

SLO Bytes HardCopy

A publication of the San Luis Obispo PC Users Group

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SLO Bytes May 2004 Meeting Reviews

General SIG Review by Alan Raul

Our May meeting started out with some trivia information about current hard drive sizes. The largest available consumer hard drives are the Hitachi 400GB 7200 RPM drive for desktop computers and the Toshiba 100GB 4200 RPM drive for laptop computers. Most of us can remember when 1.6GB (circa 1995) was considered a large hard drive! A few of you go back even further and can remember even smaller hard drive sizes.

It was announced that Windows XP SP2 will be delayed till the third quarter 2004. What's new? Has Microsoft ever delivered software on time?

Anyone traveling south to the Goleta area may want to stop in at the PC Club. It's part of a chain of about 59 retail stores which also have a mail order division.

<http://www.pcclub.com>

If you need to make long URLs useable, then try <http://tinyurl.com/> It's another web site like <http://snipurl.com/>

Linksys users can obtain help on their Linksys devices from this newly created web site.

<http://www.linksysinfo.org/>

A new version of IrfanView 3.91 is now available that fixes a few bugs from the previous version.

<http://www.irfanview.com>

Those that use File and Printer Sharing with Microsoft Windows will want to take a look at this tutorial from Microsoft. <http://snipurl.com/4bco>

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=87c0a6db-aeef8-4bef-925e-7ac9be791028&DisplayLang=en>

EZ-Clocker I-Series computer cases have some of the most unique computer cases which allow you to simply over-clock the CPU by rotating a knob on the front of the case!

<http://snipurl.com/63r2>

<http://www.syntaxusa.com/catalog/index.php?cPath=42&osCsid=29a822435bc6fa7e035b2fba569537af>

If you still use Microsoft Windows 98 then take a look at the UNOFFICIAL Windows 98 Second Edition Service Pack 1.5 available for FREE.

<http://exuberant.ms11.net/>

We revisited the Windows XP paging file which was discussed in the previous month's "Hardware SIG." The advantages of moving your Windows XP paging file into another partition either on your main hard drive or a secondary hard drive results in a more efficient OS, easier and faster defragging, smaller and faster backups. More information about the Windows XP paging File can be found at

http://www.theeldergeek.com/paging_file.htm

May 2004 Main Meeting Review by Alan Raul

After some scrumptious goodies from the kitchen we all sat down in the main hall to some video presentations from Software Cinema. Software Cinema brings you leading digital imaging and design experts who teach practical and proven Photoshop techniques for "Photography and Design" in vivid detail on CD or DVD and in training camps around the U.S. and Canada. Photoshop is the default image manipulation program from Adobe. Some of the Photoshop techniques demonstrated included the "Healing Brush" and the "Liquefy Brush". The most interesting technique demonstrated was a person with a "pot belly" which was moved up, using the "liquefy Brush" to make a trim-looking person. You may sign-out any of the videos from the club by contacting Marvin, who by the way will be leaving us in June. More information can be found at <http://www.software-cinema.com/>

Guy Kuncir's Featured Speaker Programming Schedule

Our speaker at the June 6th SLO Bytes meeting will be Lauri Sowa, a new member, whose presentation, "***Discover the Secrets of Microsoft Word***", should be of interest to all of us.

Lauri is Microsoft Certified and has a solid track record in business and personal computing. She travels throughout the United States teaching Microsoft and Accounting Seminars and she shares some of the pitfalls and tips of computerization in her bi-weekly column in the Nipomo Adobe Press. In addition to training, she operates her local business - Wise Owl Opportunities with her husband, which specializes in computer training and repair. She has received top training awards and is considered one of the nation's leading experts in the areas she covers.

Lauri proposes to outline the implementation and differences between the versions of MS Word found in Office 97/2000 and Office 2002/2003. In doing so, she will highlight capabilities which permit the user to create templates which personalize Word documents; customize the toolbar; utilize automatic features (AutoCorrect, AutoFormat and AutoText); readily modify document formatting; and employ other specialty features available within MS Word

At the July 4th meeting, Lauri Sowa will be building upon her June MS Word talk by giving us some insight into some of the capability nuances and implementation variations in the latest versions of Microsoft Excel. As those who attend meetings at Computer-rooters can attest and you too will soon verify the thoroughness of Lauri's topic coverage and the care with which she answers questions on points raised during her presentations. **Don't miss this interesting Independence Day event. No fireworks, please!**

President's Message

At our 6 June 2004 meeting

At 1 PM Alan will moderate a computer question/answer session

At 230 PM, our featured speaker will be our SLO Bytes member, **Lauri Sowa**.

You may already know that our Treasurer, **Marvin Baxendale** has stepped down and is moving to Texas. We are all thankful to Marvin for doing an outstanding job for all the years since we moved to the IOOF Hall. We wish Marvin and Carolyn all the best in their new home in Texas.

Bob Miers has volunteered to step into Marvin's shoes and take over the duties of the SLO Bytes Treasurer. Thank you Bob for volunteering. We'll hold a special election at our 6 June meeting so that Bob (or if anyone else comes forward at that time) can officially be installed as our new Treasurer.

If you have not already ordered the **FREE MS update CD** for W98, W98Se, WinME, Win2000 & XP with ****ALL**** security updates through Feb `04, do so now. It's an ideal CD to have on hand if you ever have to format your drive or reinstall Windows. And, it's really FREE. Go to http://snipurl.com/MS_order to order.

Check out the **money saving offer that KCBXnet** (aka Slonet) is extending to all current and future members of SLO Bytes. Go to <http://www.slobytes.org> and click on the KCBX offers special Internet access pricing for SLO Bytes members link.

BTW, KCBXnet has added an accelerated dial-up access for their subscribers. Basically, it permits faster page loading while surfing on the Web. Check it out at http://www.kcbx.net/products_prices/internet_services.php

Continue to bring any **used ink-jet printer or toner cartridges** to our meeting and take advantage of the four **learning CDs**"Learn Windows XP, Excel, Word & Power Point" available for our members to check out (at Marvin's table)

Celina Penalba has sent me this URL <http://www.cnethelpu.com/?mcid=497-0526> where CNET is offering **Free On-line Courses**. Check it out. Thank you Celina.

--Ray Miklas

Deleting Information from Hard Drives By Gene Barlow
User Group Relations
Copyrighted May 2004

The early hard drives on mainframe computers were not considered very reliable. Information stored on these early devices would often not record properly or may become contaminated easily. Programmers using these drives would write the data in two separate locations on the drive. Then, when the data was needed later, it would be read from both locations and compared in memory to make sure it was still the same. If differences were detected, then the program could not continue until the data was corrected and rewritten to the hard drive.

As technology advanced, special mathematical checking codes were stored with the data that could detect if the information retrieved from a hard drive was still valid. These codes eliminated the need to record the data twice, but did nothing to clean up any errors found. It wasn't long before more sophisticated checking codes were introduced that could not only detect errors, but would also actually correct most single and double character errors. Still, the recording of information on hard drives was not considered real reliable and frequent backup copies of the drives were necessary.

When the IBM PC was introduced with hard drives, the designers of these drives were still very concerned about losing data on these devices. So, everything was done to make sure the data written to the drive remained on the hard drive and could not be accidentally deleted or lost. Today, it is almost impossible to permanently delete information, once it is written to a hard drive. Who would have thought that this retention of information would become a problem for computer users?

In today's world, privacy and security of information are major concerns. Identity theft is a major problem that we all face. With just a few pieces of information about us, dishonest individuals can steal large sums of money from us and ruin our credit ratings. At the same time, computers and the internet have made information much more widely available not only to us, but to these dishonest individuals. Unless we are careful, our private information can get into the hands of these dishonest individuals and they will certainly take advantage of the situation.

Recent studies have shown that hard drives on PCs contain a wealth of private information that most users thought they had removed from the drive months or years earlier. What these users do not understand is that simply deleting a file from the hard drive does not permanently remove it from the drive. In fact, all that deleting a file does is to flag that file space for future reuse. It may be years before that space is reused with another file or it may never be reused. So, the deleted information remains on the hard drive, hidden from the user, but still there. Dishonest individuals using commonly available software can find and access all of these deleted files.

Users that are knowledgeable enough to know that deleted files remain on the hard drive are often surprised to learn that formatting the hard drive does not get rid of these deleted files either. All the formatting function does is to create a few tables at the beginning of the partition. The deleted information on the hard drive is not removed or changed during a format. Operations such as defragging a hard drive only cause your private information to be copied and spread across the entire hard drive. So, how can you permanently remove private information once it is written to a hard drive?

The only effective way to permanently remove information from a hard drive is to write blanks or zeros over the top of the deleted information. This obliterates the information that was written there earlier. To do this, special hard drive wiping utilities must be used. Two of the best hard drive wiping utilities were developed by WhiteCanyon Software. I have come to know and rely on these excellent products. One or both of them could make your job of keeping your hard drive clean of hidden private or personal information easy to do.

The first of these two products is called WipeDrive. This is the bulldozer of the two products. When you use it to wipe your hard drive, it starts at the beginning of the drive and writes blanks on top of everything on the drive. It continues to wipe the drive until it reaches the end of the hard drive. When it is done, the entire drive is totally clean and empty. Nothing remains on the hard drive that a dishonest person could see or use against you. Everyone should use this utility before they sell or give their old computer or hard drive away. Otherwise, you are giving away all of your private information with your old computer. WipeDrive boots from a diskette or CD and can wipe all PC type hard drives. WipeDrive sells for up to \$45 in computer stores, but user group members can obtain a copy from our User Group Store for just \$24.

The second of these two products is called SecureClean. This is more like a vacuum cleaner, than a bulldozer. It vacuums the dirt out of the carpet, but does not knock over the furniture or the walls. In other words, it can clean the deleted information off your hard drive, but does not disturb the actively used files on the drive. The selective ability of SecureClean to wipe your hard drive, but not disturbing your current files, makes it the ideal tool to use on your current hard drives to keep them clean of deleted information. I recommend that you run SecureClean about once a month on your computer to permanently wipe over all deleted information on the drive.

Packaged with SecureClean is a bonus utility call SecureScan. This product will scan your hard drive and show you all of the deleted information that is hidden on the drive. You will be surprised at what you'll find still on your hard drive. You may find personal files that you deleted months or years ago that are

still on the drive. You may even find some files that were accidentally deleted and you thought they were forever lost. If a deleted file is still complete, SecureScan can even bring this file back to life and make it available again on your hard drive. This un-delete function of SecureScan is not the main purpose of this program, but a nice additional feature that you may want to use. SecureClean and SecureScan install on any Windows operating system. SecureClean sells for \$40, but user group members can obtain a copy from our User Group Store for just \$24. Buy both WipeDrive and SecureClean/Scan for just \$39, a \$60 value.

To order either or both of these excellent hard drive wiping utilities, go to the User Group Store at <http://www.usergroupstore.com>. (or <http://www.ugr.com/store>) You can read more about these two products in the security department of the store. Click on any of the Buy Now buttons to get to our secure web order form. Complete the form including the special code of UGWCM04. You will be given the chance to verify and correct your order before it is submitted. Once you submit it, we will receive it shortly and normally we ship all orders the following morning. You should have your products in just a few days. While you are at the User Group Store, check out the many other products we offer, all at great user group discounts.

Preventing personal and private information from building up on your hard drive is important for all of us to do. Get the tools you need to keep your drive clean today. If you have any questions about these products or this technical newsletter, please contact me at gene@ugr.com. I look forward to helping you.

Gene Barlow
User Group Relations gene@ugr.com
PO Box 275 www.ugr.com
Orem, UT 84059-0275 801-796-7370

Nate Wallenstein's Recommended Readings

Abbott and Costello in the 21st Century by Tom Krauss and Ron Ogg, DVPC (Diablo Valley PC Users Group)

Do you remember that really old bit by Bud Abbott and Lou Costello titled "Who's on First"? Funny stuff, even if it is from the 1940's! If you would like to relive the original, go to www.paradiselost.org/whosonfirst.html (this is the version with the famous "damn" that shocked censors of that period) and members.aol.com/acqtrly/who.html (the version from their 1945 film *The Naughty Nineties* with the language "cleaned up" for the movie so it would be suitable for the tender ears of 1940's families). Here's a computer-related version found on the Internet, just to show that funny stuff can become *au courant*!

Phone rings.

ABBOTT Super Duper computer store. Can I help you?

COSTELLO Thanks. I'm setting up an office in my den, and I'm thinking about buying a computer.

ABBOTT Mac?

COSTELLO No, the names Lou.

ABBOTT Your computer?

COSTELLO I don't own a computer. I want to buy one.

ABBOTT Mac?

COSTELLO I told you, my names Lou.

ABBOTT What about Windows?

COSTELLO Why? Will it get stuffy in here?

ABBOTT Do you want a computer with Windows?

COSTELLO I don't know. What will I see when I look in the windows?

ABBOTT Wallpaper.

COSTELLO Never mind the windows. I need a computer and software.

ABBOTT Software for Windows?

COSTELLO No. On the computer! I need something I can use to write proposals, track expenses and run my business. What have you got?

ABBOTT Office.

COSTELLO Yeah, for my office. Can you recommend anything?

ABBOTT I just did.

COSTELLO You just did what?

ABBOTT Recommend something.

COSTELLO You recommended something?

ABBOTT Yes.

COSTELLO For my office?

ABBOTT Yes

COSTELLO OK, what did you recommend for my office?

ABBOTT Office.

COSTELLO Yes, for my office!

ABBOTT I recommend Office with Windows.

COSTELLO I already have an office and it has windows! OK, let's just say, I'm sitting at my computer and I want to type a proposal. What do I need?

ABBOTT Word.

COSTELLO What word?

ABBOTT Word in Office.

COSTELLO The only word in office is office.

ABBOTT The Word in Office for Windows.

COSTELLO Which word in office for windows?

ABBOTT The Word you get when you click the blue w.

COSTELLO I'm going to click your blue w if you don't start with some straight answers. OK, forget that. Can I watch movies on the Internet?

ABBOTT Yes, you want RealOne.

COSTELLO Maybe a real one, maybe a cartoon. What I watch is none of your business. just tell me what I need!

ABBOTT RealOne.

COSTELLO If it's a long movie I also want to see reels 2, 3 & 4. Can I watch them?

ABBOTT Of course.

COSTELLO Great, with what?

ABBOTT RealOne.

COSTELLO; OK, I'm at my computer and I want to watch a movie. What do I do?

ABBOTT You click the blue 1.

COSTELLO I click the blue one what?

ABBOTT The blue 1.

COSTELLO Is that different from the blue w?

ABBOTT The blue 1 is RealOne and the blue w is Word.

COSTELLO What word?

ABBOTT The Word in Office for Windows.

COSTELLO But there's three words in office for windows!

ABBOTT No, just one. But it's the most popular Word in the world.

COSTELLO It is?

ABBOTT Yes, but to be fair, there aren't many other Words left. It pretty much wiped out all the other Words out there.

COSTELLO And that word is real one?

ABBOTT RealOne has nothing to do with Word. RealOne isn't even part of Office.

COSTELLO Stop! Don't start that again. What about financial bookkeeping? You have anything I can track my money with?

ABBOTT Money.

COSTELLO That's right. What do you have?

ABBOTT Money.

COSTELLO I need money to track my money?

ABBOTT It comes bundled with your computer.

COSTELLO What's bundled to my computer?

ABBOTT Money.

COSTELLO Money comes with my computer?

ABBOTT Yes. No extra charge.

COSTELLO I get a bundle of money with my computer? How much?

ABBOTT One copy.

COSTELLO Isn't it illegal to copy money?

ABBOTT Microsoft gave us a license to copy Money.

COSTELLO They can give you a license to copy money?

ABBOTT Why not, they own it.

COSTELLO Well, it's great that I'm going to get free money, but I'll still need to track it. Do you have anything for managing your money?

ABBOTT Managing Your Money? That program disappeared years ago.

COSTELLO Well, what do you sell in its place?

ABBOTT Money.

COSTELLO You sell money?

ABBOTT Of course. But if you buy a computer from us, you get it for free.

COSTELLO That's all very wonderful, but I'll be running a business. Do you have any software for, you know, accounting?

ABBOTT Simply Accounting.

COSTELLO Probably, but it might get a little complicated.

ABBOTT If you don't want Simply Accounting, you might try M.Y.O.B.

COSTELLO M.Y.O.B.? What does that stand for?

ABBOTT Mind Your Own Business.

COSTELLO I beg your pardon?

ABBOTT No, that would be I.B.Y.P. I said M.Y.O.B.

COSTELLO Look, I just need to do some accounting for my home business. You know accounting? You do it with money.

ABBOTT Of course you can do accounting with Money. But you may need more.

COSTELLO More money?

ABBOTT More than Money. Money can't do everything.

COSTELLO I don't need a sermon! Okay, let's forget about money for the moment. I'm worried that my computer might... what's the word? Crash. And if my computer crashes, what can I use to get back my data?

ABBOTT GoBack.

COSTELLO Okay. I'm worried about my computer smashing and I need something to restore my data. What do you recommend?

ABBOTT GoBack.

COSTELLO How many times do I have to repeat myself?

ABBOTT I've never asked you to repeat yourself. All I said was GoBack.

COSTELLO How can I go back if I haven't even been anywhere? Okay, I'll go back. What do I need to write a proposal?

ABBOTT Word.

COSTELLO But I'll need lots of words to write a proposal.

ABBOTT No, you only need one Word the Word in Office for Windows.

COSTELLO But there's three words in... Oh, never mind. (Click!)

ABBOTT Hello? Hello? Customers! Why do they always hang up on me? Oh, well. (Phone rings.) Super Duper computer store. Can I help you?

Treasurer's Report

April 15, 2004 - May 15, 2004

Income

Membership Dues	\$250.00
Refreshments	\$23.25
KCBX Affinity Payments	\$74.00
Dividend Payments	\$8.84
Sale of DVD Player	\$40.00

Expenses

Rent	\$75.00
Refreshments	\$36.30
Office Expense	\$14.00

Checking Account Balance \$2,963.08

Savings Account Balance \$932.93

Club Information and Meeting Times

SLO Bytes, a PC Users Group dedicated to educate its members in the use of personal computers, digital devices and software, meets on the first Sunday of each month at the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) Hall at 520 Dana Street, San Luis Obispo. All meetings are open to the public at no cost. Special interest groups meet from 1 to 200 PM and guest speaker presentations begin at 230 PM. Contact Guy Kuncir (489-1395, gkuncir@charter.net) or visit www.slobytes.org for additional information about SLO Bytes and the scheduled presentation.

HardCopy is a monthly publication of SLO Bytes PC Users' Group located in San Luis Obispo, California. Information in this Newsletter is derived from both our own membership and other PC User Group Newsletters. The purpose of this publication is to inform our members of meetings and provide information related to the use of PCs and various Operating Systems.

Membership Dues are \$25 per year. Full membership entitles you to our monthly newsletter via e-mail, technical assistance, raffle gift drawing at the end of the meetings, a voice in the affairs of the club, and comradeships.

Article Submission: Deadline for submission of articles is the 20th of each month. Articles should be E-mailed to the editor rmiklas@bigfoot.com

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Outside Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

HTML/Internet SIG normally meets at 630 PM on the Monday following our Sunday General Meeting at Ralph Sutter's home in Arroyo Grande. Call Ralph at (805) 489-8678 for directions

Linux SIG normally meets on Thursday at 630 PM (following our Sunday's General Meeting) at KCBX.net [a.k.a. SLONET] Training Center, 4100 Vachell Lane, SLO.

SLO Bytes Officers/Volunteers

Ray Miklas (President, HardCopy Editor) rmiklas@bigfoot.com
Guy Kuncir (V.P./Programs/Publicity) gkuncir@charter.net
Marvin Baxendale (Treasurer/Membership/Publishing) mbaxendale@charter.net
Ralph Sutter (Secretary/Webmaster/HTML-Internet SIG) rsutter@cuesta.edu
Bill Avery (Contributing Columnist/Win95/98 SIG) wavery@slonet.org
Alan Raul (General SIG/Linux SIG)
Nancy Vrooman (Refreshments)
Peter Stonehewer (Refreshments)
Nate Wallenstein (Contributing Columnist)
Ken Stilts (Set-up/Clean-up)
Cliff Buttschardt (Set-up/Clean-up)
John Enos (Set-up/Clean-up)
Bill Palmerston (Set-up/Clean-up)

SLO Bytes Website www.slobytes.org