

PC Post



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Modesto PC User Group.
Modesto, California

27 YEARS OF USER HELPING USER

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Thursday, January 22, 2009
Batteries and Multi-meters

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The presentation this month is by Ray Nichols, a longtime MPCUG Computer Club member, and a former U.S. Navy Aviation Electronics Technician.

The meeting will be on the use of a Multi-Meter by lay people, a Voltmeter used to read both DC & AC voltages, and an Ohmmeter used to check for continuity in circuits and to detect opens and shorts.

You will be taught to measure the voltage of common batteries (bring several to practice on), and also household power sources. You will be taught to determine continuity in a circuit or if that light bulb is really burned out. Multi-Meters will be available for purchase for \$2.00 (that's right, TWO Dollars).

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. Following dinner at 7:30 p.m., Ray will make his presentation.

The event will take place at Denny's Restaurant 1525 McHenry Ave. Next to the Heritage Inn, formerly Vagabond Inn, just South of Granger Ave.

Also, those attending are encouraged to bring magazines and books to donate, for delivery to Veterans Hospitals. Mike Stavrakakis, a Korean War Veteran who has dedicated a large part of his time to delivering such items to Veterans facilities, will be there to pick them up. Jeff Jardine, of The Modesto Bee, has written of his selfless efforts more than once.

Important Meeting Dates

General Meeting - January 22 - Denny's Restaurant, 1525 McHenry
Board Meeting - February 4 - Ridgeway's Restaurant,
Beginner's SIG Meeting - February 9 - Denny's Restaurant

Claude's Bytes. . . January '09

By Claude Delphia, Editor Emeritus, Modesto PC User Group

Viruses - Lately we've seen an increase in efforts by others to load viruses into our computers. The foremost and most dangerous are emails from supposedly trusted sites that attempt to get us to click on attachments. Just DON'T do it no matter how tempting or appealing it is.

The long standing rule applies: don't open an attachment unless you know the sender personally and are expecting the attachment. Also look at the source of the attachment. What kind of attachment is it? If it is a document attachment, photo (such as JPG) or a PDF, you are probably pretty safe, but only if it is a trusted source. This does mean that you need to understand what file extensions mean. For example, .doc is usually a Microsoft Word document. A WordPerfect document usually has a different extension. Photos are one of a number of extensions such as JPG or TIF which are major photo file types.

Be vigilant. If you don't want your computer infected, you have to learn how to protect yourself. Just like when you are driving your car, you have to have an idea of what to do if another car heads straight for you, turn in a way to avoid the other car. Always be prepared to make an emergency stop if the car ahead of you is acting a little strangely.

Stop, stop, stop if you don't understand what the attached file is. Call a computer friend if you really need the file but aren't sure whether to open it.

Remember the best safety tip: if the information or file sounds weird, don't follow the enticement. This isn't any different than all the Nigerian scams where you are being offered millions of dollars if you just give them your identification information. Just don't be gullible.

There is no such thing as being able to use your computer and not learn some of the basics, such as file extensions. The less you learn, the more you can be in potential danger.

After 26 plus years, I'm still learning new things. I'm also learning new things about programs I use regularly, even Word, which I use many times daily. The reason I keep learning new things is because I think of something I want to do and then I check the Help feature in the program to see if the program will do that.

I also learn new things, as I think I've mentioned before, because I click on things accidentally and learn that there is a feature I can use that I never bothered to learn before. That's a fun way to learn something. But you have to be a bit adventurous or you will stop learning.

So learn something new this week. Try to learn something new everyday.

IRS Again Offers FREE Online Filing for Most Taxpayers
By Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, TX;
Internet Radio Talk Show Host

WEBSITE:
<http://www.irs.gov>
<http://www.taxact.com>

It is that time of year again. Now is the time of the annual W-2 and 1099 forms. Once again, the IRS, through its Free File Alliance partners, is offering most of us the ability to prepare and electronically file our federal income taxes for free. This year, for most of the free tax preparers, almost anyone with an adjusted gross income of less than \$56,000 can prepare his taxes online and electronically file them for free. At present, 20 tax preparation companies are participating in the Free File Alliance. According to the IRS, 70% of all taxpayers, or about 98 million wage earners, can prepare their taxes online and e-file, all for free. Since its inception in 2003, over 24 million tax returns were prepared and filed through the Free File Alliance, of which 4.8 million were filed last year.

For the first time, almost all taxpayers, regardless of income, can use the common IRS forms online and file their returns electronically, for free, just as if they were filling in the traditional paper forms. The IRS states it this way, on the IRS.gov website, "Regardless of income level, taxpayers who are comfortable with filling out paper tax forms and who don't need extra assistance can use the IRS's new Free File Fillable Forms. These new online versions of paper tax forms that can be e-filed are available for the first time by visiting the IRS.gov Free File site."



Not just can taxpayers use the IRS online e-file system for free, but if a refund is coming, it may be received in as little as 10 days. The IRS does not charge a fee for the online tax

preparation or for e-filing. Online filing is safe, according to the IRS. "E-filed tax return information is protected through encryption. Also, taxpayers receive an acknowledgment within 48 hours that the IRS has accepted their return." The IRS goes on to say, "This year, the IRS and its partners are offering a new option, Free File Fillable Forms, which opens up Free File to virtually everyone, even those whose incomes exceed \$56,000."

For those with an adjusted gross income of less than \$56,000, selecting one of the 20 free online tax preparers would be a wise choice. There is a button on the IRS website, "Help me Find A Company", to help the taxpayer select a free online company based on eligibility criteria. Different Free Filing Alliance members have different eligibility requirements for free preparation services, ranging from state of residence, age, income range, eligibility for an earned income tax credit, to military status. I went online to try one of the companies, and it was an easy process to complete an online tax return. The site used an interview method where a series of planned questions were asked online, and typed responses filled in the blanks. I was asked questions about marital status, and different forms of income. I was also asked if I lived in an area that had been a federally declared disaster area in 2008, to determine if I was eligible for special benefits. Adjacent to most questions was a "learn more" link, which opened a popup window which explained the item. There was a request online for my bank routing information such that my refund could be direct deposited. Upon completion of the questions, and filling in the necessary fields on the website, my return was checked for accuracy. With a few more mouse clicks, my return would have been e-filed directly with the IRS, and my refund would be direct deposited in my account in as little as 10 days. It was noted that I would receive an email confirmation from the preparer within 48 hours acknowledging the filing of my tax return.

Security was provided to the internet connect via online encryption; while not perfect, it does provide a reasonable amount of security and safety. This was confirmed both by the "https" in the web address, and the closed padlock in the corner of my browser, which indicated a secured connection. In terms of privacy, all of the participating companies must comply with IRS privacy guidelines as a matter of contract. While there are the 20 providers of free federal tax computation and e-filing, most of these companies offer additional services for a fee. The most common additional paid service is the preparation of state taxes, and when offered, this is a voluntary option and not a requirement for the free federal service. A few of the providers also offer the preparation of state income forms for free, but most charge a fee for state returns.

The tax preparation companies participating in the Free File Alliance range from well know providers, such as H&R Block, to well known software companies, such as TurboTax. The well respected provider of free tax software, TaxAct offers the free online service through the IRS website to those with an adjusted gross income below \$56,000, but charges only a \$7.95 fee to those not eligible for the free computation and e-filing. TaxAct also offers a "free for everyone" service and e-filing from its website at www.taxact.com, with nominally priced "Deluxe" (federal only, \$9.95, state \$7 extra) and "Ultimate" (state included, \$16.95) tax preparation services online. TaxAct also offers inexpensive preparation and e-filing of state income taxes. There are several lesser known companies linked on the IRS site, but all have been tested for accuracy and are acceptable to the IRS. A few of the services also have

websites and tax forms in Spanish and most explicitly include the new Form 982 (Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief).

We all have a choice in regards to preparing our federal (and state) tax returns. We can use a CPA firm, a commercial tax preparation company, commercial or free computer software, or pencil and paper IRS forms. We can mail paper forms to the IRS, or we can e-file through a variety of methods. For many of us, using one of the free filing services may be a proper way to perform this onerous annual task, that most of us dread doing, but still do it effectively and for free. If you feel comfortable doing your taxes online, this IRS Free File Alliance may be a worthwhile alternative, and you can not beat the price.

Computer mouse celebrates 40th birthday by Claudine Beaumont

It was only meant to be a prototype. But 40 years after the computer mouse first scrolled its way into the public consciousness, new touch-screen technology could be about to consign the mouse to the annals of history.

The computer mouse was the creation of Doug Engelbart and his team at the Stanford Research Institute in California, who needed a simple way of controlling their computers. The result was a carved wooden block mounted on wheels, with a long cable trailing out the back. One researcher nicknamed it a mouse, and the moniker stuck.



Douglas Engelbart (right) with the many versions of his invention, the mouse. His wooden prototype is in the foreground. Photo: AP

"We thought that when it had escaped out to the world it would have a more dignified name," said Mr Engelbart. "But it didn't."

The mouse made its debut at a presentation in San Francisco in 1968 to show off a working network computer system. Before the invention of the mouse, people working on computers used a light pen, similar to those wielded by radar operators during the war, to navigate around on screen. The research team at the Institute set about finding an alternative, and went through a range of designs before finally settling on the mouse.

"We set up our experiments and the mouse won in every category, even though it had never been used before," said Mr Engelbart. "It was faster, and with it people made fewer mistakes. Five or six of us were involved in these tests, but no one can remember who started calling it a mouse. I'm surprised the name stuck."

The mouse was developed by Xerox during the 1970s, and the first commercial product was released in 1981 with the launch of the Xerox Star computer system. But it wasn't until Apple acquired the license for the mouse for \$40,000 from the Stanford Institute that the technology really took off. The Apple Macintosh, launched in 1984, used the mouse to good

effect, and is the machine widely credited with kick-starting the home computer revolution. The mouse became the default input method on most computers for the next two decades.

However, it faces stiff competition from new technology touch-screen interfaces. Apple's iPhone mobile phone has shown people the power and potential of touch-screens, and the Nintendo Wii demonstrates the simplicity of natural gestures. Companies such as HP have already started building computers that rely on touch-sensitive monitors rather than a mouse, and Microsoft, too, is experimenting with new user interfaces. Its Surface computer is a touch-screen tablet which responds to natural hand gestures, touch and physical objects.

After 40 years the computer mouse may be facing redundancy

competition from new technology touch-screen interfaces. Apple's shown people the power and and the Nintendo Wii demonstrates gestures. Companies such as HP computers that rely on rather than a mouse, and Microsoft, too, is experimenting with new user interfaces. Its Surface computer is a touch-screen tablet which responds to natural hand gestures, touch and physical objects.

"I very much doubt we'll be using a mouse in 40 years' time," Steve Prentice, an analyst at Gartner Research, told the Observer.

Mr Engelbart, 83, did not make a fortune from his creation, however. The patent he had on the device ran out shortly before Apple launched it to a wider audience, meaning he received no royalties for his invention. However, in 1998 he finally received recognition for his innovative design when the then president, Bill Clinton, awarded him the National Medal of Technology for creating the foundations of modern computing.



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CES 2009 TVs, Cell Phones, Cameras



You may have heard that CES, the International Consumer Electronic Show, was not as popular in 2009 as it has been in past years. Well, the truth of the matter is that the number of both exhibitors and attendees was slightly less than last year. Yet, with 2,700 exhibitors from 30 product categories like audio, digital imaging, embedded technology, digital entertainment, home theater, video, home networking, in-vehicle technology and wireless there was no lack of things to see at CES 2009.

As usual TVs took center stage with thin being the in thing in television technology. The Samsung Luxia LCD TV is only a quarter of an inch thick. LG and several manufacturers all showed off TVs less than an inch thick. But how many people care about how slim their TV is?

Another technology that is about to hit TV is 3D. Sony and several other manufacturers showed off some amazing 3D televisions. Although the pictures were great, you need to wear special 3D glasses to view most of these. For some of us, this will take us back to our childhood days of paper glasses for viewing 3D movies. These may not be memories that we want to relive. I am hoping when they actually come up with a standard on which to base the new 3D televisions, they will nix the glasses.

Purchasing a television is already a pretty complex decision, but what I saw at CES will make it even more difficult. Now there are regular LCDs and LED backlit LCDs. The LED lighting produced better black images and uses less power. There are also TVs that will be all LED. Sony has an OLED (organic light-emitting diode) TV and Toshiba will have a new SED (surface-conduction electron-emitter display) TV. Toshiba also displayed a prototype of the Cell CPU that they plan to use for future televisions. Along with a set-top box you will be able to record six HD television shows at one time. Cell TV owners will be able to watch four TV shows at one time on one TV. The Cell TV will also be able to upscale 1080p to 2160p. So we will have another number to worry about.



If you aren't yet confused, there's more. Almost all the television manufacturers have developed their own special technologies for improving and enhancing the television displays and each has made up their own terminology for their technologies. So now you will have to decide if you like Panasonic's "Digital Cinema Color" or Toshiba's "Resolution+".

On top of that, almost all manufacturers are moving to Internet-connected TVs. Panasonic will have Viera Cast for Internet content. LG Electronics will have Netflix-enabled televisions. Samsung will have Yahoo! Widgets. Yet each will be different, making choosing a TV more difficult than ever before.

There will also be more options in choosing cell phones and digital cameras. Yet, it seems that you can hardly go wrong no matter what you choose in these categories. You will see the cameras in cell phone greatly improved and touch screens and interfaces are better than ever. Watch out later this year for the Palm Pre which is a touch screen phone with a new operating system and great features. It may well be the iPhone killer.

In the digital camera arena, prices continue to tumble as features improve. Casio's new EXLIM models can capture 30 shots per second and allow users to cut and paste moving subjects onto still backgrounds. Olympus has in-camera panorama capabilities that automatically stitch photos together to create a panoramic picture right in the camera. Panasonic introduced a new camcorder with an unbelievable 70x optical zoom.

Although many of the TVs that we saw at CES are yet to be released, most of the digital cameras are already available. While this year's gadgets were not necessarily revolutionary, they certainly were evolutionary. Old products like televisions, cell phones, and digital cameras have many improved features that make them more exciting. While making a decision on what to buy may be a little more difficult this year, most of us will be able take our

time researching the products that we want to purchase in the future. ... as we wait for the recession to play itself out.

Juice Your Broadband Speed

by Vinny La Bash, Member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., Florida

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People prefer broadband internet connections because of the obvious speed advantages over dial-up and satellite links. Then why is it that broadband never seems to be fast enough? Are you getting the speed promised by your ISP? Broadband can cost \$100 a month or more, but does the provider really provide the advertised speed? Is the connection reliable or does the modem need a reboot several times a day?



Fortunately, there are ways to achieve high, reliable throughput without having to have an engineering degree. Here are some suggestions to get every bit per second possible from your modem without any technical hiccups or interruptions in service.

Start with your computer and TV equipment. A common source of line noise can be traced to improper grounding of anything that plugs into household electrical circuits. This can seriously degrade performance of cable equipment. Every electrical device, especially those in the same room as the cable modem, should be plugged into properly grounded outlets. The best connections are with polarized plugs oriented in the correct direction, and please don't use any three prong to two prong adapters. Get up-to-date gear. Electric outlet testers are cheap. Buy one and use it to test for excess voltage on your cable wiring. Any problem could indicate a serious safety hazard. Engage a licensed electrician to fix it.

Almost anything manufactured today in the consumer electronics world is light years ahead of its predecessors manufactured only two or three years ago. Cable modems are no exception, so if yours is more than three years old get a new one from your provider. Most providers will make a free exchange, but some will require an extension of your contract. You want to do this because the latest modems conform to the DOCSIS 2.0 standard. This offers higher upload and download capabilities and supports other advanced broadband applications, including online gaming and peer-to-peer computing.

Ask your ISP if they automatically update firmware for the modem. If they don't, have them supply the website address of your modem's manufacturer so you can download the most recent firmware. Check the website about twice a year for new updates.

Next, go to a test site such as PC Pitstop, and check your upload and download speeds to see if they match the terms of your service contract. If they don't, give your ISP a call and have them reset the modem's settings. While you're at it, have them check the

signal-to-noise ratio. Too much noise can cause interference, and your modem will then have to resend information cutting down on your throughput.

It's possible that your cable wiring may contain too many splices or simply be too long. That can be fixed by a visit from your ISP technician. Have the technician check the line quality leading to your house. If the signal is good and you're having problems, the house wiring may be the culprit. The definitive answer for cable modems is to create a split directly after the junction box and then run a new cable directly to your modem. The other side of the split will take care of your television sets which aren't nearly as sensitive to line noise.

After you've done everything from a hardware and firmware standpoint, and your cable connection is as clean as possible, you're ready to fine tune the system for best performance. Vista users don't have to do much of anything to optimize the operating system since Vista does TCP stack tuning dynamically. Any internet performance adjustments can be made through the browser. Firefox users may want to try Firetune or Fasterfox. They are both free utilities and allow adjustment to cache memory, capacity and other settings such as pipelining.

If you do a lot of downloading, you can save time by installing a download manager like Flashget. This widely used utility claims the highest number of users on the internet. It uses MHT (Multi-server Hyper-threading Transportation) technique. It's very easy to use and comes with exceptional document management features. Best of all, it's free.

After all this work, it would be a tragedy if you didn't keep in mind that sometimes the simplest solutions are the best ones. Most cable modems and routers have reset features. Many a mysterious internet ailment has been corrected simply by resetting the equipment. Turn off the computer and the modem. Un-plug the modem for a few minutes and then power everything back on. You may be pleasantly surprised.

Review of ZoomWare

by Gerry Gerstenberg, Broward Personal Computer Association, Florida

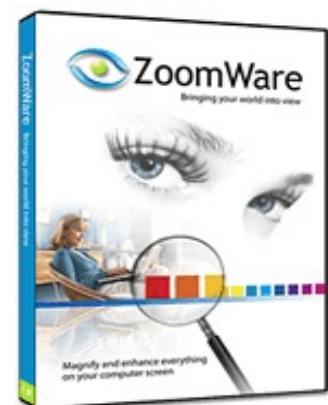
www.bpca.com / tutot101 AT earthlink.net

Introduction

ZoomWare described my condition perfectly. I lean in towards my computer monitor and squint. I've tried using different eye glasses, but it is still hard to read the text. A magnifying screen held in front of the monitor display is ok, for a few minutes, but is awkward for continuous use. I need help. So I tried Zoomware.

Description

ZoomWare is a computer program for those who have a hard time seeing/reading what is on their display.



It gives a magnification boost, up to 2x, for everything that is on the screen – text and pictures. It allows you to adjust the size and color of that elusive pointer. The cursor can also be enhanced. The glare can be eliminated by applying a soft tint to white areas of the screen. Purchasing

ZoomWare is manufactured by A2squared.. It can be purchased by download at www.getzoomware.com. The suggested price is \$149.00. You can buy a hard copy for \$175.00.

If you are a member of APCUG you can purchase ZoomWare as a download now for just \$119—a 20% discount. To take advantage of your special APCUG member discount, simply purchase ZoomWare online at www.GetZoomWare.com and enter the following code at checkout: APCUG08. If you prefer to receive a CD version, it can be purchased for \$140 (a \$35 savings) and they will ship the product to you within 3 to 5 business days. And, you can install it on up to three computers.

Requirements

The following hardware and software are required to run ZoomWare:

1 GHz Pentium 4 processor or equivalent
1.5 GHz for Windows Vista
Windows Vista (32 bit OS only) or XP (32 bit OS only) (SP2) operating system
Minimum 512 MB RAM for Windows XP
Minimum 1 GB RAM for Windows Vista
50 MB free hard disk space.

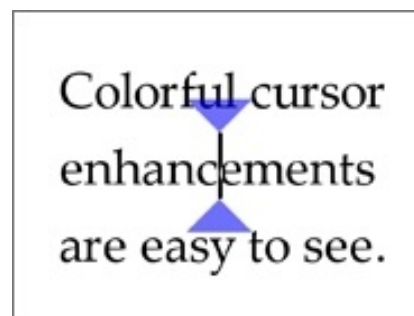
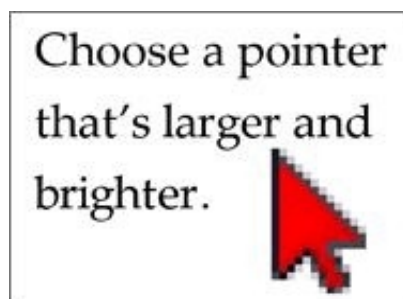
Installation

The program is very easy to install. Just autorun the CD and follow the directions.

Configuration

After it is installed you can configure it using the user interface to suit your needs. There are four tabs that let you change the settings.

- The view tab offers full view, large lens view, small lens view.
- The color tab allows reverse video, applies various tints, and shows a normal display.
- The pointer tab chooses between large and small pointers with a variety of colors.
- The cursor tab places large triangles above and below the cursor making it more visible.



Shortcut or Hot Keys

I like to use shortcut keys or hotkeys. ZoomWare has a neat feature that allows you to remap their preselected hotkeys to your needs.

Two hot keys you should know about as soon as you start using ZoomWare are: Alt + Delete to toggle ZoomWare off/on. Also Alt + PgUp / PgDn to increase/decrease magnification are very useful.

To capture a large display you can use alt+shift+ctrl+c according to James Jandzinski, a ZoomWare Product Support Specialist.

ZoomWare has a feature that previews a toolbar option as you hover over it. You can first read what it does before you select it and would then have to make changes because you did not like what it did.

Also if you hover over a desktop icon information about the icon appears in a box in larger easier to read text.

Conclusion

I would recommend ZoomWare for computer users having vision problems. I tried it with Open Office. I did searches on Google. All went very well at all magnifications. Trying to play Easy Bridge and Solitaire with it at a higher magnification was a challenge. You need a good memory as you pan back and forth on the cards.



Smart Computing Tips & Fun Facts

www.smartcomputing.com

Peripheral Energy Savers

Although easy to forget, your scanner, printer, and other peripherals attached to your computer draw power from one source or another. Many of us turn off our computers regularly but forget about these extra devices. By getting in the habit of shutting down these extra items regularly, you'll save some energy

Make Time For Cable Management

When you set up your computer, spend some time managing the cables. Route wires so that they have a little slack and make sure that they don't hang over one another and create a trip-hazard. Bundle wires together and tie them with a twist-tie or Velcro tie (which can be found at electronics and hardware stores). Wind up any excess wires so that they don't collect dust. Your computer area will not only look nicer, but also benefit your computer, as well-routed wires can help with proper air flow around your computer.

Give Your Computer Room To Breathe

The new computer you received for Christmas is great. Now all you need is a computer desk so you can keep all your work materials in one convenient place. When looking at computer desks, hutches, armoires, and work centers, keep in mind that your computer needs room to breathe. Avoid purchasing a desk that forces you to place your computer tower into a cubby hole where the airflow is greatly reduced. Without the proper airflow, computer components can heat up and won't perform their best. Cubby holes with an opening in the front and back are generally OK.

Consider An Ergonomic Keyboard Or Mouse

These devices are designed to minimize muscle strain and other problems such as carpal tunnel syndrome. Ergonomic keyboards and mice are ideal for those who use their computers for several hours a day.

Consider A Wireless Mouse

Wireless models reduce the amount of cable clutter around your PC, and you have the freedom to use the mouse or keyboard away from your desk, which can be handy when you want to control the playback of media.

Words of the Month

White Balance

With film you can buy "daylight balanced film" for shooting outdoors or "tungsten balanced film" for shooting indoors under normal domestic lighting (not fluorescents!). If you use daylight film under tungsten light the images will be very yellow. If you use tungsten film in daylight the images will be very blue. With film you have to correct for the "color temperature" of the light using filters or by the right choice of film.

With digital you can pick your white balance to suit your light source, so that white looks white, not yellow or blue. Normally there is an automatic setting and the camera decides what white balance setting to use. However if you know what your light source is you can usually set the camera to it and this may give better results. Most digital cameras have settings for sunlight, shade, electronic flash, fluorescent lighting and tungsten lighting. Some have a manual or custom setting where you point the camera at a white card and let the camera figure out what setting to use to make it white.

Special Interest Groups & Meetings

**Beginners/Internet SIG ... Jim Goodman 579-0122 6:30 p.m. 1st Tuesday, Denny's,
1525 McHenry Avenue**
Board Meeting Mike Kumler 531-2262 7 p.m., 1st Wed. of the month

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

WWW.MPCUG.NET

The Club's Meeting Place

Our general meeting and the Random Access Special Interest Group are held at the Denny's at 1525 McHenry Avenue

Free classifieds for members. Email the text to the editor at scvjudy@usa.net



Need help hooking up that new PC, or installing DSL-Cable?

Call Jim Goodman, \$60.00 for as long as it takes.579-0122

jgood99@sbcglobal.net

Modesto, Ceres Area



For Information about our website host and how you can get on board:

Click on this link info@fire2wire.com

Cyrano Writing & Editing

When you need help putting it in words, call Cyrano.

(209) 523-4218; 499-5401

Resumes, letters, applications, articles, newsletters, press releases, theses

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PC Post

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Editor Emeritus: Claude Delphia

President Emeritus: Bud Bondiotti – 1950 - 2008

Join The Modesto PC User Group

Website: www.mpcug.net

To join MPCUG (or just get more information about us, go to our Website 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.

Opinions expressed in 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 unformatted MS Word RTF text. Proofread and run your spell checker; watch for special upper and lower case in brand names. If you want to include a graphic, please send it as a jpeg attached to the E-mail submitting your article. Please note in the article where the jpeg should be placed.

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 E-mail as an attached file. Call her at 661 252 8852 before submission. Please include your name, day and evening phone numbers, and E-mail address for contact.