

Bits & Bytes

A Publication of the Kern Independent PC Users Group

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October, 2000

Program Notes by Sam Thompson

KIPUG Meeting Schedule and Program Lineup

- Oct MP3 Format

***Kipug Meeting
Oct 12.***

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Before addressing our plans for October, I'd like to thank Larry Clever, better known as Your Computer Doctor, for a fine, professional program delivered in September. The many of you who had other things to do missed a multimedia trip through the history of data storage devices though the ages. In fact, the presentation reached all the way back to ancient Egypt. I'm sorry we weren't able to have a larger turnout.

Moving on, for the month of October we have cornered one of our technology locals to share a bit of what he knows with you. Board Member Steve Garcia will be sharing a program dealing with music on the computer. We asked him to show us all about MP3 since we knew he had discussed having a large amount of disk space dedicated to MP3 files on his computer. Although Steve won't be discussing Napster and that ilk, he will be showing how he

has transferred his record collection to CD and how he is able to use MP3 to store lots of music in a much smaller space. Don't miss this program because it will be full of useful information and not just glitz.

In planning the future of the club, your Board has been looking at ways to provide you with additional value for your membership dollars. Most recently we have been discussing using more general meeting time to share practical ways to use your computer and the software you already own more efficiently. In addition to looking for meeting topics which pique your interest, we are now looking into how to provide training classes on a limited basis for those of you looking for that.

Over the years, one of the things we have heard from new members is that they want training on their new computers. In fact, continuing members



Calling All Members

have also expressed this same need. Check your Bits and Bytes as we approach the new year because we will be setting up members-only classes.

Of course one difficulty in providing training is to select topics or software which will draw the greatest number of members. To help us select the topics you want, could you please take a few minutes to send me an e-mail indicating your area of interest? Just drop a line to sthompson@bak.rr.com and I will share the results with the Board. If you have other feedback for the Board, please feel free to share that with us also.



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Elected June 1

Happenings at the Internet SIG

Do you have questions about the Internet? Would you like to be able to find that neat website you heard about but can't quite remember? How do those search engines work anyway? Is there a way I can narrow down my searches? Would you like to find out? Would you like to join other **KIPUG** members who also have questions about the world wide web?

Also if people are interested I have been working on my own website for over a year now and am willing to share some of my knowledge of using Front Page or another program called 1st Page 2000.

I can help you out. I have just completed a week-long course at New Horizons learning about internet fundamentals. I will be starting a Beginning Internet SIG group the first Tuesday in October at 7p.m. at my home. Please call me at 832-5437 or use the web to find me at the following e-mail address,
sarahpm@subsonic.com.

Sarah Perelli-Minetti

The following rates are for one insertion in the **KIPUG** newsletter. All copy must be received camera-ready, no later than the 15th day of any given month for publication in the following month's newsletter.

Camera-ready copy should be submitted to Bits & Bytes, c/o Tom Rabe, 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.

Special Interest Groups

Del Jones, ED/Sig Coordinator (661) 871-0598

SIG	Contact	Day/Time	Location/Sponsor
Geneology	Donna Plunkett 398-8304	3 rd Thursday 7:00 p.m.	Donna Plunkett's Home
Nerd Nite	Sam Thompson 399-1539	4 th Thursday 7:00 p.m.	Sam's House
Netware Users Inter	Robert Stout 399-9505	3 rd Thursday 7:00 p.m.	New Horizons
Random Access	Bill Peacock 328-0180	2 nd Thursday 6:30 p.m.	At Monthly Meeting
Beginning Internet	Sarah Perelli-Minetti 832-5437	Please call for details	Sarah's Place

A Double Header from Audrey

:CUE:CAT QUERY

At the September KIPUG meeting someone asked if anyone had tried out their CueCat, or knew anything about them. We had received one in the mail but I had not installed and used ours, because its sole function is to take you to an advertiser's website after you've swiped the bar code in an ad or the label on a product. I want to read less, not more ads. Ours came in a box which said "Exclusive to Forbes Subscribers."

Then a week later while reading the Sunday Paper I saw an ad in *Parade* magazine giving an address to which you could write and get one free. Some exclusivity! It is also available through RadioShack and was sent to subscribers of *Wired* magazine, according to an article Bob found on Internet. The article was at <http://news.cnet.com/news/0-1005-200-2826868.html> and titled "Cat scanning device may track users online." It said when you use the CueCat your browser makes a connection with DigitalConvergence's site, which reports the bar code, your device's serial number, and a token that identifies you. That's after you've gone to their Web site and registered some personal information including their name, email address, gender, age range and ZIP code, probably required to activate the beast. As you continue to use the CueCat a profile is built of what your interests are.

The Denver based Privacy Foundation was expected to issue a detailed report on the scanners. Earlier in September a security breach at DigitalConvergence Web site exposed about 140,000 consumer's names, email addresses and ZIP codes.

We're going to donate ours for the next door prize. But don't let that keep you from coming to the meeting. You can always decline.

BE SURE YOU ARE



LOOKING AT THE RIGHT PROBLEM BEFORE YOU TRY TO FIX IT

An advantage of coming to KIPUG meetings is the help we get in solving computer problems. At the last meeting I lamented that closing my Eudora 4.0 e-mail program, and sometimes my WordPerfect made my machine crash. Several members advised downloading

the upgrades. Since we don't have DSL downloading 4.2.3 took an hour, so I did not download the maintenance program which was then available. And I decided to buy 5.0 to save time. I learned that Office Depot and CompUSA only have version 4.0, and Office Max has none. "No one uses Eudora anymore. I use HotMail," the salesman there told me.

So I went back to the website, and downloaded 5.0. An hour later I tried to figure out how to pay for it, without giving my credit card number to Internet. I phoned the order number and found the software version of 5.0 won't be available until October, so I'm stuck with the ads in the freeware version until then. The program crashes locking up my new HP Vectra were finally solved by taking it back to Carney's. They removed all of Norton except the virus protection. Now instead of CrashGuard protecting my programs in its inflexible iron grip, I'm back to the three-fingered-salute, from which I can at least re-boot. The problem was not Eudora, but CrashGuard. And it probably wasn't the TSR taskbar programs they had removed earlier in an attempt to reduce the crash frequency.

– Audrey Cochran



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Notes from the Editor

My thanks to the contributors for their articles. A week prior to this, I had my doubts as to whether we would have a newsletter at all.

I wonder if Audrey would consider having a byline in the paper chronicling member's trials and tribulations with their computers. I'm sure we all have our stories to tell. I also wonder if some of our more technically proficient members have some stories to tell. I have heard some of these stories and they are a riot.

Steve Gibson is a well-known maker of disk utilities and has a web site www.grc.com. During the summer he made a discovery about some software vendors using a utility for downloading

that not only downloads but also sends back data about your computer and under some circumstances about you. The companies involved are Netscape/AOL, NetZip, and Realnetworks. I just downloaded Netscape's Communicator(ver 4.75) and noticed that the download utility had changed. Gibson's article, which showed up in the Orange Coast PC User Group's newsletter, led me to Gibson's net site. The site article gives a blow-by-blow description on how he found the problem and dealt with it. I was able to uninstall the download utility and my system was back to normal. He makes some great disk utilities and is not afraid to speak his mind. Visit it sometime.

On a technical note, PowerQuest has released Drive Image

4.0. This one will back up to CDR disks directly. It is available as a download for \$29.95. I tried it out and it works very well. It backed up 1.1 Gigabytes in about 20 minutes in their highly compressed mode. It will span multiple CD's and will restore from a DOS floppy boot disk. One difference with this version compared to previous ones is the when you run it from windows, it goes and reboots your computer before starting up in DOS. This utility has saved my hide in the past.

On a brief note, I just got a DSL line in September. I asked for the self-installation kit. The promise date was Sept 5. What followed is a perfect Trials and Tribulation article.

Dave Chalmers