THE BUG REPORT

January 2009

INSIDE

If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: If we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome.

--Anne Bradstreet, Poet

January 5

eBoostr
With Greg Neumann

The January program will be presented by Greg Neumann. Greg will be demonstrating a free program called *eBoostr* that will allow *Windows XP* users to use flash drives as part of their onboard memory. This should be very useful for people who have older computers that will not allow adding increased memory.

Additionally, *eBoostr* is a program which provides *Windows XP* users with the capability to have *Vista's* 'ReadyBoost' and 'SuperFetch' technologies available on *Windows XP.* It speeds up your PC and improves application responsiveness

by using flash memory and free RAM as an extra layer of performance-boosting cache for your PC.

Use up to four inexpensive flash devices to speed up your system. Add more speed to your PC without any hardware upgrade!

Greg will also show *Picasa*, the Google photo program, that is free.

Your president will demonstrate the *ZOOMIT* and 'System Information' *Windows* (SIW) utilities.

Don't miss this great evening of utilities that will be useful to everyone.

Greater South Bay PC Users Group

A member of
Association of Personal Computer User Groups

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General meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the first Monday of the month at the Salvation Army Facility, 4223 Emerald Street (at the corner of Emerald and Earl Streets), Torrance.

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President's Thoughts

By U. A. Garred Sexton

How often have you wished the text on your computer screen were larger, you could enlarge a part of the picture, or you could circle or underline something with a red marking to emphasize it? Some of you realize that holding the control key down while rotating the thumb wheel on your mouse will change the size within some programs but not others; for example, it will not work with AOL.

If you are interested in having more flexibility, a free download that will work on any part of the screen and in all programs is *ZOOMIT*. To locate the *ZOOMIT* download, go to Google, find the Search box and type *ZOOMIT* in the box. The program is small and needs to be loaded when you think you will be using it. To make it easy to use, put a shortcut to *Zoomit* on your desktop. In the default setting (control key + number 1 key), you will be able to enlarge any part of the screen that is centered around the curser, but you cannot edit anything. You can enlarge the area of interest and control the amount of enlargement with your mouse. To return to normal function and size, press the ESC button.

Another part of the program allows you to draw on the screen with a red line to point out or emphasize an item or items. To get to this feature, pressing the control key + number 2 key will provide you with a red plus sign that you can manipulate with your mouse as you wish. Holding down the left mouse button will permit you to start drawing a figure or line and releasing the mouse button will stop the line's progress. This is great if you are showing pictures and want to point out something to the audience. It works much better than a laser pointer. To return to normal and eliminate the red markings, press ESC. No editing or changing the screen is possible while this feature is active. Unfortunately you cannot run both parts of the *ZOOMIT* program at once. Also, you cannot use another program such as *SNAGIT* with *ZOOMIT*.

On another topic, Dave Whittle has a beta website, , that looks interesting. It is called "CoolHotNot" Insiders List.

You may sign up for this pre-beta interest list at CoolHotNot.com. If you sign up you will be informed of what's new with the site as it develops. They have their plans firmly in place, and most of their team assembled – when the team is firmly in place, they'll be introducing you to them via this list.

Their plans are to keep you fully informed as to What's Cool, What's Hot, and What's Not – based on the actual experience of their team of industry insiders and tech experts as well as the combined wisdom of everyone who registers and shares their tech "Best Loved List," "Most Wanted List," and "Biggest Letdown List."

The site will also have various social networking aspects that will make it fun to visit, worthwhile to share, and easy to learn.

Internet Talk

By Frank Chao
Member, GS-BUG

Welcome to the New Year and to the 111th *Internet Talk* article for *The Bug Report,* a publication of the Greater South Bay PC Users Group (GSBUG). Liz and I hope that your holidays brought you much fun and joy. The Tucson Computer Society's "holiday celebration hour" that we attended in December reminded us of the great GSBUG Christmas party meetings that we used to attend. We used the shindig here in Tucson as an excuse to demonstrate karaoke software.

BLACK VIPER'S OPERATION SYSTEM GUIDES

You can speed up your computer by performing the cleanup/speedup tweaks at http://www.blackviper.com/Articles/OS/OSguides.htm

Note that they provide tweaks for *Windows 2000 Pro* and *Windows ME* in addition to *Windows XP*. and *Windows Vista*. Those who are still running *2000* and *ME* will benefit the most from tweaking their older, slower computers, but Liz and I have seen even the fastest *Vista* machines slowed down to a crawl by non-optimal settings and unneeded software.

The actual tweaks at the Black Viper Web site are not on the homepage. For example, to get

to the list of tweaks for *Windows XP Home*:
Click on 'Windows XP Home' in the 'Quick Links' section,
Then, click on 'Windows XP Home Super Tweaks Page'
Then carefully follow the instructions from 'Number One' to 'Number Ten.'

For each step of the instructions, click on 'Screen shots of the process,' if you want more detailed directions.

EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT FREE KARAOKE

. . . but were too busy to ask has been written into a document by Liz and me and it is located at

http://aztcs.org/meeting_notes/2008-12-15/Karaoke_on_a_PC.pdf

Those of you who have been reading my articles for the past two years will recognize all of the sections of this 40 page dissertation. It compiles all that we have written into a single document.

With each passing year, more and more karaoke is available as streaming videos at various Web sites. However, the number of songs that are available as a 'Web video' remains a small fraction of the number that is

available as .kar, .mid, or .midi files, and the audio quality of the streaming videos is horrible compared to local application-based karaoke.

This extended article has detailed instructions on both Web-based and local application-based karaoke.

AN EXPLORATION OF NON-FREE KARAOKE

Having exhausted the limits of free karaoke, Liz and I decided to learn about the non-free versions of karaoke. We discovered that there are three levels of non-free karaoke:

- Proprietary file downloads
- MP3+G downloads
and
- CD+G discs

Proprietary file downloads are the cheapest and CD+G discs are the most expensive.

PROPRIETARY FILE DOWNLOADS

For an example of 'proprietary file downloads,' go to the Karafun Web site at http://www.karafun.com.

Then, click on the 'Karaoke songs' tab,

Next, click on any song:

You will discover that most songs are selling for 2.99 Euros, or about four dollars per downloaded song.
These songs are in the *.kfn Karafun file format and keep in mind that only the free Karafun software application can open them. The Karafun software application has problems running on computers with processors running slower than 3 gigahertz, so make sure that your computer is capable of running Karafun without audio distortion, before spending money at the '..Songs' section of the Karafun Web site.

MP3+G DOWNLOADS

The next level up in price and audio quality is 'MP3+G downloads.'

Karaoke songs in this format are usually sold as *.zip files that contain an *.MP3 file and a *.CDG file. I refer to each song as a CDG file pair. The 'mp3' file contains the music audio and the 'cdg' file contains the scrolling lyrics.

The largest online retailer is called 'CAVS USA' and their Web page is located at http://www.cavsusa.com/cdgdownload/.

If you search for *White Christmas*, you will find that it is available for download as a zipped CDG file pair for 99 cents. Cool!

If you paid them 99 cents via a credit card, the zip file that you download will actually have three files inside it as follows:

The MCG file is actually a compressed version of the CDG lyrics file so we can still refer to the downloaded zip file as a file pair consisting of an .mp3 file compressed audio and a .cdg lyrics file.

You can play CDG file pairs with the Karafun freeware application.

Again, you need to make sure that the Karafun software application will run on your computer. It only runs on half the computers that I and Liz have tried it on.

Keep in mind that CDG file pairs are the medium quality level of non-free karaoke.

Also, please keep in mind that you can get *White Christmas* as a free .midi karaoke or .kar file at many places such as at http://ultimatemidikaraoke.com/about.html so please do not spend your money for a CDG file pair unless you really need the enhanced audio quality relative to the lower quality of a midi karaoke or .kar file.

CD+G DISCS

CD+G discs are the top-most level of karaoke music. They are what professional musicians use.

CD+G discs look just like the audio CDs that you buy. However they have audio lyrics en-

coded into the same tracks that music is encoded into.

CD+G disks are also known as CDG disks.

The following logo is stamped on a CD+G disc:

The jewel case covers of most CD+G disks show 'CD+G' in a blue-colored circle that is about half an inch in diameter. Also, left edge of the jewel case will have the letters 'CDG' after the title of the disc.

There are no free software applications for playing CD+G discs. The lowest cost one is called *Siglos Karaoke Player/Recorder*, which costs about 50 dollars.

See http://www.powerkaraoke.com/src/prod_siglos-karaoke-player-recorder.php

Remember, this is the professional level of karaoke. If you hire a disk jockey to play at a bar mitzvah or a wedding, this professional will either bring CD+G disks or he/she will have them 'ripped' into their professional quality karaoke machine (which is a dedicated computer of some sort).

FREE STORAGE ON THE WEB--PART 1

BOX.NET
We will now start a new series of discussions about storing files for free on the Internet. Let's kick off this section with Box.net:

Their Web site is at http://www.box.net

To learn more about their free 'Lite' plan, go to http://www.box.net/info/pricing-plans

The key features for a free account are:

- Total storage space = 1 Gigabyte
-
- Maximum single file size = 25 Megabytes
-
- Maximum monthly bandwidth = 10 Gigabytes

The maximum monthly bandwidth is the total amount of data that you (and others that you designate) upload to, and download from, your free account.

Let me know if there is an online file storage service that you are particularly fond of and we will describe them in future articles in this series.

If you have any questions or problems, I can be contacted by the following methods:

XP SP3-Access Denied

By Bob Elgines
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This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

I tried installing the *Windows XP SP3* upgrade several times and, after talking with Microsoft reps, I shut off my anti-virus and updated my BIOS, but nothing seemed to work.

Then I decided to do a search and found 'Access Denied' information and over 340, 000 other people had used this same area. For some reason a changeable entry in the Register is locked and will not allow SP3 to change it.

First, do a right click on 'My Computer' icon and select 'Properties' to see if it has been installed.

Here is what you need to do if the Error message read 'Access Denied' or 'Service Pack Installation Did Not Complete.' First read your 'folder. In case you forgot Svcpack.log,' located under the *Windows* what the error message said, it should be at the bottom of the log.

Next 'Backup' your 'Register,' then download and install 'Subinacl.exe' from www.microsoft/downloads/

details.aspx?
FamilyID=e8ba3e56-4a91-93cf-ed698Se3927b&displaylang=en

Start 'Notepad,' then enter the following text:
cd /d "%ProgramFiles% \Windows Resource Kits\Tools"
subinacl /subkeyreg
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE /
grant=administrators=f /
grant=system=f
subinacl /subkeyreg
HKEY_CURRENT_USER /
grant=administrators=f /
grant=system=f
subinacl /subkeyreg
HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT /
grant=administrators=f /
grant=system=f
subinacl /subdirectories %
SystemDrive% /
grant=administrators=f /
grant=system=f
subinacl /subdirectories %
windir%*.* /
grant=administrators=f /
grant=system=f
secedit /configure /cfg %
windir%\repair\secsetup.inf /db
secsetup.sdb /verbose

Save as 'Reset.cmd.' Now double click on this file. It will take a while to complete its job.

Reboot your computer, you are now ready to install *Win XP SP3*.

Go to *Windows* update if you need to find the SP3 update.

Article

Simple File Management Enhancements Are At the Top of a Wish List For *Windows 7*

by Linda Gonse
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Besides the obvious–a stable system that performs fast, without vulnerabilities–I have thought of a few things I'd like to see integrated into the *Windows 7* OS which may be released in 2009/2010.

When it comes right down to it, I don't care if I can use 10 fingers to Paint with or other iPhone-like multi-touch features, or if *Internet Explorer* can recall a previous browsing session.

Simple file management enhancements are at the top of my wish list. I want to be able to print a list of my files and file information–a print directory feature. In the "old days" of DOS, you could do this. And now, you can use third party programs to accomplish this, but why isn't this already built-into *Windows*?

In *Windows 3.11*, there was a simple undelete feature. In later versions, the Recycle Bin gives you a chance to recover files you delete in haste or ignorance. But, what about files you deleted from the Recycle Bin? If you don't have a third party program installed, the files are really history.

Wouldn't it be great to have auto filtering in *Windows Explorer*?

Clicking on the top tab in a folder allows you to sort by Size, Date Modified, Type, etc. – but you still have to scroll through all the files in a directory to get to the specific file you are looking for. If you could set an auto-filter, such as *Excel* has, you could choose which extensions would be viewable, click on one, and only those files would be visible.

Windows 3.11 had the capability to only show certain types of files. This was closer to what I'd like, but it was a little involved to set it up and then be sure you reverted to the default file view afterward.

And, what about being able to flag a file and see the flag in *Windows Explorer*? Or, jot a post-it like note and attach it to a file?

DOS also allowed you to rename extensions on an entire directory of files. That would be a handy tool now.

What happened to the "quick view" inside of a word processing file in a directory? I want it back again.

A constant aggravation is the 'Open' and 'Save As' boxes in *Windows* and applications.

Sometimes there is a miniscule box to view an entire directory in bite sizes. Why can't all the boxes be large ones? And, why can't they be modified permanently so you can always view them the way you like them, such as you do in Folders?

Another drawback to these windows is that despite file names that are not very long, to the right of the file name I have to slide the first two columns - Size and Type - closer, scrunching them together, so I can see the Date Modified tab in the

same window. Sometimes you can scroll to see the Date Modified tab, but that is still not handy.

I have rearranged the headings to suit my need for selecting files by the most current. But, after closing and reopening an application, I have to modify the list again. Why can't my modifications be permanent? Also, I'd like to see these types of windows open up larger or have a resizing option to drag a corner border to make them larger.

Why do directories sometimes get scrambled? They aren't alphabetized or in any other order. Before I can open a file (not every time), I first have to click on the Name bar to alphabetize the directory. (Yes. There is a trick to closing a window to retain the order when it's reopened. Hold the Shift button down as you click on the "X" in the corner. But, you shouldn't have to do this.)

I'd also like to be able to format file names and related information in a directory. Maybe make some bold and orange, or some a bit smaller. Or, add stars or a ranking notation to files. The logical next step would be to set-up a sort function to be able to look for all items in a certain color or in 8 point type, or the file ranking.

Do you see the usefulness of these changes in sorting files? Modifying directory listings can be very helpful. It would allow users to see at a glance which items are important, or used most often, etc.

This is my short list. Have I mentioned anything on yours?

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*(From **Password**, page 9)*

passwords and access personal information.

So here are a few ground rules that may help keep your private information a little safer online:

1.   Use passwords that are not easy to guess and cannot be easily cracked. (Look for more on how to choose good passwords in another column.)

2.   Choose a security question that others will not be able to guess the answer to. Or answer the security question with an answer that you create which is not necessarily the true answer.

3.   Use unique passwords, especially for important services and websites like banking sites and e-mail.

4.   Keep your passwords private. Don't leave them on a sticky note on your computer screen or keep them in an unencrypted file on your computer.

5.   Change your passwords often.

6.   Do not change your password by clicking on a link in an email from someone claiming to be a system administrator, bank representative, or other seemingly reputable party. They may not be who they say they are. When you

want to change your password, always type in the address yourself so you know you are at the real website rather than a bogus one.

7.   Use one credit card for all online purchases. This will limit your financial exposure.

8.   Keep your operating system up-to-date.

9.   Use a good anti-virus and anti-spyware programs.

10. Consider using an encrypted password manager program.

Check the Compu-KISS website at www.compukiss.com for more information on choosing good passwords.

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*(**Internet Talk**, from page 6)*

1.   Send me e-mail at: fchao2@yahoo.com

2. Send "snail" United States Postal Service (USPS) mail to

Frank Chao
405 E. Wetmore Rd. #117-484
Tucson, AZ 85705-1792

Or sell your computer and take up golf instead !!

⚘⚘⚘⚘

One of the advantages of being disorderly is that one is constantly making exciting discoveries.
--A.A. Milne,
author of Winnie-the-Pooh

Article

Password Protection

**By Sandy Berger,
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When technology is good, it is very, very good, but when it is bad it can be truly atrocious.

So it is with the hacking of Sarah Palin's Yahoo e-mail account. The bad guys are out there using technology for their own advantage. Whether they are serious hackers who want information for devious purposes or young students who just want to show their technological prowess, this theft shows that everyone is vulnerable.

The recent hijacking of Sarah Palin's e-mail account is also a great example of how a hacker can gain access to an e-mail account and how e-mail accounts need to be better protected against such penetration.

We currently rely on passwords to protect most of our online activity.

Professional hackers often use 'password crackers' to guess passwords. Anyone can easily find these hacker tools on the Internet. They can even be purchased on CD. There are word lists for common passwords and dictionary combinations of possible passwords in a variety of different languages. These tools are all aimed at giving a person all the technical tools that they need to guess passwords.

In Sarah Palin's case, however, the perpetrator didn't even have to use tools like this.

A hacker identifying himself as 'Rubico' claims to have been able to change the password on Sarah Palin's Yahoo Mail account quite easily. All he had to do was use her e-mail name to log into the Yahoo Mail's interface and select the option to reset the password.

Yahoo then asked him to provide her birth date and zip code, which have become public knowledge.

He then had to answer her self-chosen security question which was where she met her husband. After several television interviews of Sarah and her husband, the answer to that question also became public knowledge.

Sarah Palin was thrown into the public arena quite quickly, but even those of us who are not public figures may find that their passwords and answers to security questions can be easily guessed.

Do you use the name of your spouse, children, pet, favorite sport, birthday, or wedding date as your password? Have you entered security questions like place of birth or favorite color that are easy to guess?

Privacy as we knew it before the Internet is now a thing of the past. With the Internet, more of our lives are online than most of us realize.

Many people use blogging as a past time and post information on MySpace, Facebook, and other social networking websites. Once posted, all of that information is publicly known.

And the Internet is archived, so even when you remove current information, previously posted information can still be found in Internet archives. That information can be used to guess

Article

QuickMonth Calendar

By Ken Peters
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This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

If you're tired of double clicking the clock to get the calendar up, then this program is for you: http://www.codedawn.com/qmc/quickmonth-calendar-download/.

QuickMonth Calendar is a freeware program which displays a small popup calendar on your *Windows* desktop whenever your mouse hovers over the clock in the system tray. The calendar display may also be toggled on and off by using the 'Windows+Q' keyboard shortcut. The program works with *XP* and *Windows 2000.* Click the clock once to make it appear. *Vista* already has a popup calendar.

You can get *QuickMonth Calendar* by visiting the download page. *QuickMonth Calendar* is free and does not include any adware or spyware.

NOTE: Some antivirus programs have incorrectly detected *QuickMonth Calendar* as a Trojan horse. Do not be alarmed — this type of erroneous detection is called a false positive. If you receive a virus warning message regarding *QuickMonth Cal-*

endar (qmc.exe), please report the false positive to your anti-virus software manufacturer so they can update their definitions. Here are a few of *QuickMonth Calendar's* features:

To quickly jump to today's date, right-click on the calendar or left-click the bottom of the calendar where it says 'Today.' Use the buttons at the top of the calendar to change the month. You can also left-click on the name of the month to see a popup menu of all the months

Left-click on the year to quickly change the year.

The calendar automatically detects the location of your *Windows* taskbar, so if you move the taskbar to the top, left, or right side of the screen, the calendar will still display next to your system tray clock (you may have to restart *Windows* once for the change to take effect).

The look of the calendar changes according to what your system colors are (as determined by your current *Windows* theme or visual style). The calendar will appear in any program when you put the pointer over the clock. I have found this program very handy when trying to find a date when

writing an e-mail or other document. When I need to look up a date, it's very nice to have the calendar popup just by hovering the pointer over the clock. It's also helpful when on the telephone and trying to settle on a date.

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Tip

From *Smart Computing:*

New Sound System — Try Before You Buy

When shopping for a new sound system for your PC, we strongly suggest that you test out a sound system at a computer retailer, and when you do, don't forget to ask about what you can't see.

Although you may think Speaker A highly outperforms Speaker B, it could be that different sound cards are affecting the sound or that an upgraded sound card would greatly improve Speaker B and do little for Speaker A.

Be sure to ask the sales clerk about sound cards in addition to the actual speakers.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Members may place personal ads of three (3) lines for free. All other business and non-members ads: $2.00 per ad for 3 lines. Ads must be prepaid, camera-ready copy, and received by the 15th of the month preceding publication.

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    Page Ad $25.00
    1/2 Page Ad $35.00
    Full Page Ad 60.00

All prices are for single issue only. All advertisements must be prepaid and received by the 15th of the month preceding publication. All artwork must be camera ready copy.

Checks payable to GS-BUG, Inc.
Mail to:
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Torrance, CA 90505-2522

LIBRARY

Shareware disks are available at the General Meeting for $3.00 per disk and $5.00 per CD. Charges are to recover duplication and distribution costs.

SIG MEETINGS

Daytime Hardware   Every Tuesday
1—4 p.m.   Torrance Scout Center
Bob Hudak   rsh532@aol.com

Digital Imaging   Every Tuesday
9—12 noon   Torrance Scout Center
Greg Neumann   Gbug_caller@aol.com

Linux   2nd Thursday
7:00 p.m.   Garry Sexton's
George Porter   310-373-5416
                                    g19porter@verizon.net

Beginning *Windows XP*   3rd Thursday
7:00 p.m.   Garry Sexton's
Virginia Pfiffner   310-374-2410
                                    vpfiffne@elcamino.edu

Internet   4th Thursday
7:00 p.m.   Garry Sexton's
Tom Tucknott   310-530-4992
                                    ttucknott@socal.rr.com

SIG Meeting Addresses

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2375 Plaza Del Amo, Torrance

                                    Garry Sexton's
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The Bug Report
The Greater South Bay PC Users Group
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January 2009

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