



# The PULP

## HUGE this month:

General Meeting: Feb 15th

More "All about HDTV"

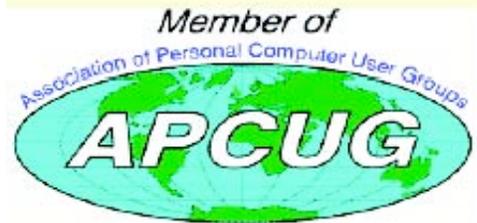
See you there!

East Hartford Public Library  
Main St. & Central Ave., East Hartford, CT.

Q&A Session: 7:00PM–7:30PM  
Meeting starts at: 7:30PM

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**MEETING LOCATIONS**  
East Hartford Public  
Library  
Main & Central Avenue  
in the Lion's Room  
(downstairs)

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# Editors Corner

I'm going to try this again (for the 3rd time & maybe the charm). The first time there was an accident that tied up traffic in front of the library and then we got snowed out, so maybe this time we can chat about HDTV.

BTW--I think I've now missed more meetings in 3 months than I've missed in the previous 25 years.

On Feb. 14-16 'Jeopardy' will be having a special event, 2 prior champions will be playing against a computer (IBM's Watson), watch for a quiz question in the future. Watson has already won a preliminary event.

Calif. courts now allow the search of cell phone text messages by police without a warrant, 'FinallyFast.com' has to refund customers and pay a fine for deceiving customers, Apple is using tamperproof (?) screws in iPhone 4 and retrofitting other products as they come in for repair (iFixit.com has been selling kits with the

screwdrivers and replacement screws), 'puppy cams' are starting to take over the internet (according to Cisco), the US DOJ (with a group representing some police departments) are seeking mandatory data retention for ISPs, and Intel is developing a potential defense for 'zero-day' attacks.

Researchers have demo'd a way to send a SMS text message that can shut down a cell phone.

Stuart Rabinowitz  
Editor-in-Chief

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Here is the appropriate copyright citation and a link to the full text. articles from "Tidbits"

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Please note that the clubs PO Box has been closed. When membership renewals go out in the fall the return address will be that of our Membership person Richard Sztaba.



# A Little Computer Quiz

by Stuart Rabinowitz

The trivia and minutiae of the computer related world. The answers will appear next month or you can submit an answer sheet at the General Meeting. Good Luck.

- 1 What was the first color digital camera and when was it released?
- 2 What was the first digital camera to have a built-in LCD screen?
- 3 What was the first digital camera to use Compact Flash media for storage?
- 4 What was the first digital camera released primarily for kids?
- 5 What was the first computer marketed as a "home computer" and by what company?
- 6 How much did it cost?

Answers to , January, 2011 Quiz

- 1 Steven Sasson was the first to do something in December, 1975 that we now do all the time. What did he do?  
A He took the first photo with a digital camera
- 2 How long did it take?  
A It took 23 seconds to record a 100x100 (0.01 megapixel) pixel image to cassette tape
- 3 What was the first digital camera sold in the US?  
A The Dycam Model 1
- 4 In what year was it first sold?  
A 1990
- 5 At what resolution were the pictures?  
A The 256 grey level photos were 0.09 MP (376x240 pixels)



**Windows 7 Tech Tips**

By Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D., Regular Columnist, Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., Florida  
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This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

Have you ever wanted or needed information about the hardware in your computer? Did you know that Windows 7 contains a command that can provide you with a list of your hardware components including memory information? It does and it is very easy to explore and to save to a file. There are other helpful little bits of information hidden in the recesses of Win7, so let's take some time to explore a few of them.

First let's check out the system information command. Go to Start and type "cmd" in the Search box (without the quotes), then press Enter. This will open a command window in which you can type "systeminfo", also without the quote marks. Press Enter again and you will get a detailed profile of your computer. This list will include the processor, BIOS version, operating system and updates, both installed and available memory and much more. In all, there are thirty-two categories of information provided by this command. You can scroll up and down through this information. Then, if you want to save this info to a disc file, type the command "systeminfo /FO CSV > systeminfo.csv". Again, without the quotes. This file will be saved in the directory shown at the beginning of the command line. So be sure you remember this location when you go to look for the file. A CSV file can be opened in a spreadsheet or a database program. Now you will have a ready reference for the components which make up your computer. It's not a bad idea to create this file and keep it for reference purposes.

Of course, if you are a frequent reader of Dr Herb's "Computer Buffet" you would have seen references to "Belarc Advisor". This free program gives you a profile of all the hardware and software on your machine. It also highlights problem areas such as non-working applications. The software information can be quite extensive. The last time I ran this application on a Windows machine I had more than eight pages of information. Far more than I really wanted. The systeminfo command gives you a summary which is printable in one page.

There is another use for system information. If you type this "system information" command into the Start-Search

box, it will bring up a list of applications before you finish typing. Select "System Information" from the list and click on it. You now have a double pane window with a tree of topics on the left and an information window on the right. The first item is a general summary of system information similar to the information we obtained in the command window. But there are other more detailed topics under the headings in the tree list. For example, hardware resources, components and software environment. Under components you will find a very important topic – problem devices. Hopefully, at this point there will be nothing listed when you highlight this topic. But if there are, it can lead you to solutions for some of your hardware problems. Under software environment you will find a topic called Startups. This lists the applications that are loaded into memory when your computer starts. Always something worth knowing.

Another interesting item under Software Environment is Windows Error Reporting. This gives you a detailed list of applications that have "misfired" or produced system hang-ups. This can be useful when you have problems with either Windows or third-party applications. All of the errors I found on my system were related to missing drivers that I had to install after installing Win7. Once that was completed the errors disappeared. Yes, I said that with crossed fingers – no use asking for bad luck, right?

If you haven't backed up your computer recently, then you should try the backup built into Win7. In previous versions of Windows the backup application provided by Microsoft was very slow and some versions were very limited in the media to which they would write the backup file. It was also useless when you changed your Windows version as the file formats in the backup file were not compatible with the newer version. In the Win7 help files there is information on how to restore a backup made with Vista to Win7. So at least the latest versions should be compatible.

These latest versions of the backup applications are much faster than previous versions. To try the backup applications, open the Control Panel and select System Security, then backup and restore. Here you have several options. You can do a complete image of your hard drive, just backup your data, or make a system repair disc. If you did not get a Windows installation disc when you purchased your computer, then the first thing you should do is make a system repair disc. All you need for this is a blank CD and then just follow the



on-screen instructions. The next step would be to make a complete image file, preferably on an external drive. It's really not a good idea to put it on the same drive you are imaging even if it is a separate partition. Why? Because when the drive fails you won't be able to access the image file to restore anything to a new hard drive. Even if you do have a Windows installation disc the repair disc plus the image file are a better solution for restoring Windows and your files after a drive failure. The image file you create will be more current than the original installation disc when it comes to Windows updates. It will also include the installation of all the applications you added after you purchased the system or upgraded to Win7.

Once you have the repair disc and the image backup you can start doing data backups, or you can create new image files periodically. There is no need to make image files unless you have added applications or made substantial changes to your system. Windows file backup can be set to run automatically to save your data files. It will also add new folders and files to the backup list when you create them. I would also recommend that this be saved to an external drive.

Do you have a need for a system to remember user names and passwords? Win7 has a credential manager which can be used for storing user names and passwords in an encrypted file. This application can be found in the Control Panel under User Accounts. If you can't find it, try searching within the Control Panel.

I frequently have a need to write down short notes or references to information I found on the Internet or in other sources. This is where Sticky Notes comes in quite handy. You can run this application by typing "stikynot" in the Start - Search box and clicking on the program that shows in the popdown menu. Alternatively, you can go to All Programs - Accessories and click on Sticky Notes. These can be placed anywhere on your desktop. You can also pin the application to the taskbar so it will be readily available. Just right click on the menu item or one of the sticky notes and select "pin to taskbar".

If you want to see the minute by minute performance of your computer, try typing "resource monitor" in the Start - Search box. The complete term will show up before you have completed typing and you can then click on the item. This brings up a window in which you can view the memory utilization, cpu utilization and other resources as you use your computer. It's a great way to see which applications

are using the most memory.

By playing around with the Control Panel and other aspects of Windows 7, you can find many helpful built-in functions. You can also query the Help files. On my system the Help response is much quicker than it was in Vista and XP. I also found that many subjects are better explained and more detailed. So if you are stuck on something, try the Help application that's on the Start menu. The more you play with Win7, the more you will find that may be useful.

Dr. Lewis is a former university and medical school professor of physiology. He has been working with personal computers for over thirty years, developing software and assembling systems.





## Social Networking and Seniors

by Hewie Poplock

"Hewie's News & Reviews" ([www.hewie.net](http://www.hewie.net))

There is a new report that shows that Internet users 50+ have nearly doubled in just the past year, from 22% to 42% in 2010. The survey goes on to say that almost half of Internet users 50-64 and about 26% users age 65 and older now use social networking sites.

While email and online news are still more appealing to older users, these people are now using the social sites and are repeat users, at that. The report goes on to say it shows that one attraction to seniors and others as well, is reconnecting with people from their past. It also states that older adults are more likely to be living with a chronic disease and are more likely to seek out online support with others afflicted or with medical professionals.

I am in the "older adults" category, as are many of my friends. Although I am more technically savvy than most, I am still seeing many people from my past and present in my age group using Facebook. I also must say that I have many friends who resist this new social stuff.

I am amazed that many of my friends, who have resisted a lot of the Internet hoopla and used AOL for many years because it was easy, are using Facebook and doing so daily. Some are very passive and are mostly lurkers. Others have immersed themselves in social networking and have renewed friendships and have become closer friends to many that they only occasionally see in person.

I have never played any of the games on Facebook and "hide" the references to Farmville, Mafia Wars, and such. I don't post that I went to a movie or had stopped at McDonalds on the way home, but do not mind when my "friends" do. I do enjoy seeing pictures from my friends, hearing that my real estate sales friend sold a home, hearing that another friend

found a job, or a friend's daughter finished a charity race.

Each of us has our own interests and it is fun sharing them with your friends. I enjoy seeing what others do and what they are interested in. I can see what others in my age bracket find fun and interesting when using social networking. Being the careful and responsible computer person that I am, I always watch what I say and post to protect my information and the information of others. I also advise others to use the privacy settings that they are comfortable with and not to post anything that they do not want the whole world to see.

The report also says that social media bridges generational gaps. I totally agree. I see that grandparents and the rest of the family keep in touch, but all need to remember that what you share with your peers may not be items that you want to share with your family, your bosses, or your ex.

Various organizations that work with older adults, such as AARP, Older Adults Technology Services (OATS) and Project GOAL, have been actively promoting social media resources that are relevant to mature users.



Ubuntu & Linux Software  
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I suppose some of you might be wondering why I have been writing about the Ubuntu Linux operating system and Linux software. As I noted in last month's article my laptop is now my sole computer. Although it has a Pentium 4 processor it only has 512 MB of RAM. Naturally, that means it is incapable of running Windows Vista. But it does easily run Ubuntu with more than enough memory to do multi-tasking with no reduction in speed. I also know that there are a number of the members of the SPCUG that use computers that are running Windows 98 or Windows XP. The point is, that it is not necessary to try to upgrade these computers to run Vista or to buy a new computer. Instead you have the free alternative of installing Ubuntu or another version of Linux. This article will discuss some of the range of free Linux software and how easy it is to install it.

The original installation CD of Ubuntu included the OpenOffice software. OpenOffice includes a word processor, spreadsheet and presentation applications. These are fully compatible with the components of Microsoft Office. I frequently receive documents prepared in MS Word and they open directly into OpenOffice Writer. I can edit, comment and save a copy in the OpenOffice format. Then I can return the modified document to the originator in MS Word format with all the edits and comments intact. The same is true for spreadsheets. The OpenOffice presentation application (Impress) reads, writes and modifies PowerPoint files as easily as Writer works with documents. OpenOffice also includes a Drawing application. Drawing is an application that I haven't used.

Other included software with Ubuntu are Ekiga (internet phone software), Pidgion (internet messenger), Evolution (e-mail), and a remote desktop viewer. Graphics software includes the F-Spot photo manager, GIMP Image Editor and Xsane scanner software. Also, there is a CD burner, movie player for DVDs and two music players.

I grant you that the included software doesn't always meet all the needs for many users. So Ubuntu has several ways of installing additional software. I

mentioned last month about installing the drivers for my printer, scanner and the wireless modem. This month I will continue with other applications that are the equivalent of those that I used under Windows. The installation of these applications was much easier than installing drivers for the accessory hardware.

The first step in installing any application is to go to the Applications – Add/Remove menu. When this application runs it provides you with a list of all the software available through Ubuntu and its third-party providers. On the left side of the window are listed various categories that you can highlight and the appropriate applications are then listed on the right side. When you highlight a specific application, a description appears in the lower portion of the window. There is also a search box that you can use to find a specific program or a group of programs.

Since I maintain my financial records on my computer I wanted a financial program that ran under Ubuntu. Not knowing the specific name, I just searched on the term "finances". This brought up a list of financial software. One of the interesting aspects of the Add/Remove application is that programs are rated based on feedback from users using 1 to 5 stars. There was a 5 star application listed, GNUcash, which can import files in the Quicken format. So I put a check mark in the box by the application name and then clicked on the "Apply Changes" button. This brought up another window for verification of the changes to be made. After clicking on "OK", the application was downloaded from the Internet and installed on the hard drive without any further action on my part. A shortcut icon was also added to the Office portion of the applications menu. There was no reboot required to complete this process. After the installation, the "Add/Remove" application reported the successful installation and remained open in case I wanted to use it further.

My Windows financial software was Microsoft Money. Supposedly it will export its data files in the Quicken format. I did that and then copied the files from the Windows partition to the Ubuntu partition. However, the import into GNUcash was not really successful. I'm not sure why but I suspect there was information missing which resulted in misidentification of some of the accounts. Anyway, I selected an arbitrary date and entered opening balances for that date. So now, it is working perfectly and is in agreement with my bank balances. Using it is even somewhat easier than working with either Money or Quicken. Plus, the price is right.



Another application that I needed for Ubuntu was a genealogy program. Here again I was able to find a five star program, GRAMPS. (Very appropriate name I thought.) It was also available through the "Add/Remove" application so installation was completed quickly. GRAMPS imports GED files as do many genealogy programs. So I exported my files from my Windows software in the GED format then copied the GED file to the Ubuntu partition. The import into GRAMPS was essentially a two-click operation. Everything, including notes and references, were now available in an Ubuntu application. GRAMPS also has more report formats than my Windows software included. So I consider it a very successful replacement.

For quite some time I have used a PDA, specifically a Sony Clie which runs Palm Pilot software. The Sony CD loaded the Windows version to the hard drive and also included software to synchronize with the PDA. Since I have considerable contact information in the Clie along with many memoranda, I really wanted to be able to run this under Ubuntu. In the System-Preferences menu there is a selection for PalmOS devices. Now that sounded like it would be quite simple to install the applications necessary to run the Clie. Clicking on the selection runs the Gnome-Pilot application which helps the user to determine the settings for synchronizing with the Clie. Unfortunately, it could not find the Clie PDA. So I had to go back online to the Ubuntu forums to see if I could find the secret. It turns out that getting a PDA recognized and synced with Ubuntu is not always simple. After spending considerable time reading various solutions I came across a command line entry that showed the entries where my Clie was being recognized by Ubuntu. The PDA was properly identified by vendor and product ID's. Now all the information I had gathered indicated that the PDA should be listed as using a USB connection and usually ttyUSB0 and ttyUSB1. Much to my surprise my printout showed the Clie as using ttyUSB9 and ttyUSB10. The Gnome-Pilot software refused to accept either of these as valid locations. However, another application, J-Pilot, accepted ttyUSB10 and synced with the Clie when the sync button was clicked. The synchronization transferred all of my information directly into the J-Pilot software. This software works on the desktop in a very similar manner to the Clie and Pilot software I had used under Windows. Successive synchronizations have also been successful. So that was one less application that would need to run under Windows.

There has been one big disappointment in the hardware setup. I have a multi-function media card reader built into the laptop. It reads SD cards as well as xD, MMC, and memory sticks. This reader works great under

Windows as a way to transfer photos from my camera to the computer. However, there is apparently no driver available for this to work under Ubuntu. The card reader is manufactured by O2 Micro and they apparently don't believe Linux is here to stay so they have no plans to create Linux drivers for any of their products. At least that's the quotation from a response to a query from a Ubuntu user. So when I have photos to transfer to my computer I can either reboot into Windows, or I can connect the camera with a USB cable. The USB cable works fine as Ubuntu recognizes the camera right away. It also opens the F-Spot Photo Manager which allows me to choose the pictures and the location where I want them saved.

One of the applications included with Ubuntu is Brasero, a CD/DVD burner. When I first tried to use it, it refused to recognize my DVD+R discs. It would read and write DVD-R/RW with no difficulty. Since I had a supply of the +R discs I decided to look for other DVD burning software. In the ADD/Remove application there were several CD/DVD burners listed. One of them was five star application called K3B. It was written primarily to work with the KDE desktop that is an alternative to the GNOME desktop. The KDE desktop comes with Kubuntu and has an interface that is closer to the one found in Windows. Anyway, K3B will work with GNOME, so let ADD/Remove install it. Any software that you add through Add/Remove can be removed simply by locating it in the list and removing the checkmark that indicates it has been installed. So now I have both Brasero and K3B installed. I also found, the next time I wanted to burn a DVD, that Brasero would now work with my external burner and the +R discs. I do like the interface for K3B better than Brasero, but they both work.

As you can see one of the nice attributes of using open license software is the ability to install it and use it at no cost. If you don't like it, you simply remove it. It's certainly not that simple in Windows. So, if you want to try a Linux OS on your computer download a "Live CD" and try it out. Also check out the online help forums. I think you'll find them easier to understand than much of the material Microsoft makes available. Whatever you decide, enjoy your computing!

Dr. Lewis is a former university and medical school professor of physiology. He has been working with personal computers for over thirty years, developing software and assembling systems.



**never lose a manual again**

by Linda Gonse, ORCOPUG

I just found my old Sharp PDA, discovered it was still working, and decided to put it to use again. The downside was the manual was gone. An Internet search showed the original manual available, but prices ranged from \$20 to \$39! The Sharp device began to look obsolete to me. Then, I discovered [retrevo.com](http://www.retrevo.com). It boasts a library of more than 100,000 downloadable manuals from more than 1,000 brands of consumer electronics for consumer electronics searchable by category and brand at <http://www.retrevo.com/samples/index.html>. My manual was there and it was free. In seconds, I downloaded it. There are more than 100 categories to search for manuals:

2-way Radio	Air Conditioner	Amp	Binocular	Blender	Boombox	Bread Maker
CD Player	CRT TV	Calculator	Camcorders	Car Amplifier	Car Receiver	Car Video
Cell Phone	Clock Radio	Coffee Maker	Controller	Copier	DVD Drive	DVD Players
DVR	Desktop	Digital Camera	Digital Photo Frame		Dishwasher	Dreamcast
Game	Dryer	Fax Machine	Film Camera	Food Processor	Freezer	GPS
GPS Accessory	Game Boy	Game Console	Game Cube	Gaming Accessory		Graphics &
Publishing	Grill Guitar	Headphone	Headset	Heating Cooling/Air		Home
Theater	Hub	Karaoke System	Keyboard	LCD TV	Labeling System	Laptop
MP3 Accessory	MP3 Player	Microwave	Mini Audio System	Network Adapter	Monitor	Mouse
Multifunction Printer		Music Keyboard	NIC	PS2 Game	Nintendo DS Lite	
Oven	PBX	PDA	PDA Accessory	Projector	Plasma TV	Portable
DVD Player	Portable TV	Printer	Projection TV	Router	Radar Detector	Radio
Range	Receiver	Refrigerator	Remote Control	Router	Satellite Radio	Satellite
Receiver	Scanner	Security Camera	Speaker	Speaker System	Storage	Subwoofer
Switch	TV	Tablet	Tape Deck	Telephone	Telescope	Turntable
VCR	Vacuum	Voice Recorder	Washer	Watch	Wii Game	Wireless
Router	Xbox Game					

Another benefit of the site is that it also will store your manuals for you. Is that great or what?

At [retrevo.com](http://www.retrevo.com) again later I learned that over 4 million people visit the site every month to get help with decisions about the gadgets they buy. Retrevo is NOT a retailer and does not sell consumer electronics, but it uses artificial intelligence to analyze and visually summarize more than 50 million real-time data points from across the web; and gives shoppers comprehensive, unbiased, up-to-date product information about what products to buy as well as when and where to buy them.





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Editor	Stuart Rabinowitz
Distribution	George Carbonell

Membership: Anyone may become a member. Dues are \$12 per year and include a one-year subscription to The Pulp as well as access to the HUGE Public Domain disk libraries and BBS. Meeting topics, times and places can be found on page 1 of this issue.

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# February 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 1972 HP-35 introduced	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14 1946 ENIAC is turned on	15 <b>General Meeting 7 PM</b>	16	17	18 1977 1st Computerland opens	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					