

SLO Bytes HardCopy

A publication of the San Luis Obispo PC Users Group
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Alan's October 2nd, 2005 General Windows SIG by Alan Raul

This month's SIG was a general discussion of some of the latest developments in "computer technology," especially in "computer applications." Software upgrades are occurring at a fast pace due to security threats and also trying to release to the market before the competition can. Just some of the upgrades announced were: Acronis True Image 9.0, Symantec Norton Ghost 10.0, Symantec Norton AntiVirus 2006, ACDSee 8.0, Adobe Photoshop Elements 4.0 (Adobe Photoshop CS3 is in the wings), Mozilla Firefox 1.0.7, Mozilla Thunderbird 1.0.7 and Opera 8.5 which is now FREE. Microsoft Office 2003 SP 2 and other SP2 updates on other Microsoft Office applications were just released.

It was announced that Microsoft will be supporting PDF (Portable Document Format), which Adobe developed, in their next Office 12 release.

Microsoft Office Small Business Accounting 2006 was demonstrated. It looks like Microsoft has come up with a winning product to compete with Intuit's Quick Books.

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/FX011956881033.aspx>

October 2, 2005 Main Meeting Review by Bill Avery

Additional comments on Alan's General Windows SIG:

Alan gave us a quick overview of the current state of Computing Technology, and where he thinks it might be going. We discussed browsers, operating systems, and new digital image viewers and editors.

Mention was made of Broadband over Power-Line (BPL) networking technology, which delivers Internet connections via the local power wiring in your home or office. This seems attractive until the technical details are revealed, and there is active opposition in the amateur radio community to the deployment of BPL due to the extensive evidence of its radio interference problems for ham operators, and other users of the radio spectrum occupied by the BPL signals. The battle over this problem is not over yet, and several trial runs have been cancelled. We will wait and see how it goes.

<http://snipurl.com/itjk>

<http://www.geek.com/news/geeknews/2005Sep/gee20051003032544.htm>

As usual, spam is a sore topic amongst our members, and Dave McLaughlin mentioned using a complex email account name as a good technique to combat it. He has letters, numbers and periods to defeat the easy guessers who steal email addresses.

Our guest speaker, Laurie Sowa, had to leave right after her presentation, so Ray called for a short break. Our coffee and cookie assortment was carefully provided by Nancy Vrooman and Peter Stonehewer in the adjacent break room, so we could catch up with each other as well as the changes in computer technology. Several items appeared on the "free" and "4-sale" table by the door, so I gave them new homes in my collection, in case someone might want them later. If you could use a nice 24-pin dot-matrix printer, call me. Please do not assume that anything you bring to our meeting can be left behind with us, if it is not taken or sold. I do not want to throw away equipment in the dumpster, after the meeting.

Laurie is one of our favorite guest speakers, and she likes to enlighten us on the various aspects of Microsoft Office products, which are among the most commonly used applications on computers today. She covers Word, Access, Excel, and PowerPoint, which are the word processor, database, spreadsheet, and presentation programs found in Office. They are integrated in the sense that if you wish to link a document in one program with another program, you can transmit changes to one version of the information automatically to another (linked) program. If you created a table of data in Excel, with that table shown as a part of a Word document, any changes made in either program can be reflected in the other document without extra typing effort, for example. We learned many tricks to use with Word and Access that she uses to aid her teaching.

There are different versions of Office 2000 and Office 2003, which can affect how you work with them. The most common version is still Office 2000, but Office 2003 is definitely an improved program. Because all the integrated programs have a common method of operation, it is easier to learn the details of any particular program. As an example we worked with an Excel spreadsheet linked to a Word document. Using a right click, the drop down menu has a Paste Special - Paste Link selection that will insert clipboard data that is linked between the two programs. We changed the data in Excel, and it was corrected in Word, automatically.

The PowerPoint program is great for making a photo album, so she gave some examples of that application, with a link to an auto run.inf file to make your photo CD work automatically when you send it to your family or friends.

We heard an interesting trick for MS Word, if your documents do not come up formatted correctly. Often the default style sheet, called "normal.dot", will become corrupted. If you want to restore the original "normal.dot" style sheet, use the Start - Run command box to open "winword- a" to bypass all the add-ins in the start-up for a clean version of Word. If this works, then you know you have a corrupted start-up style sheet, which must be erased or renamed, and allowed to be reset during a standard start-up of a new (blank) Word document.

Toolbars are an interesting feature of Microsoft programs, and you can customize the ones in Office to suit your document needs. Exploring them is a fun part of running the software. Moving them around is also possible, so be aware that they may shift to the bottom or side instead of the top, if someone hits the right keys, or mouse clicks. A right click next to Help will provide a list of toolbars which are active, and your choice of other available toolbars.

We looked at MS Publisher, and compared it with Word. The specific type of document produced in Publisher is usually one of the prepared types, such as a newsletter or thank-you card. The functionality of the menus is similar to Word, so the learning curve is shorter. We used to write our newsletter in Publisher, and those old versions are available on our SLOBYTES website, <http://www.slobytes.org/>, as examples.

Another program associated with Office is MS Project, which allows time lines and project planning to be done on a computer, and Laurie gave a quick review of how that works. Her basic example was a construction project, and the advanced one was an engineering project with several scheduled overlapping each other. You can copy and paste the data into, and out of MS Project to make up your schedules and deadlines.

As a last note, she answered a question from the audience about conditional statements in Excel, showing how to set up a reorder page for an inventory spreadsheet. She used "equal if" with a condition, to display "Reorder" in the inventory list. This is one of the most common uses of Excel in business.

One thing she noted about people contacting each other in our new digital generation (i.e. cell phones, PDAs, and mobile computers) is to call the person, rather than their presumed location or building. This is a fundamental shift, and somewhat strange to our many of us in the older generation!

The other important point she left with us is that different versions of the same programs may not always work with the stated minimum requirements. "These programs were not meant to last forever" Laurie said, and the newest versions are built to run on the more modern machines, so they are power hungry and memory intensive. Beware when you must upgrade!

In closing, she reviewed our discussion of Office programs, and she took questions from the crowd. If you wish to contact her, send an email to: wiseowl@wiseowlops.com, and/or check out her website at: <http://www.wiseowlops.com/index.html>.

We said a quick "Thank you" to her as she and her husband packed up, and headed for the Santa Maria airport.

Ray gave our announcements of the Linux, HTML, and Digital Photography SIG meetings, coming up in the week following the regular meeting. Please see our BBS (<http://users.boardnation.com/~slobytes>) for details. We welcomed our visitors, and new members for the past month, held the door prize drawing, and put away our chairs.

I'll see you at the next meeting, with Gene Barlow, on Sunday, Nov. 6, 2005.

Don Jones' Featured Speaker Programming Schedule by Don Jones

At 2:30 PM our guest speaker will be **Gene Barlow** who has over 45 years of computer experience including management of IBM's user group support and his own consulting firm, User Group Relations. We welcome him back as Gene is very well known in the user group community for his excellent presentations and willingness to help users. His talk will cover three areas:

Internet Security:

While we spend hours on the Internet communicating with family and friends, shopping, managing finances, etc., there is a dark side to the Internet that we may not be aware of. This session will help you to understand what is going on behind the scenes and show you the world of Hackers so they can take advantage of your computer and information. We will look at various protection options available to you and how effective they are at keeping you safe.

Organizing Your Access to the Internet using Optimal Desktop Pro:

We are living in the Information Age and actually have an "information overload" to contend with. Finding information on the Internet or even on our large gigabyte hard drives is becoming a real problem. Gene will show you how to tailor your desktop using Drawers and Sections by name, icon or color to prevent this problem by organizing your "Access Points" to the information. You can then find what you want on your screen in three easy mouse clicks.

Backing Up Your Hard Drive using Acronis True Image:

Backing up your hard drive is possibly the most important thing you can do with your computer. True Image, a PC Magazine Editors Choice program, has the ability to make incremental backups which are relatively small and are very quick.

On December 4th, our featured speaker will be George Lepp of Lepp Institute in Los Osos, a nationally known photographer and Editor of photo magazines. George brings beautiful examples of his work and is

one of our most popular presenters. He will be our only speaker (for December meeting only), starting at 1:00 PM.

Following his presentation, we will have our annual Christmas party and prize drawing for members, including new ones.

Note about year-end elections:

As Ray announced at earlier meetings, I will be resigning my VP-Program Chairman job at the end of the year. I have enjoyed the experience and have found the other Board members very willing and helpful when I needed it. You can be assured of their help and mine if you need it. I plan to continue through the year. The program speakers are full for the rest of this year, and I also have February and June set. Guy left me well-documented info, so taking over the job was quite smooth. I sincerely hope that one of you who come and enjoy the meetings consider volunteering to run for the position. It doesn't take too much time, is rewarding, and is essential to maintain a viable PC Users Group. I plan to continue with the Digital Photography SIG.

Digital Photography SIG Review by Lou Pera

The digital camera SIG met at its usual time (7:00PM 2nd Tuesday after our regular meeting) ten members being present. We were treated to a very interesting and informing presentation by Nancy Vrooman in the use of "Irfanview". "Irfanview" as you probably know, is photo editing freeware. Nancy is quite expert in the use of the program and demonstrated its features including photo enhancing, resizing, adding text to pictures and making slide shows. After a break for coffee Don Jones answered some questions on Photoshop Elements and gave us the opportunity to see a portion of a training DVD that came with his subscription to "Photo Shop Elements Techniques". The instructions dealt with ways in which it is possible to customize the way "Elements" is set up on your computer. Don discovered this magazine, www.photoshopelementsuser.com by following a link from Adobe. The subscription is \$49. per year and it appears to be a great learning tool. Next month Fred Cook will be demonstrating "Fast Stone Image Viewer".

Lou Pera

President's Message

November Meeting Schedule

At our November 6, 2005 meeting

At 1 PM, Alan will be moderating the Question and Answer session.

At 2:30 PM, Our speaker **Gene Barlow** will give his presentation.

At our December 4th meeting, we will have an opportunity to cast our vote for all the officers of SLO Bytes. With the exception of Don Jones, the Programs Chair, all the Officers agreed to serve in the coming year, you are all invited to volunteer or nominate any member for any position to be voted upon at our December meeting. Please submit your nominations to our Secretary, Ralph Sutter.

At 1 PM, George Lepp will make his presentation (no General SIG), followed by our coffee and cookie break. After we vote for the next year's Officer election, once again, I'll be the "Santa Clause", passing out

the various gifts at our gala give-away raffle.

APCUG - August PUSH Articles (attached) came to me from **Judy Taylour of APCUG** Region 10 Chair and Editorial PUSH Committee Chair.

Webmaster's note: Each of the following files are available for download at www.slobytes.org/newsletter/push/1105/index.html. All are in .rtf format.

- Expect the Unexpected When Traveling Abroad - Kauer
- Indexing the Web - Lewis
- Laptop Display Replacement - Mike Borman
- Microsoft is Helping - Elgines
- Mystery of File Extensions Explained - Gerber
- Netiquette Equals Friendly Online Neighborhoods - Goldberg
- Network Your Home or Office Internet - Wilsker
- October is National Cyber Security Awareness Month - Capital Tech News - Crane
- The Insiders' Guide to Craigslist - Johnson
- The New, the Best, and the Worst - Borman
- Trolling for WiFi - Brewer

Judy Taylor also sent the following to us in the APCUG's October NOOZ articles:

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APCUG ANNUAL CONFERENCE JANUARY 2 - 5, 2006 AT THE STARDUST RESORT AND CASINO

Information about Registration, Conference Schedule, Special Events, Hotel Reservations, Las Vegas Office address, etc. may be found at:

<http://apcug.net/events/conference06/index.htm>

Computer Outlook Radio Talk Show with John Iasiuolo. John is a member of the Las Vegas PC Users Group and you can listen live Monday through Friday from 5:00 to 6:00 PM Pacific time to his show at <http://computeroutlook.com/>. You have the opportunity to chat with John and his co-host, Rob Winchell (currently President of the Las Vegas group) live during the shows or via 'live' e-mail (time permitting during the show) by sending a message to live@computeroutlook.com. If they don't have time to answer your e-mail on-air during the show, it will be answered after the show. Find out more information about the live chat at the above URL. John's show is Your One Stop Connection to Discovering in Plain English ... What's New, What's Best, and What's Next in the computer & technology industry. The first Monday of each month is devoted to User Groups.

The "Bits & Bytes" Computer Show features Dave Gerber (Sarasota PCUG, Florida) and his fellow co-host, Forrest Paradise. Just turn on your speakers and access the live Internet feed at www.bitsandbytesradio.com. The Internet feed is live on Sunday from 9:30 – 10:45 am Eastern time. If you live in their neighborhood, you can also listen to the live show on WIBQ AM 1220. The call-in numbers are: Sarasota Area: 954.2339; Toll Free: 866.952.1220. You can also access the schedule of upcoming shows and listen to the archived shows at the above URL. Each week they will give you the latest news from the Digital World, Computing Tips, Industry Guests and Prizes!! They are also testing a Chat Room that is only a click away, again via the above URL.

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Take advantage of the four **learning CD's** "Learn Windows XP, Excel, Word & Power Point" available

for our members to check out (at the Treasurer's table)

We also have **Adobe Photoshop 7, learning CD's** to check out (at the Treasurer's table). These 5 CD's cover, in depth, the various program features in lesson format.

Finally, we have a copy of **Windows XP Service Pack 2 info. CD** to check out which has a 20 min. video you can run giving you the overview of what SP 2 has to offer.

If you still are in need of **Windows XP Service Pack 2 CD** for upgrading you O/S, contact me and I will give you one.

Continue to bring any **used ink-jet printer or toner cartridges** to our meeting. We collect them (at the Treasurer's table) and turn them over to "Make A-Wish Foundation" who generate much needed funds for their organization by refurbishing and selling them.

--Ray Miklas

Treasurer's Report

Sept 24, 2005 – Oct 24, 2005

Income

New members	\$50.00
Renewing members	100.00
Refreshments	23.75
Donation - Leroy Gass	50.00

Expenses

Hall rent	75.00
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Bank accounts @ 9/30/05

Saving Acct Balance	3,187.99
Checking Acct Balance	2,222.16
Interest- year to date	37.93

New members:

Bob Barlow, Ed Lynn and Don & Joan Riebow

Renewing members: four

The Donation: Came from a grateful citizen that Ray Miklas assisted with his computer.

Robert Mires, Treasurer

Club Information and Meeting Times

SLO Bytes, a PC Users Group dedicated to educate its members in the use of personal computers, digital devices and software, meets on the first Sunday of each month at the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) Hall at 520 Dana Street, San Luis Obispo. All meetings are open to the public at no cost. Special interest groups meet from 1 to 2:00 PM and guest speaker presentations begin at 2:30 PM. Contact Don

Jones (773-5526, donej@sbcglobal.net) or visit www.slobytes.org for additional information about SLO Bytes and the scheduled presentation.

HardCopy is a monthly publication of SLO Bytes PC Users' Group located in San Luis Obispo, California. Information in this Newsletter is derived from both our own membership and other PC User Group Newsletters. The purpose of this publication is to inform our members of meetings and provide information related to the use of PCs and various Operating Systems.

Membership Dues are \$25 per year. Full membership entitles you to our monthly newsletter via e-mail, technical assistance, raffle gift drawing at the end of the meetings, a voice in the affairs of the club, and comradeships.

Article Submission Deadline for submission of articles is the 20th of each month. Articles should be E-mailed to the editor (rmiklas@bigfoot.com).

Disclaimer: Neither SLO Bytes PC Users' Group, its officers, editors, or contributors to this newsletter assume liability for damages arising out of this publication of any article, including but not limited to the listing of programming code, batch files and other helpful hints. Articles from this newsletter may be reprinted by other user groups if credit is given to both the author and newsletter from which it was taken. Reproduction of articles with a specific Copyright notice is prohibited without prior permission from the original author.

Outside Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

HTML/Internet SIG normally meets at 6:30 PM on the Monday (following our Sunday's General Meeting) at Ralph Sutter's home in Arroyo Grande. Call Ralph at 489-8678 for directions.

Linux SIG normally meets at 6:30 PM on Thursday (following our Sunday's General Meeting) at KCBXnet [a.k.a. SLONET] Training Center, 4100 Vachell Lane, SLO.

Photography SIG normally meets at 7 PM on a second Tuesday (following our Sunday's General Meeting) at Don Jones's home in Pismo Beach. Call Don at 773-5526 for directions.

SLO Bytes Officers/Volunteers

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Bill Avery (Contributing Columnist/Win95/98/XP SIG) wavery@slonet.org

Alan Raul (General SIG/Linux SIG)

Lou Pera (Contributing Columnist/Photo SIG)

Nancy Vrooman (Refreshments)

Peter Stonehewer (Refreshments)

Ken Stilts (Set-up/Clean-up)

Cliff Buttschardt (Set-up/Clean-up)

John Enos (Set-up/Clean-up)
Bill Palmerston (Set-up/Clean-up)

SLO Bytes Website <http://www.slobytes.org>