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Cyber Chat

"A computer user group newsletter"

Volume 8 Issue 10

DeFuniak Springs, FL 32435

October 2006

General Meeting

Oct. 21

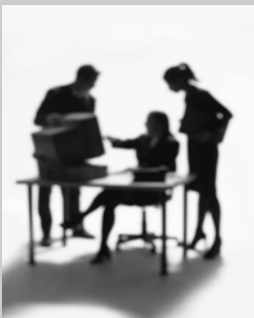
Okaloosa-Walton
College

Chautauqua Center

Room 201

(computer lab—bldg 2)

DeFuniak Springs, FL



Special

Interest Groups

Genealogy

October 3—10:00 AM

Room 211

OWC Chautauqua Center

Gay Russ—SIG Leader

Microsoft Windows Vista

By Mike Moore, President,
Bowling Green Area
Microcomputer User Group, KY

Webstar@hughes.net

<http://www.bgamug.org>

In many respects, Microsoft's dominance in the areas of Internet Browsers, Office Suites and of course Operating Systems is puzzling, at least in the past few years. Open Source software such as the free OpenOffice.org suite has come into its own and the latest Apple MacIntosh™ computers are brought to market with an operating system featuring iron-clad Unix underpinnings and a cheeky marketing campaign designed to turn PC users away from Windows.

And yet, due to the sheer number of PCs out there with Microsoft branding, Windows still commands a staggering market share, in spite of no major upgrades to either Internet Explorer or WindowsXP in 3 and 5 years, respectively.

Microsoft's answer to the rapidly changing personal computing scene

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has been a complete rethinking of Windows from the ground up.

Vista, a new operating system due out around January of 2007 and now in beta testing around the world, seeks to redesign the way we use computers, particularly internet and media-enabled computers. Previously code named "Longhorn," this release is about as far removed from XP as XP was from the old text-based DOS operating systems. Although Microsoft is still hard at work finalizing the features of this blockbuster operating system, you can look forward to these new features, which will in most cases require a pretty beefy computer for support:

(See Vista—page 4)

COMPUTER EXPO

OCT 7

FEATURING

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Bess Ross	Secretary	892-7823	bessross@msn.com
Gay Russ	Treasurer	892-7452	mgruss@defuniak.com
Sonny Hollingsworth	Member at Large	892-2456	sonnyh@defuniak.com
Tim Polito	Web Master	835-7746	polito@direcway.com
J. B. Hillard	Editor	892-3450	jbh37@earthlink.net
Jerry Fulaytar	Assistant Editor	892-0103	goodwaters@defuniak.com
Dan Owens	Director-Community Service	892-4232	wdowensiii@yahoo.com
Sam Sloan	Technology Manager	892-9329	scecil@panhandle.rr.com
Roy Hoobler	Inventory Manager		roy@connectcomputing.com
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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.

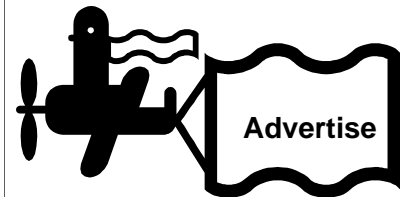
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Ernest "Sonny" Hollingsworth

Tel: 892-2456

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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 newsletter is prepared using Microsoft Publisher 2003, a homebrew 3.2 MHz PC, Canon ip4000 printer and Canoscan 8400f.

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Boot n' Reboot

by J. B. Hillard—President



Of course the big news this month is the Computer Expo at OWC in Niceville.

The sponsoring User Groups have put a lot of effort into making

all the arrangements. This is a first for Northwest Florida and we hope it will provide a level of knowledge and entertainment that has been unavailable to home computer users.

A hearty thanks to Okaloosa-Walton College, and Amanda Barker and Laura Schultz of the PRIME Time Department for helping make this happen.

The nominating committee for 2007 officers is Sam Sloan, Jan VanSlate, and Jerry Fulaytar. They will be looking for volunteers to serve in the various positions, and will announce their recommendations at the November meeting.

At the September meeting I completely forgot to bring up our official association with the newly formed Northwest Florida Association of Computer User Groups. We will be discussing this at the October meeting.

There is going to be some changers in the community service operation real soon. We all knew it would happen one day when the volunteers were ready to give it up. Unless new blood steps forward is may soon disappear. More on this later.

Happy Computing - J. B.

Recycle old ink cartridges:

Turn in your used ink cartridges and help the club earn money as we help protect the environment

Our Community

Community Service Program

"People Helping People"

There is little to report this month. Activity is way down although about 15 computers have come in through OWC and private donations. Some were received from Jobs Plus but the pc's were too old to be of any help.

Four laptops are being checked out but are of considerable vintage in computer age.



There will be a computer sale on November 4 at the Chautauqua Center.

This may be the last one on behalf of the club. Pending retirement of the volunteer technicians is just around the corner.

Most likely it is going to be necessary to close down the community service operation. Of course if there are new volunteers willing and able to give about 8 hours a week on average then the project can continue.

No matter what happens we can be very proud of the service that has been provided to scores of home-bound and students over the past 7 years.

May the good Lord bless and keep all of you.

Affiliated with



Vista—from page 1

Aero

Aero is the name given to a new and visually stunning 3-D like graphical interface, which is currently known as the Desktop and Windows Explorer. In Vista, Microsoft introduces the Desktop Window Manager that will feature new technologies for application developers, transparent window effects, animations and file previews that all told will knock your socks off. See some of the previews of this interface at <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/>.

The full set of Aero features will be available on computers that support DirectX 9.0 and beefy video cards, so prepare to upgrade (and prepare to donate your existing computer to Gene Iglehart!)

“With Vista and other search engine companies like Google, we are poised at the brink of an explosion in search ability – “

Security

Microsoft has completely turned internet security on its head in the new Vista vision, choosing to de-fault a normal windows user to a limited access, virus-armored profile, as opposed to the current de-fault of a normal user having unlimited rights to the file system. Users that require more permissions on their accounts will have to make conscious and hopefully well-informed efforts to undo the protection Vista has built in to each account.

Quick Search

Windows 2000 and XP relied on indexed search techniques that were effective to a point, at a cost of much hard drive overhead and a key-word based search methodology. Vista takes this a quantum step farther and looks for both file content and something called meta-data, which will increase the relevancy of our searches for information on our machines, and will also help integrate local hard drive searches with internet searching.

For example, file name searches are often useless when looking in a directory of photographic image files where the digital camera has named them with non-descriptive serial-number like file names. Imagine describing a photograph to your computer and having it go out and look for, say, a photo with a white church steeple, or a recorded song file that sounds like a tune you hum into a microphone. With Vista and other search engine companies like Google, we are poised at the brink of an explosion in search ability – a good thing considering all of the information that is out there!

WinFX

WinFX is an applications interface that supersedes the Win32 standard introduced in 1993. An Applications Programming Interface (API) is a set of standards and library routines that serve to control Windows – everything from the way applications are installed to all of the

various standard ways in which a program can manipulate a window. The API is the way that many thousands of programs, hardware drivers and video games are able to communicate with Windows without Microsoft having to license the Windows operating secrets to each vendor. If you think of each way in which a particular windows feature can be controlled as being closed black box, the API standards are the knobs, buttons and dials on that box. WinFX means that developers with designs for software that is to run under Vista ought to be ready to study hard, because WinFX changes everything. The new API also means that we are bidding goodbye to our beloved DOS command line pretty much for good, running Vista.

As different as WinFX is, it should be thought of as a superset of Win32, which means that we won't necessarily have to buy all new software, at least not right away.

WindowsXP is my favorite operating system to date, and I predict that Microsoft will have to float some pretty good deals, and computer vendors will need to price sharply to get mainstream users to up-grade. Computer experimenters, those individuals that get really steamed when their cousin gets a faster computer than they have, will likely upgrade immediately, and hopefully BGAMUG will be able to refurbish what equipment they cast off in the quest for Vista!

The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.

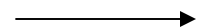
Q & A — Submitted by Sam Sloan Chautauqua Cyber Club, Inc.

Q:

I like to send my friends a lot of forwards through e-mail, but I'm afraid there's too much extra information in them before they're sent. How can I delete some of that to make it all an even safer process?

A:

This is a very good question and it's great that you're thinking about this type of thing. When it comes to e-mailing, you may not realize how much personal information is shared between people. This is especially true when you're forwarding e-mails. People you don't even know may have access to your e-mail address and vice versa. If someone slacks just a little, problems with e-mail spam could hit you before you can



Tips—from page 4

even blink your eyes.

So, you may be wondering how this information gets out to other people. Well, when you forward an e-mail you received from someone else, their e-mail address is still contained in the e-mail. You didn't think of that, did you? And when your friend sends it to 10 of their friends, your e-mail address remains in the e-mail and it's distributed to those people (and probably more) in no time. As long as the e-mail continues to be forwarded, your e-mail address is at risk.

The best thing to do to keep addresses safe is clean up every e-mail before you send it off. You want to share the e-mail with other people, not the e-mail addresses already in it, so it's best to remove all the existing e-mail addresses from the forwarding message. I know some forwards are rather long, but take some time to browse through it and delete any e-mail addresses you see. The person getting the e-mail only needs to see your address and their own.

You can then inform your friends and family members to do the same thing when they forward e-mails. They might want to send the one you sent them to another person, so make sure they know to remove your address before sending it. This will prevent your e-mail address from being spread out to everyone, even strangers! Sounds like a good idea, doesn't it?!

Of course, there may be a few times you need to keep certain things in an e-mail, such as an important discussion between you and a few other friends. If that is an ongoing e-mail, it makes no sense to delete the addresses each time. Usually when you do something like that, you know everyone involved, so it's generally safe, but always be careful in other situations. You can also clean up your forwards by removing all the carets (>>>) that appear. Read [here](#) for some more help on doing that.

Practicing all of these procedures will help to keep you and all your forwarding friends extra safe in the wide world of e-mail! Now, go read those funny forwards and laugh the rest of the day away!

Q:
I heard of a CD label program called LightScribe the other day. What's that all about?

A: I just heard about this too! Chad, our tech support

guru, came over to my office and was telling me all about it. He was in here just raving about it and then I heard him go tell everyone else in the office about it. We all thought it seemed pretty cool too, so after I got this question in my e-mail, I was all about researching it to see what it really is all about.

LightScribe is a new technology that works with an optical disc recording utility. With LightScribe, you can place laser-etched labels on your recordable CDs and DVDs. So, if you usually use stick-on labels for your CDs, you'll be amazed at what LightScribe can do. You need to have the optical disc writer, the LightScribe software and special LightScribe coated discs in order for the labeling to work.

Basically, what you do is burn the data you want on the CD or DVD (whether it's music or a movie, etc.) on the read side of the disc. Once that's done, you flip the disc over and insert it in the optical disc writer. This turns it to the label side so the magic can start! The laser then begins its work and when it's done, you have an awesome label on your disc that could never be replaced.

Your label can say whatever you want it to as well. If you have a CD with your favorite songs on it, you could make a song list or just name it "My Favorite Songs." If it's a movie, write the name of the movie on the label so you'll never forget which one is on that particular DVD. Or maybe you have a disc full of pictures that you would like to save forever. Give them a name like "Family Photos" to keep in your memory forever. LightScribe has a whole label gallery that you can browse through and download as well. Below is just a small example of a label.

The special LightScribe discs are coated with a reactive dye that helps the label come to life. With this dye, your label will never show signs of fading from too much sunlight, etc. You should still keep these discs in a safe and protected spot, but the labels will last a long time. The discs can also be relabeled if you ever decide to change the design. You just have to choose your new label and then let the writer go to work! It can be done several times, in fact.

LightScribe was created by a Hewlett-Packard engineer and it's fairly new, but they are trying to get it out to more manufacturers, media personnel and software developers. Although it is an up and coming piece of equipment, you may be able to find the optical writers at your local computer stores. You can always check to see if they've made their way there yet and if not, you can always check back. They'll be there soon.

The Senior Tutor

Don Edrington



**DON
EDRINGTON**

Old US Mail Scams Updated for the Internet

Some of the Internet scams currently circulating harken back to the 1960s when they were perpetrated via regular US mail. One scam targeted businesses with phony invoices for relatively small amounts the crook hoped a busy office manager would pay without bothering to check their validity. Now I'm receiving phony invoices via email.

Another e-mail scam is a notice that purports to be from a bank or credit card company that says your purchase of (various items) has been approved, and that (\$450, more or less) has been withdrawn from your account. A footnote says if you wish to dispute this transaction you can do so by clicking a link. Clicking it, of course, will take you to a spoofed site which asks for all kinds of personal information, which the crook can use to steal your identity.

Be Wary of "Surveys"

Crooks are also getting smarter about placing links that many respond to, since they have an air of legitimacy. Most are simple Yes or No "surveys," such as "Do you think the US should attack Iran's nuclear facilities?" By clicking either choice, you will very likely download a destructive virus, or some insidious spyware. If you see a message bearing the word **DOWNLOAD**, exit the site immediately.

More information about scams and "urban legends" can be found at www.scambusters.org.

A favorite ploy of spyware installers is to pose as "anti-spyware" software, which offers to scan your computer for free. This is like a burglar offering to install a burglar alarm system in your home. Legitimate free anti-spyware and anti-virus programs can be found on my site. Others I would view with suspicion, unless you have some very convincing evidence that they are legitimate.

Be Careful of What You Click On

Life on the Internet continues to become more hazardous. I recently mentioned some sites that feature short, funny videos. Because of their brevity it's not uncommon to find yourself clicking rapidly to play one right after another. However, the more you click, the more frequently ads appear between — or as part of — the videos. Many of these ads can be misleading and designed to trick you into signing up for "services" you don't need and which are hard to get rid of once you have accepted them.

Such "services" include *"speeding up your PC," "stopping spam," "cleaning your registry," "removing spyware,"* and *"blocking pop-ups,"* among many others. You will also be told you are the *"Winner of the Hour"* and should *"Click Here"* to receive your *"Free Laptop/iPod/etc."*

Multi-Level Pyramid Schemes

The "Free Gift" ads are basically multi-level marketing schemes, in which you actually can receive merchandise if you first sell something to a number of others.

The "Anti-Adware/Spyware" promos are almost always programs that remove other companies' malware and install their own, and then hold your PC hostage for getting rid of it — at a price.

Most of the "Speed Up Your PC" offers want to sell you "services" that can be accomplished with tools already on your PC, such as **Disk Cleanup**, **Defrag**, **Scan-Disk/Chkdsk**, and **MSConfig**. Instructions for using these tools are on my site, or you can click on **Start>Help & Support** to find information. Disabling your screensaver and other animated features can also help, since they use system resources.

Other utilities can be found at www.karenware.com. **Karen Kenworthy** has created a number of useful **PowerTools** that can be downloaded without charge.

Notice

The "Puppy Linux" class has been cancelled due to lack of interest. We will be coordinating with Tommie Gipson and the Vo-Tech to allow any member to attend a Vo-Tech Linux course without charge.



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