

THE WYSIWYG

January 2010

Volume 22, Issue 1

STERLING HEIGHTS COMPUTER CLUB

PO Box 385

Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0385

\$3.00

TUESDAY Jan. 5

**Main Meeting
7:30 PM**

**Meeting topic not
finalized at the time of
publication**

**Bring a guest and qualify for
a better door prize - see page
4 for details**

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The President's Pen

by Don VanSyckel



Happy New Year, or at least I hope it is considering all that's going on in the world. Well here at SHCC we intend to have a good year. It's my perception that SHCC has a well kept secret. A very well kept secret and that's the WYSIWYG Web Watch column. Quite a bit of work goes into this 'page' in the WYSIWYG. Then after the newsletter is published key words are added and passed to the web master for posting on the web site.

Our member Paul Baecker searches out web sites of interest to include in the list. Web sites that are informative, entertaining, or have reference material are listed for your viewing pleasure. Many months the majority of the listed sites are related by sharing a theme.

If you don't feel like typing in the web URLs and can wait a week or two the monthly column from the newsletter will be posted on the web site. Then you can simply click your way through them. On the web site menu on the left, towards the bottom is "Web Site Reviews"; click here. The next page has a link to each of the last two months as well as links to three lists to help you locate web sites of interest. Reviews by key word, list of the monthly pages, and an alphabetical URL list.

Cruise around here you will be overwhelmed with how many interesting and entertaining web site you will find. With 2400 web sites to choose from there's a wide variety.

Here's where you get to help. Paul is always on the look out for good web sites to include in the column. If you visit a web site that's entertaining, unusual, very informative, or just plain interesting, copy the URL, paste it into an email and send it to Paul or WebWatch @SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org. If everyone in the club sent Paul as few as two a year, it would make a huge dent in what Paul has to search out. Like many columnists, Paul works ahead of deadlines so don't be disappointed if a link you send doesn't appear for a few months.



Last Month's Meeting

Last month Mr. Jeffrey Bates of Microsoft presented "Windows 7". This was a real eye opener. It appears that Microsoft might have actually listened to user feedback about their product and did something about it. There are many new features but without the intrusive problems of Vista. Having said this you might want to wait and get Windows 7 when you purchase your next PC since there is no direct upgrade path, just a rebuild path.



Guests and visitors are welcome. People can attend any SHCC meetings during two consecutive months before deciding to become a member or not. Meetings include the main meeting and SIGs. July and August don't count since there is no main meeting. Membership includes admission to all SHCC functions and the newsletter. Membership is open to anyone. It is not limited to the residents of Sterling Heights.

DUES: \$25/YEAR**Resource People:**

Family Tree	Rick Schummer
Firefox	Don VanSyckel
FoxPro	Rick Schummer
Internet Explorer	-
MS Publisher	Rick Kucejko
MS Word	Rick Schummer
WordPerfect	Jim McNeil
Spreadsheets	Rick Schummer

SHCC Coordinators:

Associate Editor	Rick Schummer
Net/Comm. SIG	Betty MacKenzie
Door prizes	Sharon Patrick
Greeter	Lindell Beck
Newsletter publisher	Rick Kucejko
PC SIG	Jack Vander-Schrier
Program Coordinator	Jerry Hess
Publicity	Patrick Little
Resource People	open
Vendor Press Rel.	Jim Waldrop
Web Page	Don VanSyckel

Special Interest Groups:

MS-DOS (Main)	IBM compatibles
Net/Com	Computers communicating with other computers
PC	Intermediate users discuss various topics

Contact Information:

Lindell Beck	586-939-4278	ljaybeck48312@yahoo.com
Ron Frederick	586-294-5687	frederic@gdls.com
Jerry Hess	586-566-6166	jhess@comcast.net
Rick Kucejko	248-879-6180	rick@kucejko.com
Patrick Little	586-264-1497	pblittle@wideopenwest.com
Betty MacKenzie	586-254-0677	mackenzie79@comcast.net
Sharon Patrick	586-268-3626	espee37@att.net
Rick Schummer	586-997-1451	rick@rickschummer.com
Ed Trombley	586-254-1172	ejtrombley@comcast.net
Don VanSyckel	586-731-9232	don@vansyckel.net
Jack Vander-Schrier	586-739-5952	jvanders@comcast.net

2010 SHCC Officers

V. President: John Rady
Treasurer: Ed Trombley
President: Don VanSyckel
Secretary: Rick Kucejko

CLUB ADDRESS: PO Box 385, Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0385
CLUB E-MAIL ADDRESS: Info@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org
CLUB WEB PAGE: http://www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org

Four Month Meeting Schedule:**JANUARY 2010**

- 5 - Main Meeting
- 6 - COMP meeting
- 7 - Net Comm SIG
- 10 - SEMCO meeting
- 27 - PC SIG

MARCH 2010

- 2 - SHCC - Main Meeting
- 3 - COMP meeting
- 8 - SEMCO meeting
- Net/Comm SIG
- PC SIG

FEBRUARY 2010

- 2 - SHCC - Main Meeting
- 3 - COMP meeting
- 8 - SEMCO meeting
- Net/Comm SIG
- PC SIG

APRIL 2010

- 6 - Main Meeting
- 7 - COMP meeting
- 11 - SEMCO meeting
- Net/Comm SIG
- PC SIG

Other Computer Clubs:

As a member of SHCC, you can attend meetings of other clubs where we have reciprocating membership agreements, at no charge.

Computer Club of Marysville and Port Huron (COMP)

Time: 1st Wednesday, 7:00PM
 Place: Mackenzie Bldg, Room 201, St Clair Community College, Clara E McKenzie Library-Science Building, 323 Erie St.
 Port Huron, (810) 982-1187
 Web Page: http://www.bwcomp.org
 Reciprocating: Yes

South Eastern Michigan Computer Organization (SEMCO)

Time: 2nd Sunday at 1:30PM
 Place: The Engineering Society of Detroit 20700 Civic Center Dr. Suite450 4th Floor
 Web page: http://www.semco.org
 Reciprocating: Yes

The OPC (Older Persons Commission) Computer Club

Time: Every Tuesday at 10:00
 Place: OPC in Rochester 248-656-1403.
 Web page: http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Village/1904/

No cost for residents to join or attend meetings. \$150 fee for non-residents
 Reciprocating: No

Newsletter submissions are due 10 days before the club meeting, but the earlier the better. They should be sent to :

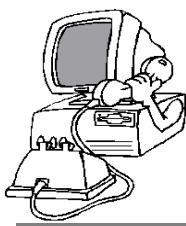
WYSIWYG Publisher
 5069 Fedora, Troy, MI 48098
 OR at the e-mail addresses: newsletter@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org

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SIG Meetings

Net/Comm SIG



The location for the Net/Comm SIG meetings will alternate between the Sterling Heights Public Library and the Clinton-Macomb Public Library, since neither library will allow a pre-arranged monthly meeting to be scheduled for months in advance. As you are aware, the Macomb Library is not able to host our meetings any longer, and we have not yet found a single permanent location to replace it.

In January, the SIG meeting will be in Thursday, January 7 at the Sterling Heights Public Library. (The date is subject to change — please check the web site prior to the meeting.)

The members of the Net/Comm SIG discuss topics to help members of the SHCC learn more about the Internet.

For more information about the SIG, call or e-mail Betty MacKenzie (phone number is on page 2), or check the club web site.

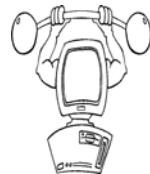


Attend A SIG

If you do not attend SIG meetings, you are missing out on important club benefits available to you. These small groups get into more detail and question and answer sessions than is possible at the main meeting.



PC SIG



The location for the PC SIG meetings will alternate between the Sterling Heights Public Library and the Clinton-Macomb Public Library, since neither library will allow a pre-arranged monthly meeting to be scheduled for months in advance. As you are aware, the Macomb Library is not able to host our meetings any longer, and we have not yet found a single permanent location to replace it.

In January the SIG meeting will be on Wednesday, January 27 at the Sterling Heights Public Library. (The date is subject to change — please check the web site prior to the meeting.)

Intermediate level topics are discussed, aimed at users with some knowledge of computers. Questions and answers regarding your computer will be discussed as always.

For more information about the SIG, call or e-mail Jack Vander-Shrier (phone number is on page 2), or check the club web site.



World Wide Web Column on the Club Web Site

Check out the improved section on the web site. You can see past web sites reviewed in the column on our club web page. They are arranged into various topics to help locate a specific site.



Location Of The Sterling Heights Public Library

The Sterling Heights Public Library, at 40255 Dodge Park Road, is located just south of Utica Road. A large sign reading "City Center" marks the driveway to the library and parking. The Programming Center, where the meeting is held, is just inside the front door of the library.



Request For Door Prizes

Your Computer Club Needs You, or at least your 'stuff.' We could use a bit of help in accumulating useful items for the door prize give away. Please take a look and see if you have any computer related items or equipment that you no longer need and that might be of value to another club member. If you come across some treasures, just bring them to the next club meeting and pass them along at the speaker's table. Thanks, Sharon Patrick, Door Prize Coordinator



SHCC Emergency Shutdown

If a club meeting is canceled an email will be sent to members by an officer, or the coordinator if a SIG meeting, at least an hour before the scheduled start of the meeting. If you have an issue with your email call one of the officers or the coordinator of the SIG. Don't call too early, the decision might not be finalized yet. All members are encouraged to keep the club up to date with their email address.



SHCC Business

Door Prizes

The SHCC offers door prizes at most regularly scheduled club meetings. In December the winners circle included::

Mike Galat won a 4 GB flash Drive

Sharon Patrick won a 4 GB Flash Drive

Jerry Hess won a 4 GB Flash Drive

Sharon Patrick won X-Box Guitars

James Waldrop won Norton Internet Security 2009

Paul Baecker won BitDefender antivirus software

Ron Linsley won Playstation 3 guitars



Presenters Wanted

The officers invite any member to make a presentation at the main meeting.

If there is some software you have been using and think others may be interested as well, or there is a computer topic you would like to present to other members, please call or e-mail Don VanSyckel. Making presentations is not that difficult. The hour goes by before you know it and there is always enough material to cover in a software package so that the hour is easy to fill.

If there is a topic you are interested in or something you would like demonstrated, please see any of the officers. They are always interested in what the members would like to see.



Continued Bring A Friend Program For The Improved Door Prizes

The past "Bring A Friend" program has helped to bring new visitors to our club. Thus, we will continue this program, but in a modified form.

Bringing a new guest will still qualify a member for a special door prize drawing to be held before other door prize tickets are drawn. The new person must fill out a new member sheet at the check-in desk. The difference is that now these special drawings will only be held in November and April.

Members who bring a guest between January and April 2010 will be put on a list, and then be eligible for the special drawing in April. Between May and November, eligibility will be for the November drawing. If not present at the special drawing meeting, the member would automatically be added to the next special drawing meeting.

For the months with the special drawing, at the end of the meeting we will draw for prizes from the 'special' door prize tickets first. As with all of our door prize drawings, the first ticket drawn will get the first pick from all the door prizes, including our special bonus prizes. After the special drawings, the remainder of the special door prize tickets which have not been drawn, will be added to the regular door prize tickets, and the regular door prize drawing will be held. Not all the special tickets may be drawn in the special drawing stage. The more friends you bring to the meeting, the more chances you have to win.

Members who are eligible for the special drawing will also get a regular door prize ticket for the regular door prize drawing. Thus, these members could get two door prizes at the meeting.

Friends who count for earning you a special door prize ticket must be 'new' to SHCC., and have never been to any SHCC meetings in the past.



Member Classified Ads

Send any classifieds to the WYSIWYG Publisher at the club's PO Box, or to his e-mail address posted on page 2 of the newsletter.

Ads are available to SHCC members and are limited to computer related items for non-commercial purposes. There is no charge for members classified ads.



SHCC Post Office Box

After 9-11 some of the rules have been changed concerning post office boxes. These changes are intended to make it more difficult for persons using post office boxes to remain anonymous, at least to the post office. If you send anything to the club's PO box don't put a person's name on it. It's OK to use titles such as President, Treasurer, and such. If you use a person's name, your mail will sit at the post office until that person can get to the post office with ID and claim the mail. This just slows down your mail and inconveniences the addressee.



From The DealsGuy

by Bob (The Cheapskate) Click, Greater Orlando Computer Users Group.

(Editor's Note: Bob Click used to be a member of the SHCC.)

From The DealsGuy For January 2010 by Bob (The Cheapskate) Click, Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

*Problems Never Cease

A while back, I mentioned my lightning strike and replacing my damaged router with a new one by D-Link. I'm told that D-Link has many glowing reviews, but my experience has been just the opposite. It stops working whenever it feels like it and if I switch the Ethernet cable from the router directly into the modem without rebooting either the modem or the computer, the computer accesses the Internet OK, and faster than it did before. When I get the router running again, my network connected printer no longer prints and I have to get Ricoh's help to reconfigure the IP addresses so my printer works. The Ricoh techs have been great. I've tried reconfiguring the printer using the printer's manual, but have not mastered working with IP addresses so far. The D-Link router tech support also leaves a lot to be desired; in fact, they sometimes brush you off whether they get the router working or not, and they're sometimes hard to understand. Once they advised me to upgrade the firmware and quickly got rid of me. Updating the firmware didn't help.

Last week that router quit working twice and I decided I'd had enough of that piece of junk, so I bought another router on sale, but this one is a Netgear, as was my last one, which worked great for a couple of years, until the lightning strike. The Netgear has a disk to help set it up (so did the D-Link) and this Netgear is working fine, but my printer again had to be reconfigured. I'll see if D-Link will let me

return the router for them to check, but at this point, it doesn't matter to me. I've had enough of D-Link.

*Gotta Keep Those Costs Down

How many people do you know who have been let go by their employer lately, even though they might have been with them for years and have an excellent attendance and work record? Lately, I know quite a few of those people. They go to work one day only to be told that a cut is being made, and it is them. Usually the employee has likely been with the company the longest. I believe that's the corporate way of keeping the bonus up by getting rid of employees who are paid the most. Disregard the knowledge, dependability, and experience they have for taking good care of customers. All those years of being a responsible and prudent employee meant nothing. Most of the ones I know had to immediately collect their personal items and were escorted off the property like some kind of criminal, which doesn't make them feel very good. An older person has a difficult task finding a job, unless you get lucky, and older can mean over 35 these days.

*Time To Help Pay Back The Stimulus Loans

I'm sure there will be several articles soon about doing your income tax return free, but I'll add my two cents worth on that topic now. There are several ways to do your income tax at no cost, but my favorite is "Tax Act," <<http://www.taxact.com>> which has a free version and a pay version. The free version does your tax return just fine, except that it pesters you frequently about the advantages of their pay version. I used the free version the first year I tried it and it did what I needed just fine. I had already taken my data to a free preparation service and just wanted to compare the results. Tax Act

actually found a mistake in the one I just had done for free.

The following year I decided to use the deluxe version (right now they are offering it to me for \$12.95) because that one brings forward all of the information from your previous year's return, saving a lot of typing and possible errors. I also called their tech support a couple years ago for help with my "green" credits and had good response with it.

Also, don't forget AARP's free tax help for seniors. We really need to pay our taxes so we can repay the Chinese and keep them from repossessing the USA for nonpayment of our loan. I doubt I could learn to speak Chinese.

***This One Can Improve Your Photos**
 AMS Software announced the release of Home Photo Studio, a new program for photo editing, creating original greeting cards, and decorating ordinary pictures. It offers plenty of frames, tools, masks, filters, and effects (such as 3D and plastic effects). The number of effects may be confusing at first, but it offers opportunities for making every photo special. Greeting card templates can be colorful, darkish, funny, or romantic, and will help the user create a proper greeting card for any occasion. Home Photo Studio offers all necessary functions for uncomplicated photo editing.

The most popular feature, besides greeting card templates, is probably Effects&Filters that allows adding natural phenomena (such as stars, clouds, rain, snow and lightning). You can also add noise and blur, stylize a picture (ancient photo effect, pencil drawing, lithograph, etc.), adjust brightness and saturation; and make complex combinations. The user can adjust the transparency of the effects and set the area to be processed (the top, bottom, center, borders, etc.). There are a variety of picture frames.

Home Photo Studio Deluxe edition costs a bit more than Standard Edition, but is rich with extra features. It is the right variant for those who want to create 3D compositions, get automatically created collages, use plastic effects, and import PNG/Photoshop™ templates. Deluxe edition is also remarkable for it's over 100 professionally designed frames and greeting card templates.

Working with Home Photo Studio is usually trouble-free thanks to the intuitive interface. But if the user still faces a problem while mastering the program, the detailed Help system is ready to explain how to deal with it.

Features: (Some features are only in the Deluxe Edition)

- Support of more than 20 graphics formats;
- Convenient image explorer;
- Hundreds of filters, effects and masks;
- Fast photo enhancement and retouch;
- Creation of slideshows with smooth transition effects;
- Greeting card templates and picture frames;
- Automatic creation of collages and 3D compositions;
- Auto enhancement and red eye removal.

Home Photo Studio runs under Windows 2000/XP/Vista and 7. The Standard edition costs \$39.00 USD and the Deluxe edition costs \$59.00 USD. Here's a special offer for user group members. Order the Standard Edition, and then write to <support@ams-soft.com>. The message must include the order ID and the text "DealsGuy Special Offer." AMS Software will then ship the "Deluxe" Edition with 100 extra templates and extended functions. Further product information, as well as its free trial version, is available at <<http://home-photo-studio.com/>>.

Download link: <<http://home-photo-studio.com/PhotoStudio.zip>>
Company website: <<http://ams-soft.com/>>

*Some Popular Sites With Low Prices

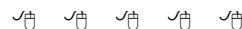
Some of you probably know about these, but some may not. Here are some URLs for great deals that are popular with the local user group members, and something I check frequently. One is <<http://www.1saleaday.com/>> where the sale is good for 24 hours only. The price might even be FREE with the only cost being the shipping. I've bought a few items there and some were fantastic deals while others were good, but the item wasn't quite as I expected.

Another very popular one is <<http://www.giveawayoftheday.com/>> where the item is absolutely free by download for just 24 hours. Some of these free items are reputable ones that normally have a retail price and are rated good software. When it's free, I sometimes download it even though I have no use for it at the time, but I take the attitude that "you never know." I think that men can change their minds too.

<<http://www.software-dod.com>> is another interesting site where you might find a bargain, but I've only found one I wanted so far, and I'm not sure I really needed it.

If you find something that interests you, I suggest you read it thoroughly because I had something I thought I wanted on 1saleaday, but ended up not getting what I thought I was ordering. Read the description over thoroughly to avoid that.

That's it for this month. I'll soon have more new product announcements on my Web site that didn't offer discounts. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click <bobclick.bellsouth.net>. Visit my Web site at <<http://www.dealsguy.com>>.



A Tale Of Two Printers, A Scanner, And A CD Drive

by Bruce Preston, Danbury Area Computer Society, CT
www.dacs.org bpreston@mags.net

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

Printer #1: About two months ago, my friend/dentist called to say that he had a problem with his Epson Stylus CX-3810 Multifunction printer. Usually when he printed, a pop-up window would appear showing the level of his ink cartridges. This had disappeared. In addition he could not get it to appear when he went to the printer's property page by way of

Control Panel > Printers. He had wasted two hours on the phone with Epson's support "somewhere" - they had him uninstall the printer and reinstall it twice, and finally they used the generic "not my problem" cure - they told him to "reinstall Windows." Fortunately he didn't follow that instruction.

Printer #2: About a week ago, I had a problem with my HP OfficeJet 6310, a multifunction printer. It just ceased to respond to print requests, although the scan and copy functions worked just

fine. I tried doing a "repair install." HP's large hourglass thing came up for a while, a screen flashed by too fast to read, and the setup utility concluded before asking me what to do. I went to the HP site and found that they had a 38MB download of basic drivers for "Corporate Use Only." Reading the description, it detailed that this was a lightweight install for distributing over a corporate network such that the printer's functions could be shared over a local area network (which I do) without the baggage (not their phrasing) of all the add-on software that the consumer installation puts on each machine. The consumer install puts "HP Director" - a dashboard application, various photo manipulation software, various photo sharing software, and the ubiquitous automatic check for updates application. The one thing that it would lose would be the ability to send a scan to a desktop application at a selected machine by pushing buttons on the printer's control panel - "pushing" the scan to the computer rather than "pulling" it from the computer. This is a feature I don't need. The lightweight install was just what I wanted. In addition, it said that if it found the consumer drivers it would uninstall them. I downloaded it and cranked up the installation program from the command line as instructed. Again, I got the large hourglass, a too-fast-to-read pop-up, and then nothing.

Scanner: About a month ago there was a Q&A Posting on SmartComputing where a reader had a problem with an Epson Perfection 2580 scanner. Upon pushing the scan button he got a message on his computer's display that a DLL was unable to save the file. Previously it had worked fine. He too had not gotten a solution from Epson support.

CD Drive: About two weeks ago a friend of mine in Michigan had a problem with a CD drive. It "just disappeared." When she had installed an upgrade to her antivirus software it

had complained about an incompatibility with the CD burner software (the software came with the machine when new). She ran the uninstall program which crashed, and the drive disappeared from the device manager.

What do all of these have in common? It appears that all the problems were caused by corrupted registry entries. It is unknown what might have corrupted the registry entries, perhaps an update from either the vendor or Microsoft - but I won't point fingers without evidence. Whatever the cause, the standard response of "uninstall/reinstall" or "repair reinstall" didn't fix the system.

The good news is that free RevoUninstaller from www.revouninstaller.com resolved all four problems in minutes. After uninstalling the broken software we were able to install components without a problem.

RevoUninstaller loads quickly and presents you with a very inclusive list of things that it offers to remove for you. I found it notable that it presented the list within a second whereas the standard Add/Remove Programs takes about a minute to populate on my machine. When you select something to uninstall, it gives you three options:

- 1) Safe - fast uninstall and a scan of the hard disk for left over files.
- 2) Moderate - same as Safe with an additional extended scan of the system registry for left over entries.
- 3) Advanced - Same as Moderate but with a deeper registry scan. Takes a bit more time but finds and/or clears more.

I have always used the "Advanced" option. RevoUninstaller analyzes the application for a moment and then uses the application's native uninstall mechanism first. Upon completion it then does its own digging. When done,

it presents you with a tree-view of what it found in the registry with full path to the registry keys. The items it suggests for deletion are shown in bold, and have an adjacent check box. I have always used the SELECT ALL and the DELETE button. Having cleaned the registry of leftover, it then displays a similar page with a list of leftover files, and gives you the same option of selecting files for deletion. Again, I have used SELECT ALL and DELETE to good effect.

Why it works - this is just an educated guess but I suspect it to be accurate. When an application is installed, along with the core .EXE files the vendors often include a multitude of dynamic link libraries - DLLs, which are either provided by the vendor or a third party. These DLLs provide common functionality across products. (For example, almost every application in Windows is likely to make use of COMDLG32.DLL from Microsoft - this Common Dialog module provides the ubiquitous FILE / OPEN, FILE / SAVE, FILE / PRINT dialog boxes. DLLs are activated from the .EXE by way of registry entries. If COMDLG32.DLL has three functions (known as Entry Points) then it would have three registry entries, one for each function. Now suppose an update is installed - it may replace a DLL with a newer one, and may insert a new registry entry to point to the new DLL. But, if some other application also makes use of the DLL that has been replaced, it may break. For this reason when you uninstall something you may see a warning message that asks for permission to remove a component that might be shared.

I suspect that the first two printer problems weren't cured by the reinstall SETUP because the SETUP found either the leftover files or left over registry entries and decided that it wasn't necessary to continue, and thus either skipped a critical step or just decided to bail out. By running the

RevoUninstaller the machine was wiped clean in such a manner that the SETUP was forced to do all of its operations.

For what it's worth - the HP installer seems to be a homegrown custom module rather than an installer based upon the almost industry standard InstallShield product. I don't know about the Epson installers or the one for the CD drive. There are several products used for creating installations - InstallShield, Wyse, Microsoft's MSI, etc. I won't go so far as to say that the problem is specific to any particular installer product - in fact, they may all be innocent and victims of a sloppy update.

Lastly, I'm not a fan of the various "registry cleaners" as I have found them to be either a scam (We've found 4,513 problems in your registry. We will remove 33 of them, and if you pay us \$29.95 and we'll remove the rest!) or to work only on the registry without delving into the innards of related applications. Revo Uninstaller seems to approach the registry from the application's side and work from the outside in, rather than from the registry side and work from the inside out. Again, that's just my educated guess. Be that as it may, I highly recommend RevoUninstaller.



GIMP

*by Paul Braget, President, OMUG (Olympia Microcomputer Users Group)
Olympia, Washington
<http://olymug.org> [president @ olymug.org](mailto:president@olymug.org)*

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups.

It is awesome what one can do with a camera today. With a camera in hand and a photo manipulation editor/program (application), one could only imagine what may be next on the to-do list. It enlarges our world, especially with open access to various editing tools. One of the tools that will work with multiple platforms (e.g. Windows, Mac, Linux, Unix) is the GIMP.

GIMP (The GNU Image Manipulation Program) is a free software raster graphics editor. Primarily, GIMP is used as a tool for photo manipulations, such as resizing, editing, and cropping photos, combining multiple images, and converting between different image formats.

I was first introduced to this graphical program by a fellow student while working at the resource center

(computer lab) at South Puget Sound Community College in 1997. It allowed us to work in the graphic arts field without spending tons of cash.

In the media, this popular application caught the attention of many in the photography field. As a popular application, GIMP is regularly reviewed and criticized, the reviews often targeting the fitness of GIMP for use in professional environments; for example, GIMP is often cited as a replacement for Adobe Photoshop. Even though comparisons to Photoshop are of regular occurrence, the maintainers of GIMP state that GIMP does not aim to replicate Photoshop.

A Google search for "Gimp vs Photoshop" in quotes currently shows 8,750 hits on my Ubuntu Machine (8.04) using the FireFox search option. I've been seeing this flame war going on since the turn of the century. A use of a program should not be judged by (flame wars) quantity (or how many sold), but should be utilized for its quality (price vs performance).

Photoshop costs around \$700 these days, and GIMP is free, so of course if cost is a main factor you're going to swerve towards GIMP. But—it's not that simple. Photoshop has two leads over GIMP: (1) patented features, and (2) the interface that everyone is used to. Most especially, GIMP is out of the running for professional print shop editing, thanks to the patent lock on industrial features such as color correction and CMYK. GIMP can emulate these features with workarounds, or it can get sued, and that's all there is to it.

A common misperception is that GIMP lacks many more features that Photoshop has. In fact, with the exception of features that depend on patented algorithms, Gimp is 99% on par with Photoshop in capabilities. It's just that Photoshop users try Gimp, are immediately lost in the different and somewhat baroque interface, and leave in terror. Having the features doesn't do you much good if you can't find them!

Oki-doki, now that the comparisons have been made, one might ask, "Where can I find this GNU Image Manipulation Program?" It comes with the Ubuntu operating system as part of a packaged deal. Or the links below will guide you to your operating system platform.

–Installers for GIMP on Windows:
<http://gimp-win.sourceforge.net/stable.html>

–GIMP on OS X:
<http://gimp.lisanet.de/Website/Download.html>

–GIMP for a variety of Linux Distributions:
<http://www.gimp.org/downloads/>

–GIMP for Unix:
<http://www.gimp.org/unix/>

, Online tutorials for GIMP abound:
<http://www.gimp-tutorials.com/>

–Video tutorials:
http://sixrevisions.com/graphics-design/gimp_video_tutorials/

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9EfZFeFhyg&feature=related>



WYSIWYG WEB WATCH (www)

By Paul Baecker

webwatch@sterlingheightscomputerclub.org



This column attempts to locate sites containing valuable, amusing and free content, with no overbearing pressure to purchase anything.

Send your favorite entertaining, helpful or just plain useless sites (a description is optional) to the e-address noted above, for inclusion in a future WYSIWYG issue. Also check the SHCC web site ("Web Page Reviews")

Can you pass this driving test?
http://www.autoinsurance.org/driving_test/

Download 130-page guide to installing and using Ubuntu Linux for novices.
<http://www.tuxradar.com/linuxstarterpack>

Find tutorials, features, tips and help for your Linux installation.
<http://www.linuxformat.com>

Famous boat captains are compared in this downloadable poster.
http://www.pixlmonster.com/quackerjack/boat_captains/

Guide to Google Wave online communications tool that enables groups of people to edit & discuss documents simultaneously on the web
<http://completewaveguide.com>

Videos and links to websites about the pressures on and habitats of wildlife.
<http://odyseetv.com>

Video commemorating the good ol' days of hot rods and cruisin'.
<http://oldfortyfives.com/CarsWeDrove.htm>

Hand and power tool reviews, how-to-projects, buying guides (some in audio format), more,
<http://www.protoolreviews.com>

One hundred free games to play online.
<http://www.microsoft.com/games/playyourgame/>

Original photos from the Civil War.
<http://www.mikelynaugh.com/VirtualCivilWar/New/Originals2/index.html>

How quickly can you identify the 50 states, spelled correctly?
<http://www.sporcle.com/games/states.php>

FavBackup is a simple free tool to backup and restore web browser settings and other data on Windows systems.
<http://www.favbrowser.com/backup/>

How many real and animated personalities do you recognize when zooming around this artwork?
<http://www.thepictureofeverything.com>

A guide to sleeping in airports for weary and budget-minded travelers.
<http://www.sleepinginairports.com>

A social network for and about the animals with which we share the planet ~ pics, videos, articles, more.
<http://mysmelly.com>

Aviation enthusiasts offer airport and aircraft pics, videos, news, airport spotting maps, more.
<http://nycaviation.com>

Comical snowmen.
<http://funnypagenet.com/funny-snowmen/>

Some rather ancient Christmas holiday music. But who is the "Jingle Bells Piggie"?

http://heavens-gates.com/50s/50s_christmas.html

Fascinating collection of thousands of panoramic views of int'l locations. Choose location on map on the left, and then choose from available panoramas on the right (scroll down for more). Use mouse to navigate the individual panorama images. White arrows occasionally appear in panoramas which can transport you to other suggested locations. Right-click on image to choose a view format. Got lost? Return here to start over. NOTE: Webpages may refresh slowly.
<http://www.360cities.net/area/world>

Suggestions on how to recover a dead hard drive.
<http://www.wikihow.com/Recover-a-Dead-Hard-Disk>

Free editable map of the whole world.
<http://www.openstreetmap.org>

Yoono is a free tool for connecting to all your social networks and instant messaging services.
<http://www.yoono.com>

Sketch & Paint ~ create and save your artwork. Many tool, color, and texture options.
<http://www.onemotion.com/flash/sketch-paint/>

Things people said - slips, gaffes, complaints, warning labels, more.
<http://www.rinkworks.com/said/>

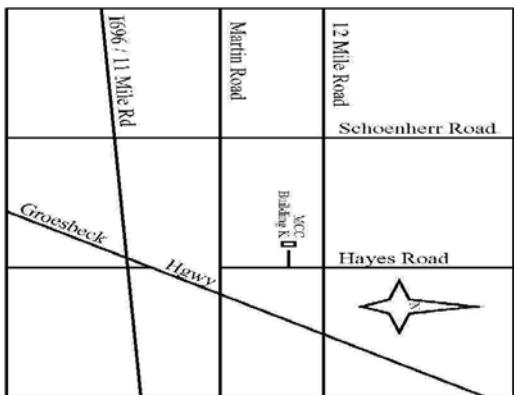
Color photography from Russia in the early 1900's.
<http://blogs.denverpost.com/captured/2009/10/21/color-photography-from-russian-in-the-early-1900s/>

JANUARY AT SHCC:

TUESDAY January 5
Main Meeting: 7:30PM

Macomb Community College
South Campus
14500 E 12 Mile Road, Warren
John Lewis Community Center
(Building K)
(Enter from Hayes Road)

Meeting topic not finalized at the time of publication



SIGs

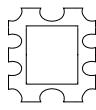
THURSDAY JANUARY 7

Net/Com SIG
7:00PM at the Sterling Heights Public Library Programming Center.

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 27

PC SIG
7:00PM at the Sterling Heights Public Library Programming Center.

STERLING HEIGHTS COMPUTER CLUB
PO Box 385
Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0385



Note: The SIG meeting location will alternate between the Sterling Heights Public Library and the Clinton-Macomb Public Library for now. Dates are subject to change—check the web site prior to the planned meeting.