



www.waltonccc.org

Cyber Chat

Volume 10 Issue 3

DeFuniak Springs, Florida

March 2008

Regular Meeting

March 20, 2008

10:00 AM

Okaloosa-Walton College

908 W. Hwy 90

Room 154

DeFuniak Springs, Florida

See Program on Page 8

Lab Room 201 open 8:45AM for Windows SIG



DON EDRINGTON



Don Edrington The Senior Computer Tutor

A Winner!

For the past five years or more we have shared articles of wisdom from Don Edrington out California way. By happenstance I found Don on the Internet and took an immediate liking to his outlook on life and the way he shared and helped his readers. In tribute to Don and his right hand associate, Mary Hanson, this issue of Cyber Chat it dedicated to these two wonderful people who have contributed so much to our members.

J. B. Hillard

Guest Editor

understand, he has a background as varied as the color of autumn leaves. Looks at his background which is so diversified I'm not sure if he was born in the 19th or 20th Century. How can anyone be so involved in such a wide variety without being of a very advanced age? I'm a senior citizen myself so maybe I can get away with that comment. Don is a gifted guy.

He has obviously been around since the days the computer was invented. At least as we common folks know and understand computers. His background has been in journalism, photography, and as a cartoonist. He loves music, old nostalgic types of music, celebrity and other vintage photos. Look for "briefbio" on his website, it's interesting. J. B.

Inside this Edition

Boot n/ Reboot 3

Our Community 3

PC Don—The Senior Computer Tutor 4

Page 4—8 on Digital Photography

Not only is Don Edrington a computer column writer with a delivery style that novice readers can

Board of Directors and Volunteer Staff

J. B. Hillard	President	892-3450	jbh37@panhandle.rr.com
Chip Russ	Vice President	892-7452	chipruss@defuniak.com
Estelle Norman	Secretary	834-2564	ewn@fairpoint.net
Robert Connor	Treas./Membership	892-5098	kittysfour@embarqmail.com
Sonny Hollingsworth	Member at Large	892-2456	Ehollinsorth@panhandle.rr.com
Diane Merkel	Webmaster	897-4505	ddmerkel@aol.com
Robert Connor	Newsletter Editor	892-5098	kittysfour@embarqmail.com
Jerry Fulaytar	Assistant Editor	892-0103	twowaters@embarqmail.com
Sam Sloan	Technology Manager	892-9329	scecil@panhandle.rr.com
Gay Russ	Leader—Genealogy SIG	892-7452	mgr99@defuniak.com
Rella Bierbower	Director-Social Services	892-3782	ibierbower@panhandle.rr.com
Joe Contreras	Listserv Administrator	892-6856	joe@ifixcomputers.net

Cyber Chat is published monthly by the ChautauquaCyber Club, Inc. It is distributed to each member and made available to the public through local business, educational, and public library organizations.

The Chautauqua Cyber Club, Inc. is in no way responsible or liable for any damages resulting from articles, opinions, advertising representations, warranties expressed or implied in this publication. We do not endorse or recommend products or services. Comments or opinions do not necessarily reflect the policies of the Chautauqua Cyber Club, Inc. , Board of Directors.

The principle of equal access/equal opportunity for everyone is practiced.

The primary purpose is to assist our members and others to become more proficient in the use of a computer for their personal enjoyment. We serve through promotion of computer literacy and education by being actively involved in the community.

The Chautauqua Cyber Club, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization under section 501(c)3 for educational purposes, and incorporated under the laws of the State of Florida.

CCC Listserv: email to waltonccc@freelists.org

Free computer help by using the club listserv. Post a problem by email and obtain an answer (most of the time).

The listserv is a service provided to members of the Chautauqua Cyber Club and invited guests. It is used for problems solving, posting club news and special bulletins, and to maintain a user friendly communication network.

NOTICE

Publishing information: Articles submitted for publication should be in Microsoft Word or regular ASCII text and unformatted. Photos with article are encouraged.

Presenters/Writers: Members are encouraged to volunteer and present a program on software or hardware. Vendors will provide presentations-in-a-box, and publishers will provide books for review. Whatever is presented becomes the property of the presenter. Make your interest known and share. You will be surprised at what all is available to demonstrate.

Cyber Chat: This is a monthly publication. It is mailed to each members as a benefit, but can be viewed on the website at www.waltonccc.org.

Donate Your Old Computer

Help Promote Computer Literacy and Education

in Walton County

Pentium II , III, and IV class computers, monitors, and printers in working condition are accepted

Receipt issued upon request for tax credit

Chautauqua Cyber Club, Inc.— 501(c)3

To make a donation call

J. B. Hillard 892-3450 / 892-8100

Boot n' Reboot

by J. B. Hillard—President



This issue of Cyber Chat is somewhat different than previous issues. It's our way of recognizing and showing

appreciation to Don Edrington who has allowed us to use his copyrighted material for many years. Because of it our members have benefited greatly in improving their knowledge and computer skills. Next month there will be continuation with two articles related to the primary focus this month, digital photography and photo work. I can't wait until we get into the new Life Enrichment Senior Center where we can expand the type of training that will be offered. Digital Photography will be on top of the list.

About the time you receive this newsletter I will be down in Zephyrhills for the Spring Conference of the Florida Association of Computer User Groups. Robert Connor and Gay Russ are repeaters as well. I keep hoping every year we will have at least five, but that was accomplished only one year. The limit from each club is five. The knowledge and information that is gathered at the conference always gives me a lift. About this time of year I'm usually near burned out, but the get away trip is a good refresher. It keeps me going until summer anyway.

I think it's about time for another cookout at Lake Stanley Park. April would be a good time before it get's too hot. More on this later.

Happy Computing,

J. B.

Our Community



Community Service Program

"People Helping People"

For a good many years we have promoted computing and brought numerous citizens into the hobby with our community service work. The volunteers who come to the shop every week, month after month, are the backbone of the operation. They are supported by many others when a special call goes out for assistance to do a yard sale, move equipment, or do whatever is needed. Many of our members support the ink cartridge recycle project and this helps raise money to buy parts.

While we have assisted individuals, other non-profit organizations, and literally hundreds of students of all types, a recent opportunity came our way that just might be the crown jewel of all.

We received a request from a U. S. Army Unit in Iraq to help them with computers to set up a communications and education center. With the help of Okaloosa-Walton College we have been able to meet the request. There will be more to the story as the equipment is delivered and placed into operation.



Sam Sloan with part of the 20 computers ready for Iraq. He was assisted by Robert Connor who was resting in his Lazy Boy when the photo was taken. The computers were provided by Okaloosa-Walton College



PC Don
The Senior
Computer Tutor
www.pcdon.com

Crop, Resize, Align, Color Basics

How to Crop and/or Resize a Photo Image-Editing Basics

One of the advantages of using a digital camera is being able to edit your shots in all kinds of creative ways. Obvious edits might be, say, removing a blemish from someone's portrait or filling in someone's bald spot.

Beyond cosmetic editing, you can make pictures darker or lighter or change their contrast levels. You can even superimpose an object from one picture onto another, or change a trio of friends into a duo if you decide you no longer like one of them.

How to Crop a Photo

The first editing command most of us learn is **cropping**, i.e. eliminating all but the most essential part of a photo. Image-editing programs often come with phonebook-sized manuals that explain how to turn simple snapshots into works of art worthy of upscale gallery exhibits. The best I can offer here are some beginning tips.

Dozens of image-editing programs exist, each with its own set of tools and command structures — but I will only be specific about **Windows Paint** and **Irfanview**, since they are available to

all users of Windows-based PCs. The former is found at **Start>All Programs>Accessories>Paint**, while the latter is free from www.irfanview.com. Let's start with **Paint**.

Paint, as its name suggests, was designed more for "painting" a picture than for editing a photo. But it still has some useful photo-editing features. Let's say you have a cute shot of a laughing child, and would like to eliminate most of the extraneous background. Launch Paint, then click **File>Open**, which should take you to your *My Pictures* folder. Double-click the target photo.

Click on the rectangular "crop" tool in the upper right corner of the toolbar. Now hold down your left mouse button and draw a rectangle around the photo's subject, leaving just the amount of background you want. Then click **Edit>Copy** to copy your selection to the "invisible Windows clipboard."

Now click **File>New** to create space for your cropping. Answer NO when asked if you want to save the previous picture. Click **Edit>Paste** to display your cropped picture. Finally, go to **File>Save As** to give your cropped picture a name.

Doing the above with *Irfanview* is faster and easier. As before, use **File>Open** and double-click the target photo, which will automatically be in the "cropping" mode when displayed. Draw your rectangle and click the Toolbar *Scissors*, which will **cut** the cropped area from the picture. Next click the Toolbar "**Paste**" icon to make your cropped section replace the original photo. As always, use **File>Save As** to name the finished job. Your original will remain unchanged.



How to Resize a Picture

To re-size a picture in *Paint*, click **Image>Stretch & Skew** and choose your new dimensions. In *Irfanview* click **Image>Resize/Resample**.

Irfanview will also let you do some basic color enhancement by clicking **Image>Enhance Colors**. *Paint* has no such feature, but will let you change colors on a bit by bit (pixel by pixel) basis, and will also let you add text to a picture.

This is just the tip of the photo-editing iceberg, and you probably have software which will do lots of more sophisticated things.

Problems with Enlarging Digital Pictures

I recently explained that a photograph scanned and copied into a computer is converted to a "bitmap" image consisting of tiny squares which, when viewed from a distance, give the illusion of being the same "smooth flowing" colors seen in the original photo. However, I continue to be asked why enlarging a bitmap photo makes it look "blocky."

"When my photos are enlarged at Kodak," I'm told, "the prints still looks smooth and natural."

Well, it's because of the those little squares. Colors captured on film by a camera are "continuous tone" images that continue to be smooth flowing when they are enlarged or reduced. However, computer images are broken down into tiny "bits" which must be "mapped" in a way that makes them appear to be smooth

flowing at a given "dots per inch" resolution.

If a photo is scanned and subsequently printed at the same size as the original, using a high DPI on quality paper, the result can be an image that looks very much like a Kodak print. But a little arithmetic will explain why enlarging a bitmap can make it look "blocky."

Doing Some Math Might Make It Easier to Understand

Let's assume that the original photo is a sunset with vibrant shades of yellow, orange and red. Then let's zoom in on one of the tiny yellow squares, which is probably surrounded by squares in varying shades of yellow-orange. Well, if you ask your image-editing program to double the size of this picture, it will actually come out four times larger (double the height by double the width). This means that the number of tiny squares will need to be quadrupled.

Well, when all these new squares are added in, how does your computer know what color to make each one? Take the aforementioned yellow square, for instance. It needs to be supplemented by three new squares; and the most logical thing to do is make them all yellow.

Now, where you had one yellow square surrounded by others of various yellow-orange hues, you have a block of four yellow squares surrounded by blocks of yellow-orange shades, which are also four times larger than they were originally. These blocks are what make the enlargement look "blocky."

Yes, a professional graphic artist may be able to edit these colored blocks, one bit at a time, to compensate for all this — but your image-editing software is not likely to be quite that smart.



Can This Be Overcome?

So what can be done to keep a larger print from looking blocky? The best solution is to start with a larger photo to be scanned. If you don't have a larger copy of the picture,

consider having it enlarged photographically before you scan it.

I recently explained all this to someone who replied, "Well, that may be the case with 'bitmaps' — but all my pictures are 'JPGs.'"

Well, JPGs are, in fact, bitmaps, as are BMPs, GIFs, TIFs and many, many other picture formats too numerous to list here.

Why Are There So Many Different Formats?

Well, in the early days of computer imaging, different programs were being written by different people — and the results were several different ways to accomplish, more or less, the same thing. So Is One of These Formats Better Than All the Others?

You may get varying opinions from computer technicians and graphic artists, but here's what most of us need to know: the JPG format (a.k.a. JPEG and JPE) has become the most popular for reproducing color photographs on Windows-based PCs. The GIF format is used most often for drawings seen on the Internet, and it is also used for animated graphics. However, GIFs are limited to 256 colors, while JPGs can display millions of colors.

But an important feature regarding saving your picture as a JPG, about which many users are unaware, is the fact that you can choose from different "image quality" to "file size" ratios; high-

quality/large-size, medium-quality/medium-size, and low-quality/small-size.

However, no-frills image-editing programs (such as Windows Paint) default to "medium quality" without offering the other choices. Graphics software by Adobe, Corel, Jasc PaintShop Pro and many others, do ask which quality/size ratio you want, when saving a picture.

So Which Ratio Is best to Use?

It pays to experiment — and you'll probably discover that very little difference can be seen between the high quality and medium quality images. In any case, keep in mind that smaller file sizes can be uploaded and downloaded faster, and that they take up less disk space. (However, in these times of high-speed cable connections and huge-capacity hard drives, this may not be quite the issue it was just a few years ago.)

One other thing you need to be aware of, though, is that once a JPG has been saved as a lower quality image, it can NOT be restored to a higher quality. So always save it with a different filename. This will preserve the original image, in case you later change your mind about which quality to use when saving.

How to Straighten (Rotate, Align) a Photo

Most image-editing programs have options that allows you to rotate a picture clockwise or counter-clockwise to an angle of your choice. Windows Paint, the no-frills image-editing program that comes with Windows, will only let you rotate a picture in 90 degree increments; however, most other programs offer more sophisticated alignment options. With a picture opened in



Images.

Rotating a Picture with Irfanview

Irfanview (my favorite program for opening, cropping, and resizing photos) also has a rotation option under Image

that lets you choose Rotate Left or Rotate Right.

These commands will rotate a picture 90° counter-clockwise and 90° clockwise, respectively.

Clicking on **Image>Custom Rotation** will let you rotate a picture clockwise to any angle from 1° to 359°. If you want to rotate a picture counter-clockwise, place a minus sign (-) in front of the number you type in.

If you rotate a picture in Irfanview, but are not pleased with the result, you can click Edit>Undo (or Ctrl+Z) to return the image to its previous state.

Irfanview is a totally free program that can be downloaded from: www.irfanview.com. Picasa2 can be downloaded from: <http://picasa.google.com>.

Rotating a Picture with Picasa2

Picasa2 is free from Google and is an image-management program I recommend for anyone with a large collection of digital photos. However, Picasa2's command structure tends to be a little complicated, so here's a step-by-step guide on how to straighten a photo with Picasa2.

Picasa2 Needs Some Time to "Index" All Your Photos

In order to work properly, however, Picasa2 should be installed a few hours before its first use. This is because it "indexes" all your pictures,

much like Google indexes files on the Internet.

Upon launching Picasa2, you should see a collection of "Thumbnails" of the images in your "My Photos" folder. The left side of your screen will list all the various folders Picasa2 has found which contain pictures, with "My Photos" normally marked as the album currently being viewed.

Use the vertical scroll bar to find your target picture. If it's not in the My Pictures folder (which is found inside your My Documents folder), place it there before launching Picasa2. Yes, you can browse to find pictures in other folders, but Picasa2 is easier to use if the target images are placed inside My Pictures.

If you right-click a Thumbnail of your target picture, Rotate Clockwise and Rotate Counter-Clockwise options will appear, with which can realign the image in 90° increments.

Left-clicking an image's thumbnail view will copy it into the "Picture Tray" in the lower left of the window. You can display a full size view of the picture by double-clicking this icon - or by right-clicking it and choosing View & Edit. Doing either will display a list of editing options to the left of the enlarged picture.

Choose **Basic Fixes>Straighten** and a grid will overlay the photo, which can help you realign it. A button on a sliding scale under the picture lets you realign the picture with amazing ease and accuracy.

Clicking Apply will create a straightened version of the photo, while leaving the original in place. You then need to click **File>Save a Copy**, whereupon the edited photo will be given the same name as the original, with a "1" added to



the name (such as **photo1.jpg**).

Further edits and saves would create copies thus incrementally named (photo2.jpg, photo3.jpg, etc.) all of which will be stored in the folder currently in use. (Again - this is usually your My Photos folder).

Straightening a Picture with Microsoft's "Picture It!"

Picture It! has a similar tool that works in a rather unique way. Under **Format**, click on **Straighten Picture**. Then choose a line, such as the edge of a door, which you want "upright" instead of "leaning." Click one end of the line, followed by clicking its other end, and the photo will immediately realign itself.

An alternative of way doing this is to click **Rotate>Custom**, whereupon you can click an up-arrow which will cause the picture to rotate clockwise in one degree increments. Clicking the corresponding down-arrow will rotate the image counter-clockwise. You can also type in an estimated number of clockwise degrees, press **Enter**, and fine-tune the result with individual clicks.

With the photo now realigned, click on the **Crop** tool and draw a rectangle with your left mouse-button held down. Clicking Done will leave only the cropped area displayed, whereupon choosing "Save a Copy As" will let you name the edited image, while leaving the original intact.

When you use Picasa2's straightening tool, the picture is automatically cropped. To do your own cropping, click **Crop>Manual** to draw a rectangle as described above, followed by clicking Apply to remove the discarded areas. Alternatively, you

can click one of three standard photo sizes (4x6, 5x7, or 8x10) for automatic resizing.

My preferred program for cropping, however, is Irfanview. When a picture is opened in Irfanview, you can immediately draw a rectangle around the area you want to save. Click the Scissors icon to Cut the cropped area, followed by clicking the Paste icon to reinstate the cropped area while discarding the unwanted material.

My reason for explaining these steps in Irfanview and Picasa2 is that the programs are totally free. MS-Picture-It! can be purchased, but often comes packaged with new computers nowadays.

With other image-editing programs you can click on **Help** (or press **F1** on your keyboard) and then type **rotate** or **rotation** or **align** or **alignment** or **straighten** into a Search box for specific details.

NOTE: The April issue will carry related articles on:

Darkrooms Replaced by Computers

Be your Own Photo Processing Studio

Club Meeting March 20 Program

Report on FACUG Conference

Demonstration of PDF995

(www.pdf995.com)

And ZIP Reader

(www.pkware.com)



Club Shirt

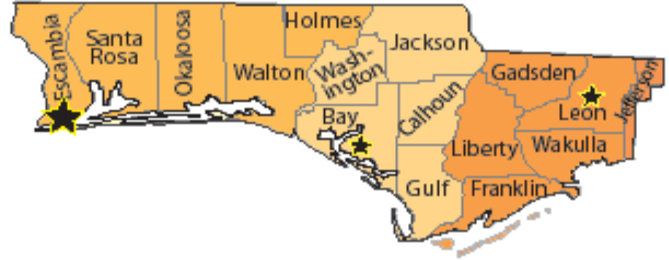
Size, S, M, L, XL, 2X

\$15.00

50% cotton 50% polyester

Stain resistant

Robert Connor— kittysfour@earhtlink.net



**Northwest Florida
Association of Computer
User Groups**

www.nwfacug.org

I Fix Computers

886 E. Baldwin Ave

DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

850-892-0977

www.defuniak.com

Internet Service, dial-up & high speed—full service home and business solutions



**Okaloosa-Walton
COLLEGE**

A Career in Computing

Main Campus	Chautauqua Center
100 College Blvd	908 W. Hwy 90
850-678-5111	850-892-8100
Niceville, FL 32578	DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

GLOBAL DATA SYSTEMS

1031 W. Hwy 90

892-6794 / 892-5809



www.gdsys.net

Membership Application: Chautauqua Cyber Club, Inc.

Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Address: _____ ZIP _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Please check one: [] New [] Renewal [] Family

Membership is based on full 12 months

Single and Family membership are the same

\$22.00 per year

\$11.00 full time OWC students

Chautauqua Cyber Club, Inc.
P. O. Box 251, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

CHAUTAUQUA CYBER CLUB, INC.
P.O. BOX 251
DEFUNIAK SPRINGS, FL. 32435

Membership Renewal

It's time to renew your membership if
Mar. 08 or before is on the mailing
label

Affiliations



Smith's

**Blue Print Copies
& Fax Service**

Signs & Printing

Business Cards ~ Magnetic Signs ~ Hats & Shirts ~ Letterhead ~ Envelopes
NCR Forms Banners ~ Yard Signs ~ Car tags ~ Tickets ~ Automobile Graphics
Window Lettering ~ Copies ~ Blue Print Copies ~ Coffee Mugs

Located at 24 s. 8th Street DeFuniak Springs, FL
behind Miracle Cleaners and right across from Hotel DeFuniak

Phone: 850-892-4478 * Fax: 850-892-4493
e-mail: advanced@defuniaksprings.com