The Bug Report

A Publication of the Greater South Bay PC Users Group

Attention!

Nominating chairman is

George Austin

Battery Self Discharge Rate

I completed the first phase of my tests to see if the discharge rate is faster when batteries are left in an unplugged charger. The charger I tested is called the X3 Charge Pro which sells for $10 on sale at Frys. Test it right away with 4 NiMH cells to see if LED turns green when charged. If not return it and get another. It also has a receptacle on the side with a wire for charging in your car.

I ran the test for 100 hours with a reading every hour and it was a fairly straight line with a slight rounding off near the end. I tested two cells in series and the discharge rate was 0.62 millivolts per hour per cell. Both cells started at 2.689 volts and ended at 2.566 volts. Now I will put a 500 ma 2.4 volt light bulb on as a test load to see how it compares with the plot of a a freshly charged pair of cells.

Theoretically at the recorded discharge rate the battery should last 23 days to get to one volt when starting at half of 2.689 which is 1.3445 volts. Normally one volt is the cut off when discharging this type of cell. When charging the two cells in series it cuts off and stops charging at 2.84 volts which is twice the number of the standard 1.42 volts at the C-10 rate of charging for NiCad cells so apparently they are essentially the same in that regard.

The AA cells I am testing are rated at 2100 mah by Panasonic. Their charger is also quite good but doesn't have the car charging feature and instead of having the LED change from red to green when it stops charging they have only a green LED that stops flashing when charged. The Panasonic came with batteries at Costco but I had to buy to get get even sets of 4 cells. Normally Fry's prices on sale are better than Costco but for this Panasonic it was about the same when you include the batteries.

Later measurements indicated that as soon as you remove the batteries from the unplugged charger the residual voltage starts to rise meaning that there was a load on the batteries. Then I took out fully charged batteries, waited a day and then put them on the voltmeter sensitive to 0.0001 of a volt and after ten hours the voltage has remained the same. So be sure to take out the batteries when you unplug the charger.

The next test will be to see if the batteries remain fully charged if the charger remains plugged in.
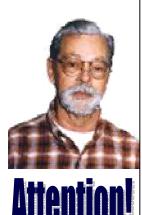
— by Dr. John Hanson

Remove Yourself From Lists

Enter your name in every search engine you can find and then ask to be removed. Maybe that will cut down on a lot of the spam you get. Page 55 of PC World for July has good ideas on how to get removed from Classmates.com and InfoSpace.com's white pages. The article also tells you to avoid paying for people finding services as you can get quite good info free.

— by Dr. John Hanson

Bob Hudak
Software Library News
RSH532@aol.com

Attention!

For every person you encourage to join the GSBUG, you will receive four months of free membership!

New Members

Please notify Herman Krouse at: herm@socal.rr.com of your email address to enable you to receive timely notices regarding special meetings, classes or cancellations. Remember, we are a computer club and we do much of our correspondence by email.

New program in the Library this month is Monitor Calibration Wizard. I tried it out and it seems to work pretty good. I set it up so that I can turn it on or off as needed. Here is some info that I got from the program.

"Monitor Calibration Wizard is an easy-to-use tool for calibrating the colors displayed by your monitor. Most monitors have flaws, they may be too dark, too bright, or they may have a color tint like green or blue. All these problems can be easily fixed through Monitor Calibration.

Wizard. Features:

Easy wizard for creating color profiles for you monitor. The wizard takes you step-by-step through the process, providing help at every step. Help for every screen. If you need on any screen, you can click on the icon to get a detailed description of what you can do on the current screen. Support for an unlimited number of profiles. For people who use more than one monitor with their computer, you could create a custom profile for each monitor. The same goes for gaming. Many games are set in very dark environments where a brighter profile can help you see the campers sitting in the dark corners :) A profile brightness adjustment is available at the end of the wizard to allow you to adjust the overall brightness of the color profile to match your needs. Monitor Calibration Wizard can load a custom color profile when Windows starts so you never have to load your profile every time you start Windows. Monitor Calibration Wizard provides a persistent profile option that enforces your profile to prevent other programs from changing the color profile le Windows uses. This is especially important to gamers as most games will change the color profile Windows uses. This not only gives you a uniform look throughout your games, but also keep the profile after you exit any program that changes the colo r profile used by Windows. Provided is a "fix" to override driver level color correction used by some software. This way you can still enjoy the benefits of Monitor Calibration Wizard even when running these programs."

If you are working with digital pictures and the colors that you see on screen are not what are printed, you need to calibrate your monitor. There are a number of really high priced programs to do that but try this easy to use one first to see if it can help you.

Hardware Sig News

We had a pretty busy month. Adding new hardware, helping install some software patches to Microsoft Windows, reformation and installing operating system on a hard drive that became really unstable over time, and other things that do not readily come to mind. There would be no way that I could do all this without help. Harry Goldstein and George Neumann jumped in and helped on many of the problems. Jack Burton walked around with a volt meter help check different circuits. This expert help is what makes it work.

I also worked on a SCSI film scanner that a member purchased and was having a problem connecting. I worked this problem at home because it took a lot of time. Finding a SCSI controller card was the first step. Next talking the computer into seeing it and making a connection. I reached out for help and had feed back from several members but it took Frank Chao to come up with the finally piece of the puzzle. I brought everything to the sig and showed members there how it worked. A lot of interest in scanning the 40-50 year old slides and saving them in a digital format. Come down and share your knowledge.

Tip Of The Month

Here is a question from one of our members and the answer received from another member. I think it might help a few others.

Question

In Win XP Pro or Home edition, when using the built in CD burning program, can you close the session but leave the CD open? Is using a third party program the better way to go?

Answer

I'm using XP Pro, and just used it to add an additional file to a CD-R that I had previously made with Roxio. At the end of the writing process, it said please wait while it makes the CD ready to be used ...

It appears that it closes the session as part of the process, but doesn't close the disk (it leaves the CD open ... which is what you asked about).

I prefer using a third party program, because it's more "normal" ... it allows you to browse your hardrive for files to burn, make a list, and then burn them .... It's more interactive during the whole process.

XP on the other hand, is less interactive (more hidden) ...there's not actually a CD authoring program that you open up ... you use Windows Explorer to find the files you want to burn and right click on them ... in the right click menu is a "Send to.." where you select your CD burner.

After doing that, a bubble pops up on your toolbar saying you have files to burn to cd, would you like to see them? Clicking on the bubble opens Windows Explorer again, showing a list of files waiting to be burned. In the left column will be a selection to go ahead and burn them. XP notifies you when it's done.

Nowhere does it give you an indication of how much disc space is left, what speed you're burning at, whether to close the session or disc, and all the other interactions we've come to expect from products like Easy CD Creator.

It works, but it's very basic ...probably ok for beginners and casual users.

Frank Chao
Internet Talk

Ways to Contact Me:

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

1. Send me e-mail at:

fchao@pacbell.net

2. Leave me a voice message at (310)768-3896.

3. Send "snail" U.S. Postal Service mail to:

Frank Chao
4001 Inglewood Ave., Ste. 101
PMB 305
Redondo Beach, CA 90278

Or sell your computer and take up lawn sailing instead !!

I would like to extend to you a warm welcome to the 72nd "Internet Talk" article for "The Bug Bulletin", a publication of the Greater South Bay PC Users Group (GSBUG).   Your computer and an it's Internet connection can entertain you and uplift your spirits by playing songs while displaying the lyrics for you to sing along with. Here is how it can be done for free:

SING ALONG MUSIC SOFTWARE!

"Karaoke" is a combination of two Japanese words. It means that a melody is played without the vocal lyrics. The words for the lyrics are shown with a bouncing ball or other visual marker to prompt you to sing a specific syllable.

 The history of "karaoke" can be found at: http://entertainment.msn.com/artist/?artist=129641 and http://www.pocketsongs.com/MainPages/karaokehistory.asp

 Before the Japanese re-invented it in the late 1970's, bandleader Mitch Miller actually did it on his "Sing Along with Mitch" television show in the early 1960's. See:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitch_Miller
http://www.tvacres.com/music_bands_mitch.htm

You can now do karaoke with your computer by downloading free software and files from the Internet:

Start by downloading and installing one or more "karaoke player" software applications:
"WinKaraoke 1.5" is available from: http://www.francisli.com/wink/
"GoSing" is available at: http://www.gosing.com
"Kplay" is available at many Websites including:
http://www.mrfreefree.com/go/free_karaoke_software/20640/
"VanBasco's Karaoke Player" is available at: http://www.vanbasco.com

You can download one or all of the above players. They all will get along with each other if they reside in the same computer.

Next, download *.kar, *.mid, or *.midi files that can be played by the player software:
The "Diversi-Tune Midi Files" page is located at: http://www.divtune.com/dtmid.htm
"Chris Reed's Karaoke Home Page" is at: http://members.aol.com/creed90952/
3701 song files are available at: http://www.karaokebash.com/
"Christine's Broadway Karaoke" page is at: http://pages.ivillage.com/simplice/music.html/
Many pop and rock songs are available at: http://www.sitevip.net/karaoke/   and http://www.findmidis.com/
"Kevin's Midi Karaoke" page is located at: http://www.angelfire.com/ab/socrpal13/
"Steve Harding's Website" is at: http://www.steveharding.com/
"Rat's Karaoke Page" is available at: http://www.zevzek.com/karaoke/kar_files.php
A page entitled "English Music" is at: http://www.terravista.pt/AguaAlto/2679/inglesaseng.htm
An interesting mix of files is available at:
http://meltingpot.fortunecity.com/trinity/120/midi.html#karaoke
A page of French songs is at: http://iquebec.ifrance.com/lupel/kar_enfant.htm

Finally, start up one of the karaoke players. Load in a song file and sing along with the displayed lyrics for the rest of the day !

MEDIA FILE FORMATS

In addition to the previous-mentioned kara-oke file formats, there are many additional audio and video file formats. At excellent description of the various video file formats can be viewed at:
http://www.uwm.edu/~elsmith/videofileformats.html

At excellent description of the various audio file formats can be viewed at:
http://www.uwm.edu/~elsmith/SoundFileFormatResearch.html

TRAVEL TIPS

To schedule a ride between any place in the Los Angeles metropolitan area and Los Angeles International Airport go to

http://www.primetimeshuttle.com

or

http://www.supershuttle.com

See you later !

MEMBERSHIP REPORT FOR GSBUG

Joyce Oliver reports that as of July 8th, our membership count is 153, which is 2 less than last month. <u>Please renew your membership, if it has expired</u>. This fine organization deserves your financial support.

Free Internet Antivirus

I continue to receive e-mail messages and phone calls from GSBUG members about whether there is free Internet access and anti-virus software are available. The answer continues to be "yes and yes". For details see:

- http://www.netzero.net
- http://www.juno.com
- http://www.grisoft.com
- http://www.avast.com
  the homepage of "Alwil Software".

All of these fine companies offer both free and non-free products so do not give them your credit card number if you want the free versions of their products.

FREE INTERNET AND ANTIVIRUS IS HERE TO STAY !

"United Online" which owns Juno and Netzero has been making steadily-growing profits since September 2003. You can see their sound financial statements at:
http://www.irconnect.com/untd/pages/financials.shtml

They have survived and prospered while most of their competitors have not.

Grisoft and Alwil Software have both been in operation since 1991. Both companies were founded in the Czech Republic. Grisoft is now incorporated in both the Czech Republic and in Delaware. See: http://www.avast.com/eng/company/awards/index.html
for the awards that have been bestowed on Alwil Software   See:
http://www.grisoft.com/us/us_firma.php for the awards that have been attained by Grisoft.

Perspectives

Dr. John Hanson
The PC Wizzard

FLASH MEMORY CARDS

These are always much cheaper at Fry's when on sale than Cosco but when in a hurry Costco usually has what you want but maybe it's the same at Fry's but I hardly ever buy anything at Fry's that is not on sale.

REBATES FROM FRY'S

Emmett Ingram says he has not had good luck on getting rebates from Fry's but I am a tiger like Harry Goldman who is very meticulous about getting rebates. What I do is not only make copies of what I send but also a copy the addressed envelope with the stamp on it so they can't say I addressed it wrong or forgot to add a stamp. I include an extra copy for them so they know I made a copy for myself. It takes a little longer but so far I have had good results.

One time Western Digital sent me an email saying I had missed the window for buying their product so would not get the $50 rebate. I brought the email to the management of Fry's and complained and the girl said I should call Western Digital. I told her it was her responsibility and if she didn't I would write to John Fry, the CEO, and mention her name. The next day I had action and later received my $50 rebate.

STICK WITH WIN 98

I just thought of another marvelous reason to stick with Win 98. Most of the virus writing people have forgotten about Win 98 and are concentrating on XP so that is another reason to stay off the cutting edge in operating systems. XP is just too juicy a target for them to resist so they don't have time for old, reliable Win 98.

Toshiba Notebook for $1,000

At the Pomona Computer show on June 20th there were many vendors selling notebooks, some new but mostly used. This one looked brand new and had all the bells and whistles such as 2.7 gc Intel CPU, 40 gb hard drive, 512 mb RAM, DVD/CDRW, wireless 54G and 15 inch wxga display. It wouldn't be good for me as I need a floppy for my international travels. I didn't check but I suspect it has USB 2 and perhaps a slot for an SD flash memory card as it should have. Also check to be sure it has a monitor output and a mouse input. The model number is A35-S1592 so you can look it up on the Internet if interested. The vendor's phone number is 213-327-4290 and his name is Saurabm or Saurabit. If you are a touch typist always get the feel of a keyboard before you buy.

Camcorder Review

Writer Baguley writes some nice things about this Panasonic camcorder but no where does he say it is digital and I don't think anyone in their right mind should buy an analog camera as a little searching can probably find a digital for about the same money. It is what he doesn't say that makes his review so bad. It's on page 64 of PC World for July.

External Hard Drives

These run about one dollar per gigabyte when on sale but be careful to test it right away as instructions are often quite poor. I returned two brands and finally assembled my own. You can buy the aluminum case for $30 at the computer show and add your own 120 gb hard drive for about $60. You only save about $30 and it's fairly easy to do. The thing that I am concerned about is there is no ventilation inside so it runs quite hot so don't leave it on for long periods.

Battery Facts

This is an article by Zachary Singer on

page 72 of PC Photo for May. If you should read this article I hope you will discover Zachary doesn't seem to know much about batteries so be suspicious of any articles by Zachary. Editors often assign writers to write articles on subjects they know nothing about so readers need to be cautious to separate the useful info from the nonsense.

Are lots of Mega Pixels Useful?

In the same May issue of PC Photo on page 64 is a good article by Jeffrey Nielsen where he points out that having lots of pixels in a sensor does not guarantee high quality. Many club members are amazed at how I get such great enlargements from my 2 mp camera. It has a great lens and excellent software plus image stabilization.

Using Levels & Curves to Rescue Fotos

Rick Sammon in the same May issue of PC Photo on page 28 has an excellent, detailed article on how to do this. He is using if for wildlife animals but it coult be useful for any pictures. I would suggest that everyone should try these techniques so that you will know what can be done when you need it.

Anyone have a Film Scanner?

They used to be very expensive but now Konica Minolta has one for only $350 list that scans in only 20 seconds at 3200 dpi. If you have a film scanner please call me or write and let me know how well it works and what you might think of this new scanner. Many of us have many slides and color negatives that we would like to scan.

Color Print Permanence:

I have been very pleased with my Minolta color laser printer even tho color toner is very expensive and Minolta has a tight control to keep others from making compatible cartridges. I want to put color prints on the back of my Tootie Launchers which are used in schools and I discovered

that the ink jet prints I tried fade very quickly in the sunlight. So I made a laser color print and put it on the rear window ledge of my car which not only is hot but gets lots of sunshine. So far a month has gone by and it doesn't seem to have faded at all.

How fast will Word Star run?

Word Star is a DOS word processing program and was the best in its day even tho the company treated its customers like dirt and made them pay thru the nose. But now it's completely free and very powerful. It was designed to run at 5 mc but it still runs fine at 500 mc and what a pleasure when everything happens so fast. Then I tried it at 1000 mc and it still works fine. Sometimes something unusual happens when I try to do something special so I always save before those types of commands. Rebooting usually solves the problem but I still haven't determined if it is speed related. Soon I will try it on a 1800 mc computer. What a wonderful program! A whole book on Tooties fits easily on a floppy.

Life Before Computers

An application was for employment
A program was a TV show
A cursor used profanity
A keyboard was a piano!
Memory was something that you lost with age
A CD was a bank account!
And if you had a broken disk,
It would hurt when you found out!
Compress was something you did to garbage
Not something you did to a file
And if you unzipped anything in public
You'd be in jail for awhile!
Log on was adding wood to a fire
Hard drive was a long trip on the road
A mouse pad was where a mouse lived
And a backup happened to your commode!
Cut--you did with a pocket knife
Paste you did with glue
A web was a spider's home
And a virus was the flu!
I guess I'll stick to my pad and paper
And the memory in my head
I hear nobody's been killed in a computer crash
But when it happens they wish they were dead!

SIGs:

Event	Location	SIG Leader
Board Meeting 1st Wednesday	Levy School - 229th Place & Madison, Torrance, Rm 7	Gary Sexton, President UAGS@aol.com
General Meeting 1st Monday	Salvation Army, 4223 Emerald St. Torrance	First Monday of the Month
Excel SIG 3rd Tuesday	Gary Sexton's home, 3623 W. 227th St. Torrance	Gary Sexton 373-3989 UAGS@aol.com
Daytime Hardware SIG Every Tuesday	Torrance Scout Ctr, 2365 Plaza Del Amo 1pm to 4pm	Bob Hudak - rsh532@aol.com rsh532@aol.com
Internet SIG 4th Thursday	Herman Krouse's home 2746 W. 234 Street	Herman Krouse 325-2336
Windows 98/XP SIG 4th Friday	Levy School - 229th Place & Madison, Torrance, Rm 7 6:30 pm	John Sullivan 549-2063
Windows 95/98/ME 3rd Thursday	Levy School - 229th Place & Madison, Torrance, Rm 7 7:00 pm	Virginia Pfiffner 374-2410 vpfiffne@.elcamino.edu
DIG SIG (Digital Imaging) Every Tuesday	Torrance Scout Ctr, 2365 Plaza Del Amo 9:15 to 12:00 pm	Fred Vogel 375-9336

QUICK TRICKS

Interested in more ways to use the Windows Key on your keyboard?

If you've ever wondered how to use the key on your keyboard with the Windows logo (the key between the Ctrl and the Alt keys on most keyboards), here are a few ways it can help you:

- By itself it opens the Start menu.
- Press the Windows Key + d to minimize and maximizes all open applications.
- Press the Windows Key + e to open Windows Explorer.
- Press the Windows Key + f to open Search Companion.
- Press the Windows Key + m to minimize all open applications.
- Press the Windows Key + M to maximize all open applications.
- Press the Windows Key + r to open the run command.

Hot Links—Editor's Choice

1. www.ipl.org — The Internet Public Library. Provide library services to Internet users. Activities include: finding, evaluating, selecting, organizing, describing, and creating information resources; and direct assistance to individuals.
2. www.playingwithtime.org — Take a journey through time sped up by viewing the New York forest for a year in just 14 seconds or even watch time slow down in a blinking of an eye. QuickTime 5 is required. If you don't have it, you'll be prompted to download it.
3. www.skeptdic.com — A collection of strange beliefs, amusing deceptions, and dangerous delusions.

"I don't think my dad's going to get a computer anytime soon. He's still excited about getting call-waiting."

General Meeting

Minutes of July 5, 2004

The president and secretary being present, a general meeting of the Greater South Bay PC Users Group (GS-BUG) was held on Monday, July 5, 2004 at the Salvation Army Facility, 4223 Emerald Street, Torrance, CA. In attendance were approximately 43 members and guests. President U. A. Garred (Garry) Sexton called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

DIGITAL IMAGING SIG Fred Vogel announced the SIG will be closed on July 6 and will be dark for the month of August. The SIG will resume in September and being with the use of new digital imaging manual.

LIBRARY SIG Bob Hudak has prepared a new CD which will allow personal created CDs to auto run. This disk is good for slide shows or photos on disk to send to relatives, etc. He also reintroduced a disk program for printing directories. Other materials are available on his table at every meeting so please check it out.

The HARDWARE SIG meets every Tuesday from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

WINDOWS 95/98 SIG Virginia Pfiffner encourages members who are interested in reviewing Windows 95/98, ME and Word to come to her 3rd Thursday meeting.

PROGRAM Emmett Ingram introduced Brian C. Thorson, EMF Specialist for Southern California Edison who returned to complete his presentation that began earlier this year.

Mr. Thorson expanded the information on electric magnetic fields, the sources and strength of magnetic fields on every day household equipment, i.e., electric razors, hair dryers, TVs, microwave ovens, etc. He also showed some of the methods used by Edison to reduce the strength of EMF from high voltage transmission lines. Mr. Thorson closed his presentation by showing charts of research undertaken over the past thirty years by governments, scientists and electric utilities from around the world on the effects of EMF on health. To date, there has been no definitive correlation pointing to EMF causing higher incidences of major illnesses. However, Mr. Thorson advised to take a cautionary approach in the use of all electric appliances.

Door prizes were won by Dorothy O'Brien and Fred Gutman.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

— by Pamela Harrison, Secretary

General Meeting Notice

Please mark your calendars for the General Meeting is to be held on the 1st Monday of each month at the Salvation Army Facility.

Address:
4223 Emerald Street
Torrance, CA

Time:
7:30 P.M.

GENERAL MEETING

General meeting are held at 7:30 pm on the first Monday of the month at the Salvation

Army Facility at 4223 Emerald St. at the corner of Emerald and Earl Streets in Torrance

MEMBERSHIPS:

Membership is available for twelve months
from the date of joining. Membership rates are:

Individual - $36.00
Student - $18.00
Family - $48.00
Newsletter only - $18.00

Checks should be payable to: GS-Bug, Inc. and mailed to:

GS-BUG, Inc. - Memberships
P.O. Box 6950
Torrance, CA 90504-6950

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Garry Sexton
Ph: (310) 373-3989

Email: UAGS@aol.com
Past Pres: Emmett Ingram
Ph: (310) 377-4668
VP- Tom Tucknott
Ph: (310) 530-4992
Secr'y - Pamela Harrison

Ph: (310) 378-0121
Email: sharinor@worldnet.att.net
Treasurer: Jim Corones
Ph: (310) 322-1441
Email: jcorones1@juno.com
Librarian: Bob Hudak
Ph: (310) 323.0579
Email: rsh532@aol.com
Membership: Joyce Oliver
Ph: (323) 778-6256
Email: bg168@lafn.org
Program: Emmett Ingram
Ph: (310) 377-4668
Email:
GS Bug Web Master: Shelly Miller
Ph: (310) 541-6796
Email: seamil19@verizon.net

EDITOR:
Sharon Grant
E: yeptune@netzero.com

DIRECTORS AT LARGE

John Hanson
Ph: (310) 643-9882
Email: ba030@lafn.org

Virginia Pfiffner
Ph: (310) 374-2410
E: vpfiffne@.elcamino.edu

Jack Noble
Email: jacnob@aol.com

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

The Bug Report

The Greater South Bay PC Users Group
P.O. Box 6950
Torrance, CA 90504-6950

a member of