

Bits & Bytes

A Publication of the Kern PC Users Group

July Program

Picnic Time at Sam's House

Meeting time is 7:00 pm, July 12



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Camera-ready copy should be submitted to Bits & Bytes, c/o Dave Chalmers, P.O. Box 2780, Bakersfield, CA 93303

KIPUG members who have computer related items for sale or trade or who have information they would like to share with other members may do so **FREE** of charge as space permits. Ads larger than business card size are subject to 50% of normal advertising fees. Non-members are subject to the normal advertising fees.

Business Card \$ 5.00
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ADVERTISERS

KIPUG will mail your direct computer user targeted mail advertisement (fully prepared for mailing, including postage) to our entire membership at a reasonable fee. For more information, please contact Robert Stout, President, at (661) 399-9505.

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Rumblings from the editor.

During the last board meeting, Robert Stout resigned from the board due to personal commitments. Rob is presently the network person for the Delano school district, which probably covers most of the school computers north of Bakersfield and south of Fresno. I don't blame him for being overwhelmed. I hope we can find a **NEW** president that will put up with our present board members. Our elections have been put off until September, which I hope we will be able to find **new members** willing to take on the duties of being club officers.

During our last general meeting, I had some discussions with several people, where they indicated several ideas about the news letter. When asked if they would write an article about their ideas, I received comments such as "I can't write" or "I don't have time".

I do realize that writing something that will expose you to your peers can be intimidating. It also is plain hard work. As the editor, I don't insist on articles that have a minimum or maximum word count. If it is a short couple of paragraphs, I will still use it. If you feel that your ability to articulate your self is limited, send me what you have and I will perform my editorial duties without prejudice. As a case in point, I hated to write anything until I went to work for InfoWord Magazine where I had to write reviews. I found that seeing my name in print as an author was a real ego booster and changed my attitude about writing in general. My advice to you the members is "Try it, You might like it".

Club or no Club?

I have a theory about the big decisions we make in our lives. I think of them as “crossroads.” These “crossroads” are like the crossroads you encounter when traveling in your car. You have to make a decision about which way to turn and that decision determines where you are going to end up. We face similar decisions in life but, unlike the freeway, life rarely offers us the opportunity to go back to the “crossroads” and try another direction. In life, once the “crossroads” decision is made, we are stuck with where that road takes us.

KIPUG is at such a “crossroad.” Attendance at general meetings has been falling off for several years now and what used to be a gathering of 50 – 75 users has become 20 - 30. Presenters like Randy Whittle, who showed us PhotoSuite month before last, cannot justify traveling to Bakersfield to demonstrate their product to 30 people. As a result, these types of programs simply won’t be available to us.

KIPUG is at
such a
“crossroad.”

Another issue that we face is the fact that many of the members of the Board of Directors are losing heart in continuing to invest their time and effort in a group that appears to be dying. It’s not that they don’t care, they do. They just feel that the apparently decreasing interest in the club doesn’t justify the work that has to be done to make the meetings happen

month after month. Die-hards like “elected for life” club treasurer Willy Lowell will probably hang in there until the club slowly sinks beneath the waves but many of the Board members have lost heart.

Part of that problem is the fact that each year when elections roll around, there is little or no interest on the part of club members in running for the Board and contributing something more than just their presence at the meeting. I’ve been in many different clubs over the years and I’ve seen this situation before. The same people work for years to keep the club going and, as time wears on, they just get worn down. Clubs of all kinds that prosper somehow manage to bring new people into the management side periodically and those people bring

new ideas and, perhaps most importantly, new enthusiasm toward making the club better and more interesting.

It may be that, after almost 20 years, we should just give up the idea of regular monthly meetings with scheduled programs and let the club mutate back to what it was in the beginning. At that point in the club's life, we met at somebody's house once a month and sat around and discussed computers and programs. It was very loosely organized and lots of fun. Interestingly, the so called "nerd night" at Sam Thompson's house (*boy is it great to see him up and around and looking good after his surgery*) is almost as well attended as the regular meeting. We get together, talk about whatever, eat some Kinto's tasties and just have a good time. It's largely social with lots of computer stuff stirred in but it manages to still be lots of fun. It's similar to the Saturday night poker parties my dad used to attend but centers around computer stuff instead of straights and flushes. Jim Lamberson drives for 30 minutes from the far East side to town to Sam's far West side of town location on a regular basis to make the meeting. Hmmm.

Where do we go from here?

Well folks, I can't answer that – BUT YOU CAN. If you want the club to continue on pretty much like it is then YOU need to get off your fanny and get involved. We postponed elections of officers until the September meeting and if there is little or no interest from the membership come September, the Board will have to make a decision as to the future of the club and I think you know what that decision is likely to be.

Bill Peacock
Past President

Program Notes

by Sam Thompson

First, thanks to Stuart Ree for a last-minute program showing us all about Windows XP in June. I apologize again for the last-minute change, but it was unavoidable since I messed up the communication between our speaker and myself. I had a couple of other issues at the time

For July, we will have our usual potluck at my (Sam's) house. The directions to my new house are listed elsewhere in this newsletter. Bring a dish large enough for you and the people you bring, and that should mean we have enough food for everyone (as usual). If you want a special drink other than soft drink, bring that, too. KIPUG will supply seating and tables, tablecloths, flatware, plates, and soft drinks. I hope to see you there. We have been missing many of you at the general meetings, so it would be nice to have everyone out for the picnic.

Our programs for the coming months remain as previously announced. (Please excuse the cut-and-paste from the previous announce-

ment). August will be a program from 4-D Web Development Tools. For September, John Morgan from Tule Fog User Group in Visalia will be representing TechSmith and showing two of their products, SnagIt and Camtasia. With SnagIt -- you can basically capture anything from your screen alter it, and print/e-mail/save your captures. Camtasia is for video capture and production. October will be our showcase for Sundial Systems to show their Junk Spy product which helps to screen junk out of email. InfoUSA will be highlighting their products in November. Resume Plus is their newest, but I'm sure we will hear about Select Phone and Powerfinder as well. InfoUSA is eager to share their products with us, so November should be productive for all of us. Of course, we have our potluck and holiday party in December, so that means the rest of our calendar year should be set. I just hope everyone is able to live up to their commitments.

These are programs designed to appeal to the general computer user. Some will show you new products with which you may not be familiar, while others may demonstrate new ways to use familiar software. If you have interest in learning more about a

specific product, I invite you to host a Special Interest Group (SIG) which will allow you to meet with others of similar interest. Expertise is not required to host a SIG; only interest and enthusiasm.

By the way, we are actively soliciting members to take over management of the group. The old Board has run out of steam, so we need you to step up and help out. Talk to a Board member or officer, and I think you'll find the time commitment minimal.

Lots of room for
a few para-
graphs from our
members at
large here

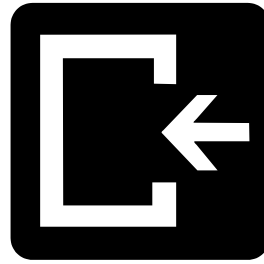
ED.

Server 54, Where Are You?

(04/09/01, 4:28 p.m. ET) TechWeb News <<http://www.techweb.com/news>>

The University of North Carolina has finally found a network server that, although missing for four years, hasn't missed a packet in all that time. Try as they might, university administrators couldn't find the server. Working with Novell Inc., IT workers tracked it down by meticulously following cable until they literally ran into a wall. The server had been mistakenly sealed behind drywall by maintenance workers.

Thanks Stu for the humor



Directions to Sam's House

The July general meeting will still be held at Sam's house as usual, but Sam has moved. Here are the directions to his house:

Drive west on Rosedale Hwy. to Allen Road. It's along way - maybe 7 miles or so from Hwy. 99.

Right (north) about half a mile on Allen Road to Meacham.

Left (west) about 2 blocks on Meacham to Phairfield

Right (north) 2 blocks on Phairfield to Ascot Court.

Left (west) into cul-de-sac to 13401.

If you get lost, the phone number 587-8500.

Viruses

If computers alone don't throw the average user into fits of paranoia, computer viruses will. But as with other aspects of computing, this deep concern fails to prompt any attempt on the user's part to learn the facts.

About two years ago, I was asked to run a virus scan on one company's network of computers. I did and I found a simple harmless virus on each computer in the network. After I reported that to the company's officials, they gasped (literally), then thanked me, then asked me to leave despite my offers to remove the virus with the anti-virus program. The next day, I found out that they formatted every single hard drive of every computer, backing up only the most important data.



tell?"

- **Customer:** "When I type 'DIR', it says 'VIRUS <DIR>' and some date stuff."
- **Customer:** "Excuse me, there is an empty-folder virus on my disk."

A user called to inform us that his laptop had a virus. When we asked why he thought he had a virus, he promptly explained that he must have a virus as his system would no longer fit in the docking station.

It was later determined that it had a faulty port on the back of the system.

One day at school, I was lending a friend a couple of my CD games. Then a girl came up and said, "I wouldn't do that if I were you. You might get it back with a virus on it."

-
- **Customer:** "My hard disk has a virus!"
 - **Tech Support:** "How can you

While working on the help-desk of a local community college, I came across a message on one of our tech support forums. The author of

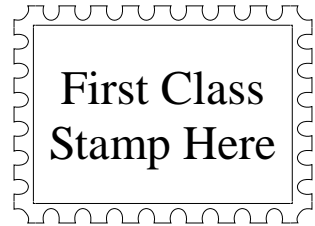
this message was convinced that there was a virus in his BIOS, and he later started accusing us of sending him it. He was convinced that our computers were sending the virus straight to his hard drive through the "modem sub-carrier" (his words) between key-strokes while he was dialed in to his shell account.

A customer came in to the store one day with a Macintosh. I had just replaced a bad drive in the thing a few days previously. She complained that it wasn't working again, implying that I didn't fix it right the first time. So, I get out the diagnostic tools, but can't find a thing wrong with it. I then checked some of the diskettes she brought in with it and find that they are loaded with viruses. After cleaning up the diskettes, I explained to her that her computer probably got the virus by trading diskettes with someone whose computer was also infected. She then got a very sullen expression on her face and asked me, "Can a person catch this virus from their computer?"

I was in the local Circuit City store,

when I saw a demo Sony Playstation game unit, and I went over to try it out. The controller would not work -- it had apparently been disconnected to the game unit. I told this to a passing salesman, and he said, "Oh no sir, it doesn't work because the controller has a virus."

I asked him how he thought the controller contracted the virus. He said it was because the display used to be near the computer section of the store, and they had moved it away from the computers "to see if it would get better."



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We are on the web at
WWW.KIPUG.ORG

Your Address Here

Tom Rabe Webmaster

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month
at the Kern Superintendent of Schools Building.

17th and L streets Downtown