SLO Bytes HardCopy

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November 7, 2004 web links from Alan's General Windows SIG
Adobe Photoshop Elements 3.0
Photoshop Elements 3.0 is the latest consumer photo-editing software from Adobe, which now
provides powerful photo editing functionality plus intuitive organizing and sharing capabilities.
http://www.adobe.com/products/photoshopelwin/main.html

Archives of SLO Bytes Bulletin Board
Our Bulletin Board got whacked so here is the location of the older postings.
http://www.slobytes.org/bb/users.boardnation.com/~slobytes/index.php.htm

Microsoft California Class Action Settlement The deadline for submitting a claim has been
extended. The court has not set an exact date, however, the earliest possible date that claim
forms would be due is January 7, 2005.
http://www.microsoftcalsettlement.com/

Microsoft Partner Pack for Windows XP
The Partner Pack is the ultimate application package for your Windows XP PC. Install this
package and you will be able to play new games and have more fun, explore the Internet in new
ways, keep in touch and share information with friends and family, better protect your PC and do
more with tools and desktop utilities.
http://www.microsoft.com/windows/partnerpack/
NOTE: CA's eTrust EZ Antivirus is included FREE with the above Microsoft partner pack for
Windows XP

Vulnerability Notice: Specific versions of eTrust EZ Antivirus and eTrust EZ Armor
http://www.my-etrust.com/news/pressreleasedetails.cfm?pressReleaseID=27

My-eTrust Product Upgrade Path
http://snipurl.com/ahsq
http://crm.my-
etrust.com/CIDocument.asp?KDId=1840&GUID=7DF3CC63EF324E2FBB0315590A407A95

Microsoft Windows XP Media Center Edition 2005
http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/mediacenter/default.mspx

November 2004 Main Meeting Review by Bill Avery

Our Social Break, the mid-meeting highlight, served by our volunteer hostess Nancy Vrooman,
began at 2:15 PM. She set it up so our members and guests can enjoy great cookies and treats,
with fresh coffee and teas, and have a chance to catch up on the past month, and share
problems and solutions on a one-to-one basis. We resumed promptly at 2:30 PM in the main hall.

Ray's announcements of the club activities, which include the HTML and Linux Special Interest
Group, opened the Main Meeting. The SIGs are scheduled for the first Monday and Thursday
evenings of every month, respectively, at Ralph Sutter's home in Arroyo and the KCBXnet
Training Center in SLO. Our club guests were welcomed by Ray, and asked how they had heard
about our group. Many say that they found us through Dan Logan's Tech-notes column in the
Tribune newspaper. - Thanks, Dan!

If you have pictures to share on our website, please bring your files on a CD-ROM, thumb-drive or floppy, for download to a laptop at the Treasurers Table, for transfer to our web host, thanks to Ralph Sutter. The table is also the place to renew your membership, or change your address, and checkout software which we can loan from our CD-ROM library. Also, recycle any old ink cartridges which you have saved from your printers - just drop them off at the table, for Ray Miklas and Dave Grant to pickup after the meeting.

Guy Kuncir introduced the main speaker, Dennis Johansen of Jims Campus Camera. He is returning to our club again after a similar presentation last year (the Oct. 5, 2003 meeting) in which he covered the latest developments in digital photography, with several examples of equipment from his stock at the store. This year, he spoke about Technology Transitions in Digital Photography. There are almost daily changes in digital photography technology. Several industry magazines help by providing information about innovations, months in advance. Knowledge of this field is something that must be constantly refreshed.

Dennis Johansen is the owner of Jims Campus Camera in downtown San Luis Obispo. Jims is now beginning its 34th year of operation in San Luis Obispo, and is the largest and best-equipped camera store on the central coast of California. Jims has been selling digital cameras for six years. Olympus, Nikon, Canon, and Minolta brands make up the selection of about 25 models on hand at any one time. Jims also sells the popular Nikon D-70 and Canon D-20, the Canon Digital Rebel SLR cameras, and lenses.

Many members responded positively to Dennis' question of how many members are on their second digital camera? Most of last year's models are gone. Printers have improved. Quality is up and price is down, as it was last year. Disposable, recyclable digital cameras are a new product, offered by CVS pharmacy stores, and I saw them at Wal-Mart in Arroyo Grande.

Digital SLR cameras are becoming more common, and the lens sizes change between film and digital lenses. This is based on the size of the film or CCD sensor. The lenses on the digital cameras become more telephoto, Dennis explained. This is good news, because the telephoto lenses become about 1.5 times more powerful. The prices are really high, which is a problem.

There is a new feature called stabilization, to stabilize the camera at slow shutter speed, by vibrating the sensor at a high rate of speed. Too many choices can confuse the issues, and the number of models which allow adjustment of every parameter in manual mode is quite large. The Olympus 300 and 410 are simpler designs, which he can recommend. ASA ratings are important in film cameras, but digital types are specified by the pixel ratings. With film, fine detail was built-in, but now it must be bought with the digital camera, and for the high end (8 Megapixel) units, that can mean prices over $1,000! Most users can get satisfaction with a 2 Megapixel size, he said.

Improvements in the last few years include faster start-up time and quicker shutter delay. If a modern camera is slow, it may be that the red-eye reduction is turned on and that is the default setting on most models. Turn it off, to improve operation, Dennis noted. Many miniature models have been introduced, with the problem of blocking the lens or flash when taking a picture, so that may not be an improvement, if you are not careful! Batteries have improved, also, with Lithium types and NiMH showing much longer operational times as compared to NiCads. Typical use allows 150 shots per battery charge. The display screen is the biggest drain on the power supply, so turn it off for longer life, when you do not need it. Chargers are available for most countries electrical systems but be sure to check the specifications listed on the unit and the type of connection available for each charger to avoid a melt-down!

Hard drive crashes can destroy your hard work, including your digital pictures. Store them on CD-ROM or DVD, if possible. Be aware that media formats are still changing, and it may be possible that current recordings will be unavailable in the future, due to compatibility problems with newer technologies. There are at least 2 new DVD formats being used in Japan at this time that are

competing for that market with incompatible systems. Archival photo albums are not being created very often any more, but there are good printers, good inks, and special papers which would allow those images to be saved in a stable form, if you just take the time to do it. On-line printing services can do the job better and cheaper, such as http//www.oldphoto.net file://http/www.oldphoto.htm , where 35 mm slides are scanned onto CD-ROM or DVD for 35 cents per image. They do not claim to scan printed photos, however.

Memory prices have dropped drastically, so that camera memory cards (and thumb drives, too) are becoming very cheap. Currently, sizes are available up to 12 Gigabytes, with terabyte sizes on the horizon! Memory speed will affect performance in both read and write modes, with 40x or 80x as common specification at the present time. USB 2.0 interfaces are standard, so be sure that the computer you use can support that format. My last trip to Staples found a complete array of products, along with a detailed selection guide for the various competing brands and sizes.

Be aware of emailing vacation photos because there have been cases of lost messages, to where they were sent, but those messages were unfortunately not available when the user got home. Instead use the compact portable hard drives which have recently become available in 20 to 40 MB range, with a memory card interface.

The question and answer session at the end of Dennis' presentation concerned silver in films and paper, batteries in airport inspections, slide scanners, and slide projectors. He noted that Kodak has stopped making those Carousels about 3 months ago so maintain your equipment. If you scan slides on a flat-bed scanner, Epson has a new process, with a light in the lid, rather than reflect light off a white-matte background. Dennis tested several brands of discrete slide scanners, and noted that the Minolta seemed to be the best. Many old Ecktachrome slides have changed color with time, with fading pinks or blues, so the new systems can correct for this problem, as well as removing dust and scratch marks.

We talked about publishing in a digital age, and it was noted that 35 mm slides are generally accepted by publishers but more and more, as the number of small publishing houses has increased, they will accept digital images, also. We concluded the discussion with a note on battery life, where Dennis said that first time users often wear out a battery due to the time spent learning about their new camera.

We held our Quick-Pick raffle for prizes, and put away the chairs, anticipating a fun Christmas meeting early in December, so I'll see you there.

Guy Kuncir's Featured Speaker Programming Schedule

Following last years example, the December 5th meeting of the SLO Bytes PC Users Group combines a small group approach to our program with the traditional Christmas Give-Away. Three Special Interest Groups will simultaneously address topics within their sphere of interest.

In the first session: Alan Raul (General SIG) will be conducting his usual Q & A session and, if satisfying all questions presented, will finish with a surprise topic. Ralph Sutter (HTML SIG) will demonstrate the various steps necessary to create a personal web site and to move the structure he created on line. He will do so using several freeware products and free web hosting, showing: site organization, page formatting, hyperlink creation, image insertion and good HTML practices. Bill Avery (Windows Applications SIG) will look at some simple CAD programs for drawing detailed, accurate images in mechanical, electrical and architectural application areas. These include: QuickCAD by Microsoft, Q-CAD in Mandrake 10.1 Linux (via Knoppix), and eMachineShop "where you can design, price, and order your custom parts on-line."

After a break for munchies, the three SIGs will resume for another half hour: Alan providing insight into hard drive imaging software, comparing the attributes of PowerQuest V2i, Symantec Ghost 9 and True Image 8; Ralph continuing the process initiated earlier by getting the web site

on line; and Bill discussing new developments in Amateur Radio emergency communications being developed in San Luis Obispo County, specifically, how email is sent via packet systems such as Winlink 2000 and how APRS (the Amateur Position Reporting System) can map locations via packet repeaters located throughout the world.

The final session of the day is the Christmas Give-Away for members, with Ray Miklas playing Santa. Santa's bag of goodies will have its usual computer-related look and feel -- either some software, hardware or useful gadgets and more.

Come join us! This is the time for our guests to sign up and partake in Santa's offerings. Theres always room for more computer types of good cheer!

Webmaster's Notes by Ralph Sutter

This is a reminder to all SLO Bytes members to bring their photos to each General meeting. Images can either be candid shots of club activities or any photos that you have taken and would like to see displayed in the SLO Bytes Photo Gallery, www.slobytes.org/photos. Bring your digital camera by the Treasurer's table at the close of each meeting and I will transfer your images to my laptop via a multi-format card reader. I will also accept images on CDs. Please note that I will not be able to accept prints. Share your pictures. Share your skills. Help SLO Bytes build our Photo Gallery.

Ralph Sutter
SLO Bytes Webmaster

President's Message

December Meeting Schedule

1:00 - 1:15 PM - Main Hall - Announcements and Voting

1:15 - 2:00 PM - Main Hall - Alan - Question & Answer
1:15 - 2:00 PM - Men's Lounge - Bill - CAD Programs
1:15 - 2:00 PM - Women's Lounge - Ralph - Personal Web Site Creation

2:00 - 2:30 PM - Dining Room - Swap Meet and Munchies

2:30 - 3:00 PM - Main Hall - Alan - Hard Drive Imaging 2:30 - 3:00 PM - Men's Lounge - Bill - Amateur Radio Emergency Communication 2:30 - 3:00 PM - Women's Lounge - Ralph - Personal Web Site Creation

3:00 - 4:00 PM - Main Hall - Xmas Give-A-Way

As you see (above) we will not have a featured speaker at out December meeting. After the 1PM election of the Officers/volunteers for 2005 we will break-up to various rooms where specific SIGs will be presented/discussed. At 3 PM, once again, I'll be the "Santa Clause", passing out the various gifts at our gala give-away raffle. Each member present at the meeting will receive a gift. I believe that we will be happy with the gifts we receive from "Santa" this year.

We will also be holding a "Swap Meet" on this day. Members should bring older and new (computer related items) to be sold or exchanged or just for a give-a-way. All items should be displayed on one of the tables in the dining area for everyone to examine.

Check out the money saving offer that KCBXnet (aka Slonet) is extending to all current and future members of SLO Bytes. Go to http://www.slobytes.org http://www.slobytes.org/ and click on the KCBX offers special Internet access pricing for SLO Bytes members link.

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.

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
Oct 24, 2004 Nov 24, 2004

Income
Membership dues-new	$ 75.00
Renewal members	200.00
Refreshments	40.55

Expenses
Hall rent	75.00
Refreshments	30.42
APCUG dues for 2005	50.00

Bank accounts @10/31/04
Checking Acct Balance	$ 1,040.46
Saving Acct Balance	3,156.29

New Members: Bob Harrison; Heulan Brown; Eugene Yuan

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 200 PM and guest speaker presentations begin at 230 PM. Contact Guy Kuncir (489-1395, gkuncir@charter.net) or visit www.slobytes.org http://www.slobytes.org/ for additional information about SLO Bytes and the scheduled presentation.

Outside Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

HTML/Internet SIG normally meets at 6:30 PM on the Monday following our Sunday General Meeting at Ralph Sutter's home in Arroyo Grande. Call Ralph at (805) 489-8678 for directions. Linux SIG normally meets on Thursday at 6:30 PM (following our Sunday's General Meeting) at KCBX.net [a.k.a. SLONET] Training Center, 4100 Vachell Lane, SLO.

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Alan Raul (General SIG/Linux SIG)
Nancy Vrooman (Refreshments)
Peter Stonehewer (Refreshments)
Nate Wallenstein (Contributing Columnist)
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 http://www.slobytes.org/