

SCUG



REPORT

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March 2007

## SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Executive Meeting	Digital Photography	Genealogy Group	Windows PC Computer	General Meeting
Next meeting is Apr. 2, 7 p.m.	Next Meeting is Apr. 4, 7 p.m.	Next meeting is Apr. 16, 7 p.m.	Next meeting is Apr. 19, 7 p.m.	Next meeting is Apr. 25, 7 p.m.
Dorothy Alexander President president@scug.ca	Pierre Houle Group Leader digitalsig@scug.ca	Val Conway Group Leader genealogy@scug.ca	Pierre Houle Group Leader windows@scug.ca	We welcome all guests. Come out, learn and have fun.

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**What's Happening**

SCUG members are more than just computer "GEEKS", many help out in communities by volunteering. SCUG members have helped out various local churches with computer-related issues. Check out SCUG's past Webmaster's activities, far removed from Sarnia, yet only a click away on his Blog...See page 2.

If you know of a SCUG member who volunteers in the community, including computer help, please Email: editor@scug.ca

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**PRESIDENT'S  
PERSPECTIVE**  
by Dorothy Alexander

Digital cameras have become the camera of choice these days. The technology has improved measurably since they were first introduced. No doubt some of you have children, or grandchildren who would not have any idea what a roll of film even looks like. It is a far cry from the days when you had to use a light meter and figure out the "f" stops. By the time you were all set up the person had moved or the scene you were taking had moved on.

I recall the days when we would sit on Sunday to view all the slides that the family members had taken on special occasions. Now we are busy transferring these to our computers then onto CD's or DVD's or even making slide show presentations with music. No more overhead screen to bother with or a carousel to put all the slides into. What does the future hold in store for us?

The SCUG executive formed a committee to oversee preparations for the Anniversary celebrations in May. If you have something that would be of interest to others please share it. We would love to get some old pictures of the club for the newsletter. If you need help scanning them please contact a SCUG executive.

For those of you who joined SCUG near the conception of the club, and have any memories or things of interest pertaining to that, I would ask that you share them with the rest of us. Please contact Bill Colotelo ( bcolotelo@cogeco.ca) who is chairing this committee.

For the March General Meeting we welcome Ged Smyth, of the Future Shop who will give us a demonstration of the various kinds of digital camera available.

SCUG Volunteers in Action

**Editor's Korner**  
editor@scug.ca



Greg West - Editor

Iain Smy, SCUG's past Webmaster, has landed in Nicaragua in his quest to assist with the locals, helping expand supplies that are very much in need. Apart from handing out vitamins to the school children, Iain is also a somewhat of a Santa Claus down there. Here is an excerpt from Iain's Blog on March 13, 2007:

"The saga begins on Sunday when we walk up to the orphanage and discover that the kids have been taken to the lake for the afternoon and it would be better to return Monday late morning. OK, no problem there but Tom also discovers that the number of kids is lower than he expected and has some extra stuffed toys. Ok no problem there either always better to have too many than not enough.

So we start to walk back from the orphanage and Tom gets this wonderful idea to hand out the extra ones (6 or 7) to some of the kids in the park whose parent's work all day at selling little items. Again not a problem I thought. Of course with Tom's big camera bag I end up carrying the large CLEAR plastic bag with about 50 stuffed toys as we go walking thru the park."

If you would like to follow Iain's activities while he is volunteering down in Nicaragua, read all about it in his Blog: <http://www.pantherassociates.com/wordpress>



## Your Secretary's Notes

by Tom Deprose  
secretary@scug.ca

SCUG Executive Meeting March 5th, 2007 at St. James' Church. Wilf sent his regrets.

1. Approval Of Minutes of Feb.5th / 07. Accepted as corrected and published.

2. Membership Input: Jim reported that, as of Februarys 07 end, membership stood at 112 (77 Members & 35 Associates) with one new Member, eight Members and seven Associates renewing plus two new Guests, bringing Guests on record to five. The downward trend is of concern. Dorothy offered to email the recent leavers and discuss the reasons for non-renewal. Maybe we need a specific nurturing program for new members. There were 58 attendees, 50 of who were Members, a comfortable quorum. On the Newsletter, it was decided to print 90 for the Mar. GM.

3. Vice President's Input: Bill noticed that SCUG is not listed in Sarnia On-Line. Wilf to follow up. As Elections Officer he had been informed that all except one of the Exec. would be re-running for office at the June elections. He will remind the Members at the next GM that all positions are open to all Members.

4. Secretary's Input: Tom-Nothing secretarial to report. All accommodations are status quo. As member of CRT, reported that the Revised Constitution was accepted by a 47-0 vote. Thanks to Kathy and Linda for their Poll Clerk roles.

5. Treasurer's Input: Ed's Feb. financial statement was approved.

6. Software Librarian's Input: Pierre reported 46 disks were handed out. Problems with the "burning " program are unresolved at this point. We may have to prepare all new disks again. The DOM for Feb. is yet to be chosen.

7. Newsletter Editor's Input: Greg reported that new efforts to improve the consistency of toner, by Dorothy talking to the Staples' acting General Manager, has made a major improvement in NL quality. The comparison with the Kwik Kopy example shows it is now equal and at a better price. He is still disappointed in the lack of Member feed back.

8. Program Coordinator's Input: Norm reports that we have only one review outstanding, "Wild Presenter Pro" with Greg.

9. Public Relations Input: Wilf wrote that brochures, from a new order of 200, have been distributed to the

Welcome Wagon, Digital Friends and Computer Complete. The three marked-up books from the reviews were given to Members by via mini-draws of those interested. Compuprizes for the Mar. GM will be a 2GB drive and a Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing Program. In the anticipated Future Shop door prize, a contrasting colour raffle ticket will be needed. Wilf to purchase.

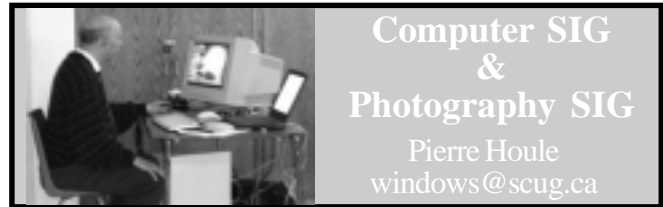
10. Webmaster's Input: Dick reported that pressure to find a satisfactory new host, improve the Web Site and provide a better link with the NL, as suggested by Greg, will require some considerable study. The Dreamweaver Program was discussed as a possible candidate for the updating but is expensive.

11. Meetings - - March - Future Shop - Chris confirmed Ged Smyth would cover digital cameras. They will be giving out coupons offering discounts for camera purchases and will also supply a draw prize. - April - Jason Hannigan, GIS Specialist will describe the mapping system in Lambton County - May -. Suggestion - Invite original members and have someone (Jim Verdon for example) explain how the club came into being. Have a large slab cake and offer coffee at price paid 25 years ago? The Exec. approved in general and Dorothy will gather some thoughts on the idea and bounce them around the Exec. Assume about 80 attendees? - June - Staples and hopefully MS. If they cannot come, John will find another company.

12. Old Business - -This last minute illness of our Scrap Booking presenter was covered by Dorothy's quick work. The presentation by Anna May Clements on making rubber stamps was well done and well received and Pierre's Show on Vista was his usual high quality information transfer. - Michelle Medd interested in offering her Scrap Booking later in the Fall - High speed at St. James in 2007. Minor problems still, possibly due to computer limitations. The Jim's Duo to look into it? - Cogeco Channel 6 TV is starting a show called "Ask the Experts". Would someone from SCUG want to do it one day? No volunteers as yet. - The disposal of the now surplus speakers was put to the Members with only Pierre showing interest, so they go to him.

13. New Business - Photos of each member, in colour, for a slap up June NL was aired for consideration. - Corel cannot visit but would do a telephone hook-up in business hours .Not really useful! - Kathy Witheridge retiring as Coffee Maker after the April GM. Notice in NL and Bill will mention it at March GM. Many thanks for all that good work Kathy. - Dave Johnson asked at the vote if we could, in future, have email and proxy voting. He was asked to submit an Amendment as detailed in Item 14 of the Constitution.

Next exec meeting scheduled for Monday, April2, 2007 with V.P. Bill Colotelo to preside.



## Free Program of the Month

This month I am including two programs on the disk of the month.



The first one is called Wink.

Wink is a Tutorial and Presentation creation software, primarily aimed at creating tutorials on how to use software (like a tutor for MS-Word/Excel etc).

Using Wink you can capture screenshots, add explanations boxes, buttons, titles etc and generate a highly effective tutorial for your users. It could also be used to describe a problem someone is having.



The second is TweakUI for XP. This program allows you to configure many different settings in Windows from one interface. It is a MS Powertoy.

Please give feedback and suggestions for the monthly disk.

### **Note:** NEW SCUG WEBSITE

SCUG is in the throws of revamping the website. Of course this type of project does not happen like Instant Messaging, and it is thought to be a summer project while SCUG is resting up for the next new season. If you have any suggestions, anything you would like changed within the SCUG website, please contact Dick Carpani at: [webmaster@scug.ca](mailto:webmaster@scug.ca)

## Windows SIG

Due to circumstances beyond our control the March Windows SIG had to be cancelled because the church was locked and no one had a key.

We suspect it had to do with March Break. If the weather was warmer we could have had the meeting on the lawn as we had a good turnout.

We were to talk about **RAM**.

The next meeting Windows SIG meeting will be Thursday April 19th at Grace United Church, 7:00 P.M.. The topic will be **RAM** (again).

What is **RAM**, you may ask?

**RAM** is "Random-Access Memory: the most common computer memory which can be used by programs to perform necessary tasks while the computer is on; an integrated circuit memory chip allows information to be stored or accessed in any order and all storage locations are equally accessible ([wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn](http://wordnet.princeton.edu/perl/webwn))."



## Digital Photography SIG

About 25 members attended the March Digital Photography SIG.

Norm led the meeting with a demonstration of Proshow Gold which helps create slide shows which include titles, transitions, video clips, and music. The result can be burned to a CD, VCD or DVD. Thanks Norm!

The next meeting of the Digital SIG will be Wednesday, April 4th, 7:00 P.M., at St. James Church. There will be various topics including:

- 1) Transferring pictures from your digital camera
- 2) Changing Resolution of pictures without degrading the image.
- 3) How to make and use layers in Photoshop

Hope to see you there!

## Genealogy SIG

Val Conway  
genealogy@scug.ca



Newsletter Report for March 19 Meeting:

All 8 people who were in attendance at the March 19 meeting shared and discussed problems and possible research solutions. Some of the names being researched were Stewart, Smith, Campbell and Melville and areas discussed were England, Ireland, Scotland, US and Canada.

The next Genealogy SIG meeting will be Monday, April 16th at St. James the Apostle Church, 140 Lansdowne North, at Athlone from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. We will again hold open discussions and learn a little more about Family Tree Maker.

If you would like to receive reminder e-mails for each meeting and haven't attended a meeting yet please e-mail me <genealogy@scug.ca> and I will add you to the list.

## SCUG Book Reviewers Wanted

O'REILLY®



SCUG is looking for members to review computer books for O'Reilly Publishing. Anyone interested in doing a book review, please contact:

**Program Coordinator**  
Norm Lamoureux  
coordinator@scug.ca

For a complete list of books at O'Reilly's go here:  
<http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/prdindex.html>

Do you know what catchy phrase represents each of these: Wikipedia, YouTube, MySpace, and Flickr, or mashups that combine enterprise apps with blogs and podcasts?  
...Answer on page 8.



### PLEASE ADORN SCUG NAME TAGS

Don't forget to wear your **SCUG name tag** at all meetings. If you have lost it please contact an executive member for assistance.



**TIP**

Learn all about Broadband and then some. Get the real scoop on your connection and service with Sympatico or Cogeco at:  
[www.dslreports.com](http://www.dslreports.com)

### Don't forget your tickets!!!




### SCUG Compuprize Winner



**Ian Campbell** Foldable keyboard  
Donated by Verdon Computers  
**Wilf Coulter** 50 pack CD-R  
**Terry North** 50/50 draw

# TID BITS

**Greg West**  
SCUG Editor  
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*Photo taken at Disney Resorts, Florida by Greg West*

## LAPTOP SCARE

I have a 3-year old Toshiba Satellite A20 model (much similar to SCUG's newer laptop). As Murphy would deal a hand, my extra warranty ran out last month, and this month the

laptop has decided to make some weird noises. The sound starts off as a slow, low, hum and then after a few seconds the sound begins to rev up to where I get really fearful that this baby has seen its last Googling.

Others have experienced this problem with laptops and there are almost as many solutions as there are recommendations.

I used the search term: laptop noise, within a Google search. One of the sites suggested running Scan Disc. No problem there. I simply clicked on START - All Programs - Accessories - System Tools...Scan Disc is not there. I must confess, it has been far toooooo long since I last ran Scan Disc and I had to find out where the program hid by using Google search:

“Scandisk is not a part of Windows XP - instead you get the improved CHKDSK. You can use the Error-checking tool to check for file system errors and bad sectors on your hard disk.

1. Open My Computer, and then select the local disk you want to check.
2. On the File menu, click Properties.
3. On the Tools tab, under Error-checking, click Check Now.
4. Under Check disk options, select the Scan for and attempt recovery of bad sectors check box.

\* All files must be closed for this process to run. If the volume is currently in use, a message box will appear prompting you to indicate whether or not you want to reschedule the disk checking for the next time you restart your system. Then, the next time you restart your system,

disk checking will run. Your volume will not be available to perform other tasks while this process is running.  
\* If your volume is formatted as NTFS, Windows automatically logs all file transactions, replaces bad clusters, and stores copies of key information for all files on the NTFS volume.”

Once I found Scan Disc I clicked on CHECK NOW, as suggested in my searches, and then put a check mark in the box for “Scan for and attempt recovery of bad sectors”. Once this program goes through its 4 Phases of testing and recovery, I will also put a check mark in the box: Automatically fix file system errors”. This runs on a reboot. I will report next month on the status of my laptop...I must mention that before this operation I did run a full anti-virus scan, Adaware and Spybot. Wish me luck.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *The picture of the laptop was taken at Disney Resorts. It is actually 2 stories tall and set between 2 Disney hotels. Those two boys on the ground, of whom you can hardly see, are my grandsons. (photo taken with a Sony P72 Cybershot)*

## MODEM MYSTERY

Jim Lapointe, SCUG's Membership Secretary and I were helping out a local church with their wireless Internet system. After several hours we got the system up and running and tested by sending an email from the two computers within the building.

The next day I got a call from the Minister that they “had no Internet”. When I got to the church they had reset the modem (cable) and everything was fine. I asked what things they did with the computer. “Nothing” was the answer, “except the usual startup and trying to connect to the Internet”. They did mention that the fax machine was running; it is located directly ahead of the modem. We thought the vibration from the fax machine may have touched the reset button on the modem.

We have moved the modem and will not know for sure, however according to modemsite.com there are “several things that can reset the modem [such as] another software program (like Fax, voice-messaging, etc.” (www.modemsite.com/56k/x2-inf.asp)

Sure enough, the next day the Minister called stating they had no Internet. Once they reset the modem everything worked fine. At least now we know the real culprit that is shutting off the modem.



**TIP**

“Most broadband modems supply a 10 Mbps Ethernet connection for the home LAN, although broadband Internet services rarely if ever perform at those speeds” - for more on modems go here: (compnetworking.about.com/od/broadband/g/bldefcablemodem.htm).”

## THINGS, THINGLETS & THINGASSOS

by S. Jack Lewtschuk  
 Monterey Bay Users' Group-PC Columnist  
[www.mbug.org/](http://www.mbug.org/)  
[blacklion\(at\)royal.net](mailto:blacklion(at)royal.net)

**WORDS OF WISDOM** If builders built houses the way programmers build computer programs, the first woodpecker to come along would destroy civilization!

### KEEPING TRACK OF MULTIPLE PASSWORDS

Passwords are a part of our everyday life: we use them for e-mail, online banking, stock trading, shopping, blogging, etc. For good security, you should have a different password for each website you enter. But how can you remember so many passwords?

A password manager is a great way to consolidate all your passwords without compromising security. Generally, a password manager is a program that stores all of your passwords for you. All of your passwords are kept secure with-*you guessed it*-a password.

The key advantage to using a password manager is that you only have to remember one password. That's not too bad. Then you can retain unique passwords for each of your various accounts without taxing your memory.

There are several pay programs that work this way. Before buying one, try KeePass (<http://keepass.sourceforge.net/>), a simple, free password manager. It can help you organize your passwords and also enter them into log-in forms.

How does KeePass work? After you download and install it, there are several easy steps to setting it up. The first time you open it, you have to create the file that will store your passwords. Click the "New" button at the top left of the window which will prompt you for a "Master Key." Make it one that you can easily remember, but which someone else can't easily guess (e.g., your birth date, your spouse/child's/pet's name), because it's the password you'll use from now on to unlock all your other passwords.

KeePass includes categories for online functions such as e-mail, home banking and others. To put a password into KeePass, select a category and then click the "Add Entry" button. You'll be able to enter a title for the password, which will help you easily identify where the password is used.

Let's take Hotmail as an example-an effective title for a Hotmail password could be simply "Hotmail." You could

also enter the web address where the password is required. KeePass automatically fills the password box with a random password. Chances are that it's stronger than the password you already use for Hotmail, but to make it work, you have to log into your account and change it to match KeePass.

If you want to keep things simple, erase the pre-filled box and put in the password that you already use and click "OK". Do the same steps for all of your everyday passwords and take a load off your memory. You can drag and drop passwords directly from KeePass. Click the password you need from KeePass and move it to the blank form on a Web page. The password will appear in the blank.

KeePass keeps your entire password file encrypted. The only way to open or read it is with your master password, so don't lose it!

In addition to Windows, "switch-hitters" can download versions of KeePass for Macintosh, PocketPC, Palm and Linux. You can also take KeePass with you on a thumb drive by copying two files onto your thumb drive. One is the KeePass program (KeePass.exe), and the other is the file containing your passwords (the default is called Database.kdb).

Outlook stores all data in a single file called a ".PST file". This file contains your contacts, e-mail, calendar items and tasks.

### BACKING UP OUTLOOK CONTACTS

Outlook stores all data in a single file called a ".PST file". This file contains your contacts, e-mail, calendar items and tasks. It's easy to back up your entire Outlook .PST file-just locate it and copy it as you would any other file. Backing up individual folders within Outlook is also easy, so you can export your entire "Contacts" list. Simply highlight "Contacts" in your Outlook folders list. Then click "File," and "Import and Export" to open the "Import and Export Wizard." Select "Export to a file" and click "Next," to choose from a list of options (I recommend Microsoft Excel as the best one to choose in order to export all your contacts into a nicely ordered spreadsheet). After making your selection, click "Next." You'll be given the option again to select the folder you want to export. Highlight it, click "Next," and specify the name and location where you would like to save your file (use the "Browse" button if needed), click "Next" and then click "Finish."

You can use the same procedure with other items in the Outlook folder list. This is handy if you only want to export certain parts of your Outlook data file. You can use the files with other programs such as a "Database." You can also use it to share information with other peo-

Continued on page 8

Continued from page 7 - Things ple. Say you want to share your contacts with friends or coworkers: just export them, and others can import your list into their Outlook program.

To import a file, click "File," and "Import and Export." Select "Import from another program or file," click "Next," and select the type of file from which you're importing. In this case, select "Microsoft Excel" and click "Next." Click "Browse" to locate the file you wish to import, and then select your import options. You may want to allow duplicates, or you may wish to replace duplicates with imported items. You can also specify that duplicates not be imported. Click "Next," select the destination folder, click "Next" again, and finally, click "Finish."

**NOVICE CORNER** Starting Your Computer in "Safe Mode" At some point in time you may need to start your computer in "safe mode." You should print these instructions before continuing as they will not be available after you shut your computer down in step two.

Click "Start," click "Shut Down," and then in the drop-down list click "Shut down." In the shut down window dialog box, click "Restart," and then click "OK." When you see the message "Please select the operating system to start" or "Windows" appears on the screen, press the "F8" key several times. Use your arrow keys to highlight the appropriate "safe mode" option, and then press "ENTER." If you have a dual-boot or multiple-boot system, choose the installation that you need to access using the arrow keys, and then press "ENTER."?

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WEB 2.0



Look after your systems...Use an Anti-virus, a Firewall, and run Adaware & Spybot on a regular basis. Oh yes, and if you have a noisy laptop you may just want to read the article on page 6. "BE PREPARED"

## Thanks to Anna Mae Clements

our guest at the February General Meeting.

[www.villageimpressions.com](http://www.villageimpressions.com)



**Anna owns and operates a rubber stamp business called:**

**Village Impressions  
519-322-8846**



**PowerPoint presentation...**



**A huge SCUG crowd gathers around Anna to check out her wares.**



**Would you like your designs made into rubber stamps?**

For all the details on this world-wide business Anna has created, check out her website:

**[www.villageimpressions.com](http://www.villageimpressions.com)**

and learn more about the world of Rubber Stamping in the 21st. century. Thanks again Anna...

## Pandora - a Free Music Resource

Written by Sandy Berger  
CompuKISS  
www.compukiss.com  
sandy(at)compukiss.com

The Internet is filled with free resources, but some are better than others. Here is one of the best free music resources on the Web.

Pandora is one of my favorite music websites. Just surf over to [www.pandora.com](http://www.pandora.com) and type in a song or an artist that you like. Pandora analyses your choice and creates a music station with similar-sounding music. It will then play comparable songs that it thinks you will like. You can add more music and/or artists to the station to refine your choices. You can also tell Pandora whether or not you like the song that is playing. It uses your likes and dislikes to refine the songs it chooses. You can create up to 100 different stations with different types of music.

Pandora was created by the Music Genome Project, a group of musicians and music-loving technologists who have broken music into hundreds of music attributes or "genes" such as melody, harmony, rhythm, instrumentation, orchestration, arrangement, lyrics, and harmony. They then use high-tech methodology to analyze the musical qualities of each song and rendition.

The results are uncanny. I created several music stations with different genres that I like and in almost every case I was presented with similar music that I found very pleasing. You can experiment with different combinations. For instance, putting James Taylor and Willie Nelson together gave me an interesting, but likable mix of music.

Pandora is pretty smart. Typing in The Christmas Song and choosing Diana Krall as the artist gave me a whole station of mellow Christmas music which is just what I was looking for. Typing in The Nylons and Take 6 gave me a nice selection of acappella and harmonistic music.

Pandora also lets you bookmark songs or artists so you can remember what you liked. You can look up more information about artists and songs right on the site. Two clicks will lead you to iTunes or Amazon where you can purchase the music. You can also share your music by emailing your stations to friends.

Pandora is ad-supported so you will see ads for everything from gym shoes to cell service. I found the ads to be unobtrusive, but if you want to get rid of them, you can pay to eliminate them. For \$36, you get 12 months

of unlimited use with services exactly the same as the free version, but without the ads.

Since the ads don't bother me, I'll continue to use the free version of Pandora. It's an entertaining website that provides much listening pleasure to keep me company when I am working on the computer.

If you are into music, you may also want to check out two other music resources. MusicIP Mixer and Goombah. Like Pandora, both of these sites provide intriguing music adventures.

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## New Security Products

Shown at APCUG Annual Conference

Written by Ira Wilsker

APCUG Director

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### WEBSITES:

[www.apcug.net](http://www.apcug.net)

[www.pandasoftware.com](http://www.pandasoftware.com)

[www.grisoft.com](http://www.grisoft.com)

[www.trendmicro.com](http://www.trendmicro.com)

I recently had the opportunity to attend the annual meeting and convention of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG) in Las Vegas. Even though I have attended APCUG annual events since 1991, it always amazes me how quickly technology changes, and how those changes are rapidly introduced to us consumers. Every year participants are astounded by what we see, but every year has also demonstrated technologies dwarfing those shown the previous year. The APCUG events were all on topics related to personal computers, including security, applications, operating systems, hardware, CPU, and other technological services and components. Three of the presenters were companies in the computer security software sector.

Grisoft ([www.grisoft.com](http://www.grisoft.com)) is a computer security software publisher headquartered in the Czech Republic, and best known in the U.S. for its very popular free version of AVG antivirus software. I was very surprised

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Continued from page 9 - Security

to learn that the more sophisticated and comprehensive commercial versions of AVG are among the most widely used computer security utilities in Europe. AVG has a professional staff of engineers in Europe, but also has sales, and more importantly technical support services, located in the U.S. I have to admit that until I saw the AVG-Grisoft presentation, I was unaware of the degree of sophistication and quality features built in and backing up the AVG products. My opinion of AVG was positively changed, as I had always thought of it as an excellent free antivirus product; now I know it as a technological leader providing enhanced features and functionality in its products. While I will still recommend the free version of AVG antivirus software to those who may not be able to afford commercial software, I would also hope that those who use AVG free version and are satisfied with it would eventually upgrade to the more comprehensive and feature rich commercial products. AVG offers a comprehensive selection of security software ranging from antivirus software to complete security suites. AVG has been certified as among the most effective antivirus products by several independent testing and rating services.

Panda Software ([www.pandasoftware.com](http://www.pandasoftware.com)) is a publisher of computer security software headquartered in Spain, but with a strong American presence. I first became acquainted with Panda several years ago when I purchased a copy of Panda Antivirus at one of the big-box office supply stores. I had read some amazing reviews of it in a computer magazine, so I decided to try it on my Windows 98 computer to replace an expired competing big-named American product. My "98" computer continued to have Panda protect it for the remainder of its lifetime, and Panda never failed me. At APCUG Panda amazed me with its degree of technical sophistication in dealing with the changing threats facing the computing public. According to Panda, over 90,000 new malware threats appeared in 2006, with some individual months in 2006 having as many new threats as in all of 2005. Panda explained how the threat scenario for computer users changed from the old-fashioned viruses intended to damage computer files with random acts of vandalism, to the new threats that are almost all commercially driven. Panda Software offers technology security solutions ranging from its free online "Active Scan", to free-standing antivirus software, to comprehensive security suites complete with antivirus, firewall, anti-spyware, anti-spam, wi-fi protection, and other protective features. Panda has its own proprietary "TruPrevent Technologies" which is designed to protect computers from attack by new and unknown viruses even before the virus signatures can be updated. Most Panda Software packages can be installed on

multiple computers under a single license, and should be considered as a very strong and capable competitor to other better known security products on the market.

Trend Micro ([www.trendmicro.com](http://www.trendmicro.com)) explained the degree and types of security threats facing computer users. Identity theft of various types was discussed as well as the means to detect, protect, and neutralize a wide variety of other computer threats. Threats can come via email, malicious code on websites, from file sharing services, and countless other places. In order to deal with and protect from a wide variety of threats, Trend Micro demonstrated its flagship product Trend Micro Internet Security 2007 with its integral TrendSecure online services. Previously known under the moniker PC-Cillin, Trend Micro Internet Security 2007 provides protection from viruses, spyware, spam, phishing, and other forms of attack. Features also include a "fraud defense" to explicitly help protect credit card and other sensitive personal information from being compromised while online. The 2007 version includes a single license that can be installed on three computers which make it both a qualitative and economical good choice when compared to the other name brand security software titles widely available at retail.

I am a firm believer in good competition and the free enterprise system. As was clearly demonstrated at APCUG and CES, competition drives innovation which in turn provides valuable and tangible benefits to the consumer. We all need antivirus and other flavors of security software on our computers and any of the feisty competitors above can provide a quality product and service at very competitive prices. If more computer users could have seen what those of us at the APCUG event saw, the security "biggies" would have a lot to fear, because these aggressive "little guys" are providing excellence by innovation and superior service and support at a fair price. Those big guys on the block should be looking over their shoulders, as these little guys are growing stronger by capitalizing on the weaknesses of their larger competitors. Security software should not just be purchased based on the familiarity of the name or brand, but on the quality of the services and support offered. Any of the three products mentioned above would be a good choice for virtually all PC users.

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## WINDOWS SECRETS

Bandwidth Speeds & Testing  
 Reported by Greg West, SCUG Editor

This month Windows Secrets (windowssecrets.com) demonstrate that we may not be getting the connection speed we think we are. The author reports that his Internet provider claimed it was recently upgrading and that all its connections would allow faster "upload and download speeds".

He became suspicious when there was no real notable increase and states: "When a serviceman was at my house, I asked him, and he said he believed that they had made the changes. We then tried a speed-testing site to measure the throughput.

As it turns out, the company had not made the speed increases in my area yet, so I was still running at the lower network speeds." One of the sites offered, to test your system, is: [www.bandwidthplace.com/speedtest](http://www.bandwidthplace.com/speedtest).

I gave this a try myself. The quick result of the test is:

"1.3 megabits per second  
 Communications 1.3 megabits per second  
 Storage 163.3 kilobytes per second  
 1MB file download 6.3 seconds

It explained this in plain language:

### Communications

How communication devices are rated. Kilo means 1,000 and mega means 1,000,000. Examples include 56k modem and 10Mbit Ethernet.  
 Storage

The way data is measured on your hard drive and how file sharing and FTP programs measure transfer speeds. Kilo is 1,024 and mega is 1,048,576.  
 File download

The time it would take you to download a 1 megabyte file at this speed.  
 Subjective rating

This is a rating of your connection compared to all other connections worldwide. The scale used is one we made up.

### Bits(b), Bytes(B), and Baud

Bits and bytes are a measurement of electronic information. A byte is always 8 bits. Communications speeds

are usually measured in bits per second while many computer operations are measured in bytes per second. A "56k" modem is 56 kilobits and a "2m" DSL connection is 2 megabits per second. "128MB" of RAM is 128 megabytes. Ideally when abbreviations are used, b means bits and B means bytes. Baud rate is another measure of transmission speed and is the number of actual signals sent per second. At one time it was equal to the bits per second, but modern technology allows us to send more than one bit per electric signal.  
 Mega(M) and kilo(k)

Traditionally kilo means one thousand exactly. In the communications world engineers call a thousand bits transmitted in a second 1 kilobit per second. Makes sense. Now while 1000 is a nice round number for humans to work with, it isn't for computers. Mathematically speaking humans use decimal or base 10 numbers and computers use binary or base 2. 1024 is 2 to the power of 10 which is a significant binary value and so is represented by kilo in the computer world. Mega is similar except it means one million and in the computer world is 1024 kilo or 1,048,576. Ideally when abbreviations are used, k means 1000 and K means 1024.  
 Subjective rating Good."  
 Apparently, you can use this test 3 times per month for free.

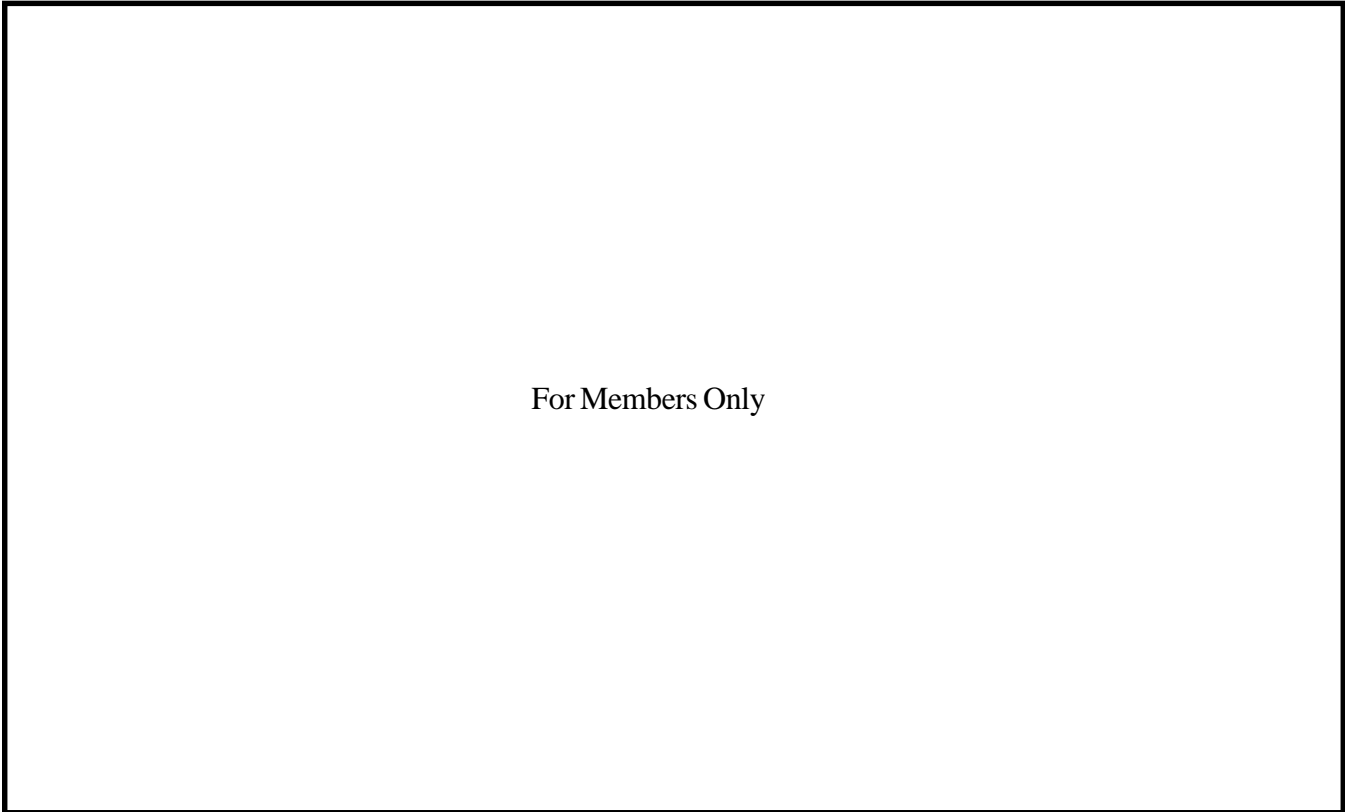
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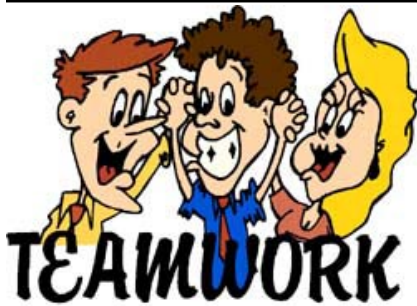
## Robbed of your Bandwidth?

...read above...

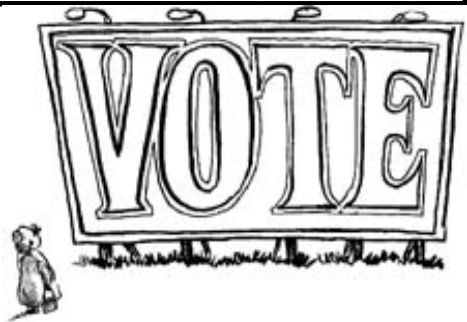




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- \* **Windows - PC** - Grace United Church, 990 Cathcart
- \* **General Meeting** - St. Bartholomews Church, 718 Cathcart
- \* **Genealogy Meeting** - St James Church-140 Lansdowne North

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April 2	April 4	April 19	April 16	April 25
April 30	May 2	May 17	May 21	May 30
June 4	June 6	June 21	June 18	June 27
July 2				



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