



OMUG



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

News

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Olympia Microcomputer Users Group

May 2008

A Veteran Steps Up to the Task

By Max Whipps
OMUG President



Well, here I am at the pinnacle of the OMUG hierarchy! I didn't want to be, as I too am so busy with other activities that I felt I didn't have adequate time left for additional OMUG obligations. Regardless, because not one of our 157 members had volunteered to serve as either president or vice president, I decided to accept the position of president IF a satisfactory member would step up to accept the vice president's position. The vice president's position is perhaps more demanding than any other member of the Executive Board, certainly more than that of president. At the last moment, a very satisfactory member did indeed step up. Vivian Forrester has been a member since January of 2001. She previously served as Secretary and as Public Relations Committee Chair. Her enthusiasm and cognitive breadth will serve our group well

As most of you know, I previously have served as Newsletter Editor from April 1996 – April 1997 and as Treasurer from April 1997 – April 2007. I decided I'd been on the Executive Board long enough and didn't run for office in 2007. I decided I would run

for Director at large in 2008 but when no one else had accepted nomination for president, I decided to accept that nomination instead because, unless someone did, OMUG would have to dissolve. I had invested too much time and effort to allow that to happen—this time.

OMUG's crises have been postponed, not resolved. The group is facing a fiscal crisis in that our income does not equal or exceed our expenses. That will be a high priority issue facing your Executive Board and all suggestions are welcome. An even greater crisis is our falling membership—members available and willing to carry out the myriad of tasks that need to be accomplished if we are to remain a viable entity. From April 2007 to April 2008, OMUG suffered a net loss of 24 primary members down to a new low of 158. I would suggest that if you think OMUG is worth your time and dues, you must have some family and friends you think would also benefit from it. RECRUIT THEM! Don't forget, you too

will benefit in that you will have 3 months added to your membership for every referral you've made that becomes a first time member.

Finally, you should know that those of us who have been carrying OMUG for so many years by performing all the tasks that need doing are getting tired. We need help and relief. We're still willing to give it our best, but we need help. Please let me know if you're willing to help out in whatever capacity you can. I don't want 2008 – 2009 to be OMUG's last year. ☞



May General Meeting

A presentation on Social Networking by Kelsey Smith of Olympia Timberland Library will show you how to make the most of your connections—one of your friends may know just the person you need to connect to in order to accomplish your goals—a new job, a new place to live, whatever! Come and learn more. ☞



EXECUTIVE BOARD

President: Max Whipps
 president@olymug.org 426-7149
Vice-President: Vivian Forrester
 vicepresident@olymug.org
Secretary: Larry Jensen
 secretary@olymug.org 456-3555
Treasurer: Gary Bigger
 treasurer@olymug.org 426-7055
Newsletter Editor: Sr. Dorothy Robinson
 newsletter@olymug.org 438-1771
Webmaster: Pat Sonnenstuhl
 webmaster@olymug.org 943-8933
Director at Large: Arlene Kapner
 Omugdirector1@comcast.net 455-0180
Director at Large: Tonney Yamane
 director2@olymug.org 943-2287
Director at Large: Jim Simmons
 director3@olymug.org

KEY MEMBERS

APCUG Representative:
 John Gerecht (see page 6 for email)
Audit Committee Chair:
 Wim Verhoef
Database Manager:
 Gary Bigger 426-7055
Elections Chair:
 Bob Steinberg
Historian:
 David Belles
Membership Chair: Open
Newsletter Distribution Coordinator:
 Open
Nominating Committee Chair:
 Arlene Kapner (see page 6 for phone)
Public Relations Chair:
 Vivian Forrester
Scholarship Committee Chair:
 Bob Wing
SIG Coordinator: Open
Special Activities Coordinator:
 Glenda Reed 705-8958
Visitors Coordinator:
 Joanne Homolka

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Successful Election

By Larry Jensen
 OMUG Secretary

President Shirley Bellinghausen opened the April 13 General Meeting at 7:00 PM. There were 29 present.

Shirley explained that the possibility of disbanding OMUG was not a threat but a statement of the actual situation. Had not Max and Vivian stepped up, disbanding would have been inevitable. Shirley also stated that many members had indicated that they would be willing to serve in temporary positions and she said they could expect to be called upon.

Bob Wing, Scholarship Committee Chairman, announced that we have received five applications for the \$1000 Scholarship awarded each year by OMUG to a deserving Evergreen College student. Bob asked for volunteers to help read the applications and choose the 2008 recipient. Evergreen is the only school we work with because they are cooperative and don't require a large amount of paperwork.

John Marshall asked for input on subjects for the Hot Topics SIG.

This SIG meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month.

While the ballots were being counted by the Election committee—Don Hertzog, Bob Wing and Joanne Homulka—Phil Vogel presented a short program on Open Office. This is a free open-source office software suite for word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, graphics, databases and more. It stores all data in an international standard format and can read and write files from other common office software such as Word and WordPerfect.

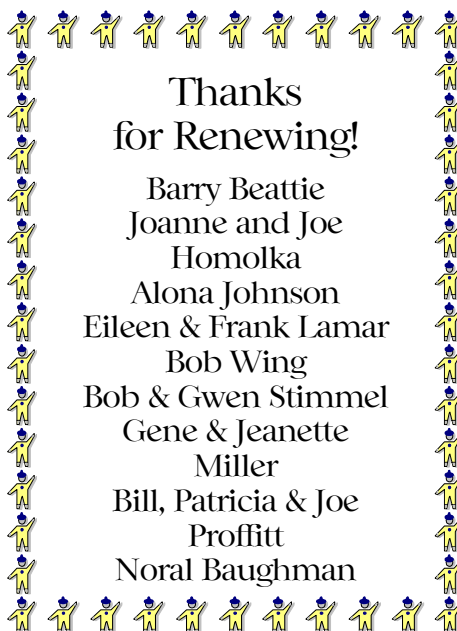
Phil demonstrated the process of downloading the latest version, Open Office 2.3. He showed in the "terms of use" that it may be downloaded free and used for any purpose. It can be used on as many computers as you wish and you can make as many copies as you wish. You can give copies away to anyone you like. Anyone can report bugs, request new features or enhance the software. Many tutorials are available for Open Office.

After Phil was finished, Don Hertzog introduced the new and returning officers. Upon introduction, each gave a short description of their background and experience with OMUG.

The 2008 officers are:

President: Max Whipps
 Vice President: Vivian Forrester
 Secretary: Larry Jensen
 Treasurer: Gary Bigger
 Newsletter Editor: Sister Dorothy Robinson
 Webmaster: Pat Sonnenstuhl
 Directors at large:
 #1 Arlene Kapner
 #2 Tonney Yamane
 #3 Jim Simmons

Thirteen empty ink cartridges were turned in as part of the fund raising effort; and Gary Bigger won the door prize! 🖨



Outgoing & Incoming Board Members Attend

By Larry Jensen
OMUG Secretary



President Shirley Bellinghausen called the April 17 business meeting to order at 7 p.m. Also present: Secretary Larry Jensen, Treasurer Gary Bigger, Webmaster Pat Sonnenstuhl, and Director Marilyn Hanna. Incoming officers present: President Max Whipps, Vice President Vivian Forrester, and Directors Tonney Yamane and Jim Simmons. Absent: Newsletter Editor Sister Dorothy Robinson; Directors Arlene Kapner and Phil Vogel.

Shirley began by reviewing the procedures for Board meetings and introducing each of the present members and asking each of the new members to give a brief resume of their background.

New Vice President Vivian Forrester has already been working on programs for upcoming General Meetings. For the May meeting, she has arranged with Kelsey Smith of the Olympia Timberline Library to give a presentation on Social Networking. There was a discussion of possible programs that had been suggested in the recent survey. Pat said she had material from Microsoft that might be used.

Minutes of the March Board meeting and April General meeting were accepted as amended. Larry explained the procedures for reviewing the minutes via email for new members.

Pat noted that she would update the calendar at the Board meetings and get it to the Newsletter Editor the next day for inclusion in the Newsletter. Pat also gave instructions to new Board members about setting up e-mail accounts so as to be included in the Yahoo Groups Board account.

March income was \$294.37. Expenses were \$212.93. Net income was \$81.44. Gary noted that henceforth bank balances would also be included in the monthly report. At the end of March we had 158 Primary Members, (24 less than last year) and 66 Associate members (1 less than last year).

Since Marilyn is not continuing on the Board, she returned material originally intended for use in putting together the new-members packet. She was totally involved with the Bylaws revision as chairperson, and was not able to work on the packet. Shirley expressed thanks for her hard work.

In unfinished business, Pat set up a Blog, linked to the website, several months ago, but it has not been promoted and so little used. It was decided to continue having it available. Pat will continue to monitor it.

Shirley had a revised version of the survey, which she suggested be included as an insert in the Newsletter and in the

New Members packet. She will send it to the Newsletter Editor as a Word File.

In new business, the Audit Committee needs to be in place by May 14th. Shirley will contact Wim Verhoef.

IPMA: Our inclusion in this annual trade show has been confirmed. It will be held May 20th and 21st at St. Martin's Pavilion. Larry will coordinate scheduling OMUG members who are asked to do two-hour shifts at our table during the show

Super Saturday: This event is held at The Evergreen State College every year. We have been confirmed for a booth. It will be held June 14th.

Sign-in sheets: Vivian suggested that we have sign-in sheets at General Meetings so that we can better contact members who would be available for committee work.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM. ☞

OMUG Income & Expenses March 2008



Income: \$ 294

(Membership Dues- \$260, Raffle Sales \$15, Bank Interest \$2, Donations \$17)

Expenses: \$ 213

(Senior Center Donation \$50, Domain Hosting \$163)

Net Increase: \$ 81

OMUG Treasury as of 04/16/2008

Savings Account Balance:	\$2,121
Scholarship Account Balance:	\$3,534
Checking Account Balance:	\$ 424
To Be Deposited:	\$ 0
Treasury Total:	\$6,079

Hasta La Vista

By Lee Reynolds

Member of Boca Raton Computer Society, Florida

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I'm told the literal meaning of "hasta la vista" in Spanish is "until the seeing." Or maybe a more adequate translation is "see you later."

But in **this** column, I'm using that phrase to invite you to take a look at Microsoft's latest version of Windows: Vista.

Configuring the Taskbar

The Taskbar works very much like previous versions of Windows, particularly XP. You can configure some options on how it operates by right clicking an empty area on it and selecting from a popup context menu.

For example, you can decide:

- ◆ To have various toolbars such as the Quick Launch toolbar and a Desktop or Documents toolbar displayed
- ◆ Show all open windows "cascaded" like a row of dominoes one behind the other, or show them side by side, or one on top of another to cover the desktop
- ◆ Minimize all the windows to show the Desktop
- ◆ Start the Task Manager application; or lock the Taskbar so that its settings cannot be modified without unlocking it first.
- ◆ If you select Properties from the context menu, you are given further ways of customizing the Taskbar.

As in Windows XP, there are options:

- ◆ to auto-hide the Taskbar (it reduces to a very thin line which only becomes visible as a normal Taskbar when you put your mouse over that thin line)
- ◆ keep the Taskbar visible over other open windows,
- ◆ group similar Taskbar buttons for same application in a stacked list.

New Option

A new option available in the Taskbar properties page, is to determine whether or not hovering your mouse over a Taskbar button shows a live preview of the corresponding window (thumbnail.)

Customize the Notification Area

Unlike XP, you now have a separate tab to customize the Notification Area, which is the part of the Taskbar on the right hand side, normally showing the system clock, a volume control for your speakers, a Network icon, a Safely Remove Hardware icon, a Power icon (if you are using a laptop on battery power), and others. You can put a check mark next to Hide Inactive Icons and then click the Customize button, in order to access a list of all icons that have shown up in the Notification Area.

This is broken down into two lists, those icons that are currently showing in the Notification Area, and those that have shown up in the past but are not currently there now. For each icon, you click to access a drop down list to choose Hide when inactive, Hide, or Show.

System Time

One of the things that you can show on the Taskbar is the system time (and that was in previous versions of Windows also), but this now has some modifications.

Hover your mouse over the system time in the Notification Area, you get a balloon tip telling the system date and day of week, but if you click on the system time instead, up pops a nice looking circular clock and a calendar of the current month, with a link to the Control Panel area

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The New, The Best, and The Worst

By Pim Borman

Webmaster,

SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc.

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Editor's note: The philosophy of the **OMUG** Linux SIG is "Our goal is to have fun, learn more about Linux, and in the process, learn to respect all Operating Systems." Please keep this in mind when reading Pim Borman's article.

Do You Ubuntu (yet)? A Linux Update

In February of 2002 I wrote here:

"It has been said that Windows XP is less buggy than its Windows 95, 98, and Me predecessors; damnation by faint praise. XP is also more expensive, can only be used on a single computer, and presents many incompatibilities with existing hardware and software. It hogs resources. That led me to wonder how Linux is coming along."

Replace "XP" with "Vista" and history repeats itself. Furthermore, add that online security has dramatically worsened and that the security of Windows Vista is at best only marginally improved.

At the time I got a copy of the Red Hat Linux 7.2 distribution (list price \$60), included in a 1000+ pages "Linux Bible" and proceeded to evaluate it. I found that the limited software included in the distribution was nice and useful, but trying to install additional programs from the Internet was a nightmare.

Six years later desktop Linux has matured beyond recognition. Linux, later renamed Linspire, was the first distribution making it a one-click operation to download and install software from a large online library. Originally the cost of acquiring Linspire and a one-year subscription to the library was \$100, but

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more recently the service has been available for free. I am still using an older version of Linspire daily, mostly for Web browsing, accessing email, and playing Freecell, Yukon or MahJongg.

In 2004 Marc Shuttleworth, a South African by birth, started a free new Linux distribution called Ubuntu ("humanity towards others"). In 1999 he sold Internet security software he had developed to Verisign for about \$575 million. He spent \$20 million of that on an 8-day trip by Soyuz to the Space Station and had plenty left over for a free software project. By now Ubuntu has become the most advanced and popular desktop Linux distribution, with the help of numerous volunteer contributors.

Ubuntu undergoes continuous upgrades as new and improved software is being developed and tested. Twice a year, in April and October, a new version is released. The latest version is numbered 7.10, for October of 2007, and is nicknamed "Gutsy Gibbon." (The next issue in April, version 8.4, will be named "Hardy Hero." You get the drift).

I installed Ubuntu side-by-side with Windows XP on my desktop computer, equipped with an AMD Athlon64 X2 4800+ dual core processor, 1 GB of RAM and an nVidia GeForce 7600 graphics card. I put it in a separate Linux partition on my hard drive previously used for Linspire. Before committing to the installation I ran Ubuntu off the CD to verify that it was compatible with my hardware.

Once installed, Ubuntu was ready to go. It automatically set up my connection to the Internet with **Firefox**, and with my permission downloaded a large number of updates and additions released since October. The **OpenOffice.org** suite of programs, comparable to MS Office, was ready to go. I already had been using the

Windows version of OpenOffice Writer so there was no learning curve whatsoever. **The Gimp**, an advanced graphics program similar to Adobe Photoshop Elements and with comparable features, came pre-installed. I also found **drivers** for my HP 812C printer and my Epson Perfection 3490 Photo Scanner. With all the necessary tools at hand I had no difficulty producing the January newsletter, including typing the articles, downloading articles from other user groups, and designing the layout and the new masthead. I printed the newsletter ready for Xeroxing and used OpenOffice Writer to save a separate version (omitting treasury data) to pdf format for distribution on the Internet.

Ubuntu provides many additional Linux [or Linux-compatible—Ed.] programs:

Thunderbird, well-known [email] program.

Pidgin, a Messenger graphical multi protocol instant messaging client, capable of using AIM/ICQ, Yahoo!, MSN, IRC, Jabber, Napster, Zephyr, Gadu-Gadu, Bonjour, Groupwise, Sametime, SILC, and SIMPLE all at once.

GRAMPS, genealogy program capable of GEDCOM files that are used in such programs as Family-Tree Maker for Windows. It can produce reports in various formats, such as text, HTML and PDF.

Gnucash can track finances in multiple accounts, keeping running and reconciled balances. It has a graphical user interface, double entry, a hierarchy of accounts, expense accounts (categories), and can import Quicken QIF files and OFX files.

Multiple sound and video programs for burning and reading CDs and DVDs, ripping and creating audio CDs, recording sound clips, playing movies, etc.

Popular games, including **aisleriot** (anagram of solitaire), a large collec-

tion of card games, including Freecell. Also **blackjack**, **glchess**, **gnome-sudoku**, **gnometris** (Tetris), **gnomine** (minesweeper), **mah-jongg**, and many others.

Additional programs can be installed with the **Add/Remove** function. Some powerful Linux programs that are not (yet) specifically adapted for Ubuntu can be retrieved with the **Synaptic** package manager, an easy-to-use graphical program to download applications from the Internet. I used it to download and install **Scribus**, an advanced desktop page layout manager capable of producing commercial grade output in PDF and Postscript. Difficult to use for a non-professional, but it worked just fine.

Installation

It is easy to install Ubuntu and Windows on the same computer in separate partitions. Previously that required manually repartitioning your computer with a program such as Partition Manager, but the latest Ubuntu version, Gutsy Gibbon, includes its own Linux-based partition manager, **GParted**, and automatically uses it to scan your computer for available space and to reconfigure that space (with your approval) to install itself. During boot-up the computer displays a menu of startup options, including Windows or Ubuntu.

I evaluated the ease of installation on an old Dell Inspiron 3800 laptop computer, with a 600 MHz Celeron CPU, 320 MB RAM and 880MB free disk space. Installation alongside the existing Windows Me went flawlessly. The computer didn't have a network card, but Ubuntu recognized the PCMCIA wireless network card and connected to the Internet after I provided the router parameters.

"Sounds Great, But Why Bother?"

For the same reasons people move

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where you can change the date and time settings.

In that area of Control Panel, you can now click on a tab for Additional Clocks and configure up to 2 more different system clocks to be active, each with a different time zone and time of day perhaps. If you do that, then hovering your mouse over the system time in the Notification Area will modify the balloon tip to show all active clocks, whereas clicking on system time will now show all these different clocks side by side, together with the calendar of the current month. 🖨

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out of the city to the suburbs: **security and cost-of-living**. To enjoy the best of both worlds, install Ubuntu side-by-side with a basic Windows program. No need for expensive MS Office or Adobe programs. —Use Ubuntu for safe online access, and keep Windows for those few occasions when Linux does not (yet) provide the means. As time goes by, it will probably be possible to abandon Windows altogether. Give it a try! 🖨

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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.

The Olympia Library:
313 8th Ave SE, corner of 8th and Franklin.

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

