



NEWSLETTER

The Best Accessory
for your PC!



MAIN MEETINGS

West Side.....Tue, July 17

CollegeAmerica, 9801 North Metro Pkwy E, Phoenix

East Side.....Wed, July 18

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

Fountain Hills.....Thu, July 19

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

Presentation this month:

Always bring your Questions & future topics.
We'll provide answers, how to's, etc.
Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced –
let's dicuss some excellent resources and possible activities
for seniors and any beginners with PC anxiety issues.

We intend to dispell these fears.

How to remove viruses (malware) - how to boot to
Safemode, connect online and do ESET online scans.
Also news about Windows 8, RT tablets versus iPads

For date and time changes, check our
website: phoenixpcug.org

Phoenix PC Users Group

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Steering Committee:

**Officers and Members who are present
at the 6:00 P.M. West Side meeting.**

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THOUGHTS FOR THE MONTH

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Happy 4th of July, everybody! And all of us have to be careful out there with the monsoon season now underway. Whether driving on the highways, or computing at home, please be sure to keep an eye on the weather.

For general safety precautions, during a thunderstorm or when leaving on a trip, be sure to unplug important electronics including your computers, printers, stereo and TV, etc. If you must leave any particular item on such as a web cam, then make sure it's plugged into a surge protector or better yet an uninterruptible power supply UPS. Also unplug the phone - & a note to plug it back in later. And don't take a shower then either. Electricity can travel within plumbing.

We are looking over these items to discuss in upcoming meetings

- * Microsoft Surface Tablet, Windows 8

- * How to buy an uninterruptible power supply and a surge protector. Also how to use one. Insurance policy for protection of your valuable equipment.

- * Microsoft's Downfall Inside the Executive E-mails and Cannibalistic Culture That Felled a Tech Giant, Vanity Fair

- * Apple iPad printing and flash viewing limitations. iPad vs. everybody else.

- * Basic tasks for general users - back up your hard drive, hardware and software, optimize your hard drive, remove simple viruses and malware,

Windows Update.

- ◆ Windows lifecycle fact sheet
- ◆ Desktop operating systems
- ◆ Windows XP
- ◆ Latest service pack Service Pack 3
- ◆ End of mainstream support April 14, 2009
- ◆ End of extended support April 8, 2014

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/products/lifecycle> or <http://tinyurl.com/26byrn5>

Well that's it for now. Hope to see you at a July meeting.

David

FROM YOUR EDITOR

Classically, the wisdom of individuals who are known as excellent conversationalists contains the admonition of "Avoid Religion and Politics" as a means of forestalling heated arguments, particularly among people who are unable to distinguish between hearsay and facts.

Perhaps the category of "Education" should be added to this short list. Why? Well, it seems that everyone who has ever attended a school of any kind considers him/herself to be an expert on any facet of the subject, no matter what the extent of personal experience happens to be. For an individual student, such expertise is a function of the level of education and the degrees awarded, even adding an additional two to twelve more years for a high school graduate working toward a professional degree. For parents the experience depends upon the number of years that their children remain stuck in their years of immaturity which, sadly, can sometimes take decades or more. For teachers, the experience changes every year. Each group of students, each subject, each teaching technique (or fad) presents a challenge.

Thus an individual's perception of the current state of the art of teaching and of the craft of instruction is likely to be a singular person's lifetime memory. In a typical group discussion concerning Education there will be an abundance of biased opinions and uninformed assertions. Someone might shout, "Computers will completely replace old methods of instruction." A more informed person might be moved to point out that there have been efficient visual methods of instruction for a very long time, dating back to Sumerian tablets 5000 years ago. In addition, there are other valid methods of instruction: such as audio, tactile, kinetic and others that utilize our natural human senses. But replacing clay tablets, or papyrus, or chalkboards, or plastic transparencies with multicolored digital pixels on a monitor screen does not constitute Learning. It is merely a method or tool. Yes, a method with a great deal of flexibility that has already changed the public perception of Education. But by no means do computers translate knowledge directly to the brain without human effort. You still have to study!

Michael

MEETINGS

CALENDAR

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PRESENTATION THIS MONTH

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Also news about Windows 8, RT tablets versus iPads

AND MUCH MORE

GENERAL MEETINGS

WEST SIDE: CollegeAmerica (see map page 16)

- Tuesday, July 17 2012
- 6:00 PM - Steering Committee and Election of Officers
- 6:30 PM - Q and A
-

EAST SIDE: University of Advancing Technology (see map page 16)

- Wednesday, July 18, 2012
- 6:30 PM - Q and A
-

FOUNTAIN HILLS: Fountain Hills Library (see map page 16)

- Thursday, July 19, 2012
- 6:30 PM - Q and A
-

EXTEND LAPTOP BATTERY LIFE

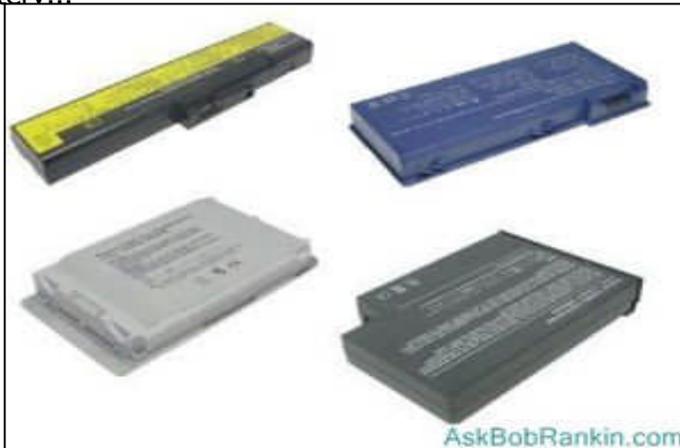
Extend Laptop Battery Life

By Bob Rankin

<http://askbobrankin.com/>

Tips For Longer Battery Life

It's easy to take electrical outlets for granted; they're everywhere, right? But sometimes you forget your laptop's power cord at home, or somehow get stuck far from wall power. Then you'll be glad you followed these tips to maximize the life of your laptop's battery...



It's important to understand what drains the most power in your laptop. In modern laptops, the LCD display consumes about 43 per cent of normal operating power. [Under the hood](#), the chipset - video, graphics, audio, math coprocessor, etc. - eats another 22 per cent. The CPU accounts for 9 per cent of power consumption, while a graphics processor takes another 8 per cent. The hard drive takes only 5 per cent, and network adapters consume only 4 per cent. So obviously, power conservation efforts should focus first on the display. Here's how to tweak your settings to save the juice.

Microsoft Windows has a Power Options section in Control Panel that can help you optimize [your laptop's](#) performance vs. power consumption trade-off. You can use one of the pre-defined Power Plans that kick in depending on whether you're operating on battery or wall power. The plans control how bright the display is; when to turn off the display during periods of inactivity; when to turn off the hard drive to save power; and what CPU performance level to use when on [battery power](#). Tweaking these plans to fit your computing habits and performance needs can extend battery life significantly.

You can also manually adjust the display brightness to suit the environment; you don't really need the brightest setting in a dim coffee shop. On most laptops, you can change the screen brightness by holding down the **Fn** button and pressing one of the function keys on the top row of the keyboard. On my [Toshiba laptop](#), Fn+F6 reduces the brightness, and Fn+F7 will make it brighter. When power is low, turn it down as much as possible.

To further stretch your [battery time](#), avoid video games, listening to music, watching videos (especially high-resolution videos) and other graphics-intensive applications while on battery. Turn off the wifi adapter if you don't need to access to the Internet. And of course, don't try to charge your iPod or cell phone via USB, if your [laptop's battery](#) life is dwindling.

Sleep or Hibernate?

It's worth noting the difference between "sleep" and "hibernation" modes here, as either can be set in the Power Options plans. Sleep mode stores your laptop's current state, including all open apps and data files, in RAM before shutting down virtually all of your system. A bit of power is used to maintain the state of RAM so it isn't lost during sleep mode. Hibernation saves the laptop's state to the hard drive, allowing the laptop to shut down completely when it is not in use. Your desktop is restored from either mode, but restoration is faster from sleep mode because everything is already in RAM. Restoring from hibernation takes a bit longer, depending on the speed of your system. Hibernation is also safer, because power might be lost during sleep mode and all your data would be lost too.

Every battery wears out eventually. The number of times you can recharge a battery depends on many factors, but just a couple of rules will help maximize your [battery's](#) service life. Do not fully discharge your battery deliberately. Old nickel-cadmium batteries had to be full discharged from time to time, but modern lithium-ion batteries' life spans are actually shortened by full discharges.

When your battery will no longer hold sufficient charge to get you through the day, it's time to buy a new one. Consider extended-life batteries with more cells (and weight), and look into refurbished laptop batteries that can save you 50 per cent or more vs. the cost of brand-new ones.

Read more: http://askbobrankin.com/extend_laptop_battery_life.html#ixzz1yXMKWZGf

A SAFE AND HEALTHY COMPUTER

Light Housekeeping for a Safe and Healthy Computer
By Mike Morris, Editor, Front Range PC Users Group,
Fort Collins, CO, <http://www.frpcug.org>
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The Front Range PC Users Group (FRPCUG) provides free computer help to the community and to several other local non-profit organizations. As a result of these efforts, we have concluded that there are two tasks and several free and reliable utilities that help to maintain a safe and healthy computer.

Without a doubt, the two most important safety and security tasks for every Windows computer user are:

Keep the Operating System up to date
Keep the security software up to date

In addition to those two tasks, there is some computer "housekeeping" required to keep your computer healthy (for those of you who consider yourselves not knowledgeable enough to "maintain" your computer, think of these utilities as cleaning tools, not maintenance tools).

For housekeeping, these utilities are recommended:

1. Revo Uninstaller

This free utility does an excellent job of uninstalling unwanted software—even better than the Windows utility.

You can use the default settings of Revo.

It is important to note that Revo first runs the uninstaller program provided with the program you want to remove. At the end of that process, you are asked if you want to restart your computer. At this point, **DO NOT RESTART YOUR COMPUTER**. Click on "No" or "Restart later" (or whatever similar message is displayed). That will allow the rest of Revo to run. It will check for left-over files in the Windows Registry and the directories. Whatever files or file remnants it finds, select everything it finds and delete them.

You can download Revo from http://www.revouninstaller.com/revo_uninstaller_free_download.html. The free version is the one in the left column.

When installing this (or any program), proceed carefully, because very likely there is additional software

"bundled" with what you want—that additional software is usually unnecessary. Examine each screen as it is displayed and uncheck or refuse any of the extra unwanted software.

Sometimes, even Revo needs some help. When combined with a registry cleaner, unwanted software can be effectively removed. The registry cleaner we recommend is:

2. CCleaner

This is another free, excellent utility. There is much debate in the computer world about registry cleaners. Since the Windows Registry is so crucial to correct operation, one viewpoint is that no one but an expert should use them. It is true that modifying the Windows Registry has the potential to create problems. However, those of us in FRPCUG have used CCleaner on many computers without problems. When using the registry cleaner option of CCleaner, you will be asked if you want to backup your registry. It's a safety factor that is up to you.

There are two parts to cleaning your computer of unwanted/left-over junk using CCleaner: Cleaner and Registry. Use both—once a week is recommended, but at least once a month.

There are cases where, after running Revo, it may be necessary to run CCleaner 3 or 4 times before all of the junk is removed. For example, if you have Norton security software installed on your computer and want to remove it, it will take Revo and possibly 3 or 4 passes of CCleaner (restarting your computer after each CCleaner run) to completely remove the Norton software (more on Norton in a moment).

You can download CCleaner from http://www.filehippo.com/download_ccleaner/. Use the "Download Latest Version" button with the green background at the right side of the page.

For computer security:

Virtually all new Windows computers are delivered with a trial version of one brand or another of security software installed, usually good for up to 90 days. Once that trial is over, you need to pay for an annual subscription for updates.

In today's world, there is no need to pay for security software. There are a number of excellent, free

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A SAFE AND HEALTHY COMPUTER

(Continued from page 5)

security software programs available. And, there are cases where the free software might actually be better than security software that you buy. For example, in the past, Norton security software acquired a reputation for slowing down the computers on which it was installed (my own experience with Norton software—at least the older versions, based on helping other computer users, is that it is not as good at catching malicious software (malware) as other programs).

Of the many free security software applications available, FRPCUG members have used these four, and found them to be reliable and effective (just because the software is free does not mean it is less capable):

One is Microsoft Security Essentials (MSE). You can download MSE from <http://www.microsoft.com/download/en/details.aspx?id=5201>. Note that there are 2 versions available, depending on whether your computer has an AMD or an Intel processor.

Another is Avira Free. This application received excellent reviews from the independent security software testing organization, AV-Comparatives - Independent Tests of Anti-Virus Software, <http://www.av-comparatives.org/>

A third choice is Avast Free, and a fourth choice is AVG Free. We suggest you read the reviews on these products (enter: review of—and the application name—into a Google search, or use the AV Comparatives website mentioned above). If you decide to use one these applications, download it from <http://www.filehippo.com>. You are less likely to encounter excess, unnecessary additional software (sometimes called "bloatware" or "sneakware"). Once you connect to the filehippo website, just enter the name of the application into the search box.

Another area of debate regarding security software is the number of different security software applications that should be installed and running on one computer. With one exception, described below, you are probably going to be better off with only one. Since these applications are always running (in the background), it is very likely that two or more security applications running simultaneously will cause conflicts (and/or slow down your computer). It is possible, with a lot of experimentation, to find multiple security applications that do not conflict (one FRPCUG member has done so), but for most computer users, one application is sufficient.

The best way to change security software is to download, but don't install, the new security software. Then use Revo (and if necessary, CCleaner) to remove the old security software. Finally, install the new security software.

A supplementary security software program that works extremely well is Malwarebytes. You can download this program from <http://www.filehippo.com/search?q=malwarebytes>. The free version does not run continuously in the background, as do other security software applications. That means Malwarebytes does not conflict with any other security software. The only disadvantage to this program is that you have to remember to run a manual scan (say once a week). It's worth it—Malwarebytes finds problems other security software does not.

The best way to keep your computer secure, as mentioned above, is to keep the operating system and security software up to date. You can set Windows computers for automatic operating system updates. Virtually all security software programs, including the free ones can be set up for automatic updates.

For more information on this topic, connect to http://frpcug.org/presentations/BB_Present04.pdf and http://frpcug.org/presentations/comp_maint_security.pdf.

One other suggestion:

Another free, useful utility is Belarc Advisor. The program provides a detailed list of the hardware installed in your computer. You can download Belarc Advisor from http://www.belarc.com/free_download.html. While not crucial, like security software and maintenance utilities, Belarc is a helpful program to have on your computer.

We have installed and run these programs on many computers without any problems. There is, however, always the chance that some unusual combination of hardware and software may result in a problem. So you should backup at the very least your important data, even if it is just copying that data temporarily to a flash drive. Please read our disclaimer at <http://www.frpcug.org/k-byte/current.pdf>

Happy Computing!

TO "CLOUD" OR NOT TO "CLOUD"

To 'Cloud' or Not To "Cloud," That Is the Question
 Submitted by Joan Frerichs, CIACUG Board Member
www.ciacug.org
ciacug@ciacug.org

I'd heard of saving computer files to the "cloud," but I really didn't know very much about it until our April CIACUG meeting when David Williams provided members with a great deal of helpful information about how it works.



If you have never had your computer "crash," be destroyed in a fire or flood, be struck by lightning, or stolen, you have been exceptionally fortunate, or, perhaps, you haven't been computing very long. After spending many painstaking hours of inputting data, contact lists, medical histories, financial information, etc. on our first computer, we experienced a crash that lost all of that data forever. Many times you toss or shred the paper trail thinking your information is safe forever. How naive can one be? It can be an "oops moment," or it can be devastating. We had to consider ours an "oh phoo moment" and move on with life and start over, and that is disconcerting, to say the least. If you have business information and customer lists on your computer, it can put you out of business temporarily, at the very least.

If you've been backing up your files to an external hard drive, what if that is destroyed in a fire? If you've been religiously backing up your data to disc

times two, putting one in the fire safe (not very safe) and taking one to an off-site location, that gets time-consuming and cumbersome. The easy solution....back it up to the "cloud."



If you are a non-business user, there are several cloud servers that give you a certain amount of free storage, and it was pointed out that it is a good plan to review the sites to see what they have to offer and then choose a couple that you feel fit your needs and you are comfortable with probably being around for the long-term. There have been servers that have "disappeared" in the past without ample warning for users to recall their data. Thus, it's a good plan to save the same data on more than one cloud server. If you are a business user or require more space than the free allotment, there will be a charge. With some servers you can increase your allotment by "recommending" their service to others, and if they should decide to sign on with that service, you may then be allowed additional storage space.

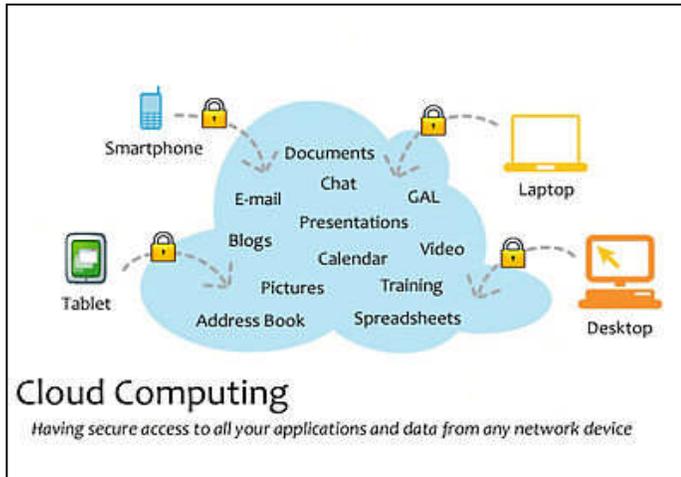
The next step is to set up your accounts, organize your files, save your files to the clouds and then synchronize your pc, your laptop, your iPad, etc. so that any changes you make to any of your saved files will automatically be updated on all your devices. That's a time-saving plus. Also, you are able to access those files in the cloud from any web-based hardware that has access to the internet. You can also share data files, photos, etc. with friends and family.

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TO "CLOUD" OR NOT TO "CLOUD"

(Continued from page 7)

Be sure to remember, or write down, your user names and passwords.



Following are some links to websites for comparison purposes:

20 Clever Apps and Services That Make Great Use of the Cloud

<http://bit.ly/Jydzv>

Comparison of online backup services

<http://bit.ly/5P003Z>

Cloud Drive Comparison

<http://rww.to/j2FUhI>

The "Top Best Cloud Storage Companies" Reviewed!

www.thetop10bestonlinebackup.com/cloud-storage

15 Best Free Online Data Storage & Backup Services

<http://bit.ly/rQGb1p>

Listed below are some of the free cloud storage servers and the amount of free storage:

DropBox 2 GB

www.dropbox.com

Windows Skydrive 7 GB

skydrive.live.com

BOX 5 GB

www.box.com

Google Drive 5 GB

drive.google.com

SugarSync 5 GB

www.sugarsync.com

ASUS Webstorage 2 GB

www.asuswebstorage.com/

Wuala 5 GB

www.wuala.com/

Apple iCloud 5 GB

www.icloud.com

Amazon Cloud 5 GB

www.amazon.com/cloudrive

Google Music

play.google.com/music

You might also be interested in checking out the following:

TonidoSync

www.tonido.com

LiveMesh

download.cnet.com/Live-Mesh-2011/

Social Folders

socialfolders.me

Insync

[ww.insynchq.com/](http://www.insynchq.com/)

Teradesk

www.teradesk.net

Now, get organized:

SAVE, SAVE, SAVE (TO THE CLOUD). It can keep you safe and sane.

SURPRISE - THERE ARE OTHER SEARCH ENGINES

What do you mean there are other search engines?

*By Linda Gonse, Editor/Webmaster, ORCOPUG
(Orange County PCUG), California*

April 2012 issue, Nibbles 'n Bits

www.orcopug.org

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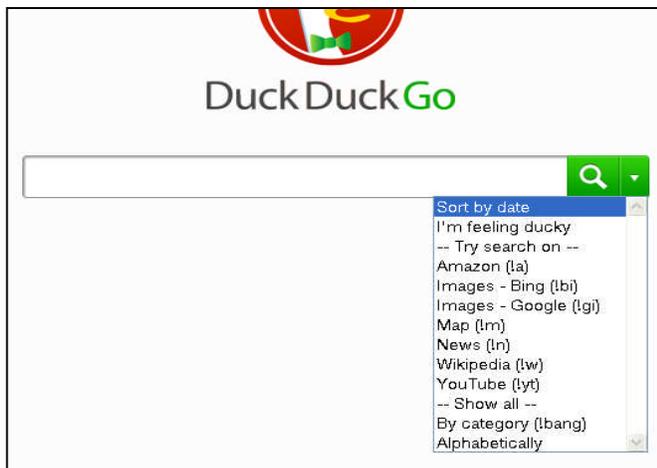
It will come as a surprise to some people that there are more choices than Google or Bing for Internet search engines. Two newer and smaller search engines that do not have a large market share of users or the reach of the major search engines actually can be unique and helpful secondary Internet search tools.

ONE OF THESE IS A GENERAL SEARCH ENGINE

It has the catchy name of DuckDuckGo which claims it will give users "way more instant answers, way less spam and real privacy."

Billing itself as "the search engine you've never heard of," it surpassed 1,000,000 searches in one day for the first time on February 14, 2012.

Similar to Google's one click "I'm feeling lucky" search, DuckDuckGo has its own one click "I'm feeling ducky" button for searches.



But, perhaps the most innovative search feature are DuckDuckGo's !bangs commands that allow you to designate a major site/category on which to base the search.

On the search page, click the down arrow and select one of the popular target sites. It will appear in the search box with an exclamation point and its letter code. Next to it, type in your search term and press enter. Bang! It takes you directly to that website

where the results of your search term are displayed. For instance, choose Amazon – !a – from the drop-down list of Bangs. Then, type "bestseller books" and press enter. A list of bestselling books at the Amazon site appears instantly.

Perhaps, just as importantly to some, DuckDuckGo's company philosophy is that "DuckDuckGo does not collect or share personal information. That is our privacy policy in a nutshell."

DuckDuckGo's company philosophy is that "DuckDuckGo does not collect or share personal information."

An enthusiastic blogger at programmableweb.com said, "The search engine provides clean,

uncluttered results and is very easy to use." Check out duckduckgo.com.

ANOTHER GENERAL SEARCH ENGINE-GIBIRU

Gibiru is a free, uncensored anonymous internet search engine and year-old Silicon Valley startup that reached 10,000 daily searches in January 2012.

Besides the limits placed by the National Security Agency, services such as America OnLine, Microsoft, Yahoo and others are slowly turning the Internet into an information superhighway dominated by barricades, toll booths, and tracking codes. They use geolocation filtering which restricts or modifies web content based on the geographical region of the user.

Such filtering can now be implemented for countries, states, cities, and even individual IP addresses. Also, due to tracking and filtering, search results are now tailored to the individual IP addresses which are conducting a search; so their "personalized" search results will be skewed and vary from one user's results to another user's results.

Gibiru provides the basic Google search results most people are familiar with, but when searching the web through Gibiru, the system does not utilize the searcher's IP address or cookie data when it returns the search results; providing a non-personalized, all-inclusive, private search experience. Gibiru gathers no personal information on its users.

However, due to some Google code needed for results, "Gibiru may use aggregated statistics to manage bandwidth and site performance. Gibiru makes nor implies any guarantee that a site or sites visited after leaving the Gibiru search results will not be tracking the user independently or storing data the user."

You can try Gibiru out at gibiru.com.

KEEPING UP WITH UPGRADES

Keeping up with Upgrades
John Curth
Phoenix PC User Group

Almost everyone is familiar with Microsoft and their constant upgrading of the Windows Operating System. Today they have [Windows 7](#) in both 32/64 bit structures. But on the horizon is Windows 8, which to most of us, it just means it's going to cost more and have a different layout. This will require individuals and computer schools to change their books, their computers, and their curriculum in order to show what the latest and greatest is right now. In addition all software and hardware manufacturers must upgrade just to sell their products.

Right now, however, all is not lost for the older 8/16/32 bit programs that are still available and still in use by many, many people. Many Microsoft users are unaware that a [Windows 7 Professional/Ultimate/Enterprise](#) version exists right now. Microsoft knows that many users who still use Windows XP are afraid that they will lose access to their current files.

So, Microsoft will allow the users of Windows 7 to download a program FREE called [Windows Virtual PC](#). This is a new file system that can be downloaded on Windows XP Professional so that the XP program may be used as before. Although it is FREE, in order to use programs that work in XP you must now reload the Install Disk from those particular programs while in the XP mode.

To get started: Download and install the chosen programs on your computer, and click Start, All Programs. Slide down to Windows Virtual PC and click once. It will open to another file that says Windows XP Mode. Click once again and you are there.

Your computer will now open with a plain blue XP (clone) screen with a new tool bar on the top center. To check I installed one of my "older" programs that came with my original computer having Windows 95. It went in easily and I now had access to that program. Now I can go back to any files that I had back then.

Were there any drawbacks? Yes, I came across two (2) problems I couldn't correct right away. First, my (large) monitor display was limited to no screen size smaller than 1920 X 1198. Under Display Proper-

ties I found that the "adjustment" bar was grayed out along as were Advanced Settings. It wouldn't allow me to change anything in the display. But a return to Windows 7 to readjust the display size to a smaller setting that could now be carried over into the XP mode. Secondly, a floppy disk drive that plugs into a USB drive was not recognized by XP program, even though it does in the Windows 7 mode. I even loaded the driver CD that I received with the floppy disk. Although with this step the computer would recognize the A Drive, but it would not open the inserted floppy. It just said "install disk" in a dialog box. The problem was overcome by using Windows 7 that had access to both the A Drive and to the floppy. Insertion of a floppy and a flash drive into USB ports allowed the floppy files to be copied to the flash drive; this gave access to those files while using the XP mode.

To close out of the XP mode, use the X on the tool bar that appeared with the clone screen and that will take you back to your Windows 7 Operating System. Also, I found out when I left a floppy in the computer and shut it down, when I booted the computer the next morning it wouldn't boot due to an "unauthorized disk" in the A Drive. That now tells me that the A Drive is still the primary boot in my BIOS.

WE WANT TO INCREASE

OUR MEMBERSHIP

IF EACH MEMBER

BROUGHT JUST ONE

INTERESTED GUEST

TO A MEETING

WE WOULD ACCOMPLISH OUR GOAL

FILE RECOVERY STRATEGIES

File Recovery Strategies

By Dick Maybach

May 2012 issue, BUG Bytes, Brookdale Computer Users' Group, NJ

www.bcug.com

n2nd (at) charter.net

Using home computers affords many opportunities for errors and malfunctions. You probably have experienced at least one of these mishaps.

- Shortly after emptying the recycle bin, you realize it contained a file you should have restored.
- A CD, CD-ROM, or DVD is scratched and unplayable or unreadable.
- You formatted the memory card for your digital camera with vacation pictures you hadn't yet moved to your PC.
- Your computer won't boot, and you haven't backed up all your files.
- Your hard disk is beginning to report errors, and again it isn't backed up.

You had a fire, a flood, or a power surge, and your hard disk is dead.

Surprisingly, you can probably recover some and perhaps most of your data in each of these cases, as you will see in this article and the two that follow it: Windows graphical tools, and command-line tools. As will become apparent, by far the best approach is prevention in the form of a good backup regimen, and if you haven't already, reading this series may inspire you to begin one.

Regardless of what happened, the first step is usually the same – turn off the equipment that contains the damaged medium. Don't power it up again until you have collected any equipment and software you need and have developed a good plan. If the plan involves using unfamiliar software, practice the procedures on a test medium until you are comfortable with them.

It's most important that you not write anything to the device from which you hope to recover the files. This implies several things.

- If the device is your system disk (C: for Windows users), you must not install any software before you

have recovered the files. Ideally, you shouldn't even reboot from it.

- To recover files from your system disk you must remove the disk and mount it in a different PC (unless you have recovery software installed) or use a Linux live CD.

When you recover files from a device, you must re-write them to a different device.

The general approach depends on the nature of the problem.

- *Complete device failure or physical damage from fire, water, electrical surge, or physical shock* – You can't do anything and neither can your local shop; instead, you must send the device to a specialist. Expect the fees to start at above \$1000, and they could be much higher. Reputable firms don't guarantee success, but many charge you only for what they are able to recover.

- *Problems resulting from a gradually failing system disk* – You must either move the drive to a new computer or boot from a live CD (which doesn't use the internal hard drive). Regardless of your approach, your first task is to move all the data from the failing device to a good one. The preferable way to do this is with a program such as gddrescue (discussed in next column), which is designed to recover as much as possible from a corrupt filesystem.

- *Problems resulting from a gradually failing storage device that is not a system disk* – Since your system disk is fine, you can use your computer to salvage the data. Again, the first step is to move all the data to a good device.

- *A computer that won't boot* – Most likely, your data isn't affected, but you should move all your files to an external device before you try to repair the operating system.

- *Problems resulting from malware or a software malfunction* – If this occurs on a system disk, you must not boot from it, as this would allow the problem software to continue its mischief. Thus, you must use either a live CD or attach the disk to a clean computer. Once you do this, there will be no new damage, which means you can recover files at your leisure.

(Continued on page 12)

FILE RECOVERY STRATEGIES

(Continued from page 11)

Problems resulting from user errors – If these occur on a system disk, you should not boot from it until you have recovered the data. This is because each boot causes files to be written, which could overwrite what you are trying to recover. The best time to recover that data is immediately after you delete it, providing you had already installed the recovery software you need. Thus, this case is an exception to the rule that your first step should be to shut down your computer.

Your first decision is whether to attempt the recovery yourself or pay a shop to do it. If the data is very valuable or belongs to a business, strongly consider having a competent professional do the work. Also consider a professional if the medium is failing; here, you have little time, as data losses will continue. Ask what approach they will use, and if their strategy is different than what I discuss here, they should be able to justify it.

You must next decide whether you will use a tool in your native operating system or a Linux (probably command-line) tool. A strong advantage of working in your native environment is that it reduces the likelihood of serious errors. However, to recover files from a Mac or Microsoft system disk, you will have to remove it and connect it to a separate, healthy computer that has the appropriate recovery software. Rather than opening the healthy computer's system case to install the hard disk in it, consider buying a IDE to USB, a SATA to USB, or a laptop disk to USB adapter (depending on the drive you're working on). (Of course, this isn't necessary if the problem is on a removable medium, such as a memory stick or CD-ROM.) An alternative is to use a Linux live-CD, which runs from a CD-ROM or memory stick without accessing the hard disk at all, except to recover files from it. As a result, you don't have to move the hard disk to another PC. Even die-hard Windows users should consider acquiring and experimenting with a Linux-based maintenance disk, such as Parted Magic, to be ready in case of difficulty. (See my article in the April BCUG Bytes, available at <http://www.bcug.com>)

Next month we'll look at recovery tools that run under Windows. (I'm not able to test Mac procedures, but a Web search will find graphical recovery tools for the Mac.) The following month, we'll look at Linux command-line tools, two of which also run on both Mac and Microsoft operating systems. To decide between graphical and command-line tools, consider the following.

Graphical tool pros:

- familiar environment and intuitive procedures. (You probably don't need a manual.)

Graphical tool cons:

- need to remove the system disk from the PC,
- need a second PC and probably an adapter to work on the system disk, and you can work only on native filesystems (FAT and NTFS for Windows).

Command-line tool pros:

- handles a greater range of problems and if used with a live-CD, allows working on a system disk in place and on many different filesystems.

Command-line tool cons:

- user needs more expertise and if used with a Linux live-CD, the environment is probably unfamiliar.

From this I recommend that if you are familiar only with Windows or the Mac and are recovering files from a removable medium, use graphical tools that are native to your operating system. However, in part three, we'll look at two command-line tools (TestDisk and PhotoRec) that run on both Windows and the Mac as well as on Linux, and both are almost as easy to use as the graphical tools. If you have a system disk problem, use a Linux live-CD (such as Parted Magic), mount the disk in a second PC that has the proper recovery tools, or take the PC with the problem disk to a good shop. Of course, by far the best approach is to use an effective backup program, which lets you avoid this whole mess.

COFFEE SHOP COMPUTER ETIQUETTE

Coffee Shop Computer Etiquette

By Mark Tiongco

www.geeks.com

This Tech Tip is a list of experiences that I have found to be a hindrance but can otherwise be remedied for all you mobile tech commuters. Have you ever found yourself trying to get work done at a Starbucks/Panera Bread (or name your favorite go-to spot) but can't because some inconsiderate customer is making it difficult/impossible to get work done? Let's dive right in to what this article is all about, coffee shop etiquette!

This Tech Tip will help outline a general etiquette list so mobile tech commuters can share a common courtesy in this world filled with laptops, e-book readers and coffee shops!

1) Keep a power strip handy

Leave a power strip in the car or backpack as a contingency plan in case you walk into a coffee shop and see one power outlet with both plugs occupied. Offer to plug your power strip in; usually everyone is okay with it as many times there are 3-4 laptop users nearby who would like to charge their rigs. If you want to go compact, you can also find a 2-3 plug power strip and just keep it in your backpack/notebook bag/man-purse.

2) Offer your power outlet to someone who needs it

And the majority of us hardly ever allow our notebooks/tablets to completely discharge, never mind that virtually all notebooks built today average at least 3-4 hours of battery life. (plenty of time to get important work done!) The interesting thing is that computer makers have listened to repeated consumer demand of more battery life (many average 7-10 hrs. run time) but unfortunately this still happens. So if you find yourself fully charged and not planning on camping out, offer it to that fellow laptop user who might be running on battery fumes.

3) Offer part of your medium (or large) table to someone else.

Yes I know this is America and it's all about space but if you were the unlucky soul to walk into a completely full coffee house, wouldn't you feel good knowing someone is willing to share his/her table? We gotta help each other out!

4) Invest in a notebook cooler or lap desk

If you arrive at a busy coffee shop and find the only option is a love seat or couch, you'll feel better knowing you won't burn your naughty bits and thus protect future generations.

5) Understand Your Notebook's Power Capabilities and Settings

Assuming the coffee shop you walk into is full of selfish and unforgiving souls (yes, I have encountered them myself!), knowing your notebook's power capabilities enables you to adapt accordingly to still get work done... For example, I know my notebook has an approximate battery life of 5 hours but when I have had to work on battery mode due to lack of available outlets, I instinctively know to dim the LCD screen and throttle down the CPU to extend battery life since I know sometimes I might be there for at least 5 hours.

6) Pick up a tablet PC

If you find that your purposes for lugging around a traditional-sized notebook are for leisurely email checking, casual web browsing and music, a tablet PC might be appropriate for you. With the explosion of tablets such as the Samsung Galaxy Tab, Motorola Xoom and even the super-duper popular Apple iPad, these slim devices can do many simple everyday computing tasks but can fit in a carrying sleeve or small messenger bag. In addition to the weight reduction, a tablet PC's perks include not requiring you to wait during start up (instant on OS!), not having to find a table and pull out/lug around a power adapter, and can last virtually the entire day on a single charge. However as a disclaimer, I am not suggesting you ditch your notebook computer in favor of a tablet PC but simply that they complement each other depending on the task that needs to be done.

7) Don't be a Squatter!

I'm sure everyone has been hearing about Starbucks' recent issues with Squatters; these are Starbucks customers who buy a cup of coffee and then occupy a table/power outlet with their laptop and basically camp out for countless hours. While I do agree this is technically legal since SBUX offers free Wi-Fi for customers, they have the right to limit use such as covering up power outlets and eventually offer your seat to other paying customers. Out of courtesy and basic respect to your fellow commuters, you should budget your time, get your work done, and then relinquish your seat for the person who needs a table to get work done (just as you probably did before him/her). However, if you insist on camping out for the entire day at Starbucks, the least you can do is buy more than a cup of coffee every 2-3 hours as a sign of good faith that you're not a moocher!

STRONG - EASY TO REMEMBER PASSWORDS

Make Hard to Break, Yet Easy to Remember Passwords

By Doris Collins, Member, ccOKC (Computer Club of Oklahoma City)

May 2012 Issue, eMonitor

www.ccokc.org

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We all know that simple passwords are dangerous. If you're using any of the following for passwords (or forms thereof), you probably aren't as secure as you think:

- Names of Pets
- Birth date
- Last 4 digits of your SS#
- Kid's Names
- Grandkid's Names
- Parent's Names
- Addresses
- Phone Numbers
- The word Password

Did I catch you? Well, it gets even worse!

Even if you're not using any of the above, but are still using simple words (like car, bike, etc.) for your passwords, you're accounts are still pretty easy to break into. Now, a better password looks more like this:

ks86jw03ts92ctb02

Although some would argue that it's not better than what most people have been using thus far. Yeah, yeah, I know what you're thinking, "How the heck am I supposed to remember that thing? It's 17 random letters and numbers!" Read on. That password is as easy to remember as any other - if you understand how it was constructed:

It's based on a fictitious Smith family with a daughter named Kelly and a son named Tyler. They have a 2003 Jeep Wrangler and an 02 Chevy Trail Blazer. Now, let's take those facts and look at the password again:

ks - Kelly Smith, born in 1986

jw03 - Jeep Wrangler, 2003 model

ts92 - Tyler Smith, born in 1992

ctb02 - You guessed it, Chevy Trail Blazer
2002 model year

I simply took the first initials of everyone and everything involved, then the year they were born (or built). It's a lot tougher to guess a password like that, but still very easy to remember.

**DID YOU KNOW
YOU CAN GET
YOUR NEWSLETTER
ELECTRONICALLY EACH
MONTH ?**

**JUST GO TO OUR
WEBSITE
AND CLICK ON THE
NEWSLETTER PAGE**

OR

**IF YOU WANT A PRINTED COPY
MAILED TO YOU EACH MONTH**

JUST SEND AN EMAIL TO:

members@phoenixpcug.org

**MAKE SURE YOU INCLUDE YOUR
EMAIL
AND ADDRESS
OR**

**check the box on your
membership application when paying
your dues**

Short Circuits...zzzt!



WHY PUNCTUATION AND VOCABULARY MATTER...

Oops 1. The Bank of America just accidentally gave a Detroit man \$1.5 million. A BofA customer whose checking account supposedly only had a few hundred dollars, didn't receive any insufficient funds notifications when he attempted to make cash withdrawals at the ATM. In fact, he didn't even receive the traditional alert that he had reached his daily withdrawal limit. Instead, a rare ATM error allowed him to continually take out as much cash as he pleased at ATMs and casino cash windows. So what did he do with the money? Invest it and change his name? Squirrel it away in a Swiss bank account and leave the country? This was no criminal mastermind. This was just a man who just stumbled on a treasure, and his luck appeared to stop once his ATM card dispensed the cash. He gambled it all away at three Michigan casinos. Now, he's facing federal charges, and it looks like he'll wind up in jail. *Bankrate.com* June 22, 2012

Oops 2. A New Mexico woman was arrested and spent a night in jail for not returning the book "Twilight" and two-DVD set "The Twilight Saga: New Moon" back to the library on time. The local paper reports the woman was arrested and handcuffed at her home in front of her five small children for the \$36 worth of library materials not returned since 2010. Her attorney says arrest warrants were mailed last year to an address at which she hadn't lived since childhood. But the woman was actually arrested by officers investigating a disturbance. The library charges, at least, were dismissed. *Associated Press* June 28, 2012

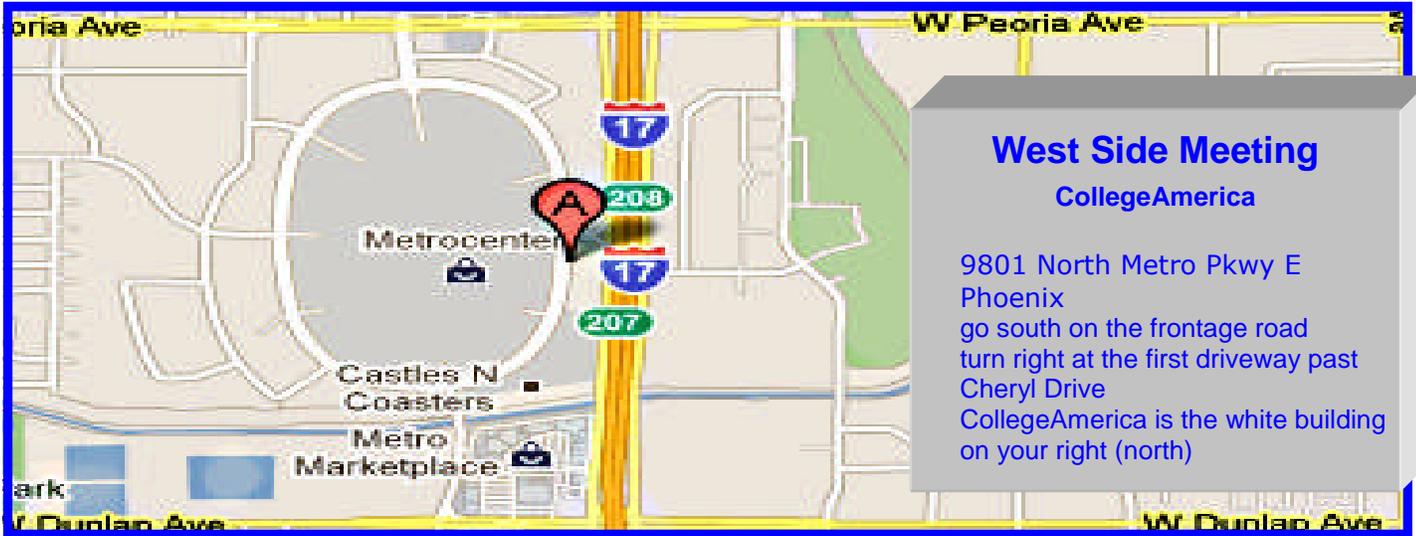
Oops 3 If you've ever lied to about your weight, texted your girl friend that you were someplace you weren't or emailed mom to say how much you love that ugly new sweater, you were breaking the law if you did it in Rhode Island. An obscure 1989 law made fibbing on the Internet a misdemeanor punishable by fines of up to \$500 and as much as a year in prison. An ACLU representative stated, "This law made virtually the entire population of Rhode Island a criminal. When this bill was enacted nobody had any idea what its ramifications were. Telling fibs may be wrong, but it shouldn't be criminal activity." The law — which legal experts say was unusually broad compared to similar laws across the country — was written to stop fraud, con artists and scammers, but it also outlawed the "transmission of false data" regardless of whether liars stood to profit from their deception or not. But state lawmakers have now decided that white lies online should no longer be a crime. The General Assembly voted this month to repeal the law. The repeal of the Rhode Island law was prompted in part by a 2010 case in which a former prison guard was arrested for setting up a fake Facebook page in the name of his boss, the state's corrections director. The charges were later dropped, though the guard lost his job. The man's attorney said what his client was accused of doing "may not be bright, but it shouldn't be illegal."

Associated Press June 26, 2012



These Items are based on articles from the noted sources and have been adapted by the Editor.

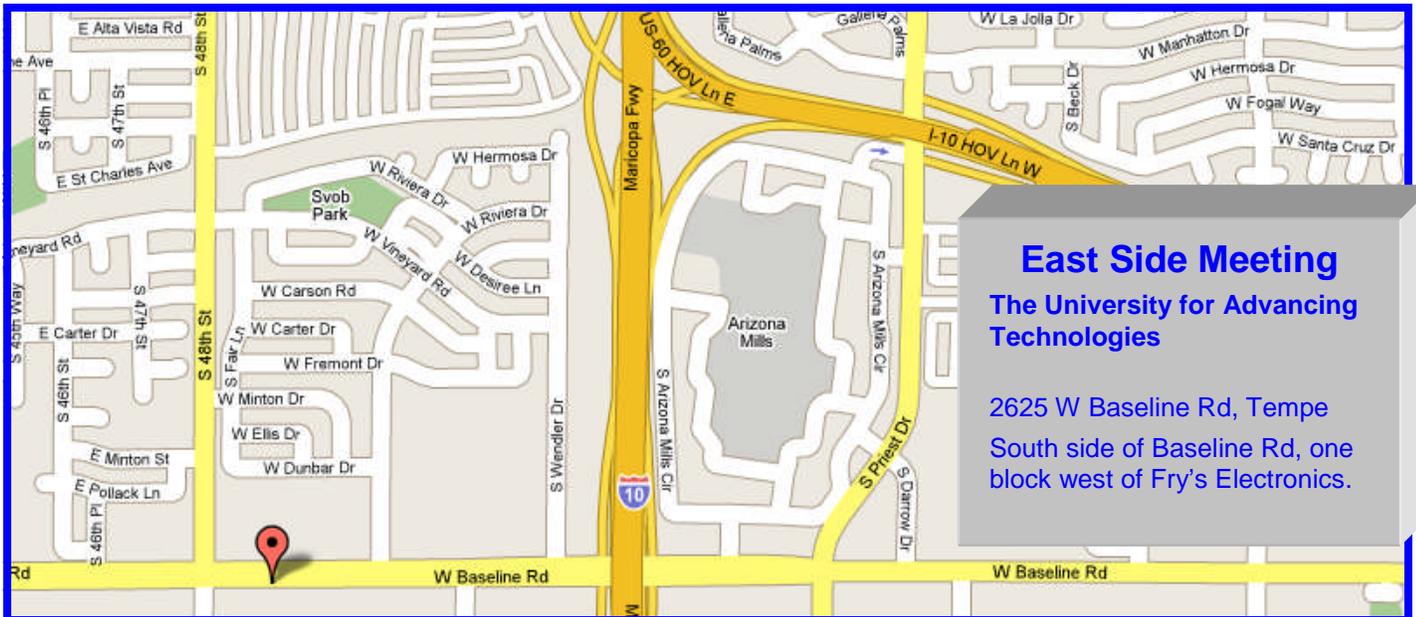
HOW TO GET THERE



West Side Meeting

CollegeAmerica

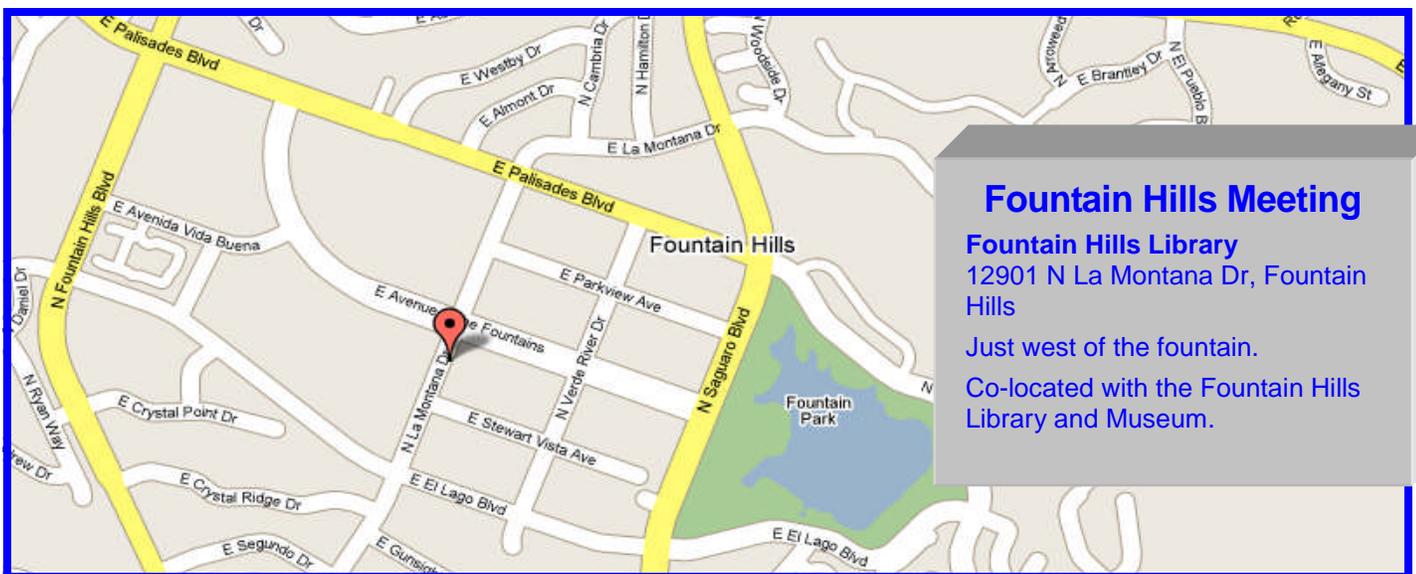
9801 North Metro Pkwy E
 Phoenix
 go south on the frontage road
 turn right at the first driveway past
 Cheryl Drive
 CollegeAmerica is the white building
 on your right (north)



East Side Meeting

The University for Advancing Technologies

2625 W Baseline Rd, Tempe
 South side of Baseline Rd, one
 block west of Fry's Electronics.



Fountain Hills Meeting

Fountain Hills Library
12901 N La Montana Dr, Fountain Hills

Just west of the fountain.
 Co-located with the Fountain Hills
 Library and Museum.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

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

*DUES \$36
THROUGH
DEC 31, 2012*

Phoenix PC Users Group Membership Application

First: (Print Legibly) _____ Initial: ___ Last: _____

Address: _____

City, State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ Ext: _____

Please note: We DO-NOT share phone numbers outside the club, and will generally only use your phone information, if we cannot contact you in timely fashion, via e-mail, or the club web-site

Receive Electronic newsletter in place of printed one: Yes No

E-mail address: _____ (Print Legibly)

Signature _____ Date ___/___/___

Release my address to vendors ? Yes No Note: Phone numbers **will not** be listed.

May the club share your e-mail address with other members only? Yes No

With club approved vendors? Yes No

Please do not share my e-mail address

Mail this completed form with payment to:

Phoenix PC Users Group
PO Box 45451
Phoenix, AZ 85064—5451



*The Best Accessory
for your PC!*

Web address:
phoenixpcug.org

July 2012

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

STAMP

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PO BOX 45451
PHOENIX, AZ 85064-5451