



Scug News

December 2009

Newsletter of the Sandwich Computer Users Group

[WWW.SCUG.ORG](http://www.scug.org)

Last Month

Last month, Jerry Kell displayed three items made with photos on the Walmart photo center web site. He explained how the site works and how he uses it. Debbie Olson presented the photo web site "Shutterfly." This web site will print your pictures and mail them to you or you can pick them up at a Target Store. Shutterfly offers many different options of decorating the pictures, adding text, etc.

December Program ~ SCUG Christmas Party

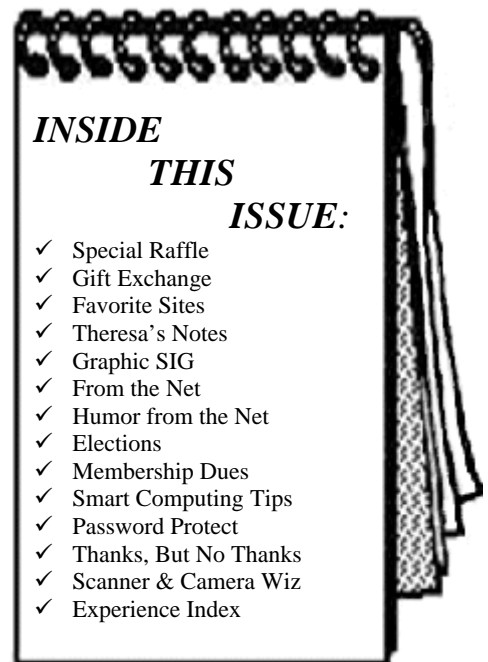
The December meeting will be our annual SCUG Christmas Party. The party is on our regular meeting night, December 17th. Setup starts at 5pm and we will eat at 6pm. Please plan on coming early or staying late to help setup or tear down. We will provide meat, drinks and table service. Please bring a dish to pass that will feed 8 to 12 people. If you would like to participate in the gift draw please purchase a gift with a value of \$10 with no white elephants. Santa Claus will have something for each membership. You must have your dues up to date to receive this Santa gift and to vote in the elections.

We meet at the Federated Church in Sandwich 403 N. Main Street on the third Thursday of each month. The meeting is a great place to learn about computers and meet new friends. Next meeting is December 17, 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.*



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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December Birthdays

12/1 Allie Mikyska
12/5 Jerry Leonard
12/8 Jonathan Lieser
12/14 Oweta Newhauser
12/26 Sherry Gartner
12/2 Elizabeth Ivins
12/8 Debbi Kell
12/12 Hal Lieser
12/21 Louise Erbrederis
12/28 Arlene Niemann
12/28 Carol Dieter

January Birthdays

1/12 Marlene Hundt
1/15 JoAnn Harkins
1/15 Dottie Olson
1/14 Bob Olson
1/15 Cindy Kaminky
1/27 Myrna Skopek

Special Raffle

Special Raffle

Our special raffle began with the October meeting. The raffle will conclude at the Christmas party. You do not need to be present to win. The tickets will cost one dollar each. Each raffle item will have a paper bag beside it. Purchase a ticket, write your name on the back of the ticket and place the ticket in the bag of the raffle item you want a chance to win.

Jerry Kell

Gift Exchange

Christmas Party Gift Exchange

Our gift exchange played at the Christmas Party will be the same as last year. If you would like to participate in the gift exchange, bring a wrapped gift with a value of around \$10. Please no gag gifts.

As your name is drawn you will choose a gift from the table but not open it. The next name drawn can take your unopened gift or take a new gift from the table. At the end of the game we will open the gifts. At that time anyone can exchange their gift with anyone else wanting to trade gifts.

Jerry Kell

Favorite Sites

Two websites to keep the kids entertained on their pc's.
All about snowflakes, how they are formed and oodles of pictures.
www.snowcrystals.com

and for the believers, plenty of activities for the Kids plus stuff for the parents.

www.northpole.com

Louise Dieden

Theresa's Notes

Theresa's Notes:

Jerry Kell and Debbie Olson presented programs on working with photos online and did a wonderful job. Sandy Henne donated all the wonderful raffle prizes. Thank you very much Sandy! There were 28 members present at the meeting.

Next month will be our Christmas Party. Many members have signed up to bring their dishes to pass. See list below:

Theresa Bagg

Christmas Party

Coming to the Christmas Party?

SCUG is furnishing plates, napkins, silverware, coffee, Italian Beef and buns. Jerry Grommes will be bringing hot apple cider.

Christmas Party List for Dish to Pass:

Peg/Art Lyman	Deviled Eggs
Sandy Henne	Chocolate Dessert
George Bell	Bread/Butter
Carol Dieter	Salad
Roberta Drykstra	Dessert
Debbie Olson	Potato Salad
Theresa Bagg	Working Woman's Salad
Wanda Hanson	Cookies
Lorraine Hacker	Baked Corn
Louise Dieden	Cuke Salad
Kathy McDermott	Chicken
Lyn Cole	Guacamole
Myrna Skopek	3-Bean Salad

If you are coming and your name is not on the list, please email me: your name and what you are bringing. I am moving into the "Food Queen" mode. We want to make sure that we do not have 7 pots of beans or 20 desserts (Why is that a bad idea??? - Yum!) If I don't see you at the Christmas Party, I wish you all of the best of the Christmas season and a Happy New Year!

Thank you,
Debbie Olson
Debob7@aol.com

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Graphics SIG

November Graphics SIG

The Graphics SIG was held at Roberta's house with 7 people in attendance. We reviewed RTF files and how to save them in Word. We followed up Thursday's presentation and discussed and explored on-line digital picture programs using Wal-Mart's in particular. We made a collage and discussed all the different options available to us and some that weren't. While we were on-line we discussed how to tell if a site was secure with the https: designation and lock icon in the address bar. We sent Jerry Kell a picture from Kathy's new digital camera which lead to a discussion about the different kinds of memory cards and memory card readers that are available. Joan brought a 4G SD memory card that was about the size of your finger nail. As usual we covered an eclectic assortment of topics.

Roberta Dykstra

From the Net

New Virus

Subject: Fw: New Virus circulating - beware!

Please be aware of a new virus campaign using H1N1 as it's method of getting people to click on a "link" contained within the email being sent. Currently, the most recent email appears to come from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, with a subject referencing H1N1, swine flu, or a vaccination program. The email will contain a link in it, claiming to bring the user to a website where they can create a "vaccination profile". Unfortunately, what's really happening is the site will attempt to infect the users machine with a virus known as Zbot.

Please disregard emails from sources you are not familiar with, weren't expecting attachments from, or emails that ask you to click on a link within the email itself.

...and as always please remember to "Think Before You Click"...

XEROX IS DOING SOMETHING COOL

If you go to this web site, www.LetsSayThanks.com you can pick out a thank you card and Xerox will print it and it will be sent to a soldier that is currently serving in Iraq. You can't pick out who gets it, but it will go to a member of the armed services.

How AMAZING it would be if we could get everyone we know to send one!!! It is FREE and it only takes a second. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the soldiers received a bunch of these? Whether you are for or against the war, our soldiers over there need to know we are behind them.

This takes just 10 seconds and it's a wonderful way to say thank you. Please take the time and please take the time to pass it on for others to do. We can never say enough thank you's.

Thanks for taking to time to support our military!

Editors Note: Let's Say Thanks was launched in June 2006 by the Xerox Corporation to facilitate the sending of thank-you cards from citizens at home to American service personnel stationed overseas.

Completed cards are printed out and delivered monthly along with care packages from Give2theTroops, a non-profit organization. The cards cannot be addressed to specific individuals, nor are senders allowed to include personal information such as mailing or email addresses (downloadable versions are available for those who wish to send personal cards to friends or relatives).

Deer ticks

Please watch this video and take it seriously. I am now feeling better after a week of flu-like symptoms and rash beginning a week after removing the engorged tick I got when bow hunting a couple weeks ago. I began taking Doxycycline just a few days after the bite. Two weeks on Doxycycline (prescription only) taken as soon as possible will usually take care of it.

These tiny Deer ticks are active all year long whenever temperatures are above freezing. So don't be fooled thinking they are like wood ticks which are active in spring and summertime only.

Take the precautions in this video when outdoors. I always do these preventative measures religiously and I still get an occasional tick!!!!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLX4KF7xzv0&feature=related>

PASS THIS ON...

Humor from the Net

UPS Airlines

Just in case you need a laugh:

Remember it takes a college degree to fly a plane, but only a high school diploma to fix one; a reassurance to those of us who fly routinely in our jobs.

After every flight, UPS pilots fill out a form, called a 'gripe sheet,' which tells mechanics about problems with the aircraft. The mechanics corrects the problems, document their repairs on the form, and then pilots review the gripe sheets before the next flight.

Never let it be said that ground crews lack a sense of humor. Here are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by UPS pilots (marked with a P) and the solutions recorded (marked with an S) by maintenance engineers.

By the way, UPS is the only major airline that has never, ever, had an accident.

P: Left inside main tire almost needs replacement.
S: Almost replaced left inside main tire.

P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.
S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

P: Something loose in cockpit
S: Something tightened in cockpit

P: Dead bugs on windshield.
S: Live bugs on back-order.

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent
S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.
S: Evidence removed.

P: DME volume unbelievably loud.
S: DME volume set to more believable level.

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.
S: That's what friction locks are for.

P: IFF inoperative in OFF mode.
S: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode.

P: Suspected crack in windshield.
S: Suspect you're right.

P: Number 3 engine missing.
S: Engine found on right wing after brief search

P: Aircraft handles funny. (I love this one!)
S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right and be serious.

P: Target radar hums.
S: Reprogrammed target radar with lyrics.

P: Mouse in cockpit.
S: Cat installed.



Indian Valley Computer Services

704 E. Church St. • Suite B • Sandwich, Illinois 60548

Brad S. Shelton
Network Administrator

Phone: 815-786-6814
or 888-508-5550
Voice Mail: 888-931-4384 E-Mail: bradnetad@indianvalley.com

Elections

In order to hold an office or to vote in the December one has to be a **Member in Good Standing** so if you are not up to date on your dues, now would be a good time to do so.

Slate of Candidates are as follows:

President	Jerry Kell
1st Vice President	Bob Olson
2nd Vice President	Tom Smith
Secretary	Theresa Bagg
Treasurer	Myrna Skopek
Board Member at Large	Louise Dieden
Sergeant at Arms	Jake Dykstra
Standby Officer	Bill Hacker

While Standby Officer is not an official position listed in our constitution, Bill Hacker has stepped up to help out and to fill in where needed.

Provisions for write ins' for all positions will be on the ballots.

Jerry Grommes
Election Chairman

Membership dues

Membership dues

The membership voted and approved reducing membership dues for those that renew (**and choose to receive the News Letter online**) to \$17.00, for those renewing (**and requesting a mailed hardcopy**) dues will remain at \$20.00. This change to our dues will take effect with renewals starting January 1, 2010.

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.

- **iTunes Shortcuts:** There are several ways you can navigate your iTunes Music Library without taking your hands off of your keyboard in Windows. For example, to start playing the selected song, press the ENTER key. You can start playing the next file in your Library by pressing SHIFT-CTRL-ALT-Right arrow. Similarly, to start playing the previous song, press SHIFT-CTRL-ALT-Left arrow. You can also browse the iTunes Music Store quickly by pressing CTRL-] to go to the next page or CTRL-[to return to the previous page.
- **Electronic Readers:** Whether you're a bookworm who simply appreciates new technology or an avid reader who wants to travel with your entire collection, ereaders have an appeal unlike many other portable devices. Ereaders are capable of storing thousands of books on a single device, a convenience that can save you from having to find free space in your home to store the same number of physical books. In terms of readability, many ereaders feature an interface with a more paper-like appearance than a typical electronic display. If you're reading in bright sunlight, many displays can deflect glare or, if you're reading at night, provide light via an LED so you don't strain your eyes.
- **Solve Network Connection Problems:** Many factors can adversely affect the strength of the wireless signal reaching your computer, such as the structure of the building, the number of people, distance, or electronic interference. Letting your mouse pointer dwell over the wireless connection icon in the System Tray will provide you with some information about the signal strength of your connection. The Windows Vista pop-up is just like the signal indicator on most cell phones: a series of bars. The more bars you have, the stronger the signal. In WinXP, the indicator is text-based: weak, strong, excellent, and so on. In Windows 7, clicking the icon will display the signal strength of each available wireless network. If you have a weak signal, try moving to another area. Sometimes, simply getting closer to the access point or eliminating sources of interference is all that's needed.

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Password Protect Acct

Password Protect Your Account

By Kathy Frey, Webmaster,
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If you password protect your account for your Windows operating system, then you should create a password reset disk. It takes very little time and is easy to do. In Windows XP, Windows Vista and Windows 7, these first steps are the same.

1. Click Start
2. Click Control Panel
3. Click User Accounts

After you have the User Accounts window open, select the account for which you want to make the password reset disk. (Make a reset disk for each account.)

- In Windows XP, on the left under Related Tasks, click on Prevent a forgotten password to start the Forgotten Password Wizard, and then click Next. Follow the wizard. You can use either a floppy disk or a USB drive for the reset disk.
- In Windows Vista, on the left click on Create a Password reset disk, then follow the wizard. The Password Reset Disk is essentially a small file that can be used to reset your password, even if you have changed your password since creating the reset disk.
- In Windows 7, click on Create a password reset disk. If no media is installed, you will get a message that indicates you need a removable media, such as a floppy disk or a flash drive.

Otherwise the password reset wizard comes up, and you again will need to follow the screens.

After creating your reset disks, store them in a very safe place, since the information can be easily used by anyone to reset the password and gain access to your account. There are other ways to change the passwords in all three operating systems, but the above is an easy and quick way to have that extra safety net in hand.

Editors Note: this looks like it should go hand and hand with estate planning. Use a USB drive for your password reset disk, put it in your Bank Box and your heirs will be able to access your password protected computer.

Thanks, But No Thanks

Windows 7, Thanks, But No Thanks!

By Herb Goldstein,
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I am a devout XP user. It's not by any means perfect. It has its own set of quirks (like everything else), but it's better than anything that came before and it works quite well. It's like my house...I know where everything is. I can navigate it in the dark. I've got it furnished and decorated just the way I want it, and it took me, bit by bit, a long time to do. So why should I move across the street and start all over again? For whose benefit?

Some weeks ago, Microsoft provided their release candidate of Windows 7 free for all takers. I installed it on a spare hard drive and have been playing with it every now and then. It's a nice functional operating system, but from a practical standpoint it provides me with nothing that I really need or must have that's missing in XP. If you are starting as a new computer user with a new computer, it's just fine. In fact it will be on your new computer right from the get-go, want it or not.

For whatever the many reasons, there is no upgrade path to migrate from XP to Windows 7. You need to start from scratch reinstalling all your software programs, all their many updates and upgrades, and all the customized settings you have factored into them over the period of time. Now that's providing you even have your original installation disks or some record of those that you originally downloaded for which you have no installation disks at all. You will also need all their serial numbers that you were originally required to provide, if you still have them. Talk about monumental tasks!

As though that were not enough to completely turn off the bravest among you, Windows 7 has another curve ball to pitch at you. Whatever applications you want to install in Windows 7 must have perfectly valid drivers that it will recognize. Windows 7 is much more fussy about what it wants to approve. Many smaller software publishers whose applications you may now be using in XP may not have developed drivers that will work in Windows 7. You may well have to kiss some of your most fabulous freebies goodbye. The loudest argument I have heard by those urging the switch is that Microsoft will cease to recognize XP. If the automobile industry operated in similar fashion you would be forced to junk all cars more than a few years old.

So pardon me folks while I continue to avoid fixing what isn't broken. Unless and until Microsoft can offer a much better operating system that will easily migrate everything I am currently using in XP, thanks but no thanks!

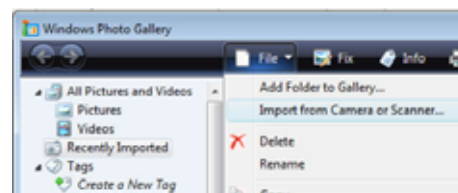
Scanner & Camera Wiz

Microsoft Scanner & Camera Wizard

By Bob Elgines, CRCC Editor,
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Most of us have multiple digital cameras nowadays, and really don't need to install all of their programs anymore since Windows XP. You can use the "Scanner & Camera Wizard". It is located under "Programs/Accessories" and if the computer does not have any third party camera programs installed, it will come up automatically after you plug your camera in to a USB port. It will list your camera, then guide you through a procedure to download your pictures or videos to your selected folder and if you wish to delete them from your camera or not.



In Windows Vista, it is not under the "Accessories" folder, but under

the "Programs" folder, labeled "Windows Photo Gallery". Run this program, then go to "File" choose "Import from Scanner or Camera".

If the computer does not have any third party camera programs installed, a selection "Import pictures; Using Windows" will come up automatically after you plug your camera in to a USB port (see picture on the left). Now you can download your pictures on any computer using the built-in software.



Experience Index

Windows Experience Index

By Sandy Berger, CompuKiss

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Have you ever wondered how fast your computer is compared to other computers? Or would you like to know which component you should upgrade in order to speed up your computer? In Windows XP and older versions of Windows, there were always ways to get performance information. However, this information was given in cryptic charts and numbers. The average person would have had to spend a lot of time to find and assess that information. Now, however, with Windows Vista and Windows 7, Microsoft has made finding and assessing this information much easier.

Inside of Vista and Windows 7 is a feature called the Windows Experience Index. This is a simple tool that gives you an easy-to-read assessment of your computer's performance. To access this feature, click on the Start button and choose Control Panel. In Windows Vista, choose the Classic View. In Windows 7 choose one of the icon views. Then click on Performance Information and Tools. You will be given a snapshot of your computers performance.

The report is divided into five categories: processor, memory, graphics, gaming graphics, and hard disk. Each one of these has a score that indicates your computer's performance in that area. A Base Score is given in bold letters. You need to be aware that the base score is not the average of the scores, but rather, it is the rating on the slowest component. So if your gaming graphics score is 2.2, your overall score will be 2.2 even if all of the other subscores are higher. The base score is given in this manner assuming that your computer can only be as fast as the slowest component.

Currently the scores for a computer running Vista range from 1 to 5.9. The scores for Window 7 computers range from 1 to 7.9. They do not go all the way up to 10 because Microsoft is allowing a little leeway for the added performance levels of future hardware components.

2 is adequate for basic computer tasks

Don't be shocked if your computer has a low base score or low subscores. Microsoft says that a score of 2 is adequate for basic computer tasks like email and word processing. Graphics-intensive software like Photoshop and games should have a score of 3 or higher.

If you use your computer for heavy duty computing including media center for multimedia like recording HDTV programs, then subscores in the processor, memory, desktop graphics, gaming graphics, and hard disk categories are all important and should be at least a 3.

In most cases, inexpensive computers will have the lowest score in the graphics category. This will be more important in a laptop computer because you cannot easily upgrade the graphics card later. In a desktop computer, you can always add a better graphics later, if you choose to do so.

To give you an idea of how these scores stack up, here's the scoring of my one-year-old dual-core, 64-bit computer that was recently upgraded to Windows 7.

Processor:	6.0
Memory:	6.0
Graphics:	3.8
Gaming Graphics:	3.4
Hard Disk:	5.9
Base Score:	3.4

My computer retailed last year for about \$500 and would currently be selling for less. I do everything on this computer including running as many as 10 programs at once, working with Photoshop, playing movies, and recording TV. My point is that even though the scores can go as high as 7.9 on a Windows 7 computer, you don't need extremely high scores to have a very useful computer.

This index is a good way to pinpoint slower components that may be worth upgrading. For example, my computer's scores tell me without a doubt, that if I were to purchase a high-end graphics card for my computer, I could almost double its base score and speed its performance.

Use it to compare computers

While this little tool is a great way to score your own PC, it also excels at letting you see how the computer you may be thinking of purchasing stacks up against the others. Most stores that sell computers have a demo running in the store. If that is the case, you can pull up the Windows Experience Index on any computer that you are thinking of purchasing. You can also use it to compare computers. This tool is not perfect, but it does give you a fairly accurate assessment. While you will still have to compare things like the amount of memory, hard drive size, and cost, you won't have to understand as much about the processors and other components. And best of all, you won't have to rely as much on the salesman in the store.

Although I still feel that computers could be made easier to use, the Windows Experience Index is one example of how the newer operating systems are at least making computers easier to understand.

Editors Note: It would be a good idea when buying a new computer to know what the *Windows Experience Index* is before purchasing. I would recommend a 3 or greater even if you are only going to do basic tasks.