



OMUG



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

News

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Olympia Microcomputer Users Group

October 2007

Successful Rest Stop Fundraiser

By Shirley Bellinghausen
OMUG President

Congratulations to the members who participated in the September 15-17 Rest Stop at Maytown. You were able to raise \$1423.07 in donations.

A committee convened to update the OMUG by-laws and Standing rules last week. Final formatting is being done by Marilyn Hanna, Don Hertzog and Jim Wiest. After approval of the executive Board the changes will be presented to all members at a general meeting for your approval.

The OMUG board has been very busy the last couple of months. Besides managing the Rest Stop and organizational laws; a new member profile form is being assembled by Vice President Jim Wiest and Director at Large Phil Vogel. It will be finalized soon and all members will be asked to update previous profiles.

One of the other directors, Marilyn Hanna is working on an OMUG Member's Handbook. This will be included in the new member packet along with the new profile form. This is a project I have been trying to get underway since I was named president.



Does anyone in your family or friends have a Webcam? My son in Federal Way set me up last night with Yahoo messenger. He has a webcam I do not. But with the Yahoo set up he can send me his picture while we are typing messages back and forth.

If you want to try it go to Yahoo.com when the page comes up click "Messenger" in a box on

the right. A dark blue screen appears click DOWNLOAD and it will walk you through the setup. You can use the messenger only and do not have to have any other Yahoo programs.

More technology fun. As we were talking Jeff was telling us about our grandson's first Fraternity house. He remembered he had taken a picture with his digital camera. He put the picture up to the webcam while it was still on the camera and we could view it perfectly.

Isn't this era of technology fascinating? 🖱

Whose PC is it, anyway?

Reporter Scott Dunn wrote in the September 13 issue of online newsletter Windows Secrets that Microsoft has admitted to silently downloading and installing updates for its Windows Updater on PCs, even when a user has elected not to have updates installed unless they choose to do so. Microsoft says these updates are necessary in order for Windows Update to work properly; however, they have not been open about this procedure.

While some people seem to think this behavior on the part of Microsoft is fine, others see it as an invasion of privacy. Although the executable files updated were not mali-

cious and there is no need to remove the files, the method Microsoft is using—a silent install without prior notice to users—is questionable to say the least.

Scott Dunn says "For users who elect not to have updates installed automatically, the issue of consent is crucial. Microsoft has apparently decided, however, that it doesn't need permission to patch Windows Updates files, even if you've set your preferences to require it."

He goes on to say, "These files are by no means viruses, and Microsoft appears to have no malicious intent in patching them. However, writing

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Jennifer Xie Selected for OMUG Scholarship

By Larry Jensen
OMUG Secretary

President Shirley Bellinghausen called the business meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. Also present were Secretary Larry Jensen, Newsletter Editor Sister Dorothy Robinson, Webmaster Pat Sonnenstuhl, Directors at Large Marilyn Hanna and Phil Vogel. Vice President Jim Wiest, Treasurer Gary Bigger and Director Arlene Kapner were absent.

The August Board minutes and September General meeting minutes were accepted.

At the president's request, Larry read the letter from Bob Wing to Jennifer Xie notifying her that she had won the 2007 scholarship award and membership from OMUG. The letter also invited her to attend monthly meetings and asked if she would make a presentation to the group at one of the meetings on a subject of her choosing.

Sister Dorothy reported that Noral will not print the addresses on the newsletter next month. Evidently this slows things down considerably, and it may be easier to go back to printing the address labels separately.

Noral also had a problem with refilling the toner cartridge. Buying a new cartridge is much more expensive, and we will need more information to decide a course of action.

Pat said that everything seems to be going well on the website and she is working to make the calendar larger.

Gary was absent, but had e-mailed the monthly statement for August to the board.

Total income \$318.75
Expenses \$1547.05 (includes the \$1000 scholarship, forwarded to The Evergreen State College)

193 Primary members (16 less than a year ago),
80 Associate members (10 less than a year ago).
273 Total members (26 less than a year ago)

Board members want to thank a custodian who has been particularly helpful to our membership, and have decided to do this by giving him a certificate of appreciation as well as writing a letter of commendation to his supervisor. Marilyn and Shirley will follow up on this.

Marilyn also reported that the bylaws committee had met and had several recommendations to make regarding changes to the Bylaws and Standing rules. These will be e-mailed to the Bylaws committee to confirm changes. The Board will then consider them at the next business meeting.



Changes will then be published in the newsletter for the club members to read and will be presented to a general meeting for acceptance after that.

Phil suggested that we might consider an exit committee to find out the reasons a member does not renew.

Shirley reported that the rest stop went well. The board decided to wait until Gary was back to discuss the event. We still need to make arrangements for the next rest stop.

Jim and Phil continue to work on the member profile forms.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25.

**Want to respond
to something in your newsletter?
Send your opinion to the Editor—
newsletter@olymug.org
Responses published as space permits.**

OMUG Income & Expenses August 2007



Income: \$319

(Membership Dues- \$300, Scholarship Donation \$15, Bank Interest \$4)

Expenses: \$1,547

(Senior Center Donation \$50, Gifts to Presenters \$10, Newsletter \$32, Insurance \$325, Picnic Supplies \$130, and Scholarship \$1000)

Net Decrease \$1,228

OMUG Treasury as of 9/18/07

Savings Account Balance:	\$2,096
Scholarship Account Balance:	\$3,640
Checking Account Balance:	\$516
To Be Deposited:	\$40
Treasury Total:	\$6,292

Net Neutrality: It's Time For Us To Speak Out!

By Linda Gonse, Editor,
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What is 'Net Neutrality?'

Briefly, "Net Neutrality" (short for Network Neutrality) is the guiding principle that preserves the free and open Internet. "It means no discrimination. Net Neutrality prevents Internet providers from speeding up or slowing down Web content based on its source, ownership or destination," according to savetheinternet.com.

"Net Neutrality is the reason why the Internet has driven economic innovation, democratic participation, and free speech online. It protects the consumer's right to use any equipment, content, application or service on a non-discriminatory basis without interference from the network provider. With Net Neutrality, the network's only job is to move data — not choose which data to privilege with higher quality service."

Why is Net Neutrality an issue?

It's an issue because it involves the transmission of data over broadband networks (e.g. DSL or cable internet services). As the number of sites on the Internet continues to grow and the quality of data becomes more sophisticated—encompassing video and audio files and other multimedia applications—broadband service providers (generally cable and phone companies) are seeking to regulate how material flows to users through their increasingly taxed networks. For most large providers, this has come down to one general desire: They could establish a tiered system of content delivery in which companies with data-heavy content can pay a fee to the providers in return for "special treatment" in transmission. *However, advocates project, this also would allow large telecom companies to block or censor things they don't like without consequence.*

Moreover, colleges worry that research and distance education could be left behind if broadband companies are allowed to favor certain content. (The implications go far beyond open access.) The Internet-for-hire has profound implications for education, library and publishing services in general. And, for users, there is either a future of poor service, or additional costs, or some combination of the two. Low and fixed income internet users' would lose their access equality.

What is being done to preserve Net Neutrality?

In a nutshell, nothing permanent has been done to pass a law to ensure freedom of the Internet. It is still a gigantic struggle of ordinary Internet users, educational institutions, online companies—such as Amazon and Google—non-profit companies, and others, against the massive lobbying efforts of the largest telecommunication companies.

Events that have unfolded since Net Neutrality became a significant issue include:

"This past summer (2006), Congress took up the issue. Following a huge lobbying campaign by both sides, including millions spent by the cable and phone corporations, the House voted down an amendment to the Act that would have made the Federal Communications Commission responsible for enforcing neutrality. In the Senate, a similar amendment was defeated in committee, but net neutrality legislators managed to table a vote on the telecommunications bill indefinitely in hopes that they can somehow force the issue back to the forefront," Bill Moyers, a respected news commentator and

journalist, said on the PBS site at <http://tinyurl.com/yhx7lz>.

In January of this year, a bill was introduced by Senators Olympia Snowe and Byron Dorgan to amend the Communications Act of 1934, which will ensure all content is treated equally and fairly on the Internet. The law also requires providers to offer consumers broadband Internet access that is not bundled with other services like phone, cable or VoIP. The title of their bill is the Internet Freedom Preservation Act.

In March, the discussion over Internet governance continued on Capitol Hill. All five FCC commissioners testified in front of the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet.

In May, the bill passed the House Judiciary Committee: 20-13.

In a June 2007 report, the Federal Trade Commission urged restraint with respect to the new regulations proposed by network neutrality advocates, noting the "broadband industry is a relatively young and evolving one," and given no "significant market failure or demonstrated consumer harm from conduct by broadband providers," such regulations "may well have adverse effects on consumer welfare, despite the good intentions of their proponents."

We've already had a taste of what can happen if telecommunication companies are handed authority to create tiered service and to have authority over what users can access. Before any decisions have been made, AT&T censored lyrics critical of Bush twice this month during Pearl Jam webcast concerts! <http://tinyurl.com/2gqv4n> This foreshad-

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ows what we can expect if Net Neutrality is not made into law permanently.

Pearl Jam appears to feel the same way. "AT&T's actions strike at the heart of the public's concerns over the power that corporations have when it comes to determining what the public sees and hears through communications media," they said.

Bill Moyers provides background and details on the subject at: <http://tinyurl.com/hfyb3>. A video segment from Moyers on America PBS show, titled "The Net at Risk," illustrates the remarkable, but unlikely, cross-section of allies on the issue at <http://tinyurl.com/yuylej>

There are also links to several articles and videos on the main page of our website: <http://www.orcopug.org>

What can you do to support Net Neutrality?

Internet Neutrality advocates are pushing for people to sign an online petition. One of them is at: <http://action.freepress.net/campaign/savethenet>. The petition says: Congress must preserve a free and open Internet. Please vote for enforceable network neutrality and keep toll-booths, gatekeepers, and discrimination off my Internet.

California Senators Boxer and Feinstein do not accept email from constituents sent through third party sites. So, people should email legislators directly, in addition to adding another name to the online petition so the numbers can be used for clout by Save The Internet.com, FreePress.com, and openinternetcoalition.com, who support the legislation. Boxer and Feinstein are already "believers" but it helps to let them know that the base on this issue is widespread.

The SavetheInternet.com Coalition is more than a million everyday people (partial list of members) who have banded together with thousands of non-profit organizations, businesses and bloggers to protect Internet freedom. The Free Press is a national, nonpartisan organization working to reform the media. Through education, organizing and advocacy, it promotes diverse and independent media ownership, strong public media, and universal access to communications. The OpenInternetCoalition represents consumers, grassroots organizations, and businesses working in pursuit of keeping the Internet fast, open and accessible to all Americans.

You can find contact information for legislators throughout the U.S. at: <http://www.congress.org/congressorg/home/>

People can read Google's Guide to Net Neutrality for Google Users at: <http://www.google.com/help/netneutrality.html> and, they should also sign up to receive updates about Internet Neutrality from one of the sites supporting this legislation, such as <http://www.savetheinternet.com/>.

Once people understand the issue of Internet Neutrality, supporters should inform others about the threat to this essential freedom, and encourage their involvement.

Finally, people who believe in an open Internet need to be aware that organized supporters fighting big telecommunication businesses need money to continue and to win the fight that affects us all. https://secure.freepress.net/05/net_neutrality -- even small donations will help this cause. ☹

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files to a user's PC without notice (when auto-updating has been turned off) is behavior that's usually associated with hacker Web sites. The question being raised in discussion forums is, "Why is Microsoft operating in this way?"

You can turn off Automatic Updates completely and avoid this stealth install—but then something that was easy becomes more difficult, that is, making sure your computer is protected.

Nate Clinton, Microsoft's Windows Update Program Manager, responds on the MS Update Product Team Blog, September 13. Clinton implies there was no other choice but stealth updates. "Had we failed to update the service automatically, users would not have been able to successfully check for updates and, in turn, users would not have had updates installed automatically or received expected notifications...To avoid creating [the] false impression, [that a user's PC is safe when it needs patches] the Windows Update client is configured to automatically check for updates anytime a system uses the WU service, independent of the selected settings for handling updates (for example, "check for updates but let me choose whether to download or install them"). This has been the case since we introduced the automatic update feature in Windows XP. In fact, WU has auto-updated itself many times in the past."

A comment on this blog by 'Thingy' as follows: "Thank you for coming forward with an answer about this issue. It is appreciated. However, you're asking yourself the wrong questions, and thus coming up with the wrong answers. You're asking yourself what you think people are expecting from automatic updates, and then using your own biased preferences towards the full automatic

Genealogy



WATCH this space for information about the coming SIG on Genealogy!

Continued from page 5, Whose PC...

update experience to flavour your answer. The question you're not asking yourself is 'why do users choose to disable the automatic installation?' There are several answers, but the most common is probably 'because Microsoft makes mistakes.' Some recent examples, off the top of my head: —the "human error" that borked Windows Genuine Advantage for a weekend; —KB937061, currently out on Windows Update, which will be re-installed indefinitely on anyone's machine who has installed Visual Studio 2005 without Crystal Reports.

Should we expect Microsoft to be infallible? No, we shouldn't. They are people after all. But choosing when to install items gives us the option to check the blogosphere for issues, avoid installing something during a critical project phase, etc, etc. And by taking the liberty of installing items without asking, you are asserting that you are infallible. Which, obviously, you are not....The Windows Update client, when the 'don't install without asking' option is selected, should not have the capability to install **anything** without asking. I hope you update your policies in this regard. And then update your software so that consent-less upgrades are not even technically possible." ☞

OMUG Supporters

We are thankful for the many people, organizations and businesses who support OMUG.

Below is a list of a few who have given back to the community by assisting OMUG in its mission to help computer users help computer users and their community.

Our supporters provide services and discounts, give of their time, provide space for OMUG activities, introduce OMUG members to new products, share knowledge and expertise, provide OMUG with software and hardware, or provide educational opportunities. All of them are appreciated.

Senior Services for South Sound
Olympia Computer Central
IPMA
Adobe
Microsoft
PowerQuest
Jasc Software
Cartridge Care, Inc

**Idea for a new SIG?
Tell any OMUG board member!**



MEETING LOCATIONS

Capital High School:
2707 Conger Ave NW
in Olympia. Follow the signs to the computer lab from the lower parking lot.

El Sarape Restaurant:
1200 Cooper Point Road in West Olympia near Staples and the Post Office.

The Olympia Center:
222 Columbia Street NW in Olympia.

Note: The computer lab at the Olympia Senior Center is on the second floor behind the boutique.

