



Sandwich
Computer
Users Group

Scug News

February 2009

Newsletter of the Sandwich Computer Users Group

WWW.SCUG.ORG

February Program – OpenOffice.org 3.0

The February program will be on making labels using OpenOffice.org 3.0. The main components of the OpenOffice.org Suite are:

- **Writer** – a word processor you can use for anything from writing a quick letter to producing an entire book.
- **Calc** – a powerful spreadsheet with all the tools you need to calculate, analyze, and present your data in numerical reports or sizzling graphics.
- **Impress** – the fastest, most powerful way to create effective multimedia presentations.
- **Draw** – lets you produce everything from simple diagrams to dynamic 3D illustrations.
- **Base** – lets you manipulate databases seamlessly. Create and modify tables, forms, queries, and reports, all from within OpenOffice.org
- **Math** – lets you create mathematical equations with a graphic user interface or by directly typing your formulas into the equation editor.

We meet at the Federated Church in Sandwich 403 N. Main Street on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00pm unless noted otherwise. The meeting is a great place to learn about computers and meet new friends. Next meeting February 19, 2009. Visit our web site at www.scug.org for more info.

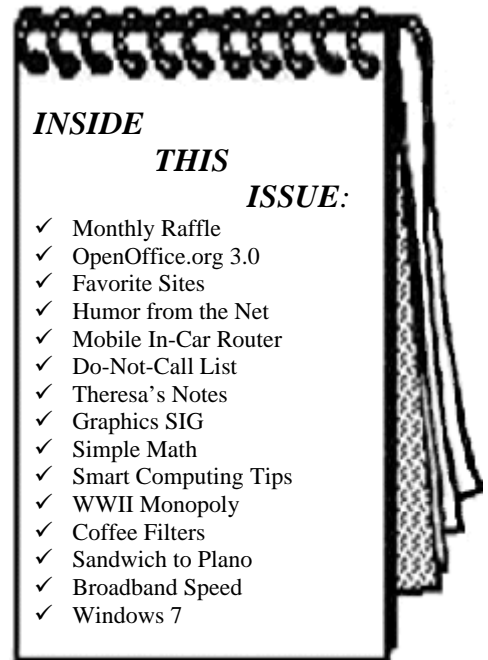
Membership forms are available at:

http://www.scug.org/About_us.htm

Local Business Celebrates 25th Anniversary



The Office Works in Plano is celebrating 25 years in business this year. *Congratulations to a great local business.*



INSIDE

THIS

ISSUE:

- ✓ Monthly Raffle
- ✓ OpenOffice.org 3.0
- ✓ Favorite Sites
- ✓ Humor from the Net
- ✓ Mobile In-Car Router
- ✓ Do-Not-Call List
- ✓ Theresa's Notes
- ✓ Graphics SIG
- ✓ Simple Math
- ✓ Smart Computing Tips
- ✓ WWII Monopoly
- ✓ Coffee Filters
- ✓ Sandwich to Plano
- ✓ Broadband Speed
- ✓ Windows 7

Hours:

Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m.— 6:00 p.m.

Sat 9:00 a.m.— 3:00 p.m.

Sunday Closed

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February Birthdays

2/17 Mary Swynenberg
2/20 Dorothy Smith
2/24 Danielle Pearson
2/18 Larry Knobeloch
2/21 Jim Weekly
2/28 Joan McEachern
2/29 Julie Pearson

March Birthdays

3/2 Bev Ludwig
3/11 Briante Bagg
3/13 Duke Wessman
3/18 Sandra Henne
3/20 George Bell
3/26 Mary Mathis
3/29 Pat Scull
3/9 Lyn Cole
3/13 Bob Stoltenberg
3/16 Irene Yingling
3/19 Beverly Gillett
3/21 Laura Olson
3/27 Jerry Kell
3/30 Laura Caupert

Monthly Raffle

Monthly Raffle

February is our salute to paper! We will have some wonderful items on the raffle table. This is a perfect time to spend your SCUG Christmas present. (If you have not spent it already!) Come early - spend often.

*Debbie Olson,
Raffle Queen*

OpenOffice.org 3.0

OpenOffice.org 3.0

OpenOffice.org provides everything most people need in an office productivity suite. It is stable, reliable, and robust, built up over twenty years' development. It was designed from the start as a single piece of software, which makes for higher quality software and a more consistent user experience.

OpenOffice.org is both easy to use and easy to migrate to, for both experienced and beginners alike. It has a familiar user interface, and is able to read and write the vast majority of legacy file formats (including common Microsoft Office formats).

OpenOffice.org is released under an open-source license (the LGPL), which means it may be used free of any license fees, for any purpose: private, governmental, commercial, etc. Once acquired (either as a free download or as a CD) it may be installed on an unlimited number of computers, and may be copied and distributed without restriction.

Favorite Sites

If you love all the super bowl half time shows, go to the NFL Network for videos, statistics and more.

<http://www.nfl.com>

Looking for answers to your Groundhog Day questions?

<http://www.groundhog.org>

This has got to be the best weather website I have seen, yet. It gives a week long range of weather conditions, with an hourly update on current conditions. It even has a map to pinpoint your area and you can use this site to check on conditions in other areas. Great for that trip you might be planning.

<http://www.srh.noaa.gov>

Louise Dieden

Many laptops currently have a Sudden Motion Sensors or Active Protection Systems inside them. While these sensors were originally designed to help protect the computer's hard disk in case they are dropped or shaken, seismologists can use them to detect earthquakes. The Quake-Catcher Network (QCN) links participating laptops into a single coordinated network that can detect and analyze earthquakes faster and better than ever before. The laptop network is the least expensive seismic network in the world. Because volunteers (individuals like you) donate idle CPU time on laptops with these sensors already built in, each additional sensor doesn't cost a thing!

<http://qcn.stanford.edu/index.php>

Researchers from the University of California at San Diego have developed software that analyzes a photograph of a key and enables anyone to make a duplicate without needing a sample key.

<http://tinyurl.com/5aqz2x>

Jake Dykstra

FaxZero lets you send a fax to any fax machine in the United States (including Puerto Rico) or Canada for free. You don't need a fax machine yourself, but you do need a valid e-mail address. Fax 1 document—maximum 3 pages Maximum 2 free faxes per day

<http://faxzero.com>

Presidents of the United States morphed in sequence from George Washington to Barack Obama. The music is 'Hooked on America' performed by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

<http://tinyurl.com/6e4lqg>

Humor from the Net

You know you are from Illinois:

- If your local Dairy Queen is closed from November through March, you might live in Illinois.
- If someone in a store offers you assistance & they don't work there, you might live in Illinois.
- If your dad's suntan stops at a line curving around the middle of his forehead, you might live in Illinois.
- If you have ever worn shorts and a parka at the same time, you might live in Illinois.
- If your town has an equal number of bars and churches, you might live in Illinois.
- If you have had a lengthy telephone conversation with someone who dialed a wrong number, you might live in Illinois.

YOU KNOW YOU ARE A TRUE Illinoisan WHEN:

1. Vacation means going north or south on I-55 for the weekend.
2. You measure distance in hours.
3. You know several people who have hit a deer more than once.
4. You often switch from heat to AC in the same day and back again.
5. You drive 65 mph through a raging blizzard, without flinching.
6. You see people wearing camouflage at social events (including weddings)
7. You install security lights on your house and garage and leave both unlocked.
8. You carry jumper cables in your car and know how to use them.
9. You design your kid's Halloween costume to fit over a snowsuit.
10. Driving is better in the winter because the potholes are filled with snow.
11. You know all 5 seasons: almost winter, winter, still winter, road construction, & It's Hot.
12. Your idea of creative landscaping is a statue of a deer next to a blue spruce.
13. 'Down south ' means Missouri.
14. A brat is something you eat.
15. Your neighbor throws a party to celebrate his new pole shed.
16. You go out to a tailgate party every Friday.
17. You have more miles on your snow blower than your car.
18. You find 0 degrees a 'little chilly.'
19. You know the difference between corn and soy beans at a glance.
20. You do not consider Chicago to be a part of Illinois.
21. A 'hill' is any landmass higher than 20 feet above sea level.
22. You actually understand these jokes, and you forward them to all your Illinois friends. What's not to understand?

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Mobile In-Car Router

The Autonet Mobile In-Car Router

With the Autonet Mobile, you can connect to the Internet in your car when you want, wherever you are. With its patent-pending TRU Technology, the Autonet Mobile Router is designed to keep you and your family from losing connection to their 3G network even when you are traveling between cell towers, through tunnels, and in areas of poor signal. Their router's sleek form factor was designed to be easily installed in the trunk of your car or the cargo area of your SUV so that it's out of your way and provides you with the best Wi-Fi signal possible.

<http://www.autonetmobile.com:80/service>

Jake Dykstra

Do-Not-Call List

Here is an excerpt from a Federal Communications Commission article (dated 10/16/2008)

Contrary to what some of the e-mail campaigns are saying, the federal government does not maintain and is not establishing a separate Do-Not-Call list for wireless phone numbers. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) established the national Do-Not-Call list to enable consumers to reduce the number of unwanted telemarketing calls to their residential or personal wireless phones. Wireless phone subscribers have always been able to add their personal wireless phone numbers to the national Do-Not-Call list, either online at www.donotcall.gov, or by calling toll-free to 1-888-382-1222 from the phone number they wish to register. The do-not-call rules require callers that aren't exempt from the rules to stop telemarketing calls 30 days after you register a number. Contrary to information in certain e-mails, there is no deadline for registering a number on the national Do-Not-Call list. There is also no longer any need to re-register a number – it will stay on the national Do-Not-Call list until you cancel your registration or discontinue service.

<http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/truthaboutcellphones.html>

Theresa's Notes

Theresa's Notes:

Due to the sub-zero weather, the January Meeting was canceled; everything planned for January has been moved to the February Meeting.

Treats for the February meeting will be provided by Jeanne Greenwalt and Dorothy Fleming. Marge Knobloch has volunteered for kitchen help and Tom Smith is doing set up. As always if anyone can come early and help it is always appreciated.

Theresa Bagg

Graphics SIG

January Graphics SIG

Cold weather saw a very small group at January's SIG. There were only five present but the information was all wonderful! We covered a myriad of topics – some Graphics and some general.

The general topics included Key Pass, Open Office features, especially creating PDF's. Impress, the presentation portion of Open Office was demonstrated showing how to reduce the file size of a PPS using the minimizer extension.

The Graphics portion was on how you can move a cutout from one photo to another photo using layering. We used GIMP, a free graphics program that you can download.

Laura Caupert

Simple Math

Dr. Adrian Rogers, Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee:

You cannot legislate the poor into freedom by legislating the wealthy out of freedom. What one person receives without working, another person must work for without receiving.

The government cannot give to anybody anything that the government does not first take from somebody else.

When half of the people get the idea that they do not have to work because the other half is going to take care of them, and when the other half gets the idea that it does no good to work because somebody else is going to get what they work for, that my dear friend, is about the end of any nation.

You cannot multiply wealth by dividing it.

Smart Computing Tips



Smart Computing Tips

As a member of the Smart Computing User Group Program, you are welcome to reprint these tips in your user group's newsletter.

To Check Those Requirements: Before you purchase computer software, such as a game or a greeting card creator, be sure to check the system requirements, which are generally listed on the side or bottom of the software box. Oftentimes, you will see two lists of system specifications: minimum system requirements and recommended system requirements. Verify that your computer meets the minimum system requirements for the software, but try to take the recommended requirements into account. If you meet the recommended settings, the program will run more smoothly. Attempting to run the program on the minimum settings may result in slow response times, reduced graphics settings, and difficulty using the software's most advanced features.

Computer Maintenance Practices: There are some easy ways to help keep your computer running healthy. First, configure your antispyware or antivirus program to run at least once a day. Most protection programs give you the option of choosing when the scan will occur, whether it's when the computer starts up, or at a specific time of day. Second, defragment your hard drive on a regular basis. Defragmenting combines fragmented files when possible, ultimately cleaning up your hard drive and making file access, and overall computer use, faster. Lastly, keeping your computer healthy means keeping your files safe. Regularly back up your most important files on an external hard drive or DVD, which ensures less data loss if something should happen to your computer.

Restart Your Computer For Better Performance: Many users log off their computer every night as a way to try to keep unwanted people from accessing their files on the computer. Instead of logging off of your computer every night, restart it. In doing so, you will enable Windows to refresh itself and remove temporary files. It will also let your computer free memory and other resources that some of your hardware and software will not release, thereby making your computer work more smoothly and at a faster rate.

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WWII Monopoly Game

WWII Monopoly "Game"

Starting in 1940, an increasing number of British airmen found themselves as the involuntary guests of the Third Reich, and the Crown was casting about for ways and means to facilitate their escape. Now, obviously, one of the most helpful aids to that end is a useful and accurate map, one showing not only where stuff was, but also showing the locations of 'safe houses' where a POW on-the-lam could go for food and shelter.

Paper maps had some real drawbacks -- they make a lot of noise when you open and fold them, they wear out rapidly, and if they get wet, they turn into mush.

Someone in Britain's MI-5 (similar to America's OSS) got the idea of printing escape maps on silk. It's durable, can be crunched-up into tiny wads and unfolded as many times as needed, and makes no noise whatsoever.

At that time, there was only one manufacturer in Great Britain that had perfected the technology of printing on silk, and that was John Waddington, Ltd. When approached by the government, the firm was only too happy to do its bit for the war effort.

By pure coincidence, Waddington was also the U.K. Licensee for the popular American board game, Monopoly. As it happened, 'games and pastimes' was a category of item qualified for insertion into 'CARE packages', dispatched by the International Red Cross to prisoners of war.

Under the strictest of secrecy, in a securely guarded and inaccessible old workshop on the grounds of Waddington's, a group of sworn-to-secrecy employees began mass-producing escape maps, keyed to each region of Germany or Italy where Allied POW camps were located. When processed, these maps could be folded into such tiny dots that they would actually fit inside a Monopoly playing piece. As long as they were at it, the clever workmen at Waddington's also managed to add:

1. A playing token, containing a small magnetic compass.
2. A two-part metal file that could easily be screwed together.
3. Useful amounts of genuine high-denomination German, Italian, and French currency, hidden within the piles of Monopoly money!

British and American air crews were advised, before taking off on their first mission, how to identify a 'rigged' Monopoly set -- by means of a tiny red dot, one cleverly rigged to look like an ordinary printing glitch, located in the corner of the "Free Parking" square.

Of the estimated 35,000 Allied POWS who successfully escaped, an estimated one-third were aided in their flight by



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the rigged Monopoly sets. Everyone who did so was sworn to secrecy indefinitely, since the British Government might want to use this highly successful ruse in still another, future war. The story wasn't de-classified until 2007, when the surviving craftsmen from Waddington's, as well as the firm itself, were finally honored in a public ceremony.

It's always nice when you can put that 'Get Out of Jail Free' card to good use!

Coffee Filters

COFFEE FILTERS:

Not just for making coffee....

1. Cover bowls or dishes when cooking in the microwave. Coffee filters make excellent covers.
2. Clean windows and mirrors. Coffee filters are Lint-free so they'll leave windows sparkling.
3. Protect China. Separate your good dishes by putting a coffee filter between each dish.
4. Filter broken cork from wine. If you break the cork when opening a wine bottle, filter the wine through a coffee filter.
5. Protect a cast-iron skillet. Place a coffee filter in the Skillet to absorb moisture and prevent rust.
6. Apply shoe polish. Ball up a lint-free coffee filter.
7. Recycle frying oil. After frying, strain oil through a sieve Lined with a coffee filter.
8. Weigh chopped foods. Place chopped ingredients in a coffee filter on a kitchen scale.
9. Hold tacos. Coffee filters make convenient wrappers for messy foods.
10. Stop the soil from leaking out of a plant pot. Line a plant pot with a coffee filter to prevent the soil from going through the drainage holes.
11. Prevent a Popsicle from dripping. Poke one or two holes as needed in a coffee filter.
12. Do you think we used expensive strips to wax eyebrows? Use strips of coffee filters.
13. Put a few in a plate and put your fried bacon, French fries, chicken fingers, etc on them. Soaks out all the grease.
14. Keep in the bathroom. They make great "razor nick Fixers."

Sandwich to Plano

US 34 Sandwich to Plano Website

The Illinois Department of Transportation is embarking on a preliminary engineering study of possible improvements to the US 34 Corridor from west of Gletty Road through down town Sandwich to Chilton Way in Plano. The Sandwich to Plano Website will provide up to date information on the progress of the study. All materials and resources will be available on the website including background and process, details about upcoming meetings and opportunities to participate. There is an opportunity for public comment, including an interactive map, as well as contacts for the project team. The website also hosts a mailing list feature.

Thoughts and feedback welcomed

The Study Team has created several mechanisms on the website to provide your input including a mailing list, participating in the Community Context Audit, an Interactive Community Context Mapping Exercise and information about upcoming public meetings.

www.sandwichtoplano.com

Broadband Speed

Juice Your Broadband Speed

Written by Vinny La Bash, a member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., FL
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People prefer broadband internet connections because of the obvious speed advantages over dial-up and satellite links. Then why is it that broadband never seems to be fast enough? Are you getting the speed promised by your ISP? Broadband can cost \$100 a month or more, but does the provider really provide the advertised speed? Is the connection reliable or does the modem need a reboot several times a day? Fortunately, there are ways to achieve high, reliable throughput without having to have an engineering degree. Here are some suggestions to get every bit per second possible from your modem without any technical hiccups or interruptions in service.

Start with your computer and TV equipment. A common source of line noise can be traced to improper grounding of anything that plugs into household electrical circuits. This can seriously degrade performance of cable equipment. Every electrical device, especially those in the same room as the cable modem, should be plugged into properly grounded

outlets. The best connections are with polarized plugs oriented in the correct direction, and please don't use any three prong to two prong adapters. Get up-to-date gear. Electric outlet testers are cheap. Buy one and use it to test for excess voltage on your cable wiring. Any problem could indicate a serious safety hazard. Engage a licensed electrician to fix it.

DOCSIS 2.0 standard

Almost anything manufactured today in the consumer electronics world is light years ahead of its predecessors manufactured only two or three years ago. Cable modems are no exception, so if yours is more than three years old get a new one from your provider. Most providers will make a free exchange, but some will require an extension of your contract. You want to do this because the latest modems conform to the DOCSIS 2.0 standard. This offers higher upload and download capabilities and supports other advanced broadband applications, including online gaming and peer-to-peer computing.

Ask your ISP if they automatically update firmware for the modem. If they don't, have them supply the website address of your modem's manufacturer so you can download the most recent firmware. Check the website about twice a year for new updates.

Next, go to a test site such as PC Pitstop, and check your upload and download speeds to see if they match the terms of your service contract. If they don't, give your ISP a call and have them reset the modem's settings. While you're at it, have them check the signal-to-noise ratio. Too much noise can cause interference, and your modem will then have to resend information cutting down on your throughput.

It's possible that your cable wiring may contain too many splices or simply be too long. That can be fixed by a visit from your ISP technician. Have the technician check the line quality leading to your house. If the signal is good and you're having problems, the house wiring may be the culprit. The definitive answer for cable modems is to create a split directly after the junction box and then run a new cable directly to your modem. The other side of the split will take care of your television sets which aren't nearly as sensitive to line noise.

After you've done everything from a hardware and firmware standpoint, and your cable connection is as clean as possible, you're ready to fine tune the system for best performance. Vista users don't have to do much of anything to optimize the operating system since Vista does TCP stack tuning dynamically. Any internet performance adjustments can be made through the browser. Firefox users may want to try Firetune or Fasterfox. They are both free utilities and allow adjustment to cache memory, capacity and other settings such as pipelining.

If you do a lot of downloading, you can save time by installing a download manager like Flashget. This widely

used utility claims the highest number of users on the internet. It uses MHT (Multi-server Hyper-threading Transportation) technique. It's very easy to use and comes with exceptional document management features. Best of all, it's free.

After all this work, it would be a tragedy if you didn't keep in mind that sometimes the simplest solutions are the best ones. Most cable modems and routers have reset features. Many a mysterious internet ailment has been corrected simply by resetting the equipment. Turn off the computer and the modem. Un-plug the modem for a few minutes and then power everything back on. You may be pleasantly surprised.

Windows 7

Windows 7 is coming soon

By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS
www.compuKISS.com
sandy (at) compuKISS.com

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If you ask 100 people their impressions of the Microsoft Vista operating system, 95 of them will tell you that Vista is no good, even if they have never seen or used it.

It is obvious that public opinion of Vista is in the mud. Microsoft made some major blunders when they introduced Vista. There were not enough drivers ready, so many printers, scanners, and other peripherals were incompatible. There was no noticeable speed increase over Windows XP. Vista requires much additional memory and more hardware, so it was often impossible to upgrade current Windows XP computers. Also, Microsoft did not woo the press as they did when they introduced Windows XP, so Vista got a lot of awful publicity. Vista is not a bad operating system, but Vista has gotten a bad name. Microsoft has lost the battle and they know it. So they are working on a new Windows operating system.

Microsoft hopes to make a clean break with previous Windows operating systems with this new version of Windows. They are especially distancing the new operating system from the "wicked" Vista operating system. This is obvious in the name they have chosen for the new OS. They are not using year names like Windows 2000. They are not using what they refer to as inspirational names, like XP or Vista. Instead, they will go back to their original numerical naming convention. There was a Windows 1, Windows 2,

and Windows 3. Now there is to be a new operating system called "Windows 7".

If you have been following the versions of Windows as they have been introduced, you will find it difficult to comprehend that this next version is actually the seventh version of Windows, but Microsoft says that it is, so that is that. It's Windows 7.

More important than the name, however, is the fact that Microsoft cannot afford another misstep. They must make this operating system faster and better than Vista. Microsoft has already showed off Windows 7 at some developer's conferences and has made some announcements and promises.

Windows 7 will be built on the Vista base, so peripherals that work with Vista, which now includes most printers, scanners, and other devices, will also work with Windows 7.

Windows 7 will have a smaller storage footprint and will use less memory. This will allow it to run on the new small Netbooks that are now running Windows XP or Unix because Windows Vista cannot run on their small solid state drives.

Windows 7 will boot up and shut down faster. It will have improved battery life on laptops. It is also promised to have an easier-to-use interface and to be easier to network in a home environment.

Although Microsoft is officially targeting January 2010 for the launch of Windows 7, logic indicates that they will have Windows 7 ready for next year's holiday selling season.

This holiday season you'll find some great prices on computers running Microsoft Vista. If all goes well, when the holiday season rolls around in 2009, the stores will be filled with computers running the next version of Windows, Windows 7. Microsoft has made mistakes before, but I think they will do everything they possibly can to make Windows 7 a winner. So if you are looking to buy a new PC, this year will be a good time to buy, but, if you can wait, next year may be even better.

USB 3.0

The USB 3.0 specification was released by Intel and its partners in August 2008, according to early reports from CNET news. Products using the 3.0 specification are likely to arrive in 2009 or 2010.

Universal Serial Bus (USB) supports following data rates:

- USB 1.0 supports a rate of 1.5 Mbit/s**
- USB 2.0 supports a rate of 480 Mbit/s**
- USB 3.0 supports a rate of 5.0 Gbit/s.**