



Brevard Users Group



October 2003

Pres Sez !

By George Rymer

Members, it is approaching that time of the year again, to select the next years board of officers. This is normally started in November, but this year we are going to start a month early because of the large turn over in officials. The Nominating Committee will be established this month, and the final ballot and floor nominations will be finalized at the December meeting. The vote will be at the January meeting and the installation of new officers will be in February.

The offices open for **NEW Officers** are;
President,
Vice President,
Secretary,
Treasurer.

Think hard about who you want to lead you for the next year. Whoever you nominate must be willing to serve in that capacity. Nominate yourself ! Do something to contribute to the Club..... or there won't be a club!

We need these Officers to conform to the State law.



Nominations for Officers

We will need the name and office of the candidate along with the name of the member nominating that person. Nominations will be open thru the December meeting.

The nominations will then be closed and a ballot prepared for any contested offices, the ballot will be published in the January newsletter. The voting will take place at the January meeting. Elected officers will assume their duties at the February meeting.

Don't be shy, nominate yourself !

President _____

Vice Pres. _____

Treasurer _____

Secretary _____

1st Member at Large _____

2nd Member at Large _____

Name of nominating member:

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Brevard Users Group

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All questions, correspondence, and other items pertaining to the Newsletter should be directed to one of the Editors.

Questions involving advertising should be directed to **Advertising** at the address below.

Articles or items of interest for inclusion in the newsletter should be sent to **The Editor** at:

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THE NEXT MEETING OF THE BREVARD USERS GROUP WILL BE ON

Monday, October 20th, 2003

AT 7:00 pm

IN

*the Eau Gallie Library
Visitors welcome!*

Visit the BUG CLUB web site
for the latest schedule.

<http://bugclub.org>

**There will be a drawing for Door Prizes!
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**Mary
Alice
Grant**
Secretary

Executive Meeting Notes

10 September 2003

Attendance: George Rymer, Eric Arnold, Ted Glaser
Lucile Wagner, Tom Wojnar, John Arnold, Dave Hixon
Meeting opened at 6:05 p.m. at Melbourne Library

Officers absent: Mary Alice Grant (Recorder) and
Jim Townsend (Newsletter publisher).

The August 2003 Officers Meeting minutes were
reviewed on line (email to all officers) and approved as
written.

The Treasurer's Report was read and approved.
Checking Account \$ 1,159.00
Savings Account \$ 1,960.88

President's Comments:

Eric Arnold (WEBMASTER) was recognized
for his continued excellent effort securing advertisers
and for expanding the amount of pages on the club
WEB site.

Lucile Wagner (VP) was recognized for
making our flyer announcing the BUG Club and inviting
people to join us.

Old Business reviewed and the following items were discussed:

A. The club is still looking for another Hard Drive
for the club laptop computer.

B. Jim Townsend and George Rymer went to
"Glenbrooke" a Wellstone Retirement Community at
Palm Bay and met with John Arnold on Friday 5 Sept
2003 to survey the facility as a possible site to host
future "Newbies" SIGs and possible monthly meetings.
The meeting room is approximately same size as
Melbourne, has a full kitchen, stage and Road Runner
cable. A motion was made to host the Newbies SIG at
"Glenbrooke" as soon as the meeting room could be
reserved. The motion was approved with 1 abstention.

C. A motion was made and approved for the
additional expenditure of funds to print an additional 50
copies of the Newsletter for the Nov. Club Fair at the
Melbourne Beach Library.

D. Eric Arnold was able to order 1000 business
cards printed at Staples for \$36.99. The officers
approved the expenditure.

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BUG MEETING 15 September 2003

Our President, George Rymer opened the
meeting at 7:05pm. **He noted that next month's
meeting will be held on Monday the 20th of
October in the Eau Gallie Library.** Please make a
note on your calendar. Also, if you are interested in a
"day time" Windows SIG, please let our President
George Rymer know.

**The speaker for the evening was Eric
Zepf representing Office Depot.** His topic was
Home Networking. He talked about what equipment
and software you need, and what you need to know
to network two or more computers. There are several
different wireless or cable routers that will do the job,
although more and more people are going wireless. A
router will also work as a firewall if you are on DSL or
Roadrunner. D-Link AirPlus uses a Web-based setup
wizard to make it easy for any user to quickly and
securely connect computers to share a high-speed
Internet connection, files, resources, and games or just
to communicate. The prices for the wireless or cable
routers run from \$49 to \$149. Once you are net-
worked this makes it very easy to pass files back and
forth between computers, thus doing away with trying
to put a file on a floppy to transfer to another com-
puter. The interest was high from our members and I
believe everyone was very happy with Mr. Zepf's
talk.

Two gifts were given out to two lucky BUG
Club Members. The meeting ended at 8pm. Don't
forget that in October the meeting will be on a MON-
DAY night at Eau Gallie Library.

Respectively given by, Mary Alice Grant



Treasurer's Report

By Ted Glaser



Expense

Newsletter	
Printing	\$191.28
Mailing	\$ 60.00
Office Supplies	\$ 36.99
Sub Totals	\$288.27

Income

Dues	\$ 225.00
N'ltr Ads	\$ 70.00
Sub Totals	\$ 295.00

Assets:

Checking Acc't	\$ 547.47
Savings Acc't	\$2,460.88
Petty Cash	\$ 60.00

Renewals:

Davie, D - #0531
 Frankenfeld, - #1013
 Gillis, K - #0955
 Hanson, A - #0984
 Millett, R - #0420

New members:

Ellis, I - #1217
 Moore, J - #1216
 Sembrie, L - #1215
 Wells, H - #1214

FOR SALE

“Toolmaker’s 25x Stereo Microscope”
 by Ken-A-Vision - \$50.00
 New it sells for \$115.00
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Outsmarting The Ink Guzzlers

*Reprint from the Online NL of:
The Deerfield Beach Computer Club*

HERE'S a riddle. Which is cheaper, a \$49 inkjet printer or a \$299 laser printer? The answer depends on how much you print and how long you keep the printer. If you do a lot of printing, over a year or two, that inexpensive inkjet printer could turn out to be more costly than the laser printer.

The companies that make printers have long known they can make more money over the life of a printer on supplies than they can on the printer itself. It's a lesson taught by the inventor of the disposable razor blade: keep the razor inexpensive and make money on the blades.

The Hewlett-Packard Deskjet 3320 costs only \$49, but a black ink cartridge that produces about 220 pages of text costs \$17.99 or about 8.2 cents a page. Contrast that with the consumption of personal laser printers and some higher-end inkjet printers, some of which use less than 2 cents' worth of ink per text page.

But the number of pages that a printer maker says a user can expect from an ink or laser toner cartridge should be taken with a grain of salt. Like the miles-per-gallon estimates for cars, results depend on conditions. With inkjet printers, ink consumption depends on the type of paper, the mix of images, the text on the page and even how the printer's driver software is configured.

Cartridge life is even less predictable - and a lot shorter - when you print color photos, in which the size, color and density of images vary significantly. Laser printers are generally cheaper to use than inkjets. Inkjets use ink that is sprayed on the paper as it travels through the printer. Laser printers, like conventional photocopy machines, use toner powder that is fused to the paper by heat.

Laser printers used to cost a lot more than inkjet models, but Hewlett-Packard, Brother, Samsung and other companies now offer monochrome personal laser printers starting at about \$199, which is comparable to the price of many mid-range inkjet printers. The downside of these low-cost laser printers is that they cannot print color, meaning they are not of much use for most digital photos.

Color laser printers, which start at about \$900, are also more economical than color inkjets. But they are a poor substitute for inkjet printers when printing digital pictures because the prints are not nearly as realistic as those produced by a good inkjet and glossy photo paper. But when it comes to printing text, today's low-cost personal laser printers produce crisper pages and are cheaper to use than most inkjets.

Tests have shown the print quality of the \$299 Brother HL-5040 to be excellent. It is not the cheapest personal laser printer, but it is rugged and economical and produces excellent quality. A \$65.99 toner cartridge yields 3,300 pages of text, according to Brother, which comes out to about 2 cents per page. A high capacity cartridge, which produces 6,500 pages, costs \$89.99 for about 1.4 cents a page.

It's also possible to get some relatively inexpensive text pages from some inkjet printers. The \$33.90 black ink cartridge on the \$200 Hewlett-Packard Business Inkjet 2230/2280 series, according to Hewlett, yields about 1,500 pages, for an ink cost of 2.3 cents a page. The \$129 Epson Stylus C82 gets 1,240 pages on a \$31.35 cartridge or about 2.5 cents a page. Canon's i320 Color Bubble Jet Printer costs \$79 and yields about 300 pages from a \$7.95 black cartridge, for a cost of about 2.6 cents a page. Of course, these figures are estimates based on manufacturers' claims.

Regardless of how a printer is rated, there are ways to save money. The drivers that come with inkjets, for example, allow you to adjust the quality and speed of the printer. The settings vary, but the available options typically include "best," "normal," "draft," "everyday" and "fast draft." Whatever terms are used, as you descend the quality scale you decrease the amount of ink that is sprayed on the page, which results in a lower cost per page.

As a bonus, lowering the quality setting also increases the printer's speed because it spends less time laying down ink. Laser printers also offer cost-saving settings. The Brother model, for example, has a "toner saver mode" that cuts down considerably on toner, but the text is very light, making it a bit hard to read.

Another option with laser printers is to reduce the resolution, or dots per inch. Many laser printers offer

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Ink Guzzlers ... Continued from Page 5

up to 1,200 dots per inch, with a default of 600 d.p.i. But the higher the resolution, the more toner they use. You can reduce toner consumption by going into the printer driver settings area and setting the printer's configuration at 300 d.p.i. That will save toner without, in most cases, resulting in an unacceptable reduction in print quality.

There are other ways to reduce printing costs. If you are working with a long report or a multipage Web site and do not need to print the entire document, use the printer dialog box to print only the pages you need. If you are printing Web pages and color is not necessary, consider selecting the "gray scale" or "black" option to avoid wasting color ink. Third-party software developed specifically to improve the economy of inkjet printers is another option.

InkSaver (\$34.99 at www.inksaver.com) allows you to adjust the amount of ink on a percentage basis, meaning you do not have to use 100 percent of the ink. The software works with both color and black ink and allows total control of settings. You can also save money, and trees, by saving paper. Almost all printers allow you to print on both sides of a page, and some can be set to do that automatically.

To save ink and paper, consider printing more than one page on a single sheet. Some printers allow you to use their configuration software to reduce the size of the image so you can, say, print two full pages on one sheet. Products like FinePrint (\$39.95 at www.fineprint.com) let you print two, four or eight pages on a single sheet. For about \$50, BlueSquirrel (www.bluesquirrel.com) publishes ClickBook, a similar program for Windows 95 and later and Macintosh OS 9 and earlier.

All printer manufacturers urge you to use their supplies. Many companies offer cheaper alternatives, like remanufactured and refilled ink or toner cartridges or even kits that you can use to refill cartridges. Such companies assert that their products are equal to the original, while printer makers tend to argue that third-party products have drawbacks like poorer print quality, the clogging of the print heads or print that fades sooner than it would if the manufacturer's cartridge were used. Claims on both sides are difficult to substantiate.

There are reasons to be cautious about third-party

cartridges and refills, since some cartridges are not simply ink reservoirs but also include electronic components. Inkjet refill kits can save you a great deal of money, but you have to be careful not to spill the ink. Recycled laser cartridges seem to work well. But with a do-it-yourself refill kit, take care not to spill or inhale the fine laser powder.

King Camp Gillette, who patented the disposable razor in 1904, would no doubt be proud of the way the disposability principle has been embraced by printer manufacturers. But that shouldn't stop you from trying to shave a few pennies off the cost of printing.

Members of the Deerfield Beach Computer Club have discovered that a good way to save on the cost of inkjet cartridges is to make their purchases for those products from the DBCC's partner—1Ink.com. This vendor, located in California, offers almost all cartridges for current printer models (with the exception of the very latest ones) at prices much, much lower than the list prices of the "name" brands.

In virtually all cases, customers have been extremely satisfied with ink cartridges from 1Ink. The company re-manufactures cartridges and makes sure that they are working properly. Their service is excellent and buyers can expect their purchases in just a few days. Orders over \$55 are sent free of shipping charges and are currently not charging sales tax in Florida. 1Ink's prices are as much as 85% less than the manufacturers' prices.

So in addition to finding great values on printers at fractions of years-gone-by prices, you can now get replacement inkjet cartridges for similar savings. We at the club recommend 1Ink highly and ask that to make your purchases, do so through the link on the DBCC website. And, while you do, please tell your friends and family to do the same. You'll be doing them a favor by helping them to save money, too. And, not incidentally, you'll also be helping YOUR club, because 1Ink pays a commission to DBCC for all purchases made through the link on our website.



***** **Reminder** *****
**The October Monthly meeting will be
held at the Eau Gallie Library on
Monday October 20th.**

Why Doesn't It Work?

by Brian K. Lewis

From Sarasota PC Monitor,
Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc.

Did you ever have a time when you added something to your computer and it didn't work? It could either be software, hardware or even a Windows upgrade. Yes, I've seen many add-ons that didn't work and it was usually because of some fundamental conflict. Whenever you add new hardware or do a Windows upgrade you frequently find that new drivers are needed. In order to understand why this is so, we need to get an understanding of the basic interaction of hardware and software in modern computers. So I will try to gently lead you to a better understanding of the role of the BIOS, drivers and the operating system (OS).

I suspect the place to start is with the BIOS. This stands for Basic Input/Output System. The BIOS is the link between the hardware and the software in your computer. Although you may think that all motherboards are alike, this isn't the case. In addition, there are different processors that can be attached to a motherboard. For example, consider the Intel line, which currently has several versions of Celeron, Pentium III and Pentium 4 processors. Then you also have the AMD processors. Your motherboard may also have built-in sound, video, and/or ethernet circuitry. All of this hardware differs in many ways and requires a unique software connection in order to speak to the operating system. This software connection is the ROM BIOS. Each motherboard manufacturer modifies the BIOS that it purchases from Award, AMI, or Phoenix to fit the particular hardware that is included on the motherboard.

Although we frequently refer to the BIOS as being part of the computer motherboard, this is only part of the total BIOS software. This software includes the ROM BIOS that is stored in a chip on the motherboard, the device drivers, which are loaded into RAM memory and the adapter ROM included on plug-in cards on the motherboard. In both cases the ROM means Read-Only Memory and this program information is stored as "firmware." Firmware just means that the program has been stored in a computer

chip attached to the motherboard or to an adapter card. One good example of an adapter card that contains a ROM chip is your video card. Some firmware, such as the ROM BIOS, may be upgradeable with software from the manufacturer.

The motherboard BIOS contains all the drivers for the hardware that has to be available at the time the computer starts or boots. This includes drivers for the hard drives, floppy drives, serial-parallel ports and keyboard and other motherboard hardware. It also includes the program for the initial testing of the system, the power-on system test (POST). The ROM BIOS is the source of the system setup information that allows user modification of certain settings such as CPU [Central Processor Unit] speed, PnP [Plug and Play] settings, boot [start up] sequence, etc.

In the startup process, after the code in the ROM BIOS has completed, there is a command that allows a jump to the boot sectors on the hard disk. Depending on the settings in the BIOS, this next boot device may be a floppy drive, ZIP drive or a CD-ROM instead of the hard drive. It is at this point that the operating system is loaded. The OS then loads the drivers for all the peripheral devices that were not needed during the initial BIOS boot process. This includes devices such as printers, scanners, CD-ROM, CD-RW, ZIP drives, USB ports, mouse drivers, video drivers and many others.

So you see what we have is a succession of software layers as shown below. Each of the higher levels connects to the hardware through the operating system and the BIOS.

- Application Software (Programs)
- Operating System
- ROM BIOS & Drivers
- Hardware

Included in the hardware category are all of the peripherals that connect to the motherboard either directly or by means of various connecting cables. So you should begin to see the extraordinary complexity of the overall system.

Let's consider a few case histories. A few years back when Windows 98 was replacing Window 95, some computer manufacturers placed a notice for laptop owners on their web sites. This notice stated that laptop owners should not attempt to upgrade their

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Why Doesn't it ... Continued from Page 7

version of Windows by using a “generic” Windows upgrade. Instead they should buy an upgrade version from the laptop manufacturer. Why did they do something like this? The answer lies in the necessity for providing laptop specific drivers that will work with the new operating system. Laptop computers have special requirements related to their LCD screens, video cards, PCMCIA slots and other hardware. Drivers for these components are generally not included with a generic OS upgrade.

Instead, the original hardware manufacturer usually provides these to the computer manufacturer. In some cases, the laptop manufacturer decided to not upgrade the drivers. This meant that the operating system could not be successfully upgraded unless the user could find the real manufacturer of the individual components and obtain new drivers from that source. Without the proper upgraded drivers, the user would have problems with the computer freezing, the frequent appearance of the dreaded “blue screen of death,” and other seemingly unsolvable problems.

Another case involved adding a larger, faster hard drive to your computer. There have been limits built-in to the ROM BIOS and/or the OS that limit the maximum size a hard drive that would be recognized. These limits were 2.1GB, 8.4GB, and 32GB. Even computers that are only a few years old may have a built-in 32GB size limit. If you are running Windows 98/SE/ME then you don't have an operating system limitation. However, you may have a ROM BIOS limitation. Since most of the motherboards manufactured since 1996 have a “flash” BIOS, you may be able to upgrade the BIOS to accept the larger size drive. However, you must obtain the upgrade from the motherboard manufacturer, not the BIOS manufacturer. As I mentioned earlier, the motherboard manufacturer usually tweaks the BIOS to fit the particular hardware being supplied with the motherboard. In addition, if the drive you are considering is an ATA-100 drive (also known as UDMA mode 5), then you will need a BIOS upgrade to take advantage of the added data transfer speed of this drive. Only the newest computers have the BIOS support for these ATA-100 drives.

This now leads us to the application level. Applications such as Microsoft Office, Internet Explorer,

Corel Draw, etc., reach the hardware level by interacting with the operating system. It is then up to the OS to provide instructions to the hardware via the BIOS. So any software that you purchase or download must work with the OS. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Back in the days of DOS, programmers always tried to write instructions in their programs to directly control the hardware and bypass the OS. There are still some programs that try that and frequently it results in system crashes or, at best, system instability. Such programming may prevent other applications from working correctly. One of our user group members downloaded a program that blocked pop-up ads on the Internet. This program did more than anticipated. It also blocked a number of game programs from running on his computer.

Utility programs, such as anti-virus software, pose another problem. In some cases they need to bypass the OS to reach a lower level in the BIOS. When you upgrade the OS, the new version may not permit the utility program to work correctly. Windows XP is a great example of this problem. It not only requires upgrades in utility software it requires upgrades in driver software and many applications.

Anytime you make a change to the software or hardware on your system you may introduce a new problem. The problems that occur may not be due to Windows. Instead there may be conflicts with some drivers or with other application software. You should always be certain that the software is compatible with your version of the OS and that you have adequate hardware support.

As I hope you can see by now, the answer to my initial question is rather complex. But I hope with a better understanding of the relationship of the hardware, ROM BIOS, drivers, OS and applications, you will have a better idea as to where to look for solutions to your own questions. Many manufacturers do provide free upgrades for drivers on their Web sites. Other sources, such as www.windrivers.com, can sometimes help you out of a conflict between software, the OS and the BIOS.

Dr. Lewis is a former University and Medical School professor. He has more than 20 years of experience working with personal computer hardware and software. He can be reached via e-mail at brian_klewis@hotmail.com . ☺

WORKING WITH SYSTEM RESTORE POINTS

*From Scott Finnie's Newsletter, July 9, 2003
Reprinted from the Space CoastPC Journal*

The advice to create a named, saved System Restore point in Windows XP (and also ME) before installing a new piece of complex or potentially problematic software or hardware is routinely given out in newsletters and Web forums. But do you know how to do it?

First, what is System Restore? This built-in recovery system in Windows XP automatically makes theoretically daily saves of your Windows Registry files so that you can revert to a previously good state in the event of system trouble. Roughly speaking, Windows makes one to three weeks of System Restore points. While you might be able to rely on an automatically created System Restore point, it's much better to create a restore point manually, naming it something like "Prior to ZoneAlarm Pro 4.0 Installation." You'll know that way exactly which restore point to use if you need to use one.

System Restore is no panacea. If you make multiple significant changes to your Windows installation, it could even conceivably cause more problems than it solves. For example, if you install Program A on Monday and Program B on Wednesday, and you start having trouble with Program A on Thursday, and treat the problem by reverting to your pre-Program A System Restore point, you will render both Program A and Program B inoperable.

System Restore is also not a substitute for uninstalling programs. You should uninstall all programs that you have installed since a restore point before you revert to that restore point.

Once you know its limitations, System Restore is a useful tool. To learn more about it, check out Windows XP's Help and Support Center. Run a search for System Restore, and you'll find several very useful links.

Here's how to create a System Restore point. Navigate these menus to open the System Restore Wizard:

Start> Programs > Accessories> System Tools> System Restore. In the wizard, choose "Create a restore point." On the next screen, give the new restore point a descriptive name. Press create.

To restore a previously saved restore point, start the System Restore Wizard and on the first screen choose "Restore my computer to an earlier time." Navigate the calendar view by clicking emboldened dates (the bold shows when restore points were saved) to find the appropriate one. Click Next and follow through the process, which includes restarting Windows.

To make saving restore points easier, drag and Ctrl-drag-and-drop the System Restore icon (whose location is described above) to the top of the Start menu.



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Choosing a Digital Camera

By Michael Murze

Reprint from the: Boca Raton Computer Society

It's a great time to buy a new digital camera. Prices are coming down and resolution and optics have vastly improved, to the point where digital can actually compete with film on a quality basis. And of course, digital has many advantages over film, such as direct computer download, no film or developing costs, immediate review of pictures to be sure you got the shot, and the ability to edit your images with programs like MGI's PhotoSuite. The only catch is really the staggering variety of options from which to choose. So here's a guide to help you decide if it's time to buy, and the key features to look for.

Resolution

Resolution (usually stated in megapixels) is the major determinant of both price and image quality, and is the first thing you should decide when looking at digital cameras. High-res digital cameras (in the 4- and 5-megapixel range) can be very expensive, but these cameras generally also have the best optics and feature sets. You can get a good 2- or 3-mega-pixel camera with fewer bells and whistles for less money.

Of course, when considering price, remember all the money you'll save on film and developing! (Prints can cost more, but you'll likely print far fewer images just the ones you really like, for a net savings overall.) And even though a high-resolution camera may cost more now, you'll likely keep it longer.

Just what is a megapixel? Basically, you multiply the image height and width in pixels, and then divide by a million.

How many pixels is enough? If you just want to display your pictures on a computer screen—to e-mail to friends, or put on CDs and Web pages—then 1,280 by 1,024, or about 1.3 megapixels, is all you can really use. Going with a slightly larger camera (2.1 megapixels) will give you the flexibility to crop your images, and get decent print quality, for relatively few

additional bucks.

If print quality is your primary concern, things get more complicated. You'll need to decide on the maximum print size you expect to use (such as 5x8 or 8x 10), and note the resolution of your printer (such as 600 or 720 dots per inch (dpi)). But you can't just multiply 8 and 10 inches by 600 dots to determine that you need an image file 4,800 x 6,000 pixels (which is lucky, since that is far beyond the capability of most digital cameras!). Image file resolution is different from print resolution since printers use solid-color dots (cyan, magenta or yellow) of varying sizes, whereas image pixels can be any of 16 million colors. So if you send a 720 pixel-per-inch image to a 720dpi printer, you'll be throwing away color data. For best results, the rule of thumb is to divide the resolution of your printer by 2 or 4 to get the image resolution you'll need. For example, for a 720dpi printer, your image file should have 360 or 180 pixels per inch. If your printer is 600dpi, use 300 or 150 pixels per inch.

You will see a small difference in print quality between divisors of 2 or 4, but the larger image will take you longer to manipulate and print. So do a test run on your printer to see the differences, and then decide which resolution you prefer.

Once you know the image resolution you need in pixels per inch, you just multiply it by print size to get the camera resolution you'll need. For example for an 8 x 10 print at 180dpi, you need a camera capable of shooting at least 1,800 by 1,440 pixels, or about 2.5 megapixels. Again, we recommend rounding up (in this case to 3 megapixels), so you can crop photos where needed.

One thing to note, however, is that some digital cameras enlarge images electronically, and those manufacturers may quote this number as the camera resolution, even though the true optical resolution is really smaller. For example, one so-called 1,280 by 1,024 (or 1.3 megapixels) camera really only captures at 640 by 480 just 0.3 megapixels!), then doubles all

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the pixels. So be sure to confirm that the true resolution of the capture chip (called a CCD) is really what you think it is.

Another important point is that sheer number of pixels is not the only component of resolution-image quality counts too. Two cameras producing the same image size might produce very different quality in terms of image detail. Image quality at a given size can be affected by the quality of the lens, any manipulation done by the camera (rescaling and color calculations) and the compression used on the image.

Most cameras use some kind of compression, typically JPEG, when saving images, and have two or more different compression options (high, medium, or low quality, for example). No matter which setting you use, the resulting image size in pixels remains the same, but the file size (in kilobytes) will be smaller for the more-compressed images (lower quality). To compress the image, resolution (detail) is thrown away. Of course, the more compression used, the more images you can capture before the memory card is filled. Generally, the better the optics and higher-priced the camera, the better image quality you will get. Which brings us to a discussion of lenses.

Lenses

Probably the biggest difference between early digital cameras and their film brethren was lens quality. Happily, that situation has largely been remedied, although digital cameras still offer less flexibility in this department. Digital cameras are also inherently less light sensitive than film cameras, which means that for a given quality lens, you will not be able to get as much image detail, unless shooting in very bright light. Do check out the ISO ratings of the cameras you are considering. Some offer the ability to capture at 400 or 800, although the results may be noisy.

When comparing lenses, we are most interested in the field of view of a lens (how wide or narrow the lens is). Historically, the focal length of the lens has been used as an indication of field of view. For 35mm

cameras, 50mm is considered “normal,” 28mm is considered “wide,” and 150mm is “long.” While focal length is measured differently in a digital camera, most manufacturers quote 35mm equivalents.

Most digital cameras have just one built-in zoom lens, although a few high-end models offer add-on or interchangeable lenses, which again are usually stated in 35mm camera equivalents. The most common optical zoom lenses are 2X and 3X. The multiplier is the longest lens setting divided by the widest (i.e. 38 to 120mm is 3X, 38 to 75mm is 2X)

A few cameras come with truly long optical zoom lenses, 6X or 10x. However be aware that as the lens gets longer, it gets more difficult to hold the lens steady enough while the picture is being taken. At least one manufacturer includes an image stabilization system in their long lens camera precisely because of this problem.

It’s important to distinguish between optical and digital zoom. With optical zoom, lenses move to scale the image (technically speaking, the focal length of the lens is being changed), whereas digital zoom scales the image electronically, without actual additional picture information. There is therefore a big difference in quality between these two techniques. Optical zooms are always preferable, although many cameras offer a combination of both, using optical up to a point, then switching to digital. You can always scale your image later if needed in Photo- Suite; there is no need to do it in the camera.

Many digital cameras offer a Macro feature. This is the ability of the camera to focus on objects very close to the lens. If you plan to take close-ups you will want to make sure the camera has Macro capability.

Speed

The other big difference between digital and film cameras is picture-taking speed. While film camera owners are used to snapping away repeatedly with no noticeable lag time between shots (except perhaps for

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flash recycling), digital cameras can be downright slow in comparison, with delays when turning the camera on, between depressing the shutter and taking the picture, and between shots. Better (and higher-priced) cameras are speedier. There's nothing worse than having a picture opportunity right in front of you, but missing it because the camera took too long to turn on. A startup time of a couple of seconds is about as good as is currently possible, but some cameras take as much as ten seconds. Startup time can be influenced by the time it takes to charge the built-in flash, and can vary based on the charge in the batteries.

Lag time is the time between depressing the shutter release button, and the actual taking of the picture. A lag time of even a fraction of a second can mean botched pictures. For some cameras, a proportion of this time is taken up by the camera focusing the lens and calculating exposure before taking the picture. It may be possible to reduce this time by depressing the shutter button halfway while framing your image, and before actually taking the picture. This makes the camera measure and pre-adjust focus so it is 'ready' to take the picture when fully depressed.

Recycle time is the minimum time between pictures. This is the time it takes the camera to transfer the image to the memory card, recharge, and get ready for the next picture. Some cameras include a large amount of buffer memory within the camera for storing pictures temporarily before saving them to the card, which can reduce recycle time from 5 seconds or more, to a fraction of a second.

Viewfinders and LCDs

Most digital cameras use viewfinders and/or LCD displays to display the image to be captured. Viewfinders are optical systems that present a view very similar to what the lens actually sees. Viewfinders are usually more accurate the further the subject is from the camera; as you get very close to the object the accuracy will decrease dramatically.

By contrast, the LCD panels on most digital

cameras let you see what the lens sees. This can be especially useful for close-up photography. LCDs also let you hold the camera away from your head while taking pictures from high or low angles. Unfortunately, LCDs are often difficult to see in bright sunlight. A few very expensive digital cameras offer single-lens reflex (like 35mm SLRs), letting you see what is coming through the lens in the viewfinder.

The Bottom Line

We've covered the major digital camera features to look for. There are many other features in some cameras, such as automatic exposure settings for different lighting situations, manual exposure settings for serious photographers, and extras such as the ability to capture video sequences or audio along with pictures. Since technology is improving rapidly, we recommend buying close to the state of the art, if you can afford it. If not, decide what features are most important to you from the list above. As with most things in life, you get what you pay for in digital cameras.

**A big Thank You to Radio Station
WFIT, 89.5 on your FM dial.
For announcing our meeting schedule.**

ITEMS 4 SALE

***** COMPUTER FOR SALE \$500 *****

1 ATX AMD 1.4 GIG COMPUTER, WITH
3D SOUND, 256K, AND THE FOLLOWING;
DESIGNER TOWER; (2) 3.5" FLOPPY DRIVES;
(2) 5.5"W X 9.0" SPEAKERS; DVD DISK DRIVE;
CD BURNER 16X10X40X; 40 GIG HARD
DRIVE; 20 GIG HARD DRIVE; MOUSE; 17"
MONITOR

PRINTER FOR SALE \$150.00

HP OFFICE JET K60 4-IN-ONE;
COPIER, FAX, PRINTER, SCANNER; WITH
INK KIT, EXTRA INKS, AND CARTRIGES
OR LEXMARK X75 PRINTER, SCANNER,
COPIER, FAX, EXTRA INK.. \$100

IVAN STILLWELL 255-0674

Newbies Corner

by Jim Hally B.U.G. member

Acronyms

Many of us computer users are always befuddled when we hear a new term. Here is a site that is pretty decent; www.utdallas.edu/ir/tcs/techsupp/computer_acronyms.html. Just go to the site and save it in your favorites. If you are using Internet Explorer, click on Favorites on the tool bar. Go down to Add to Favorites. At this point in your computer life I hope you have created some Folders and Sub-Folders. Before you save it, pay a little attention. When you get the box that allows you to save it look at the dialog box. The name will be Technical Customer Services. Now how in the heck are you going to know what that is? Highlight Technical Customer Services and type in Acronyms. Here is another one you may like a little better; <http://www.pchell.com/acronyms/index.shtml#A>

Pop Ups

Back in the late '90's pop up ads were coming into play. Those of you who are relatively new to computing will be astonished at my outrage when I would get 3 or 4 pop up ads in my Internet Explorer. Can you imagine the nerve of those creeps on the Internet. In Today's world this would be an excellent day of browsing. To use my own words, this would be astonishing. I downloaded a program called Pop-Off from Intercan Tech to thwart the dastardly interlopers. For all intents and purposes it was a good program. It stopped the pop ups but it gave me some headaches as well.

I will never forget the time some of my friends were asking me to join a group for a NASCAR game. They told me where it was on the ESPN site. I looked and looked but could never find it. One friend had a Mac another was using Netscape (1.6). I just knew the problem was somewhere in that mix. Wrong again! The problem was Pop Off took what it perceived as a pop up and took it off my page, when I was visiting a site. In this case it took the link off and that is why I

never could find it. Well, too soon old, too late smart. I finally figure it out and disabled Pop Off so I could get to the link and off I went. As soon as I was done I enabled Pop Off again and I was breezing through the Internet. I guess somewhere in the back of my mind I was always thinking, what am I missing? As programmers got more sophisticated the ads started creeping in little by little. After a few hard drive crashes, Pop Off was a thing of the past. I just never got around to reinstalling it. I believe it was something to do with another party getting involved and it looked like too much of a hassle. I suffered through the pop up ads just like you folks.

Today, it seems that the Internet is just full of pop up ads. Maybe it is just me, but I find this to be an invasion of privacy. Yes, I know the Internet is not private. On the other hand I am paying for the connection. Do I have any rights? If I call a plumber do I have to endure his sales pitch for a vacuum cleaner? If you think about what you are watching, we are actually getting pop up ads on our TV's. The blurb that comes on for another show on the network that appears on your screen is a form of a pop up ad. How long before we start seeing one for Expedia or Priceline?

While I am on this tirade I will go on. A few weeks ago Eric Arnold had a piece in the Newsletter about blocking Spam. It concerned making rules for incoming mail. A quick rundown is that you tell the mail program to look for certain words in the mail and dispose of them as you stipulate. Two examples are block and delete. I was getting a lot of mail that gave me the option to eliminate the intrusion by choosing Click Here.

I think you all know this is not what you want to do. It really says to the bad guys, hey this is a good address. I followed his instructions with mixed results. I am not complaining about the article, by any means. The rules thing is not perfect and I didn't expect it to be. Oddly enough I chose to block the mail in my rules. However some of the Click Here stuff, ended up in my Deleted Mail folder. I have to admit I can't figure that one out.

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Newbies Continued from Page 13

What drives me crazy is the fact that the same junk mail is working its way back to my Inbox. This time the option is Please Click Here. Do I make another rule for the mail program, then another, then another? Whatever outfits are sending this stuff must have a macro written that says if Click Here is blocked, try Please Click Here. What is next, Pretty Please Click Here? Can someone tell me why this has to be a fight?

Google Tool Bar

In an effort to cut down on the pop up ads I came across the Google Tool Bar. To be honest, it has several features I could care less about. It does have a Pop Up blocker, which piqued my interest. This toolbar is available for those running I.E. 5.5 or later.

Go to www.google.com
Go down to Services and Tools
Go down to Google Tools
Go to Google Toolbar.

By using the appropriate clicks you can download the toolbar. The toolbar, when installed will appear below your Tool Bar. In effect you will have two toolbars. One for I.E. and one for Google. The first advantage I find is the ability to block the pop up ads. In the 3 ½ weeks I have had the toolbar installed it has blocked 264 pop ups. Right off the bat, that has saved me 264 clicks to close those annoying ads. Unless you are writing a column, I really don't see an advantage in having the number of blocked ads posted. When you go over to the Options icon on the toolbar you can eliminate this portion of the toolbar.

Another advantage of the toolbar is the fact that you get a Google search feature right on you screen at all times. I find this quite helpful. I can't tell you how many times I have had to stop what I was doing and go to Favorites and find the Google site to look something up. Now the search feature is right on my desktop. If you click the down arrow on the right of the search box you will find a history of your recent searches. This can be quite handy when you get to our age.



Executive Meeting Continued from Page 3

E. The new advertising rates for a yearly advertisement was revisited and the rates approved at the August meeting were restated.

F. George Rymer contacted Roland DeTelteau (pronounced D-TEL-TOW) who is in charge of the Library Computer System for Brevard County. A router will be installed at the Melbourne Library. When installed the club will have internet connections for our presenters.

G. Next month at the October Membership meeting we will select a nominating committee for next years officers. Officers vacating office are President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasure. Both members-at-large will run if nominated.

H. For the open house presentation at the Melbourne Beach Library the club will have 50 copies of the Newsletter, Business cards, Meeting fliers, a laptop with the WEB site on a CD ROM and we are planning to make a Power Point Slide Show about the club. Eric will add this event to the club WEB site.

New Business:

A. A motion was made and approved to expend club funds to purchase a fold-up easel, white board, with dry markers, eraser, and cleaner, when and if the club can secure permission to put an easel by the door when we hold a General Membership Meeting.

B. A motion was made and approved to purchase 15 each 2-packs of framed Achievement Certificates for approx. \$43.09 to be given out to deserving and possible guest speakers when warranted.

C. Eric was able to get an article about our club in the "SEABREEZE" a newspaper given out at San Remo Restaurant and other business establishments.

D. Tom presented a motion and sample of an Action Item Log to be used to record motions, actions, status, assignments etc. This log will allow for easy tracking of motions, their history and will be easily reviewed when needed.

E. Lucile presented a motion to circulate a sign-up list for our proposed Christmas celebration at the December General Membership meeting. List will have name and what desert the member plans to bring. This will help provide a more varied selection of deserts and avoid to many duplicate deserts.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.



Special Interest Groups

WINDOWS SIG

Meets 7:00 PM Thursdays
1st & 3rd Thursday at Eau Gallie Library.
All Other Thursdays at Melbourne Library on
Fee Avenue.

NEWBIES SIG

Meets at 6:30 pm. Thursdays,
before the Windows SIG.
This is a trial, if we need more time,
we will make other arrangements.

IMAGING SIG

Meets at 7:30 PM the second and fourth
Thursdays, after the Windows SIG, at the
Fee Ave Library in Melbourne.

NEWSLETTER SIG

Meets twice a month on the Saturdays before
and after the BUG monthly meeting.
Members interested in helping develop the
newsletter are welcome.
Place is Jim Townsend's home
call 728-5979 for directions.

TINKERS SIG

Meets on most Sundays at
Bob Schmidt's house.
Call 952-0199 for directions
and to verify meeting.

BUG Club Information

BUG E-MAIL LIST

To be included in the BUG E-Mail roster,
send an E-Mail to George Rymer at:
grymer@cfl.rr.com.

We will need your full name, E-Mail address and
your BUG membership number. You will then
receive notices and updates on BUG activities,
special events, changes to
schedules, etc.

BUG Board of Directors

Meets the second Wednesday of the month at
the Fee Ave. Library, in Study room 1
Time 6:00 pm to 7:30pm

Sponsorship Rates

	4 Months	8 Months	12 Months
Full Page	\$ 160.00	\$ 310.00	\$ 550.00
Half Page	\$ 85.00	\$ 160.00	\$ 300.00
Qtr Page	\$ 45.00	\$ 85.00	\$ 150.00
Bus Card	\$ 25.00	\$ 45.00	\$ 85.00

Benefits of Membership In The Brevard Users Group

Annual Subscription to the B.U.G. Newsletter.
Participation in Special Interest Groups.
Seminars and Workshops.
Fellowship with other knowledgeable computer
users. Stimulating and lasting friendships.

Brevard Users Group Membership Application

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Home Phone _____

State _____ Zip + 4 _____

Family Membership \$25.00

Email address _____

Brevard Users Group Directory

Meetings:

Are held at the Melbourne Library on Fee Ave. the third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM.



Membership

is by application and payment of \$25.00 annual dues. Membership is for 12 months from receipt of dues and includes a year's subscription to the newsletter.

Mentor Program

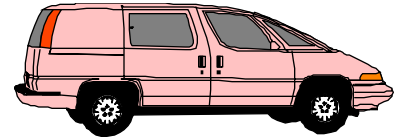
John McNeil 723-5550 AutoCad

Al Buchanan 728-2789 Works 6.0

Bob Staples 255-2623 Win95/98

Bill Ranck. 676-7908 Word Perfect

Rex Cummings 242-9601 Netscape



MOVING?

Don't miss out on any issues of the BUG Newsletter. Send your new address to:

Brevard Users' Group

Attn: Treasurer

P. O. Box 2456

Melbourne, FL 32902-2456

& e-mail to the Newsletter at jimtownsend@earthlink.net

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grymer@cfl.rr.com

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Lucile Wagner 723-1719
sunshinelu1@yahoo.com

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Ted Glaser 777-4591
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Secretary:

Mary Alice Grant 253-5666
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2nd Member at Large:

Dave Hixon 723-7168

Committee Chairperson

Beginners Help:

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ozk1joy@wmconnect.com

FACUG Representative:

Bill Ranck 676-7908

Program Director:

Eric Arnold 254-3423

BUG Web Page:

<http://bugclub.org>

Special Interest Groups

Beginners SIG:

Larry French

Hardware (Tinkers) SIG:

Bob Schmidt 952-0199
RSchmidt@cfl.rr.com

Newsletter Publishing SIG:

Jim Townsend 728-5979
jimtownsend@earthlink.net

Win 95/98 SIG:

George Rymer 724-6715
Chuck Boring 454-9455
Bob Staples 255-2623

Webmaster:

Eric Arnold
webmaster@bugclub.org

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