



*The Best Accessory  
for your PC!*

The Newsletter of the Phoenix Personal Computer Users Group  
"Users helping users to understand computers"

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**March 2007**

## The March General Meetings

*by Kathy Jacobs*  
*Phoenix PCUG Vice President*

Why do you belong to the Phoenix PC User Group? What do you want to get out of the group? These are just two of the questions that the Board of Directors has been struggling with during this fiscal year. Recently, we decided to take the questions and our answers to you, the membership. The result of that decision is this month's meeting topic: A Town Hall.

As the Board has worked through our recovery from the membership shrinkage and the change in leadership, we have found ourselves looking regularly at five classes of questions that we want to ask you, the membership:

- Communications
- Programs
- Participation
- Logistics
- Direction

None of these are simple issues to address, nor are any of them things that the Board wants to address in a vacuum. Ric and I have said all along that our goal for the year is to make this your club. What follows are some of the issues and questions we would like you to think about as you prepare for our next meeting.

Wait, did I just ask you to prepare for a meeting? Yes, I did. While most of the meetings are presenter driven informational meetings, this month's meeting will be a conversation. We want you to hear who we are and why we belong to the club. At the same time, we want to hear from all of you why you belong, what you like, and what you want to change.

Let's start with those questions we have for you...

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# Moving to Vista – What Not to Do

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*by Sandy Berger, CompuKISS*

*<http://www.compukiss.com>*

*sandy(at)compukiss.com*

*Via APCUG*

Microsoft's long-anticipated new operating system, Windows Vista, is finally here. After months of testing I can say that it is a stable program and is more secure than any previous version of Windows. It also has a great new look and some wonderful new features. Just remember that there are always gotchas with a new operating system. Here are a few of the "don'ts" when moving to Vista.

First, five different flavors of Vista are available in the US: Home Basic, Home Premium, Ultimate, Business, and Enterprise. Don't bother with Home Basic. It doesn't have "Aero", the rich new visual interface. It doesn't have the advanced multi-media features for photos, movies, and television. It doesn't even have the cool new chess or mahjong games. All of this is missing, but Microsoft is still selling the Home Basic upgrade for \$99. The full version of Home Basic is \$199. If you buy a new computer with Vista, make sure that you get at least the Home Premium version. You can get a comparison of the different versions of Vista and what they offer at the Microsoft website.

Another don't....don't try to upgrade without a large hard drive and at least one gigabyte of memory. You can use the Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor to determine if your computer is ready for Vista. Most older computers will come up lacking. So, you may not want to upgrade at all. Although Vista's better security is enticing, if you are happy with your Windows XP machine you may want to keep using it a bit longer because it may be not be economically

beneficial to upgrade. The Vista product upgrade can cost several hundred dollars. That plus the cost of extra memory and/or other hardware upgrades may make it wiser to just purchase a new computer with Vista preinstalled.

Don't expect every software program to work with Windows Vista. Intuit, the makers of the popular Quickbooks program have notified their users that no older versions of Quickbooks will run on Vista. Only an upgrade to Quickbooks 2007 will let Quickbooks users run the program on a Vista computer.

Because of the major security changes in Vista, most antivirus programs will also need an update to be able to run on Windows Vista. If you purchase a new computer it may come with a trial subscription to Symantec or McAfee that will get you started but you will have to purchase a new version in the future or move to a free antivirus program. Again upgrading an old computer may be problematic because the old antivirus software will need to be removed before the new version is installed. Experience has taught me that it is often difficult to remove all the various pieces of an existing antivirus program. This is one experience you may want to avoid.

Some programs will also have trouble with Windows Vista new user controls which make it more difficult to make changes to your computer. This bolsters the operating system against hackers, but can confuse some existing programs. Simple changes or work arounds for these types of problems can easily be found on the Web. For instance, I couldn't run Adobe Photoshop CS2 upon installation on my Vista machine, but a few simple changes which I found documented on the

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### Phoenix PC Users Group

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#### Contact Information

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 Kathy Jacobs vicepres@phoenixpcug.org  
 Bruce Jacobs call\_bruce@cox.net

### The March 2007 meetings will be

## West Side ..... Tuesday, Mar 20

DeVry University, 2149 W Dunlap Ave, Phoenix

## East Side ..... Wednesday, Mar 21

University of Advancing Technologies  
2625 W Baseline Rd, Tempe (one block west of Fry's Electronics)

## Fountain Hills ..... Thursday, Mar 22

Fountain Hills Library, 12901 N La Montana Drive,  
Fountain Hills

## The topic for the March meetings will be: Town Hall Meeting

Come talk with other club members. Help determine the future of the club. We need to know what you want out of your user group in the future. For more information read this month's cover article.

Hank Pearson will give a very brief introduction to OpenOffice.org, a free alternative to Microsoft Office. The presentation will provide information on what is included, where to get it. There will not be a demonstration of the product.

Check our Website at [www.phoenixpcug.org](http://www.phoenixpcug.org)  
to verify subject matter and time for ALL meetings!

## Help Your User Group Grow

## Bring a Friend to the Meetings

### Contributing Editors

Allen Hunt  
 Tj  
 Kathy Jacobs

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## Users Group News

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Did you pay for your membership on the website in the last year?

Please read the article on page 13 to ensure your membership continues

Please come to one of the March general meetings and let your voice be heard!

### April General Meeting Topic

#### Microsoft Office 2007

Microsoft's Office 2007 is drastically different from any other version of Office you have ever seen. There is a new interface for you to see, a new file format for you to share, and new graphics for you to use.

How different is it? No more menus. The entire program is run from what is called the Ribbon. The Ribbon runs across the top of Word, Excel, PowerPoint and parts of Outlook. The file formats for Word, PowerPoint and Excel have been changed to a more open format. The graphics and text processing have been rewritten as well.

Come see why there is much more WOW in the new version of Office than there is in Vista!

## CALENDAR

Check our website for room and time information and to check for last minute changes

### March 2007

Tuesday, Mar 20 West Side (State of the Group)..... DeVry  
Wednesday, Mar 21 East Side (State of the Group) ..... UAT  
Thursday, Mar 22 Fountain Hills (State of the Group) ..... Library  
Wednesday, Mar 28 6:00 PM DeVry (Photo & Video SIGs) ..... DeVry

### April 2007

Tuesday, April 3 6:30 PM (General Discussion SIG) ..... Library  
Wednesday, April 4 6:30 PM (Board Meeting) ..... DeVry  
Tuesday, April 17 West Side (Office 2007) ..... DeVry  
Wednesday, April 18 East Side (Office 2007) ..... UAT  
Thursday, April 19 Fountain Hills (Office 2007) ..... Library  
Wednesday, April 25 6:30 PM (Photo & Video SIGs) ..... DeVry

**The April newsletter is  
started!**

**Please send in your  
articles!**



# Help Us Help You

by Bruce Jacobs  
Phoenix PCUG Newsletter Editor

At the start of each of the general meetings we hold a Question and Answer session. Members of the user group can ask questions and the group will suggest solutions to the problems. This is part of our commitment to "Users helping users.."

Frequently we (who run the Q&A sessions) do not have enough information to help in the way we would like. This article lists some common information which is easily obtained which usually help when brought to the meetings. We want to improve your odds of getting a useful answer rather than a bunch of questions.



**I do not want to imply that you should not ask your question if you do not know this information. Do not be afraid, please ask your question anyway.**

We usually want to know what operating system you are running, what service packs you have installed, and what your PC specifications are. Find "My Computer" on your desktop, in the start menu, or inside Windows Explorer. Right click on it and select properties from the drop down list. You should see a window with your computer properties. (The example screen shot is from Windows XP)

What is important here is that we are running

Windows XP Service Pack 2, we have 1 GB of ram and a 2 GHZ CPU. This screen has most of the general system information that will let the group know what sort of computer you have. It can help us if you bring this information.

If there are performance issues you may also want to write down the amount of disk space you

have and how much free space you have left. We may also want to know how long since the operating system has been installed (which for most computers is the date when it was built).

We also frequently ask

what anti-virus and spyware programs you run and if they are up to date.

We now move on to information related to your specific problem. If you are having problems with a specific piece of hardware we generally want to know what the model number of the hardware is. If no one there knows the specifics of that piece of hardware, we can sometime get an answer using a quick Google search. If the problem is with software we will likely want to know what version you have installed. This is usually available by starting the program and going into the help menu for the program.

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## Thinking about Disaster

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*by Dick Maybach, a member of the Brookdale  
Computer User Group, New Jersey  
<http://www.bcug.com> N2nd(at)att.net  
Via APCUG*

Here, we aren't discussing PC problems such as disk crashes, but real life disasters, such as those represented by the four horsemen of the apocalypse: pestilence, war, famine, and death. There's not much we can do about these, but careful preparations will lessen the consequences. While it's not pleasant to contemplate woes, and you certainly don't want to become obsessed, some constructive worrying today could save you or your family much trouble later.

PCs have become indispensable tools for many of us. The conscientious user backs up regularly, probably to an external drive sitting beside the PC. However, if you experience a fire, flood, or theft, both your PC and its backup data will probably disappear together. If a theft occurred, not only have you lost your data, but somebody else has it. You'll need to cancel your credit cards and close bank accounts immediately, but you no longer have the information you need to do this. Thus, there are two problems: replacing the lost data and stopping somebody else from misusing it.

The best solution to the first problem is to keep a backup of your critical data in a safe place, such as bank deposit box. Many banks offer free boxes to their customers, but you could also keep the information at work or with a friend. It will be most convenient to restore this critical data to your (presumably new) PC if the backup takes the form of diskettes or CD-ROMs. If your deposit box is too small or too full to hold a 5 ¼ inch disc, use a 3 1/8 inch CD-ROM (holding about 200

Mbytes) or a USB thumb drive. The saved data will include, for example, your passwords, contact names and addresses, financial data, and family photos.

For the second problem, keep a paper copy of your credit card and bank account numbers as well as contact information for your financial institutions. You will want this data immediately, and it will take a little time to find a PC and print out the contents of a disc.

You've now taken care of disasters that happen to your home, but what if something happens to you? What information will your family need if you are not available or incapacitated? Certainly, this includes the user names and passwords for your computer and PDA. They will need the URLs, user names, and passwords of any sites you use for financial transactions, such as credit cards, banks, merchants that are authorized to charge your credit cards or make withdrawals from your bank account, employers, and retirement organizations. They will also need the passwords for any data you have encrypted, such as Quicken files or password storage programs. Finally, they will need your social security number, birth certificate, and life and health insurance policy information. You should have a paper copy of this information and tell your family where it is.

What do you do if a relative dies and you must obtain access to their PC and allow their family to carry on with their financial duties? If there is a BIOS password on a desktop PC, you must open the system unit. Most motherboards have a connector into which you can insert a jumper to restore the BIOS factory defaults and remove any

**Disaster .... Continues on page 17**

# YouTube Revolutionizes the Internet!

by Linda Gonse, Editor & Webmaster, Orange Country  
IBM PC Users' Group, California  
Editor(at)orcopug.org www.ocropug.org  
Via APCUG

Just when I thought creative ideas were running out for ways to use the Internet, along comes YouTube, www.youtube.com. Its content includes movie and TV clips, music videos, and amateur works — such as video-blogging. The innovative site's popularity is staggering. Almost 20 million visitors browse YouTube each month, according to Nielsen/NetRatings. And, in confirmation of YouTube's originality, Time magazine named it the "Invention of the Year" in 2006.

Although I only discovered YouTube in December 2006, it was founded in February 2005. In about a year and a half, YouTube has been so successful Google sealed the deal to buy it in November 2006 for \$1.65-billion! Not bad for a site that was launched with a video of a co-founder's cat playing with a dangling string!

Now, "Users upload 6500 new videos to the site every day," according to a January 2007 Time magazine article. Many of the videos are taken with home camcorders and cell phones. In fact, videos that showed L.A. police repeatedly punching a suspect on the ground, a college

student being tasered, and an outraged comedian yelling disparaging ethnic descriptions, were shown on television news after first being uploaded to YouTube. These homemade videos, which were a sensation on the news, initially prompted me to check out the site.

Incredibly, YouTube viewers watch 100 million videos each day — up from 10 million last year. The most-watched clip, with over 36+ million views is a compilation of head-butt animations inspired by the one Zinedine Zidane



## [Pickup to Electronic Snare Drum](#)

00:46

Added: 1 week ago  
From: [mekarer](#)  
Views: 520,994

★★★★☆  
1744 ratings



## [Slamball accident](#)

01:17

Added: 6 months ago  
From: [mcburger](#)  
Views: 1,014,178

★★★★★  
4962 ratings



## [Change One Thing - One Tube For Orbvious](#)

05:17

Added: 1 week ago  
From: [OneTubeGroup](#)  
Views: 173,383

★★★★☆  
1094 ratings



## [Chinese Food on Christmas](#)

03:18

Added: 2 weeks ago  
From: [BrandonHarrisWalker](#)  
Views: 289,677

★★★★★  
2419 ratings



## [Power Tool Drag Racing 4](#)

02:55

Added: 5 days ago  
From: [slamer123](#)  
Views: 543,127

★★★★☆  
968 ratings



## [Nerdcore For Life Trailer](#)

04:09

Added: 1 week ago  
From: [NerdcoreForLife](#)  
Views: 503,157

★★★★★  
1521 ratings



## [Vader Dad](#)

00:45

Added: 5 days ago  
From: [wwwBLACK20.com](#)  
Views: 1,001,437

★★★★★  
4356 ratings



## [The 12 Days of Christmas](#)

05:47

Added: 1 week ago  
From: [Zipster08](#)  
Views: 1,291,520

★★★★★  
4852 ratings



Continues next page...

## Pandora – a Free Music Resource

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*by Sandy Berger, CompuKISS  
www.compukiss.com  
sandy(at)compukiss.com  
Via APCUG*

The Internet is filled with free resources, but some are better than others. Here is one of the best free music resources on the Web.

Pandora is one of my favorite music websites. Just surf over to [www.pandora.com](http://www.pandora.com) and type in a song or an artist that you like. Pandora analyses your choice and creates a music station with similar-sounding music. It will then play comparable songs that it thinks you will like. You can add more music and/or artists to the station to refine your choices. You can also tell Pandora whether or not you like the song that is playing. It uses your likes and dislikes to refine the songs it chooses. You can create up to 100 different stations with different types of music.

Pandora was created by the Music Genome Project, a group of musicians and music-loving technologists who have broken music into hundreds of music attributes or “genes” such as melody, harmony, rhythm, instrumentation, orchestration, arrangement, lyrics, and harmony. They then use high-tech methodology to analyze the musical qualities of each song and rendition.

The results are uncanny. I created several music stations with different genres that I like and in almost every case I was presented with similar music that I found very pleasing. You can experiment with different combinations. For instance, putting James Taylor and Willie Nelson together gave me an interesting, but likable mix of music.

Pandora is pretty smart. Typing in The Christmas Song and choosing Diana Krall as the artist gave me a whole station of mellow Christmas music

which is just what I was looking for. Typing in The Nylons and Take 6 gave me a nice selection of acappella and harmonistic music.

Pandora also lets you bookmark songs or artists so you can remember what you liked. You can look up more information about artists and songs right on the site. Two clicks will lead you to iTunes or Amazon where you can purchase the music. You can also share your music by emailing your stations to friends.

Pandora is ad-supported so you will see ads for everything from gym shoes to cell service. I found the ads to be unobtrusive, but if you want to get rid of them, you can pay to eliminate them. For \$36, you get 12 months of unlimited use with services exactly the same as the free version, but without the ads.

Since the ads don't bother me, I'll continue to use the free version of Pandora. It's an entertaining website that provides much listening pleasure to keep me company when I am working on the computer.

If you are into music, you may also want to check out two other music resources. MusicIP Mixer and Goombah. Like Pandora, both of these sites provide intriguing music adventures. ♪

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### **YouTube... continues from page 8**

administered in the 2006 World Cup soccer game.

YouTube is free. You only need to sign up if you want to leave comments about the videos, rate them, or upload your own.

Choose videos from categories like Recent Videos on the next page, which include viewer ratings, video length, and description

## Coming Attractions

*by Kathy Jacobs,  
Vice President and Overall Meeting Coordinator  
Phoenix PCUG*

As promised, here is what I know of the schedule for the rest of the year. Some months have proposed topics and speakers, some have proposed topics only. At the end of the list are some other topics that have been suggested to me by members of the group.

Month	Topic	Speaker(s)
March	User Group Town Hall	Board of Directors and Members of PPCUG
March	Open Office Overview	Hank Pearson
April	Office 2007 – The Real Thing	Kathy Jacobs
May	Smart Computing Presentation in a Box style	Volunteer Needed
June	Corel's latest offerings Presentation in a Box style or build our own	Joe Benedetto to demo Kathy to talk
July	Laplink Presentation in a Box style	Volunteer Needed
August	Sound Acoustica, Applian, Audacity	Dean Botchuck
September	Open	Your Name Here
October	Security	Volunteer Needed
November	Gadgets	Bruce Jacobs
December	Party - Year in Review and Trivia Contest	Kathy will lead Need more volunteers

### Additional Suggested Topics:

Second Life	Computer Games
YouTube and Google Videos	MySpace
Searching the Net	E-bay
Mail Merge	Creative Labs
DLink or Wireless routers	Your Web Page part 2

Please contact Kathy to help.

### **March... Continued from cover**

#### **Communications**

Right now, the club has three main communication mechanisms. Unfortunately, all of them are outward flowing communication. You receive a monthly email providing meeting logistics. You receive a newsletter with information about the presentations and articles about your computer and the computer world. If you want, you can go to the website ([www.phoenixpcug.org](http://www.phoenixpcug.org)) and learn about the doings of the club.

Our first question for you is: Are these mechanisms meeting your needs? What would you like to see on the site and in the newsletter? Do you have specific information you would like to add to one or both of them? If so, is there a source for that information? Bruce Jacobs and TJ volunteer their time to provide these resources, but sometimes feel as if they are pushing out information that no one needs or uses. Do you use the information? Or, does it come to you and you set it aside and never look at it again?

One of the big issues we face within the organization, as with almost every not-for-profit organization I have ever known of, is a shortage of money. Printing the newsletter and mailing it out every month is our biggest expenditure. What would you think about receiving the newsletter electronically? If a PDF came to your inbox, would you read it? Or, would it go in the junk pile even faster?

What would you think of the group providing some kind of video or audio materials on the site to deliver content? Would you use it? Would you have stuff to contribute? Adding media content would raise our visibility, but it also takes time and resources to create and support. If we were going to do this, would it be worth the effort and potential volunteer burnout.

How would you like to communicate with the other members of the group? I know that at each meeting we offer the chance for you to ask questions. Would you like to be able to send those questions in ahead of time? What would you think of a discussion area where members of the group could provide free peer to peer support, with the understanding that some questions would need more support than could be offered via that arena?

How would you like to communicate with the Board? Right now, there isn't much feedback coming to the board about what you like and what you don't. We are slowly losing members, so we know something has to change. We need you to help us figure out what.

Should the group be looking at branching out to reach other members of the community? We don't do much PR or outreach at the moment. We don't advertise the programs or our existence. The Board has held off on PR and outreach for two reasons: First, we don't have anyone to do the PR and outreach. Second, we don't have anyone to handle the responses we might get.

#### **Programs**

Many of you know that part of the reason I took the position of Vice President was to eliminate myself as the only presenter. I've halfway succeeded. While I am not the main presenter, we are still caught in a trap of the Board members being the most frequent presenters.

We don't know what you all want to hear about. We are guessing. Yes, we asked you last year what you wanted to know about. The responses we got have driven the topics for this year. However, we haven't had much luck finding new volunteers to present.

**March ... Continues on page 12**

Check page 10 of this issue for a proposed list of topics for the rest of the year. The topics chosen were based on your feedback, availability of materials, and availability of speakers. There are still open slots for both speakers and topics.

So, what do we want to know from you? Are we anywhere close to on track? Are we going over everyone's heads with the content? Are we providing way to basic of information for everyone? Would you like to see more presentations on hardware? Would you like us to branch out into other areas of the computer world? Bill Funk's presentation on Digital Cameras last month is an example of areas we could be touching on but aren't. What would you like to see presented? What would you like to present?

Beyond the programs for the main meetings, we are trying to evaluate what Special Interest Groups we should be offering. The new General Interest Group that Allen Hunt has started is a great example of a member seeing a need and filling it. What other SIGs should be out there? Is anyone willing to do the logistics for a group if we did set one up?

Would you like to see us move some of our meeting content to a virtual arena? A significant portion of our membership has no way to get to meetings. If you are one of those members, would a virtual space that connected to the meetings or a media copy of the meetings help you feel more connected to what the group provides?

### **Participation**

Yes, this is a call for you to get involved. But it is also an attempt to find out whether you feel it is worth getting involved in the group.

Right now, our membership dues are \$36 per year. Do you get what you pay for? Do you

contribute enough to keep the price that low? I hear you thinking, "That low?" ... Yes, you read it right. Every month, this group does exactly what our mission is. We provide peer to peer, free support on your computer. If you had to pay a computer professional for the time it takes to provide the information in the meetings and communications, it would cost much more.

Does that mean I think you should have to pay more? No, not at all. What I am trying to ask is: What is it worth to you? Some people find it easier to spend money to get solutions, some find it easier to spend time. Which of these two are you willing to spend?

We currently have no membership person, no meeting coordinator for one of the meetings, no PR person, no community outreach person, no advertising manager, etc. (Those are just the ones off the top of my head.) I know that David Yamamoto, our secretary, has asked for help with minutes at every meeting over the last few months. He has finally gotten two volunteers – which are greatly appreciated.

What can you do to help the group?

This, though, is only half of the issue. Board member Bill Aulepp has suggested that we do some kind of community project to give back to those less fortunate. He can't do it alone. He needs help drafting and organizing a project before we go anywhere with the idea. Would this be something you would be interested in? Let us know...

### **Logistics**

Are we meeting the right places and times? Do we need to meet three times a month? Average attendance at meetings is way down... Are there enough people to continue holding meetings this frequently?

**March... Continued on page 14**

**Moving .... Continued from page 2**

Web, solved the problem quite easily.

Also any specially written or high-end software programs may not work with Vista. This will not affect the average user, but if you have any unusual or specialty programs you will want to check out compatibility.

Much of today's current hardware will work with Windows Vista. Of course, you may want to check the manufacturer's website to be sure before you make that assumption. You may need to update a hardware driver or two. If you have older hardware, some may not work with Vista. So check it out before you move to Vista.

Of all the hardware problems, you can expect the most problems with audio equipment. Windows Vista has a new audio stack which means that it handles the audio data structure differently than older versions of Windows. Also this audio change was made quite late in the Vista development process, so audio manufacturers may not have caught up yet. While this will probably not impact the average computer user, if you have any high-end audio equipment, make sure you check our compatibility before you migrate to Vista.

One last don't.....don't worry about the 64-bit version of Vista. If you have a 64-bit processor on your new computer like the Intel Core2 Duo or AMD 64-bit processors you may be thinking about trying out the 64-bit version of Vista. Don't do it unless you want to be on the "bleeding" edge of technology. Most hardware does not currently have 64-bit drivers and the 64-bit version of Vista does not support the widely used 32-bit drivers. Also there is currently very little software that actually takes advantage of the 64-bit system. So leave the 64-bit version as something to

dream about. It will be more secure and faster, but it is not yet ready for prime time.

However the 32-bit version of Vista is ready for immediate use. The best way to move to Vista is to buy a new computer with Vista preloaded. Just be sure you check out these gotchas before you put your money on the counter. ♯

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## Problems with Online Membership Payments

We had a system on the website designed to accept credit card payments of membership dues. The system would accept the credit card information and then wait for the data to be processed. The processing step was lost in the process of membership changes. We are not able to get at the information to charge the credit cards or even find who has tried to pay in this way.

If you have tried to pay for your membership online in the last year your credit card should not have been charged. You need to send a check to the address on the back cover. In the unlikely event that your card was charged, please let a board member know right away.

The root cause of the problem is that the data was too secure. Not only was unauthorized access prevented, after several attempts we discovered we could not access it as well.

Phoenix PCUG apologies for any inconvenience this has caused our membership. The board of directors is working on adding a new shopping cart to the website. This will allow memberships to be paid by credit at some point in the near future.

If you have any questions, please contact Ric Fischer at [president@phoenixpcug.org](mailto:president@phoenixpcug.org) ♯

### **March ... Continued on page 12**

A big problem with meeting at our current times and locations is that it has locked the PPCUG out of one of the biggest program resources in the state of Arizona. AZACC ([www.azacc.org](http://www.azacc.org)) provides a speaker each winter month to its member organizations. We do not currently belong to AZACC, in part because our meetings are put forth as the same meeting, three nights in succession. This will not be able to be fit into the AZACC schedule. (And as one who has done the AZACC Tour twice in the last few months, I can tell you that there are holes in the schedule. But there aren't any that big.) If the group wants to investigate joining AZACC, we would need to look at changing meeting times. What do you think of this idea?

Another solution to the logistics problems we have is to go virtual. This is not a solution the Board really wants to use. All of us feel very strongly that the ability to put a bunch of people in the same room and work out a problem or learn about a product is the biggest benefit of the group. But that is our opinion. What is yours?

### **Direction**

All of the other topics really merge together into the real question: What is the direction this group should be going?

Right now we are a shrinking group being run in the same manner as when we were a very large group. Do we adjust to the shrinkage, or do we find some way to stop the shrinking? Stopping the shrinkage may mean changing the direction of the group. That is not a step the board is willing to take lightly. Do you feel that the user group should still exist? Is it worth your time, money, and effort, to keep the group going?

We, as a board struggle with what services the club should be providing. We are not the only club who struggles with this issue. Most, if not all, PC User Groups came into being when computers were not a part of everyone's everyday life. When User Groups started, there was a strong need for them. The board feels there is still a strong need. What we don't know is if you as members feel the same way.

Please... Tell us. Come to the meetings this month and share your perspective on the future of the Phoenix PC Users' Group. ♯

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## **Valley CompUSA Stores are Closing**

*by Bruce Jacobs Phoenix PCUG newsletter editor*

CompUSA is closing all of the stores in the valley in the next couple of months. If you have any outstanding warranty issues now is the time to bring them up. The Tucson store will be staying open but it is quite a drive.

They will be having some store closing sales over the next few weeks. I have noticed that all sales are final so buyer beware.

### **Need a Ride?**

Have you been not able to come to our monthly meetings because you have no way to get to them? We have a solution for you!

### **Able to Provide a Ride?**

Are you willing to pick up, transport and drive another member to one meeting a month? We have an opportunity for you!

### **PPCUG's Ride Sharing Program**

Allen Hunt, long time group member has volunteered to coordinate member communication for those who need rides and those who can provide them.

To join the program for either side, email Allen at [adhunt@cox.net](mailto:adhunt@cox.net) Provide your name, your address, a way to contact you, and whether you can give or need a ride.

Allen will gather the information from everyone who responds and connect up drivers with riders. It will be the responsibility of the individual members to organize the actual rides, dates, and pick up information.

As an added bonus, any driver participating will receive one extra raffle ticket each time they drive a member to a meeting.

**Thanks to everyone who participates in the program for making our group better!**

**The Official Policy of the Phoenix PC Users Group is that we do not condone software piracy in any form.**

### **SIG Notes**

**Joe Benedetto** runs the Digital Photography SIG. See the SIG calendar on our website for last minute information.

**David Yamamoto** leads the Video SIG, which meets right after the Digital Photography SIG.

**Allen Hunt** leads the General Discussion Sig which meets in the Fountain Hills Community Center the first Tuesday of each month.

Contact SIG leaders by e-mailing [SIGs@phoenixpcug.org](mailto:SIGs@phoenixpcug.org) for more information.

**These are your SIGs, so please support them!**

### **Start a new SIG!**

Several members have expressed an interest in creating one or more SIGs that would meet on the East side of the Valley. If you are interested in organizing a SIG for this part of town on any computer related topic, please let Kathy Jacobs know. She has a potential meeting location for the SIG, but does not have the time to organize it.

### APCUG Articles

This User Group is a member of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG). The organization provides many services to its member organizations.

One of the services provided is a common clearing house of articles for use in member newsletters. Any article in the newsletter which says "Via APCUG" in the by line was obtained through APCUG.

If given permission by the author, we will submit articles to APCUG for publication in other newsletters.

If you wish to submit an article to the *Phoenix PC User Group News*, please let me know if you want it submitted to them.

## Want your own 15 minutes of fame?

### Write an article for your newsletter.

- ♦ Explain Something
- ♦ Review a Product
- ♦ Write a letter to the Editor.
- ♦ Solve World Hunger!



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**Disaster .... Continued from page 7**

passwords. Laptops have similar provisions, but you will have to contact the manufacturer to find what it is. Once the BIOS password is removed you can boot the machine, at which point you may find it has a Windows password. The safest procedure is to obtain a Linux "live CD-ROM", such as Knoppix. With this you can boot Linux directly from the CD-ROM, which will let you read and copy, but not necessarily write, Windows files. Once you have copied all the critical files from the PC, you can reset the Windows password using one of the password-cracking programs that are available on the Internet. IMPORTANT EXCEPTION – Windows 2000 and XP Pro allows files and folders to be encrypted. If this has been done, resetting the Windows password will render these permanently unreadable. Fortunately, few users use this feature. There are also PDA password cracking programs, but those I've found work only on the PC desktop program that backs up the PDA; I've not seen one for the PDA itself. If

there are encrypted Quicken files, Intuit promises to remove the passwords for \$10 per file; see their Web site for more information. If you are more adventuresome, Quicken password-cracking programs available on the Internet.

If the relative uses on-line banking, contact the bank to obtain a new password and change the ownership of the account. Monitor the account carefully for automatic transfers, both deposits and withdrawals. You probably want to stop these. Also contact all credit- and debit-card vendors to close the accounts, and notify employers and, if appropriate, Social Security of the change. Open and read carefully all letters; some bills and checks appear to be junk mail. Finally, be alert for scams; for instance, you might receive unordered merchandise or claims of debts.

Having to deal with these issues is especially difficult in times of stress, and preparing the information before they arise is a much better approach. †

**How to Submit Commercial Advertisements**

Send commercial ad copy and payments to:  
Ad Manager, Phoenix PCUG Newsletter,  
5555 N 7<sup>th</sup> Street Suite 5 PMB 101  
Phoenix, AZ 85014

Make checks payable to Phoenix PCUG

(Note: AD PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY AD unless credit arrangements have been made).

Commercial advertising rates per issue are shown below. Submit camera-ready black and white copy. Typesetting service and photographic services provided at additional cost and must be scheduled and paid for IN ADVANCE. Payment must accompany ad. Copy will not be returned unless return postage is prepaid. Single insertion ad rates are as follows:

Full Page (7.5" by 10.0")\$100.00

Half Page (7.5" by 5.0") \$50.00Ask about multiple insertion discounts!!!

Quarter Page (3.75" by 5.0") \$32.00Note: Oversized ads are charged to the next higher size rate!!

Business Cards (2.0" by 3.5") \$ 10.00 (minimum of 3 months prepaid)

For questions please contact Bruce Jacobs, 602-569-6430 or write to above

Submission deadlines are the 25th of each month prior to month of publication. Prices subject to change without notice.

## Smart Computing Magazine

There is a way you can support your user group. Smart Computing Magazine will give a gift subscription to the Phoenix PC Users Group to be used as a door prize, raffle, etc., for each five subscriptions received from our group. Subscriptions can be applied for with the subscription coupon below or by phone as long as you use our group's unique source code number (8305) when beginning the subscription.

For each paid subscription using the source code 8305, our user group will be credited one credit. Results are calculated each quarter, and credits will accumulate until the group reaches five paid subscriptions, at which time they will contact the PPCUG.

In the event our group does not reach the five paid subscription mark by the end of the quarter, credits will be carried over into the following quarter until the amount reaches five paid subscriptions, at which time a free subscription will be issued. This information is also posted on our website for future reference at [www.phoenixpcug.org/members/only/discounts/](http://www.phoenixpcug.org/members/only/discounts/) (members only section....User name and password required.) See [www.phoenixpcug.org/members/faq.shtml](http://www.phoenixpcug.org/members/faq.shtml) for questions about obtaining a password or retrieving a forgotten password.



# USER GROUP PROGRAM



**Phoenix PC Users Group**  
Be Sure to use the Phoenix PCUG Numbers:  
  
SC: 8305  
CPU: 513

**Mail to:**  
Smart Computing; PO Box 85380  
Lincoln, NE 68501-9807  
**Fax:**  
402-479-2193  
**Call to Order:**  
800-733-3809 • 402-479-2136

1 Year .....\$29    
  2 Years .....\$48    
  3 Years .....\$64

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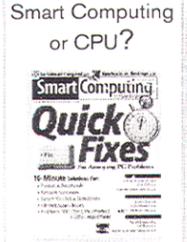
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[SmartComputing.com/groups](http://SmartComputing.com/groups)

Smart Computing or CPU?






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The Phoenix PC Users Group News, a newsletter, is published monthly, with article **submission deadlines occurring the 29th of each month**. This publication is mailed with the intention of reaching members before the monthly meeting of issue date. The Group is not responsible for lost or destroyed newsletters, other than replacing an issue lost in the mail. Notify the group Membership Coordinator at least four weeks in advance of change of address when moving.

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Submissions to the "News" should be in MS Word, RTF or unformatted text.

Articles, photos, screen shots may be e-mailed over the Internet directly to the editor at [jacobsbd@cox.net](mailto:jacobsbd@cox.net). Please include the author's name, address, phone number and e-mail address on the first lines of the article.

All materials submitted will be considered for inclusion in the "News", but the Editor reserves the right to edit as necessary, to maintain standards of literacy, grammar, and length requirements. No materials will be returned unless arrangements are made in advance.

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