



OMUG



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

News

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Olympia Microcomputer Users Group

January 2007

Easy Cards for E-mail or Snail Mail

By Shirley Bellinghausen
OMUG President

You have probably sent all your Christmas cards and your “sorry I’m late Christmas cards.” But it got me thinking how easy it is to use your computer to keep in touch with all your old friends.

I have used Printmaster programs for several years and picked up a Hallmark card CD at the Christmas auction. They both present different graphics and give you a card style appropriate for almost any one you would like to remember. All have prepared messages to choose from or leave blank for you to write your own message.

There are also free cards you can email from several sites. I have used Yahoo cards by American Greetings and Regards.com. Some especially nice cards such as are available at JacquieLawson.com require a small fee (less than \$15.00) for the year. New this year are cards that let you add a picture from any of your picture files.

You can go to the internet and search for greeting cards and peruse them. When you find one you like add it to your favorites. Card-weight paper and envelopes are available at all the computer stores. You don’t need a packet, just some pretty, 8 1/2 x 11 heavy or colored paper. With that you can print single fold cards or quarter fold cards. Even stationary is available.



It’s really fun to choose graphics that are personal for the individual on the front, inside and back to let them know YOU made the card. Programs such as Printmaster or Hallmark have graphics to cover almost any reason to send a card: birthday, graduation, new baby, Jewish celebrations, friendship or “just because.” If you are concerned about using too much ink choose graphics with fewer colors.

Some programs require you to insert the CD for some graphics. They are ok but a nuisance to keep putting the disk back in. Others include them on the install and are easier to use but take a little more disk space. If you don’t like the way your choice looks on the card delete it and choose a new one.

Using e-card websites, you can send email cards to several people at one time; a generic card just like you’d buy—but with what *you* want to say. You also receive a bonus by finding out who has new addresses. The card companies let you know when the card is picked up *or* when it could not be delivered. I even took a chance and sent one to my best friend in high school who I had not talked to for years. My address for her was years old and it went

through! She answered about a half hour after I sent the cards.

As far as cost, once you have your paper and envelopes and a program there is the cost of the stamps if you use snail mail or free using email. I recommend you try it and see how much it is.

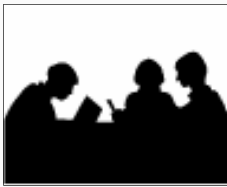
See you on Thursday, January 11, 2007. Wow!



Linux SIG to Meet Each Wednesday



Conrad Schuler and members of the Linux SIG are revved about starting to meet weekly as of January 3! There’s a “whole lotta learning going on” in this dynamic and enthusiastic group. They want a balance between academic presentation and hands-on learning—and it’s happening! Come and see Wednesdays at 7 in the Senior Center. Or bring your computer in to have Linux loaded for you! It can be loaded alongside Windows if you want to “try it out.”



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SIG Coordinator:
 Bob Steinberg
Special Activities Coordinator: Open
Visitors Coordinator:
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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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A Dark & Stormy Night...

By Sr. Dorothy Robinson
 Newsletter Editor

If we'd had our choice of weather, we would not have selected the evening of the worst storm in recent memory to have our annual potluck and silent auction. But we didn't, so we did. Some people stayed home because they had good sense, but the rest of us had as much fun just *as if* we'd had good sense....

There was enough delicious food so that no one went hungry—plus desserts to die for. I met some people I didn't know, although I'd heard of them. And I had some good conversations. It looked and sounded like others were enjoying themselves, too.

While standing in line for food, I chatted with Bob Stimmel and discovered that he enjoys painting. Later, I got a chance to see a painting he did in the hands of its new owner, John Johnston!

Since the number attending was down, so was the number of auction items. But some of us found some good bargains and took advantage of them. I personally brought home more than I came with; I keep hoping that's a good thing! We'll see if I actually *use* what I bought. 8^)

Glenda Reed did a great job of coordinating this event, even arranging for a drawing in which winners were awarded the very nice table centerpieces. Lucky winners were Merlin Pinson, Bob Steinberg, Phyllis Nation, John Johnston and Susan Marshall.

Poinsettias were given to Don Hertzog in appreciation for his help and to Chance Maxwell for coming the farthest.

Our auctioneer Gary Bigger was not able to get there, but we are nothing if not versatile in this group. President Shirley Bellinghausen did a fine job of conducting the auction with the help of Bob, her husband. And Max Whipps, our treasurer, did his usual job of taking money with a smile. ☺

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 Welcome to
 Our New and
 Returning
 Members
 Jennings Felix
 Alfred & Nathan
 Williams
 Arthur & John
 Pruett
 William Paynter
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 Thanks for Renewing!
 Darlynn, Kris, &
 Charles Wright
 Kathleen & Tom
 Gray
 Henry Alai
 Ann & Maxwell
 Berry
 Tony & Karen
 White
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Linux SIG to Meet Every Wednesday

By Larry Jensen
OMUG Secretary

President Shirley Bellinghausen opened the business meeting at 7:05 PM on December 21. Also present were Treasurer Max Whipps, Secretary Larry Jensen, Newsletter editor Sister Dorothy Robinson, and Directors at Large John Marshall and Gary Bigger. Visitors Coordinator Glenda Reed attended as a guest. Vice President John Acocks, Webmaster Pat Sonnenstuhl and director at large L. D. McNall were absent.

November board meeting minutes and December General Meeting minutes were accepted unanimously. The treasurer reported that as of the 14th of December, income was \$278.09, expenses \$291.68. We have 185 Primary members, an increase of four over this time last year. Upcoming expenses are \$50.00 for membership in APCUG and \$10 for the annual corporate report.

The January program will be a presentation by Cheryl Heywood, Community Librarian at the Olympia Timberland Library, about accessing the library's reference databases and other online services available to members with internet access. There is no confirmation yet about a possible Microsoft presentation in February.

Everyone enjoyed the profile in the last newsletter on Noral Baughman. This was the first of what we hope will be a continuing series on OMUG members. Sister Dorothy asked if there was a reason that the Newsletter did not list phone numbers for key members and some board members. It was decided to check with those members and, if they had no objections, to list their numbers so that members can contact them.. The Newsletter folding party will be at St. Placid Priory at 2:00 PM, January 2nd.

John Marshall reported that Conrad Schuler, Linux SIG leader, asked permission of the board to increase the frequency of Linux meetings to weekly on Wednesday nights. It was felt that he did not need board permission as long as there was no conflict with other meetings. Several members from the Linux SIG will come in on December 30 to install a newer, more user-friendly version of Linux on the computer lab computers.

John also noted that there is a half time job available in the Senior Center to oversee use of the database (using Excel and Access). That person would also oversee decisions pertaining to the Senior Center computers.

Glenda reported on the Potluck. She has several suggestions for future events and will give them to Shirley.



In old business, we are still looking for some large (80-100 cup) coffee pots to use at the rest stop. Sandy hasn't yet checked on the availability of rest stop dates for 2008.

The secretary suggested that there should be a set of instructions for each of our activities such as the Rest Stop and the Potluck. These should include the budget, a time line, materials needed and any other information important to a successful event. No action was taken.

Max made a motion that Pat be reimbursed for the cost of the new program, Expression Web, which is replacing Frontpage. It was seconded and carried unanimously.

Wim Verhoef, Budget Committee Chairman, will not be able to work on the budget until after January. The board authorized spending at the 2006 level, (with the addition of the cost of the new program for the Webmaster) until such time as the committee can meet.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m. ☞

OMUG Income & Expenses November 2006



Income: \$278

[Membership Dues-\$240, Reimbursement-\$33, Interest-\$5]

Expenses: \$292

[Senior Center Donation-\$50, Reimbursable Expense-\$33, Newsletter Copying-\$163, Newsletter Supplies-\$22, Membership Committee Supplies-23]

Net Debit: (\$14)

OMUG Treasury as of 12/20/06

Savings Account Balance:	\$2,891
Scholarship Account Balance:	\$3,026
Checking Account Balance:	\$242
Bank Accounts Total:	6,159
To Be Deposited:	\$40
Treasury Total:	\$6,199

Familiar Faces

Last month, Noral Baughman wrote a little about himself and his involvement with OMUG. Thanks, Noral! We'd like to profile a few others in the coming months...How about **YOU**? Please note that if you like to write, go for it; otherwise, Sr. D will help.

Fill in the form and mail or email to Sr. Dorothy: 500 College St NE, Lacey WA 98516 or newsletter@stplacid.org

Name:

Phone:

email:

Tel. # (so Sr. Dorothy can call and talk to you if needed)

How long have you been a member of OMUG?

Why did you join?

Any particular computer interests?

If you hold or have held office in OMUG, name the offices

What kind of work do you do? (or did you do, if retired)

Do you do any volunteer work besides OMUG? Tell us about it:

Interests outside of OMUG? Tell us about them:

Want us to know about your family?

Watch the Back Door!

Excerpted from The New, the Best, and the Worst Collected by Pim Borman, Webmaster, SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc. <http://swipcug.apcug.org> [swipcug\(at\)sigecom.net](mailto:swipcug(at)sigecom.net)

Many an afternoon I see a school bus stopping in the neighborhood to unload students toting enormous bags of expensive text books on their backs. It always irks me because it seems so unnecessary. The heavy backpacks put an unhealthy strain on the students' spines, and the expensive books put a severe strain on family budgets, especially if there are several children of school age. (Public school students must pay for their text books in Indiana, in case you're not from around here.)

It would be so much easier if the students used inexpensive, functional notebook computers with the textbooks stored on CDs. Ideally, classrooms should be equipped with permanent, networked units for common use so that the students can leave their own computers at home to minimize damage and loss during transport. After all, most colleges already require that students have a computer, so why not start in high school, or even earlier?

Cost shouldn't be a problem. A fully functional computer running free Linux and Open Source software can cost less than a year's worth of textbooks. Acceptance will be harder to come by, with expected resistance from book publishers about to lose a highly profitable and captive market. Microsoft may not be happy either. Teachers may have to be retrained, and administrators, having been weaned on MS Windows, may oppose the use of what many still regard as a second-best operating environment.

Often necessity is the father of invention. Third World countries, only now entering the world of comput-

ing, are the most likely to introduce revolutionary progress in low-cost personal computer productivity. My own computer, equipped with all the latest bells and whistles, sits idle for more than 99% of the time. In a Third World classroom, or maybe a small office, it could easily support a dozen or more terminals and monitors if provided with the right, free software. History would repeat itself, since time sharing of computers was first introduced in the 1960's when mainframe computers were also unaffordable for individuals. Students will only need inexpensive dumb terminals and bare-bones monitors. In England an organization calling itself Ndiyo (Swahili for "yes") is working on this approach. It makes full-fledged computing available to many at low cost.

An alternate approach called "One Laptop Per Child", initiated by academics at MIT, aims to provide specially designed laptop computers at a cost of less than \$100 per unit to millions of children in poor countries. The computing experience is less advanced than with the time sharing approach, but having your own computer, no matter how primitive, has a strong psychological advantage. I can testify to that. My first introduction to computers was via a Telex terminal connected to a time-sharing mainframe that I used for scientific modeling work. It was useful and interesting, but not nearly as captivating as running my own simple programs in Sinclair Basic on my own first (\$100) Timex-Sinclair computer.

An essential part of introducing computers to Third Worlders (and not only school children) is the availability of free software in the form of Linux and the OpenSource programs to do just about anything productive that computers are capable of. This in turn will grow and mature the Linux/OpenSource technology to the point where it may well return to the West through the back door as an

attractive, low-cost alternative to expensive and bloated Microsoft Windows and Office programs. (Based in part on an article in *The Economist*, 9/23/2006, thanks to Louis Ritz)

A South-African dotcom millionaire, Mark Shuttleworth, is financing the development of a totally free distribution of desktop Linux and all the necessary software. Called Ubuntu ("Humanity to Others"), it is already preferred by many Linux users. It is totally free. Even the CDs on which it is distributed are mailed to you free for the asking (www.ubuntu.com). Although possibly intended for use in Third World countries, Ubuntu is also rapidly gaining followers in the US. What did I just write about the back door? ☐

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.

In Our Own Backyard

By Sister Dorothy Robinson
OMUG News Editor

The article on this page attracted me because I know, from talking with Conrad Schuler, our Linux SIG leader, that in our own area we have an organization working to get computers and websites to people and organizations, here and abroad, that would not otherwise have them. The organization is called InterConnection. They take donations of computers and refurbish many of them, recycling the rest. By using volunteers for much of the work, they are able to keep costs low. Still, institutions must be able to pay for shipping. Conrad is working with them to develop the use of free Linux operating systems and opensource software as well as developing relationships with Linux users in other countries so there will be someone to administer systems. See <http://www.interconnection.org/index.php> ☐