



OMUG

<http://www.oly mug.org>

NEWS



Vol. 13, No. 7

Olympia Microcomputer Users Group

July 2005

OMUG hangs out the 'Help Wanted' sign

By Bill Gortz
OMUG president

I can't decide whether I should hang out a volunteers needed sign or a help wanted sign as we again need volunteers to help with OMUG activities and positions.

Secretary: Due to health and personal reasons our recently-elected secretary was placed in a situation where she could no longer continue with the position and submitted her resignation last month. We are now looking for someone to fill the position as OMUG Secretary until the elections next year. The duties of the Secretary as set forth in the OMUG Bylaws are:

- a. Shall keep the minutes of all General and Executive Board meetings.
- b. Shall maintain the official copy of the current standing rules.
- c. Shall make the minutes available to the Newsletter Editor for publication.
- d. Shall maintain archives of minutes and other club documents, as appropriate.

There is more in the OMUG Standing Rules and both can be viewed on the OMUG Website: <http://www.oly mug.org>.

If anyone is interested in this position please contact any member of the OMUG Executive Board (see member information on page 2) and/or come to the next business meeting on July 21.

Scatter Creek Rest Area: This is the biggest fund raiser that we have to support the OMUG Scholarships and we still need volunteers to fill four hours shifts from 2 a.m., on Aug. 6 until 2 p.m.,



on Monday, Aug. 8. If you would like to help please contact Gary Bigger, our Special Activities Chairman, (see his article on Page 2 in this newsletter.)

Olympia Senior Center: John Marshall has informed us that the Senior Center will be receiving new computers in the near future and they may need some help removing the old computers and setting up the new ones. As the Senior Center provides us with meeting places and support throughout the months I believe it would be appropriate for us to assist them, if needed, when the time comes to replace these computers. Information will be forthcoming, probably on the Reflector, when this will be happening.

Shelton/Mason County: Due to the number of OMUG members who live in

the Shelton / Mason County area there have been several requests in the past about establishing some OMUG presence in Shelton. We have recently had a preliminary meeting concerning possibly using part of the Shelton Community Center (the former Armory Building) in exchange for some assistance from volunteer OMUG members in their endeavors. Everything is still in the planning stages for the Shelton Community Center activities and nothing has been decided about what and if we will be able to work together for our mutual benefits, we will keep you posted.

They do have one urgent need right now in that they have received approximately 18 computers and a server from the Gates Foundation to set up a computer lab in the building. They are looking for an experienced volunteer that can help them establish a secure network within this lab. If anyone is willing to help them set up this network let me know and I will get you in contact with the proper persons.

Super Saturday: I wish to thank everybody who helped with the OMUG Booth at Super Saturday this year. Our location turned out not to be the best, but I have been told that we will be near our previous location next year. Again thanks to all who volunteered this year.

At this month's general meeting Ed Ervine will be showing us about using our computers for genealogy research and display. I hope to see you there.

Remember to check our website, <http://www.oly mug.org>, for current happenings within OMUG.





EXECUTIVE BOARD

President: Bill Gortz, 426-2310,
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KEY MEMBERS

APCUG Representative: Bill Gortz
Budget Committee Chair: Bill Gortz
Database Manager: Max Whipps
Elections Chair: Bob Steinberg
Historian: David Belles
Membership Chair: James Gunnells
Membership Renewal Coordinator:
Max Whipps
Newsletter Distribution Coordinator:
Loren Freeman
Nominating Committee Chair:
Wes Kirkpatrick
Scholarship Committee Chair:
Bob Wing
SIG Coordinator: Shirley Bellinghausen
Visitors Coordinator: Elizabeth Ross
Special Activities Committee Chair:
Gary Bigger

Public Relations Chair: Vivian Forrester
The Olympia Microcomputer Users
Group is a not for profit organization
dedicated to helping computer users
improve their skills with computers.

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OMUG's August rest stop coffee service needs many volunteers

By Gary Bigger
OMUG Special Activities Chairman

We have just over a month before our Rest Stop fundraiser. The times and dates are 2 a.m., Aug. 6 through 2 p.m. Aug. 8. We will be at Scatter-Creek this year. The schedule has been set up in four hour increments.

Scatter-Creek is located on the northbound lanes of I-5, approximately 12 miles south of Olympia. When coming from Olympia, you must proceed past the rest stop to Exit 88 (Highway 12) and double back. Please look at the Washington State Department of Transportation map at http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Traffic/InterstateGuide/i5/I5_NNisqToNapavine.htm

This fun activity is the funding source of our annual scholarship to Evergreen

State College students.

A 60 consecutive hour time is difficult to cover, but with four-hour shifts it is doable. OMUG needs all the help you can give. My wife has volunteered to help man the coffee pot with me. Many members get a spouse, significant other, or friend to spend time together at this event. We currently have approximately one-fourth of our schedule covered by at least one person. This is a good start, but not nearly enough. We should have a minimum of two people at the booth during each shift. It would be better with three or four people. This would allow for potty breaks and refilling coffee pots.

You can contact me via phone (360)-426-7055, e-mail g37bigger@yahoo.com or see me at any OMUG meeting. I looking forward to hearing from every OMUG member. Remember this is an opportunity to help one of our local college students.



OMUG members man the booth a Super Saturday June 11.

Search for new OMUG secretary begins

By Shirley Bellinghausen
OMUG vice president

The OMUG Board meet was open at 7 p.m., June 16 by President Bill Gortz. Attending were Shirley Bellinghausen, vice president; Max Whipps, treasurer; John Marshall, past president; Pat Sonnenstuhl, webmaster; Chris McCormick, director at large; Gary Bigger, special activities chairman; and Bob Wing, scholarship chairman.

Webmaster Pat is setting up the board members on a Yahoo site. Shirley discussed the August program and a possible new SIG leader for Geology. John announced the new router is working well with Windows. He may request help moving the Senior Center Computers when they receive new computers. They will need help with setup and removal. We should help as we are using the computer room free of charge several nights a month.

The location for our Super Saturday Booth was not as good as in previous years. The college attempted to do us a favor by placing us in a spot that had good electrical and Internet connections, however in doing so we were placed behind several vendors and could not easily be seen by the public.

Bill has requested a change near our previous location at the rotunda for next year.

The start of daytime SIGs was discussed. Bob Elves will be requested to poll his attendance and see what response they give; a room would be available in the daytime.

Our new secretary, Emily Brooks is unable to continue due to health. Members suggested names of those who might be appointed to fill the position. Max will pick up the Secretary books from Emily.

Bob Wing explained the procedure of choosing the scholarship winner. The most qualified person was our winner from last year. The committee and board will consider raising the award next year depending on funds available.

Discount is back

Corel is once again enthusiastically supporting the user group community and we sincerely welcome them back. Please visit the APCUG User Group special pricing page at <http://www.corel.com/specialusergroups> The boxed software is 50 percent off list and includes both Corel and Jasc products.



Bill explained a request made to OMUG from the Shelton Community Center. Since we have been considering a Shelton group, the committee looking into that met with the center director and had a brainstorming meeting. Their greatest need at this time is to get a central server for the 19 computers donated to them from Bill Gates. After discussion it was decided more research needs to be done in the Shelton area.

Our next club activity is the coffee stop-rest area. Chairman Gary Bigger reported he has a start on filling the four hour slots, but needs many more volunteers. He will send a sign-up form on the reflector and have someone do some calling toward the last minute for slots still to be filled. It was decided there must be a cell phone available at the rest stop at all times. Gary plans to have his motor home available at the stop to handle backup supplies.

Chris distributed the Audit Committee report.

Certificates of Appreciation to members for the 2004-05 year will be made up and be distributed at the next general meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m. by the president

OMUG Income & Expenses May 2005



Income: \$144

[Dues-\$140, Interest-\$4]

Expenses: \$133

[SSSS Donation-\$25, Newsletter-\$108]

Net Income: \$70

Checking Account Balance:	\$299	6/25/05
Savings Account Balance:	\$3642	
Scholarship Account Balance:	\$1213	
Bank Accounts Total:	<u>\$5154</u>	
To Be Deposited:	\$40	
Current Treasury:	<u>\$5194</u>	

Simple password practices keep PC secure

By **Gabe Goldberg**
APCUG Advisor and Columnist

Password dilemma: We can't live an online life without them, but if they're too numerous to remember, they encourage unsafe practices. What to do?

First, basics. A password is just the key that opens a computer lock. It may gain access to a newspaper's online edition, protect banking records, let you bid on auctions, open a frequent-flyer account, or do anything requiring verified identity.

Some Web sites assign passwords; most allow choosing them. Rules for selecting passwords are easy to find but are often impractical. Don't use easily guessed familiar names or words; use letters and numbers and special characters? OK. Avoid anything related to facts about yourself? Makes sense. Don't share passwords with anyone? Good advice. Change passwords periodically? Oops, it's a memory test [<http://www.evalu8.org/staticpage?page=review&siteid=8906>]. Use unique passwords everywhere? Hm, that takes a *lot* of passwords. Don't write them down or store them in a computer file? Tilt!

Maintaining passwords is a nuisance. So some people use one

password for everything — a bad idea, since sharing or compromising one access opens them all. Password hierarchies are common: use one password for financial matters, another for commerce, and one for trivials such as newspaper sites. That avoids revealing your sensitive e-mail/password combination to junk Web sites.

But don't use a common password for all e-commerce sites (amazon.com, buy.com, etc.) since they're occasionally hacked. And treat sites like PayPal as financial rather than e-commerce. And don't just guess which password you used on a site; some sites lock accounts after just a few failed logins.

As passwords proliferate, it's common to store them in a computer file. And having too many site-assigned passwords guarantees the need to record them. But please, don't call the file "passwords.txt" and don't use the word "password" in it. The paranoid and geeky encrypt such files, but that risks losing the file by forgetting the encryption key.

You can print and save registration pages, but that leads to bulky files, cumbersome to search and requiring updating. Some people use an address book or print lists of sites and accounts, then handwrite passwords. But that still needs updating, and can be lost, destroyed, or found by someone untrustworthy.

If you have multiple email addresses, note which you use on a given site, since that's often the key for logging in or receiving password reminders.

Hackers use special software to attack logins, applying dictionary word lists and other guessing techniques. Passwords are described as "strong" (hard to crack) if they have at least eight characters, include upper/lower case and punctuation characters and at least one digit. So even if you use a memory

aid for remembering passwords — such as words from a poem — convert them to strong passwords in a way that only you will know.

High-tech devices can add security, but they're usually used only in business settings; they include biometric devices which check fingerprints or eye structure and random logon-key generators.

Software password managers are more practical. These record and secure passwords and then auto-fill online logins. Good ones offer a "don't remember/don't ask" option to avoid recording info about sensitive sites. Encryption is desirable but not mandatory; it should be possible to secure the password manager itself with a master password.

Many managers are free, some are bought, and common software such as Web browsers and e-mail clients often includes it. Google returns many hits related to "password manager" and classy software site Tucows [www.tucows.com] numbers 300 such tools. Before installing one, make sure it supports your software applications, especially if they're non-Microsoft.

Many people don't secure home computers — but consider cleaners, workers, friends wandering through, perhaps even having permission to use the computer. Suddenly security becomes more appealing. If you handle money online, check banking/financial sites occasionally for unauthorized transactions.

Remember that you may occasionally need access to secure sites while away from your computer. You can copy passwords to a thumbdrive or PDA or simply print them, but remember that they're powerful keys and must be protected. Before traveling, check your passwords so you're not surprised on the road. If you leave your computer

See PASSWORDS, Page 5

**Welcome
New/Returning
Members**

**Mary Rose
Jim Albert
Donna Reyes**

Tech Notes: Create robots, talk to TVs

By Sue Crane

Big Bear Computer Club, California

RoboGames, formerly Robolympics games, launched at San Francisco University. 650 entrants from 15 countries gathered to show their stuff in several categories from Sumo to Soccer. Ultimately, the goal is to create robots that can do more tasks that normally, only humans can do. **Odd-shaped Robots Do More Than Housework.**

Engineers at IRobot certainly see house cleaning as a legitimate use of robots, although the company's popular Roomba Intelligent Floorvac vacuum-cleaning robot is disc shaped, not human shaped. Although the company has collaborated with toy-maker Hasbro on a life-like doll, military robots have long been their focus. Military robots don't

have a lot in common with the walking, talking robots of science fiction movies. They're shaped more like mini tanks or golf carts than like humans. PackBots, for instance, have tracked wheels to navigate rough terrain and weigh about 40 pounds.

Get Your LCD Monitor or TV

Material makers are limiting production as a reaction to 2004 trends, and this could lead to a shortage later in 2005. Glass substrates used to manufacture large-size thin film transistor LCD panels are likely to be 8 percent to 10 percent short of demand and the shortage of color filters used in fifth- and sixth-generation LCD plants is projected to be between 7 percent to 12 percent toward the end of 2005.

Talk to your TV!

Agile TV aims to 'change the way people watch TV' via the creation of its

voice-controlled TV remote. The Promptu remote is designed to replace a conventional remote control and includes a "Talk" button and a built-in microphone, together with an infrared receiver used in conjunction with an existing cable box.

PASSWORDS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

running, you can access it remotely via tools such as GoToMyPC.

On business-owned PCs, separate personal from work-related material. Determine whether your office has policies for personal computer use and monitoring of computer activity. Some businesses install keystroke loggers which can capture passwords before they're encrypted. And remember that system administrators can often defeat security measures as part of their job, so you may not want to store sensitive personal material at work.

Work and home PCs both need disaster preparation, so family members or colleagues can access what's needed in an emergency. Work-related passwords and instructions can be stored securely so they're available but can't be secretly used.

For home computers and facilities

such as e-mail and finance, remember that many ISPs and companies have privacy policies prohibiting revealing information to family members, even in cases of illness or death. Instructions and important passwords should be stored with essential family records. Note that changing situations may require special care — for example, a divorce might motivate tight security.

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The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups, an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.

Thanks For Renewing

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