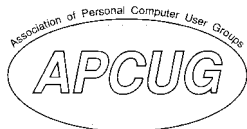




THE WYSIWYG



\$3.00

February 2010

Volume 22, Issue 2

STERLING HEIGHTS COMPUTER CLUB

PO Box 385

Sterling Heights, MI 48311-0385

TUESDAY Feb 2

Main Meeting

7:30 PM

"Migrating your PC from Windows XP to Windows 7" by Jeffrey Bates from Microsoft Corporation

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

The President's Pen

by Don VanSyckel



Wow, has a month already flown by in the new year? It's hard to believe. No, snow to speak of, so it's been a good winter so far. Of course those of you looking for an excuse to 'stay in' and play on the PC might not like it. This month we are pleased to welcome Mr. Jeffrey Bates from Microsoft Corporation. Mr. Bates will be filling us in about "Migrating your PC from Windows XP to Windows 7". There's been a lot of press about migrating to Windows 7 and the issues that many people have encountered.

There's been reports of the coming USB 3 interface to PCs. It's reported to be available on some PCs now and I would suspect will be available soon on a add in card for older PCs. What does USB 3 mean to you? First, Universal Serial Bus (USB) is a very popular method of connecting peripherals to a PC. From USB 1.1 to USB 2.0 and now to USB 3.0 this protocol has been a real work horse.

Below is a table of the 'theoretical' bus speed and the 'real world' bus speed.

Theory Data Rate	Measured Data Rate	Interface Type
12 Mbps	8 Mbps	USB 1.1
480 Mbps	320 Mbps	USB 2.0
4.8 Gbps	TBD	USB 3.0

Gbps = giga bits per second (1,000,000,000)
Mbps = mega bits per second (1,000,000)

A little about what this all means. USB 1.1 and USB 2.0 are basically the same technology. As the electronics got better it was possible to increase the speed and USB 2.0 is 40 time the speed of USB 1.1. This is a great increase but like many other things peripherals such as hard disks, camera memory, scanner resolution (more data per scan) kept pushing to larger and larger. This pushed the need for an interface faster than USB 2.0.

USB 1.1 and USB 2.0 as stated are similar and the electrical connections are exactly the same, only USB 2.0 can operate at a faster rate. In order to push the USB speed to the next level it was necessary to change the electrical connections from the four used by USB 1.1 and 2.0 to eight used by USB 3.0. The connectors are all the same size and shape and four of the eight USB 3.0 electrical connections are positioned so that a USB 2.0 peripheral connected to a USB 3.0 port will operate properly.

While USB 3.0 is 10 times the speed of USB 2.0 it is expected that it will accomplish a real world speed that is a higher percentage of it's theoretical speed than

(Continued on page 7)

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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

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

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

2010 SHCC Officers

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

Four Month Meeting Schedule:

FEBRUARY 2010

2 - SHCC - "Migrating your PC from Windows XP to Windows 7" by Jeffrey Bates from Microsoft Corporation

3 - COMP meeting
 8 - SEMCO meeting
 15 - Net/Comm SIG
 24 - PC SIG

APRIL 2010

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

MAY 2010

4 - Main Meeting
 6 - COMP meeting
 10 - SEMCO meeting
 Net/Comm SIG
 PC SIG

MARCH 2010

2 - SHCC - Main Meeting
 3 - COMP meeting
 8 - 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

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

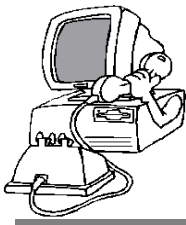
Newsletter submissions are due 10 days before the club meeting, but the earlier the better. They should be sent to :
 WYSIWYG Publisher
 5069 Fedora, Troy, MI 48098
 OR at the e-mail addresses: newsletter@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org

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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 February, the SIG meeting will be in Monday, February 15 at the Clinton Macomb 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 February the SIG meeting will be on Wednesday, February 24 at the Clinton Macomb 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 Clinton-Macomb Public Library

The April SIGs will be at the Clinton-Macomb Public Library. The Library (Main Branch) is located at 40900 Romeo Plank Road in Clinton Township, on the east side of Romeo Plank, south of 19 Mile and Cass Roads, at the intersection of Romeo Plank and Canal roads (south-east corner). (Tel. 586-226-5000.)



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 January the winners circle included::

Carole Polus won a thumb drive

Ed Trombley won a fax machine

Paul Baecker won a wireless router

Priscilla Galat won a mouse pad

Jerry Hess won a mouse pad

Martin Brown won a HP Scanner

Jenny Balcerzak won a mouse pad

Ralph Osinski won an Epson printer

Ed Zaremba won a mouse pad

Ron Linsley won a box of envelopes



Member Ads

Ads are available free to SHCC members, and are limited to computer related items for non-commercial purposes. Any ad shall be a maximum of twelve newsletter lines of text.



Club Record Changes

To update your e-mail address, phone number, etc., please e-mail the club secretary at: Secretary@SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org. Using this address will provide the smoothest and quickest venue for any changes.



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.

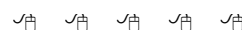
Bringing a new guest will still qualify a member for a special door prize drawing to be held before other door prize tickets are draw. The new person must fill out a new member sheet at the check-in desk. The difference is that now these special drawings will only be held in November and April.

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 you 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 February 2010 by Bob (The Cheapskate) Click, Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

Our bank, Washington Mutual, was recently taken over by Chase via the FDIC. Our checking and a small savings account were with them, and a Home Equity Loan of just a few thousand. Although our original purpose for the HEL fell through, we had eventually borrowed a small amount for home improvements. We opened the HEL three years ago and have never been late or missed a payment. We usually pay a substantial amount on the principal as well as the monthly interest, but on a few occasions, we only paid the monthly interest, which you can do on a HEL. Shortly after Chase took over, we received a letter from them with two forms they wanted signed to enable them to get copies of our IRS returns for the last two years. They also demanded that we furnish them proof of our income.

I was appalled at the intensity of their demand and decided to ignore it; after all, our record is unblemished, and our FICO score is over 800 and we weren't asking for more money, so I didn't feel we were doing anything wrong? I expected to hear from them by phone, but instead, the next month brought a letter demanding we pay the loan off and there would be no financial penalty for early payment. I also ignored that one. I guess I could have paid it off, but paying money back to your savings does not always happen as planned, so I'm just continuing to pay on the loan, wondering what their next move will be. Am I some kind of criminal?

They then discontinued our credit line, which really doesn't matter to me. Now they're hitting us with extra fees for each payment, called "back dating fees." I've tried complaining to a couple of state agencies, but neither office has responded. My feeling is, beware of dealing with Chase. We're changing our checking to another bank, and since our utilities are automatically withdrawn, we're communicating with them to change bank accounts. The utilities tell me many of their customers are also complaining about Chase.

*Interesting Reading

Everyone is interested in Flash Memory technology these days, but few end users really understand what it's all about. Information Week had an interesting article that explains some of how it works along with the shortcomings, and what the future might bring. This article might fill in some blanks, but it's written for IT people so read it carefully. Sorry for the long URL, but some readers dislike tinyurls. They tell me they want to know where they're going when they click a URL. <<http://www.informationweek.com/news/storage/systems/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=219501231&queryText=Howard%20Marks>>

Another interesting article in IW is about "The Internet of Things"; keeping track of all kinds of things, using RFID tags, and other types of information tags. It covers different topics and problems not covered in the RFID article I gave you recently, and might give you something to think about. <<http://analytics.informationweek.com/abstract/25/1343/Virtualization/monitoring-technology-creates-internet-of-things.html>>.

*Oops, Nobody Home

In my November DealsGuy column, I wrote about an interesting 3D address

book with a discount. Two of my readers have told me they tried to order it, but were unable to do so, or even get a response to e-mail. We both tried to contact the PR person that I coordinated it with, but to no avail. They don't seem to respond at all and I have no idea why. I have that problem a lot with vendors who send out announcements for a new product, but when that happens I don't usually use that item, but in this case, I had several communications with the person and she assured me everything would work fine. I guess those things happen, but I can't help but feel bad. I'm still trying to contact them.

*Need To Uninstall Something?

Mike Ungerman <<http://musings-from-mike.blogspot.com>> (interesting site) of Central Florida Computer Society <<http://www.cfcs.org>> suggested Revo Uninstaller as his favorite product for program removals <http://www.revoinstaller.com/revo_uninstaller_free_download.html>. User Group members in Florida will remember Mike as the founder of the Florida Association of Computer User Groups (FACUG). He put his own money on the line in the hopes that FACUG would be a success that first year, and it has been a resounding success every since, with the help of many other people.

Here is an excerpt from the Revo Web site: "Revo Uninstaller includes; Junk Files Cleaner, Windows Tools, Auto Run Manager, Browsers Cleaner, MS Office Cleaner, Windows Cleaner, Evidence Remover and Unrecoverable Delete tools! You can reach all these tools from the 'Tools' tool bar button of Revo Uninstaller."

Another of Mike's recommendations

Belarc Advisor is a popular product for analyzing your system, but Mike suggests a similar program, SIW - System Information for Windows, that, in his opinion, presents the data in a more manageable format <<http://www>>.

gtopala.com/>. Check their Web site to find out about its many features and download the freeware version. This is an impressive program.

*Be Warned About Those Nasty Web Sites

Hewie Poplock <<http://www.hewie.net>> of Central Florida Computer Society alerted his Windows SIG to this valuable utility, <<http://linkscanner.avg.com>>. Some of the nastiest malware could download unknowingly from innocent looking Web sites, so a timely warning might help. I recently mentioned Site Advisor from McAfee, and Site Hound from FireTrust to warn you about undesirable Web sites. They turn your browser red and warn you about possible malicious code. Also check out LinkScanner from AVG Technologies. They acquired this product a while back, which used to sell for \$29.95 before they bought it, but now it's free. It works with Windows 2000, XP, Vista and Windows 7. It's also OK on either 32 bit or 64 bit systems. It's a plug-in for IE-6 or later and also works with Firefox.

*Can't Make Up a Web Site For Your Business, Look Into This Announcement!

Talkbiznow will offer a free online storefront with the launch of Webstore, a service that enables businesses, start-ups and charities to create their own micro-Website promoting products on the Internet. "A Webstore, which can be created for free within eight minutes, dramatically cuts the time and costs required to set up a well-designed business website, which often costs users between £10,000 (\$16,000) and £20,000 (\$32,000) to build." The biggest use of the new service is expected to come from Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) who are already turning to Talkbiznow in the current tough economic conditions as a low-cost and technologically efficient way to reach new markets, recruit staff and create partnerships.

Talkbiznow users can design their own Webstore and choose audio and video promotional tools to help ensure that each micro-website is tailor-made to meet their specific business brand. Each Webstore will have its own URL address, available to all Internet users. Visitors to a Webstore can pay for products and services via PayPal, the online payment system. The accessibility of Webstore reflects the philosophy of Martin Warner, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and co-founder of Talkbiznow, who is committed to offering services for free, empowering SMEs with the technological bandwidth to compete with large corporations.

Warner says: "Webstore represents a unique, non-technical experience to market yourself. Talkbiznow members will be able to create their own storefront. Businesses, charities, events and personal profiles will all be reachable outside the network itself. A Webstore will effectively function as an online business card." Webstore users choose between elegant off-the-shelf templates to define their product, service, event or brand; also advertise prices and describe their industry. Browsers will find each micro-website intuitively easy to navigate with a Webstore acting as a portal that lies between an advertisement and a business website. Users will

be able to upload videos about themselves, or their business, from their smart phones and upload them to the page."

Talkbiznow enables its users to network, promote, collaborate with each other, and do business online. Services include web conferencing, voice conferencing and file storage facilities. Users can also use the business social network as an online portal to market and advertise services to other users.

For further information on Webstore, call + 44 (0)20 7233 7578, or check the Talkbiznow URL at <<http://www.talkbiznow.com>>.

That's it for this month. I'll have some 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>>



Converting Slides To Digital Images

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

By my estimate, over the last 40 or so years, I have taken about 6,000 slides. Topics include such things as family get-togethers, Formula 1 and Can-Am races at Watkins Glen, SCCA races at Lime Rock Park, bike tours in Vermont, the U.K, Western Europe, and steam locomotives in

Colorado, Vermont, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. For all of these I much prefer the color fidelity and permanence of slides over prints.

Unfortunately, slides also require either setting up a projector and screen or using a hand-held viewer, and don't easily lend themselves to sharing. Years ago I had a Polaroid SprintScan 35 film scanner, but it required a SCSI adapter card and Polaroid went under without delivering drivers for

Windows 2000 or XP. It was also somewhat slow taking about 2 minutes per scan. I will grant you that it delivered high quality images. My brother in law has scanned a few slides using a flatbed scanner with a light box cover, but the resolution was not great. It was acceptable for distributing by e-mail or posting on a web page, but not satisfactory for full screen viewing.

A few months ago I discovered Ion Audio's "Slides 2 PC" 35 mm Slide and Film Scanner. It is a nifty compact device that consists of housing containing a fixed-focus USB 2.0 camera, a white-balanced light source and a pair of carriers - one that can hold 3 mounted 35 mm slides, the other for 6-exposure 35 mm negative strips. System requirements are minimal - Windows XP or Vista, and a USB 2 port. *(If you only have USB 1.1 you will need to add a USB 2 card to your desktop or get a USB 2 PCMCIA card for your notebook. I tried it on my old notebook and the driver refused flatly stating that it needed USB 2.)*

Slides 2 PC comes bundled with ArcSoft's Photo Impressions 6, a consumer-friendly image capture/editing/cataloging program commonly bundled with digital scanners and cameras. The scanner appears as a TWAIN device, I happen to prefer the free (for personal use) IrfanView as I have used IrfanView for years. <http://www.irfanview.com/> One thing I disliked about the ArcSoft package was its insistence upon loading an always resident module.

I don't know if the device will work with a Mac - next time Scott is around with his Mac we'll see if it recognizes it. Since it is a TWAIN device there is a good chance as long as you bring your own software.

Operation is simple; I'll describe the process when using IrfanView. Select the TWAIN source from the FILE menu, and then select ACQUIRE/BATCH. The first dialog box asks for a

target folder, a root filename, the starting number and the number of digits. I created folder "\My Documents\My Pictures\VBT Tours\1972" as the folder, "VBT_" as the filename root, 1 as the starting number, and 3 as the number of digits. I clicked OK and the scanner loaded with a real-time preview. In this case of a blank white area since I hadn't loaded a slide. Note that since it is a video camera rather than a moving scanner mechanism there are essentially no moving parts within that can get out of calibration.

The carrier is hinged along the long side - open it, place 3 slides in the slide carrier or a film strip in the film carrier and close it. Slide the carrier into the scanner until you feel it click at the first positioning notch. In about a half second the image will appear, then reappear once the auto-exposure kicks in. Tap the top of the scanner and the image is captured to memory. A thumbnail appears above the preview image. Slide the carrier to the next notch and repeat the process. Reload and repeat until you have up to 12 thumbnails. Click on the first, shift-click on the last one to select them all, then click on the 'Transfer' button on the screen and they will be written to disk. Resultant JPEG images are 2592x1680, 24 bit color depth. They average about 2.5MB in size.

If you use Photo Impressions 6 as part of start up you get a configuration screen for the scanner where you may select image size, color depth, JPEG or TIFF, and specify whether you are

scanning transparencies (slides), color or B/W negatives. IrfanView just uses the defaults of JPEG at 24 bit color depth.

As far as speed is concerned, on this lazy Sunday afternoon I scanned 60 slides in 33 minutes without rushing. This included taking the slides out of the Bell & Howell 'Slide Cube' and reloading them. I have yet to go into the JPEGs to rotate the images that need to be turned from landscape to portrait orientation - IrfanView can do that with a single key-press.

For those who like spec sheets:

- 5 mega-pixel scanner
- USB 2.0 interface
- f/6.0 four element glass lens
- Fixed focus, auto-exposure and color balance

More information at <http://www.ionaudio.com/slides2pc>

Sources - I did a little web searching while wrapping up this article. The average eBay auction over the last 60 days closed at \$85 including shipping. J&R has it for \$79.99 plus shipping which I suspect will put it right about \$85. If you like rolling the dice, from time to time a factory refurb shows up on eBay at about \$65.

If you have many slides or negatives that you'd like to convert to digital, give this unit some thought. I'm very happy with it.

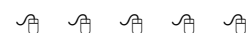


(Continued from page 1)

USB 2.0. This means that the expected performance increase will be more than a factor of 10. One of the things to note is that USB 3.0 is expected to run at a data rate higher than the fastest consumer peripherals can handle thus allowing the peripherals to run at their maximum data rate.

Competing with USB 3.0 is eSATA. Currently for external disks eSATA is probably the way to go leaving USB for other type peripheral such as printers, scanners, cameras, and thumb drives.

More on eSATA and why serial instead of parallel in future months.



Speed Demons

by Bill Roman, Advisor to the Board of Directors, The PC Users Group of Connecticut

www.tpcug.org br@numbercrunch.com

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

There is an issue that I feel must be addressed, since the issue continues to come up on a regular basis. As a PC technician I constantly get asked why the clients' computer has become so slow, and if there is anything wrong with it.

The first thing I tell the client is that there are two main culprits that contribute to a PC becoming very sluggish. The first being lack of RAM memory. This answer usually elicits a quick response from the user that they "only do e-mail, Internet and word processing" or some similar response. I then go into a discussion with the user that there are two kinds of memory in a computer: hard drive storage, which holds all their music, pictures, documents, etc. and RAM, or working memory. A user could have plenty of hard drive space to store all of their documents and stuff, but when they don't have enough RAM, the computer will, over time, become slower and slower.

Why you ask? When the computer was originally purchased (usually somewhere between 2 and 5 years ago) Windows XP, in this case, required about 512MB of RAM to run properly. As Windows critical security updates and service packs are installed, as well as upgrades and updates to all sorts of programs used on a daily basis (antivirus, Internet Explorer, AOL, Adobe Reader and Flash Player, printer updates, etc), the programs NEVER get smaller, always bigger.

Now, several years later and the

programs being used are double or triple in size, but the computer is the same one with the same specs as when it was purchased. Adding more RAM memory is a quick, cheap way to improve performance to an aging computer, and extend life before a replacement is in order. Windows XP should have at least 1024 MB (1GB) of RAM to run properly, and Windows Vista (32bit) needs 3GB of RAM. More is not better in the case of Vista for technical reasons I will not go into in this article.

This is only half the battle. The other half is to beat down what I will call the "moochers". Years ago when I would inspect a computer for sluggish performance, it was usually because of a rogue game that was installed. Back then quite a few games adopted the theory that the only reason you owned your \$3000 or \$4000 computer (yes, it was that much back then, even more depending on how far back you go) was to play some ridiculous \$49 game. The game would change many settings that allowed the game to work properly, but made it miserable to perform simple tasks like type a letter.

Now, in 2009 every program under the sun assumes that they are the main focus, and must be given priority at all times. What does this mean to you, the end user? Each time when an upgraded revision of Adobe Reader comes out it always wants to include the new "MSN Toolbar" or "Yahoo Toolbar" etc. This adds unnecessary junk to your browser, which slows down getting online. In addition, many of these programs load an additional program when Windows starts to speed it up when starting it. This is just lousy practice that is a very poor substitute for tight efficient programming. If the program was small

and lean there would be no need for "speed loaders," which make your computer take an exorbitant amount of time for Windows to start.

Not to pick on, but a classic example of this is how much Apple's iTunes has grown through the years. iTunes 6 which was released in January 2006 was about 35MB in size. iTunes 7.5 was 52MB and iTunes 8.1 (the current release) is now up to 70MB. The program is twice as large only three years later, and loads a number of programs when Windows starts to aid loading this memory hog.

What to do about this? In short be mindful when installing updated programs to unselect add on toolbars and, if available, to kick them out of starting up when Windows loads. I have discussed at our local computer club meetings to do your best to keep running processes to a minimum. By clicking control, alt, delete once (with no programs active) will bring up the task manager and show how many processes are running. A good number for Windows XP is less than 35, and for Vista it's about 45.

Startup Cop and the free CCleaner utilities have the ability to disable or remove programs from starting, but I would check online in a Google search before disabling anything unless certain.

I do hope this article sheds some light on the subject of pokey computers. Remember, it's not so much the hardware as it is software that kills a computer.

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Last Month's Meeting

Last month we heard about "Hot web sites in the WYSIWYG Web Watch Column" from SHCC members Don Van-Syckel and Paul Baecker. Paul is currently the author of the WWW Column and provides WYSIWYG readers with links to many interesting and useful web sites

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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 any-

thing. 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")

Free 2010 monthly calendars, downloadable and editable as .pdf or .doc formats.

<http://www.printable2010calendar.net>

Interactive games for learning languages.

<http://www.digitaldialects.com>

Regularly updated/searchable database offering file extension & associated programs information for Windows systems, as well as for MAC OS X and Unix based systems.

<http://www.file-extensions.org/>

How many real and animated personalities do you recognize when zooming around this artwork?

<http://www.thepictureofeverything.com>

A tutorial on color theory with respect to the creation or design of visual documents.

<http://www.worqx.com/color/>

Tutorials and videos for performing all sorts of activities and functions.

<http://www.wonderhowto.com>

Comprehensive user-friendly source for learning web design, with examples and practice modes.

<http://www.w3schools.com>

Inspirational and motivational quotes and sayings in many categories. Register for daily e-mails.

<http://www.dreamthisday.com>

Learn more about what's in household products, about potential health effects, and about safety and handling.

<http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov>

Montage of the decaying monuments and monoliths of Detroit.

<http://www.marchandmeffre.com/detroit/>

Collection of air show and military aircraft sites (and a few flora/fauna links), jam-packed with pics and a few videos.

<http://www.sky-flash.com>

Comprehensive site for American desert info - wildlife, geology, maps, flora, culture, travel suggestions and videos, photos and photo tips, more.

<http://www.desertusa.com>

Pics and video from Czech, British, Swiss, Dutch, and other European air shows.

<http://www.steehouwer.com>

Upgrading from Windows XP to Windows 7 - a video and a printable tutorial.

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows7/help/upgrading-from-windows-xp-to-windows-7>

Hundreds of challenging flash games. (Note: do NOT download anything that may be offered - all games are played online.)

<http://www.realmofdarkness.net/games/home.php>

All about cats - health, breeds, fun, nutrition, pics & videos, rescues, more.

<http://lovemeow.com>

Creative animation pits 'the chosen one' against familiar Windows components.

http://fc02.deviantart.net/fs13/f/2007/073/7/0/Animator_vs_Animation_II_by_alanbaecker.swf

The panorama and time-lapse photography are of particular interest here.

<http://alexpittphotography.com>

Hundreds of free arcade games to play on-line.

<http://www.games.soft82.com>

Collection of celebrity sound boards and prank calls.

<http://www.realmofdarkness.net/pranks/celebrpranks.htm>

Collection of ratings, rankings, or grades of various companies, based on how good they are at paying their rebates on time, in full, with no hassles.

<http://www.rebatereportcard.com>

View complaints reported against companies by consumers. Add your own rip-off experience.

<http://www.ripoffreport.com>

Let the 50s and 60s come back to life with these creative videos.

<http://oldfortyfives.com>

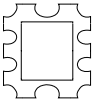
Keep clicking the screen to view positive slogans.

<http://www.welivenow.org>

"Feeding your gadget and tech obsessions" - reviews, discussions, pics & videos of the latest tekkie toys and tools.

<http://tv.slashgear.com>





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

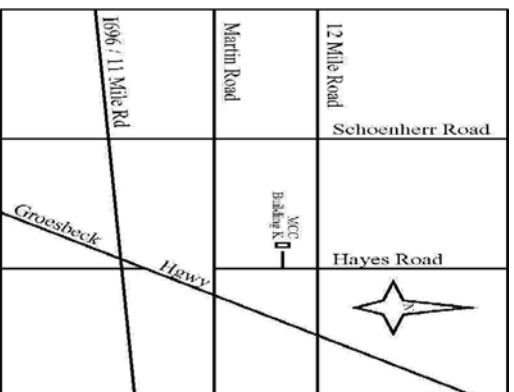


FEBRUARY AT SHCC:

TUESDAY February 2 **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)

**"Migrating your PC from
Windows XP to Windows
7" by Jeffrey Bates from
Microsoft Corporation**



SIGS

MONDAY

Net/Com SIG

FEBRUARY 15

7:00PM at the Clinton Macomb Public
Library/ Programming Center .

WEDNESDAY

PC SIG

FEBRUARY 24

7:00PM at the Clinton Macomb Public
Library/ Programming Center .

**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.**