an intentionally misspelled word *abcfed*. Then, if I inadvertently click send before I'm done, the spell checker will prevent the email from going out. Once I finish the email, I will run the spell checker and delete the intentionally misspelled word.

### Our Club is in Jeopardy!

We have two officer positions we need to fill. We urgently need a President and a Program Chairman. These are two very important positions, neither of which will take much major attention from your every day life.

The President needs to help keep our club moving in a forward direction.. You only have to lead the meeting and the Q & A. That doesn't mean you have to be a computer nerd that knows all the answers to the questions. If you can't answer them, usually Jim Burke can or even our guest speaker can help out with fielding answers. It is not a big deal and certainly not a brain twister..

Finding a guest speaker is a bit of a problem but Sinc Wall has a fine line-up for you to draw from and will be happy to assist you in getting started.. We really do need some volunteers to step forward. It is time for some one to volunteer. You need to quit taking from the club and start giving back!

### Recycle Ink Cartridges

This is just to remind you that we still are recycling our ink cartridges. Please keep them coming. It all helps to provide the cookies and coffee!

**BACK UP, BACK UP, BACK UP ... AND THEN TEST  
THE BACKUP TO BE SURE IT WORKED!  
IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME!**

**Contributors to Newsletter 2008/2009**

I really appreciate the people who take the time to send me information. It's a big plate full when you expect one person to come up with all the articles. This is a good start, it is your newsletter, please contribute.

Cathy seems to be the only person contributing interesting articles. Surely some of you have had the pleasure of an "aha" so that's the way you do it. Please share those moments. Maybe it will help someone else with the same problem.

**Contributors 2008-2009**

|                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Audrey Barnden       | George Koerlin |
| Marsha Barnden       | Marcie Malony  |
| Joann Briggs         | Cathy Villa    |
| Doris Chaison        | Sinclair Wall  |
| Wanda Cochee-LeBlanc |                |

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**VBPCUG Financial Report  
10/20/09 – 11/21/09**

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| Balance 10/20/09 | \$524.66       |
| Income           |                |
| Refreshments     | \$12.00        |
| Membership       | \$78.00        |
| Expenses         |                |
| Refreshments     | \$5.00         |
| Wireless Antenna | \$76.11        |
| Juno             | <u>\$17.94</u> |
| Balance 11/21/09 | \$515.61       |

(Cathy will have the Treasurers Report next month.)

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**WE NOW HAVE HIGH-SPEED INTERNET  
(Error Correction)**

You will notice the Wireless Antenna for \$76.11. We now have access to high speed Internet Connection thanks to **Audrey Barnden**. The wireless Antenna connects to her high speed service, and we have paid our last snail mail Juno invoice. A big thanks to **Audrey** for sharing her Internet with us and to Jim Burke who put it all together for us.

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**Editors Comments**

This newsletter is a collaboration of the efforts of many people. We welcome any articles pertaining to the computer world. Your input might help some body solve a problem, so please feel free to submit articles or experiences. Please just E-mail them to me at **helen@cipcug.org**, and because I don't always recognize everyone's name in our club, please show the **subject VBPCUG**

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**VBPCUG Mailing Address  
217 Tulip Court, Ventura, CA 93004  
Membership Information**

**Membership dues are \$15 single, \$18 per year family. Membership terms are from January 1st. Dues will be prorated at the rate of @1.25 per month.**

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**Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors or contributors, and do not necessarily represent those of the VBPCUG, it's officers or members as a whole. The information is believed to be correct and we hope informative and useful: however, no guarantee, expressed or implied, is made by VBPCUG, it's officers, editorial staff or contributors.**

**VBPCUG does not endorse or recommend any specific hardware or software products or manufactures.**

**The Ventura Beginner's PC User's Group meets on the 2nd Saturday of each month at the Buena Ventura Mobile Home Estates Clubhouse at 11405 Darling Road, Ventura, CA from 10:00 A.M. until Noon. All are Welcome.//**



**VBPCUG INFORMATION**

- |   |                                      |
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| Workshop Co-ordinator<br>Jim Burke      | jimburke110@verizon.net              |
| Refreshments<br>Pauline Wells           | 647-0459<br>pw30@sbcglobal.net       |

**INK CARTRIDGES**

Don't forget, we are still collecting ink cartridges, so don't throw those empty cartridges out. Bring them in so we can earn some money from them. They help to provide those munchies and coffee at break time.

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

**VBPCUG MEMBERSHIP  
NEW & RE-NEW 2010-2011**

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Print the following information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_, State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Single \$15.00 Family \$18.00

**WE DO NOT SHARE OUR MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION WITH ANY OTHER CLUB OR ORGANIZATION.**

Yes, I do want to re-new

No, I do not want to re-new

Yes, I am a new User

Phone (Home ): \_\_\_\_\_ )  
(Work): \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

User level: Novice \_\_\_\_\_  
Intermediate: \_\_\_\_\_  
Advanced: \_\_\_\_\_

Can you help the club as a volunteer? If so, what would you be interested in working on?