PC Post

User Helping User

26 years of User helping User

February 2008 – Volume 26.02

**For directions to Destiny Christian Center
see page 11**

Our Next Meeting

What happens when you format a photo? ….

Photo SIG leader Jim Goodman will tell you what happens when you put your photos into JPEG, TIFF, PNG and other formats, all designed to compress your camera work to fit the space available, when the Modesto PC User Group meets on Thursday, Feb. 28.

As usual, the gathering will begin at 6:30 p.m. with the Random Access Special Interest Group, where members can get their most pressing computer questions answered. Goodman's presentation will follow refreshments at 7:30 p.m.

Also on the program will be Pete Ball demonstrating his new Nikon SLR D300.

The event will take place at Destiny Christian Center on Carver Road just south of Roseburg Avenue. Members and friends should park in front or back of the building and enter on the south side.

For additional information on this program go to www.mpcug.net.

Important Meeting Dates

General Meeting — Feb. 28 — Destiny Christian Center
Photo SIG Meeting — Mar. 4 — Denny's Restaurant
Board Meeting — Mar. 5 — Ridgeway's Restaurant
Beginner's SIG Meeting — Mar. 10 — Denny's Restaurant
Office SIG Meeting— Mar. 26— Scramblz' - Turlock

President's Report .... Mike Kumler

Membership Report .... Hank Mudge

New Member - Welcome to the Club:

Sharron Harrah 1/09

Returning Member - Welcome Back:

Don Sanford 1/09

Members renewing - Thank you for your support:

Amberse Banks 10/08	Russell Clark 1/09	Ray Nichols 2/09
Bill & Virginia Nylander 12/08	Thomas O'Brien 1/09	Dick Philpot 2/09
Kirk Stockham 12/08	Don Vera 1/09	

Members dues expiring in December:

Betty Hinkley   Gordon Tolson

Members dues expiring in January:

Joe Sousa   Arthur Gingrich

Members dues expiring in February:

Donald Risen   Hank Mudge
Riva Lee   Jerry Jackman

Members dues expiring in March:

Ed Sill   Skip Pringle   Mike Kumler

Members dues expiring in April:

John (Jack) Selover	Bettie Nickerson	Luther Whitten
Philip Anselmo	Donald Branson	Frank Waldorf

For the latest information about the MPCUG — Check our website at

WWW.MPCUG.NET

Claude's Bytes ....

By Claude Delphia, Editor Emeritus, Modesto PC User Group

USB — how can we live without it? Remember the days before USB? I certainly can and I'd rather not go back to the days before this special method of interconnecting computer equipment and features. I usually have between 6 and 10 USB connections at anyone time. I almost always have one or more memory devices connected to a USB hub device. Several times a month, I transfer data from one computer to another via USB.

Memory sticks moving up — I recently went to Costco to buy a couple of memory sticks in a special offer, 3 SanDisk (a good brand) 2 gig sticks for $49.99.   I bought two packages, one for an organization I belong to and one for myself. As far as I was concerned, I was just buying some more memory sticks for various uses. I already have 2 or 3 of various capacities so I really wasn't worried about what I was buying. Wrong.

At that point I had not heard of U3, a new feature set offered on memory sticks. I hadn't even opened my set of 3 when I heard from the lady using the other set that they wouldn't work. I thought this was pretty unlikely as these things almost never fail as I wrote in a recent PC Post.

So I went into my trouble shooting mode and started asking questions about the use. It turns out the chips, as planned, were taken to a microfilm reader at the Patterson branch library. At first I thought maybe they just didn't fit right. Some stick cases can come pretty close to not being insert able in some pieces of equipment.

Fortunately I know something about the library computers. Each of their computers is set to disable any executable software that might be located on any external memory device or connection in order to protect the whole library systems network from viruses and other malicious or even accidental tampering.

At that point I started learning about the memory sticks I bought. They feature a new set of software that comes on the stick designed to make them more useful. The concept is that you can install software on the stick to handle email, for example, by taking the stick to any other computer. Normally your email software only works on your own computer. The new U3 sticks are trying to solve that problem. Unfortunately they could also contain an executable virus or worm. As soon as the stick is inserted in a USB port, the executable software is started automatically just as with a harddisk when you start it up. Many of us can remember when this feature on installation floppies.

What happens when you insert these sticks is that you are offered the option of loading some special software to do various tasks such as email. However so far as I can tell, the software is only that offered specifically to work on these sticks. You can't, for example, load Outlook, or perhaps any other Microsoft software on this chip and expect to take it to another chip. I could really use that, but so far that option isn't available. But who knows what's next as this technology is expanding. This is especially true as memory sticks capacity goes up and the price down.

One last point, you can remove the software from the memory stick and use it just like the simpler versions.

Treasurer's Report .... Barb Cameron

Modesto PC User Group
Financial Statement
January 2008

Income		Expenses	
Membership	$240.00	Rent	$ 75.00
Interest on Savings	$ 0.00		
Donations	$ 0.00		

Current Assets

Checking - US Bank, Modesto	$ 2,284.64
Savings, US Bank, Modesto	$ 332.39
	$ 2,617.03
Total Club Assets	**$ 2,617.03**

Bot-Nets ....

by Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D.

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Keeping your computer safe while connected to the Internet is becoming more and more difficult. The "attackers" are becoming more sophisticated and are sharing more ways to get their software into your computer. Business Week recently ran an article on the major security problems expected in 2008. Unfortunately, most of them arrived long before the new year started. We have been warned for years that it was possible to recruit unprotected computers into networks that could be controlled by an external source. This recruitment network problem has gotten much worse over the past few years. It is estimated that 7% of the computers connected to the Internet have been infected with a Botnet program. So what is a "Botnet"?

A robot or "bot" software program allows a computer to be remotely controlled without the knowledge of the computer's owner. When you have a number of "bot" controlled computers it is referred to as a "botnet". All of the computers in the botnet carry out commands issued by the network controller. Just one example of what can be done with a botnet is the sending of spam. The controller can easily have 100,000 computers in its network. So the botmaster will contract to send out one million e-mail messages. The network can then send ten messages from each of the compromised computers. With the constant connection to the Internet using cable or DSL the computer owner will have no idea that his/her computer has been the source for ten spam messages.
Now you might say that the idea that someone can control 100,000 computers in a botnet is ridiculous. However, as of October 2007 a major Internet security service had the IP addresses of over 12 million computers that were infected with bot software. There is also a newer threat called the Storm Worm botnet that has infected millions of computers just this year. In addition to its computer recruiting ability, it has built-in defenses that are preventing security services from analyzing it. In an E-Week article it was noted that ".. Storm worm is sending DDoS attacks to not only the researchers looking into it but to anybody on their subnet, within 5 seconds of (their) initiating efforts to fight it or examine it". A DDoS attack is a "distributed denial of service" which can bring down a computer system or network by overwhelming it with messages. A very large volume of messages are sent by the botnet in a very short period of time. It is estimated that the Storm net controls over one million computers. This would make it the most powerful supercomputer in the world, exceeding the computing power of all previous computers.

People frequently wonder why anyone would want to produce viruses, worms and other kinds of Internet attacks. Years ago it was primarily because "they could do it". Today, it has become a real source of financial gain. Let's take a look at one financial resource created by controllers of botnets. On many web pages you find ads of various types that are sponsored by Google. When these ads are clicked, the advertiser pays Google who, in turn, pays the owner of a web page, usually 80% of the fee. So the botmaster sets up a web page and contracts with Google to display ads. Then, using the botnet, sends commands to the computers in its net to click on the ads. This results in payments to the botmaster. So even with a small botnet of say 5-10,000 computers, the botmaster can easily obtain $15,000-$20,000 per month in fraudulent payments. When you consider that the known botnets all have more than 100,000 compromised systems, you get a better idea of the scale of the fraud involved. This type of click fraud has been estimated to make up 5-20% of the payments made by search companies.

Another use of large botnets is extortion. The botmaster can send an e-mail to a corporation warning that a DDoS will take place at a specific time unless a payment is made. As I mentioned earlier, spam e-mail con-

tracts are also a source of revenue for botmasters. As these networks proliferate, the sale of the IP addresses of robotically controlled computers is also favored as an income source.

So far it would appear that the only persons affected by botnets would be corporations. However, if your computer is infected, everything you do can be reported to the botmaster. Bots can incorporate "keylogger" software. That will record keystrokes, especially any related to passwords, user names or other desirable information. Another function of bot software is screen capture. It can record an entire screen and transmit the data to the botmaster. A compromised computer can also be used as a base for finding other unprotected computers to be recruited into the net. Another consideration is that the largest number of computers are those in the hands of private individuals. So you may be a major part of the problem if your computer is infected by a bot.

Once a computer has been compromised, the bot software is usually designed to hide and protect itself. For example it will search for and disable any other malware located on the computer or its associated network. It may also hide itself by means of a rootkit. It may also block updates of any anti-virus or anti-spyware software. It may even fake the process so the user believes that an update has taken place. One of the most common modifications involves changes to the Windows host file or by changing the location of the host file and altering the registry.

There are also some traps on the Internet that can lead a user to download bot (Trojan) software without realizing it. Phishing e-mail can lead to web pages that have automatic download links for bot software. Web pages can be hijacked and links added to lead the viewer to web sites that contain "free" software links that are actually hidden bot programs. Bot programs are incorporating "social engineering" functions which serve to entice users to unknowingly download malware. People are the weakest link in the security chain. E-mail, web pages, instant messaging, social contact web sites are all used by bot malware as a means of collecting information and linking to compromised computers.

Many times the actions of a computer user are governed by visual clues. An attacker may take advantage of this by providing false visual clues on a web page or a pop-up. If the dialog box or pop-up is intrusive the user may click inappropriately just to get rid of the intruder. This can lead to the download of a bot.

So how do you know if you've been infected? The easiest way to tell is related to how you have been protecting your computer from infection. Do you have all of the following?

      a. hardware firewall.
      b. software firewall that checks both incoming and outgoing messages.
      c. anti-virus software that is updated at least daily.
      d. anti-spyware software that you either run weekly or that runs in RAM constantly.
      e. keep your Windows software patches up to date.

If you don't use any of these safety mechanisms, then your machine is almost 100% guaranteed to be compromised. Even if you have taken all of these precautions, you can still be infected. However, the most effective mechanism for dealing with bots is to prevent their getting into your computer. So you have to keep the software up to date and you have to use it.

Ideally, your firewall hardware/software combination should keep you invisible on the Internet. Bot programs are constantly searching for unprotected computers with open ports. You may not be aware that your computer has over 64,000 port that can be used for communication. The most common usage are the ports in the lower range, under 1,024. However, some bots use high end ports (>60,000) for transmission of commands. One

place you can check your computers port and its invisibility on the Internet is www.GRC.com. The Gibson Research site provides a free port scan and much good information on interpreting the findings as well as how to protect your system.

Ideally the anti-virus and anti-spyware software would be able to find and remove any bot software that made its way onto your computer. However, this software needs to know the "signature" of the malware in order to identify it. So the producers of the malware are always a step ahead of the good guys. The security services have to find and disassemble the new malware before they can devise the protection against it. So it is up to the user to keep the security software as current as possible to reduce the chances of infection. Like it or not, security on the Internet is a never ending battle.

Dr. Lewis is a former university and medical school professor of physiology. He has been working with personal computers for over thirty years, developing software and assembling systems.

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Let's Clean "Start-Up" ....

By Bob Elgines, Editor, Colorado River Computer Club, AZRCC Editor

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Does your computer boot-up or run slow? Maybe there are too many programs running in the back ground. Let us do the following check first.

Hold your CTRL & ALT buttons and press the DELETE button.
Click on the PERFORMANCE tab, is your CPU Usage running more than 10% or is your Physical Memory being in total use?

Go to **START** then RUN, type in "**msconfig**" which stands for Microsoft System Configuration. In Windows VISTA you can find RUN in the ACCESSORY folder under PROGRAMS.

The System Configuration Utility windows will come up.

First go to the upper right tab labeled **STARTUP**, here you will see the list of items that load during startup. Of course some you want, some you don't. In the first column labeled STARTUP ITEM gives a very rough idea to what it is referenced too, but the second column labeled COMMAND, is much more useful. Too read it better, widen the column out by holding your mouse symbol over the vertical line located before the next column label. A double arrow will appear, then hold down left mouse button and move it to the right. This information tells you where it is located and in some cases which program is using it. Uncheck those in question, you can put them back in later if you need too. Do not uncheck you Antivirus or Spyware programs.

Next go to the tab on top labeled **SERVICES**, this show all of the programs running now. You do not what to uncheck those labeled Microsoft under the MANUFACTURER column, so to start off, lets put a check mark in the box below labeled "Hide all Microsoft Services".

Now while you are reviewing the other programs running in the background note the forth column labeled

STATUS. If it says STOPPED, then don't worry about it. We just want to stop the strange ones that are RUN-NING. You can uncheck those that you are not familiar with, here again you may bring them back in later.

After un-checking all those items under tabs STARTUP & SERVICES, then click on APPLY and CLOSE.

The System Configuration Utility will now ask you to RESTART (or Boot) your computer.

After restarting a window will come up stating System Configuration Utility has been changed, be sure to put a check mark in the bottom left (labeled "Don't show this message or launch ….") before clicking OK.

If you improved your operation of your computer, you can put back in the items one at a time until you find the program that was slowing you down.

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Look Ma No Hands ….

By Bruce Jacobs, Phoenix PCUG newsletter editor

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This article was not typed. I dictated it using the speech recognition feature in Windows Vista Ultimate.

I have been using this feature on and off for certain applications for a while and it has its good points and its bad points.

The intent of the software is to allow the user to speak words into the computer and for the computer to recognize those words, understand that some of them are commands, and also understand that some of them are input to programs. In other words, when I say the words "please save me", the computer must decide whether to add the words to the document I am editing as if I had typed them, or add the word "please" to the document, and then bring up the save dialog box to save the document with the name "me".

The program that is attempting to do this has two major hurdles to conquer. It has to recognize the spoken words correctly. This is helped by the training exercises. But it has its limitations.

It must also understand "in context" which of those words are commands and which of those words are to be part of my document. As time goes on, you learn to pause before speaking a command. So in the above example of "please save me", I would say the words altogether relatively quickly in order to enter them in my document. If I wanted to add the word "please" to my document then save the document, I would speak the word "please", then pause for a few seconds, then save the word " save." This would bring up the save dialog box and I could continue as if it was a command.

As far as the good points are concerned: If I'm working off printed list or when I know for sure what I want to say clearly, it can be a much faster way of inputting text than for me to type it. Some of that is due to my typing speed being somewhat slow. I am a faster typist then most hunt and peck folks, but I would never be able to keep a job as a secretary. It is also much better at spelling than I am.

If I don't know what I'm going to say in advance the program does not facilitate me speaking what I want to

say and then recomposing it later. Some of this may be my fault. I find that I can type up an article by hand and maintain enough control so that in the end I have something coherent. When I just speak out what I want it does not always make sense. I spend way too much time revising it.

One of the disadvantages is that you need to spend a little bit of time training the voice recognition system. The system works best when you are running a very simple application such as WordPad or Notepad. It can even be used to some extent in Microsoft Word. However when using an application such as PowerPoint, the program spends so much time trying to figure out what possible commands you might be wanting to perform and not enough time actually realizing that you are trying to enter words.

Another problem is homonyms. These are words that sound the same but they have different meanings in English except for the possibility of some contextual clues. There is no way for the speech recognition software to know whether I want "2", "two", "to", or "too." During setup the program asks you if they can look at the contents of documents on your hard drive to help you determine what word you used most often and in what context. This does help it guess which homonym you want.

The final problem I wish to discuss is the editing features. Whenever I create a text document I will want to fix mistakes. There are some commands in the software that will help fix mistakes, but they are limited and clumsy. Some of them will even (in theory) help prevent mistakes by the voice recognition software in future. All that being said, I find that editing documents using the voice recognition software is very frustrating. I always resort to using the arrow keys and the mouse to navigate through the document.

Vista speech recognition is a helpful tool when transcribing printed text or when words have been spoken into a tape recorder. However for initial composition of documents or editing I do not find it useful. I do not believe that I could ever learn to use it as a complete 100% substitute for the keyboard and mouse. I would not consider it a replacement if I was disabled.

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Check Alternative Travel Site for Deals ....

by Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont TX; Radio & TV show host

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We have all seen the TV commercials with the gnome fretting over travel problems, and have seen the black clad inspectors prancing all over a hotel snooping in every nook and cranny. One thing the internet is not short of is travel websites that offer airline tickets, hotel rooms, cruises, rental cars, and package deals combining all of the above.   Many of the proprietary airline and hotel sites, such as Continental.com and Hilton.com themselves guarantee the lowest rates, but neglect to show what the competition is offering. One advantage to the direct sale proprietary travel sites is that they generally do not add a service fee for online bookings, unlike the fees charged by the independent commercial travel websites. On the other hand, the commercial travel sites can show the rates and fares from multiple providers, allowing for comparison shopping for both cost and schedule. While there are many well advertised mega-travel sites like Expedia, Hotels.com, Orbitz, and Travelocity, there are also some lesser known web sites that offer a service that some of the mega sites are lacking.

One such site that I recently learned about from a professional acquaintance is Ultimate Fares, at www.ultimatefares.com. While similar to the mega travel sites in appearance and function it had some different travel results when I compared it to some of the mega sites and proprietary web sites in a side by side comparison. In one example, I was looking for the lowest possible airfare from Beaumont to Las Vegas on some specific peak travel dates. Travelocity and Expedia displayed a nearly identical selection of flights and airfares, many of which were duplicated on Ultimate Fares. What was unusual on the Ultimate Fares website was the ability of the user to choose from some unusual indirect routings where the user had the choice to choose between a lower fare (not offered on the mega sites) and a longer flight time, including connections. If for the traveler, at his personal choice, it is worth saving in some cases over a hundred dollars in airfare, in exchange for a two or three hour longer total flight time, the user at least has that choice. One specific example was on the Beaumont BPT – Las Vegas LAS example on some peak travel days in the Christmas – New Years time period, when the airlines were extremely busy and heavily booked. While the traveler could select a direct Beaumont – Houston IAH – Las Vegas route from one carrier, or a combination of carriers, both by changing planes in Houston, Ultimate Fares had some lower fares listed with some unusual city pair combinations. When I ran the comparison for this column, Ultimate Fares showed several lower fares than the mega sites, but with the longer flight times by about two hours by going from Houston IAH to the Orange County, California John Wayne airport, another change of airlines, and then a short direct flight back to Las Vegas. If the traveler is on a tight budget, and the difference in cost (savings) is worth more than the hours of additional time each way and inconvenience, then this could be a good alternative. My only concern would be for the timely arrival of the baggage after being on three different airlines! Ultimate Fares will email two confirmations to the traveler, the first the purchase confirmation, and the second will be the airline confirmation number and itinerary. This second email is the document that will be required to pick up boarding passes at the airport, so be sure to save it and print several copies, and bring the printout with the airline confirmation number to the airport!

Another area of travel deals where Ultimate Fares had rates as good or in some cases even better than the competing mega sites was cruise deals. I randomly selected some dates, and compared the featured cruises on each of the websites, and then found the comparable cruise on the other sites. In many of the cruises compared, Ultimate Fares had lower rates and larger discounts than the mega sites. In one specific example, I selected next September for a date range, and compared Caribbean cruises. Ultimate Fares showed rates for interior, ocean view, balcony, and suite cabins that were very competitive with the mega sites, and in some cases, better deals. According to Ultimate Fares, some of the best deals offered savings off of the published cruise line brochures of "up to" 77%, 75%, and 72%! Remember that on almost all travel sites, taxes and fees will be added to the quoted price, and should be included in any final comparison.

Hotel rooms and airline seats are considered as perishable commodities if not booked, and go unused. Hotels often have some last minute unsold rooms, airlines have unsold seats, and rental car companies have cars left in the lot. Ultimate Fares offers "Last Minute Deals" which offer combinations of flight, hotel, and car deals which can be booked up to 14 days in advance, and offer package discounts of up to 70%. These last minute deals would be ideal for the person or family who has the flexibility of date and location, and will accept a smaller combination of offerings in exchange for deep discounts. The smaller combination of possible offerings is not a sparse offering; as I type this in late December, Ultimate Fares has a lengthy list of last minute deals from Houston, including 230 last minute flight and hotel deals (double occupancy, car optional), 115 flight and car deals, and 47 hotel and car deals, all at package prices of up to 70% off retail rates.

Many of us rent cars at our destination when we fly to distant cities. As an example, I compared rental car rates for an upcoming week at DFW airport. Ultimate Fares listed the rates for 10 different car companies, ranging from no-name deep discount companies, to the major national rental car companies. Ultimate Fares

quoted rates up to 40% less than the mega travel sites for the same cars on the same dates! Just remember to include taxes and fees, which are quoted by the website prior to actual booking, in any comparison.

Now, I always heard that if a deal is too good to be true, it probably is. Ultimate Fares, while not well known, has privacy certificates from Verisign, and Trust-E, and is a member of the ASTA (American Society of Travel Agents). I looked up some of the online reviews of Ultimate Fares and they were a mixed bag of positive and negative reviews. One often repeated warning in the online reviews of Ultimate Fares (that also applies to all other travel sites as well) is to be fully cognizant that the original price quoted does not include all taxes and fees; fees and taxes can substantially increase the total cost of the trip! To be fair, Ultimate Fares, just like almost all other travel websites, does indeed disclose the taxes, fees and total price prior to the traveler entering any credit card information. I did find when comparing taxes and fees on some sample airfares between Ultimate Fares, the mega sites, and the airline websites directly, that the Ultimate Fares taxes and fees were about $10 to $30 a ticket higher than the airline site which only charges taxes and mandatory fees (but no surcharges), but competitive with the mega sites that have the same taxes and mandatory fees, but also add on some type of surcharge.

Before buying any travel services from anyone online, checkout the reputation of the seller, and use a major credit card that is likely to side with you in the event of a dispute. Be emphatically sure to review the itinerary and any taxes and fees prior to entering credit card information and finalizing the booking process, as many fares and deals are rigid and non-refundable, or have hefty fees to change an itinerary.

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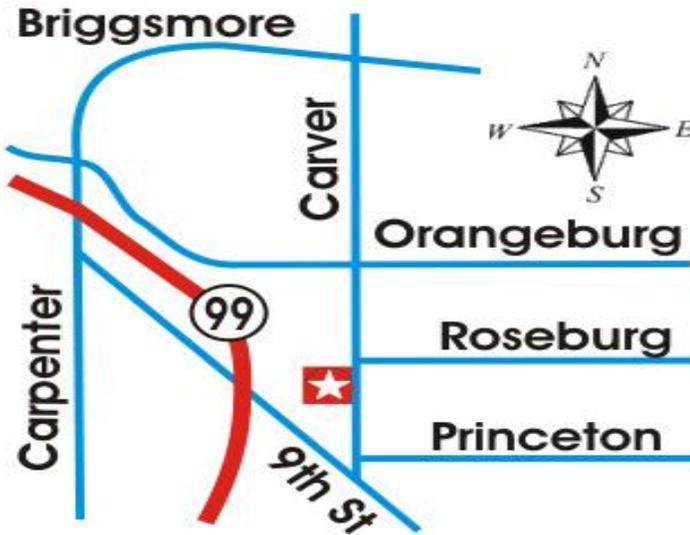
The Scoop on Blu-Ray ....

Blu-ray, also known as Blu-ray Disc (BD), is the name of a next-generation optical disc format jointly developed by the Blu-ray Disc Association (BDA), a group of the world's leading consumer electronics, personal computer and media manufacturers (including Apple, Dell, Hitachi, HP, JVC, LG, Mitsubishi, Panasonic, Pioneer, Philips, Samsung, Sharp, Sony, TDK and Thomson). The format was developed to enable recording, rewriting and playback of high-definition video (HD), as well as storing large amounts of data. The format offers more than five times the storage capacity of traditional DVDs and can hold up to 25GB on a single-layer disc and 50GB on a dual-layer disc. This extra capacity combined with the use of advanced video and audio codecs will offer consumers an unprecedented HD experience.

While current optical disc technologies such as DVD, DVD±R, DVD±RW, and DVD-RAM rely on a red laser to read and write data, the new format uses a blue-violet laser instead, hence the name Blu-ray. Despite the different type of lasers used, Blu-ray products can easily be made backwards compatible with CDs and DVDs through the use of a BD/DVD/CD compatible optical pickup unit. The benefit of using a blue-violet laser (405nm) is that it has a shorter wavelength than a red laser (650nm), which makes it possible to focus the laser spot with even greater precision. This allows data to be packed more tightly and stored in less space, so it's possible to fit more data on the disc even though it's the same size as a CD/DVD. This together with the change of numerical aperture to 0.85 is what enables Blu-ray Discs to hold 25GB/50GB.

Blu-ray is currently supported by more than 180 of the world's leading consumer electronics, personal computer, recording media, video game and music companies. The format also has broad support from the major movie studios as a successor to today's DVD format. In fact, seven of the eight major movie studios (Disney, Fox, Warner, Paramount, Sony, Lionsgate and MGM) have released movies in the Blu-ray format and six of them (Disney, Fox, Sony, Warner, Lionsgate and MGM) are releasing their movies exclusively in the Blu-ray format. Many studios have also announced that they will begin releasing new feature films on Blu-ray Disc day-and-date with DVD, as well as a continuous slate of catalog titles every month. For more information about Blu-ray movies, check out our Blu-ray movies and Blu-ray reviews section which offers information about new and upcoming Blu-ray releases, as well as what movies are currently available in the Blu-ray format.

The Club's Meeting Place

Our general meeting and the Random Access Special Interest Group are held at the Destiny Christian Center, 1161 Carver Road on the west side of Carver across from Sam's Food City. Parking is available both in front of and behind the Center. No parking along side of the Center, please.
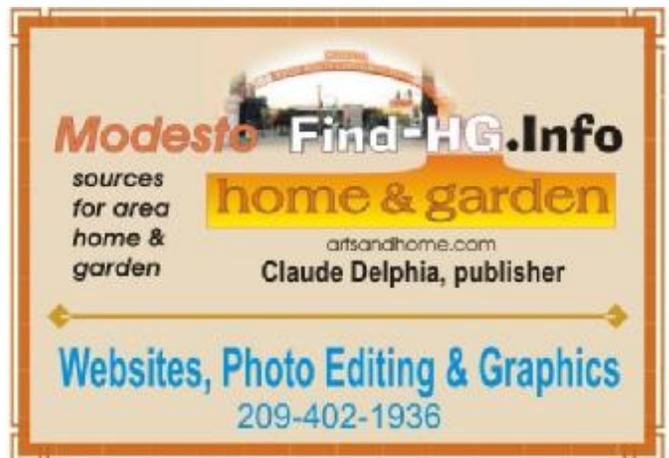
Be sure and check our web site at least once a week at www.mpcug.net

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PC Post

Editor: Bud Bondietti

Editor Emeritus: William "Doc" Holloway — 1920 -- 1996
Claude Delphia, Editor Emeritus
Bud Bondietti and Elizabeth Leedom, Presidents Emeritus
Barbara Cameron, Member Emeritus

Join The Modesto PC User Group

Web site: www.mpcug.net

To join MPCUG (or just get more information about us go to our Web site and fill out the new member form or mail your check to: MPCUG, P.O. Box 5122, Modesto, CA 95352-5122.Membership is just $24 a year and includes 12 issues of the PC Post along with participation in all meetings and events. You will also receive e-mail advising you of extra events or news.

The PC Post and Editorial Policy

The PC Post is published online 12 times per year and is available to all group members as a membership benefit. Annual group membership dues are $24.00.

For information write: Modesto PCUG PO Box 5122, Modesto, CA 95352-5122

Opinions expressed in the PC Post do not necessarily reflect the opinions or views of the members as a group or the Board of Directors.

The PC Post encourages group members to submit articles for publication. We would like to have articles which deal with the writer's experience with computer hardware and software or digital photography.

An article may deal with any computer-related subject provided it contains no libelous or offensive material. We can't use information copied from other publications without written permission except for quotes.

Articles should be submitted in MS Word text. Do not spend time formatting your article such as indents or centering. Please use only one space between sentences. and do not use bold, italicize or otherwise format the submission as we can't guarantee results in translation to Publisher. Proof read and run your spelling checker. Watch for special upper and lower case in brand names. Do not tab or indent to layout text.

If you want to include a graphic, please contact the editor for instructions.

We reserve the right to edit articles, for length or to improve readability. Longer articles may be published in several parts. We will not knowingly promote unlicensed businesses.

Letters to the editor are encouraged. All articles and letters to the editor should be submitted to the editor via email as an attached file. Call him at (209) 667-1980 before submission. Please include your name, day and evening phone numbers, and email address for contact.

The MPCUG exchanges some articles with other user groups around the country via the Association of PC User Groups (APCUG). If for any reason you object to having your article distributed to APCUG member organizations for reprinting, please notify the editor at the time you submit the article. Your wish will in no way affect publication of your article in the Post. Production notes: Prepared using **Microsoft Publisher 2007**, **MS Office 2007**, **pdfFactory** and a Minolta laser color printer in addition to a lot of sweat and a few tears.