



OMUG



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

News

Vol. 17, No. 4

Olympia Microcomputer Users Group

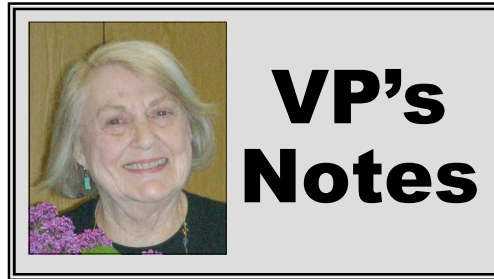
April 2009

We're Off And Running!

By Vivian Forrester
OMUG Vice President

Time for Change? –That was the title of the Past President's article. And mine included the line "together we can move forward and come out of this particular bottleneck."

And we did. We have a full slate of officers who believe in the purpose of OMUG and the place it fills for our community. Let's have a good turnout for the Election of Officers at our next General Meeting on April 9th. Electing officers is only the first step. The officers need the help of eve-



ryone in filling committees to carry OMUG forward.

Your ideas and input are important. The members decided they would like to continue the discussion begun at the March meeting on into our April General Meeting. So you still have a chance to share your thoughts

and hear the ideas of other members.

I will be out of town for the April meeting but will be back for the Business meeting. This Board meeting, according to OMUG By-laws, ". . . shall be a transition meeting with out-going and in-coming Officers expected to attend."

I have enjoyed my year as OMUG Vice President, not only for the pleasant relationship with fellow Board and club members, but for the willingness of community leaders to give presentations to us. ☺

gOS & Cloud

By Sr. Dorothy Robinson
OMUG News Editor

A while back I wrote a little piece on "cloud computing," the growing concept of using your computer as a tool to access programs and services online rather than having everything on your computer.

Recently, I followed a link in the Tech Republic newsletter on Linux and Open Source—and found information about an operating system called Good OS, or gOS. Good OS claims to make a Linux operating system "for the rest of us," which implies "easy to use." I'm not sure

about this since I've still got it on my To-Do list to download and try. The 3rd major release since 2007, gOS Gadgets is a full desktop operating system for laptops or desktops. You may recall the \$199 Everex gPC which was introduced at that big discount store in November 2007—gOS was its operating system.

Also a while back, Paul Braget helped me install Ubuntu on a new computer for our Spirituality Center. When we booted it up the first time, both of us got a big surprise. A tiny version of Linux called Splashtop was the first thing we saw only seconds after turning on the computer. Splashtop gave us the opportunity to use the browser for looking around the Internet or check email, or to go

to the second operating system—Windows XP. We were blown away! And excited. Paul had heard of this but hadn't seen it before. And what a great idea! Say you don't really want to do any word processing, just check your web email and maybe find a map to your friend's house—literally in seconds, you're in business with Splashtop.

Soooo, I was wondering when this concept might be coming to another PC near me. And it seems the time is sooner than I thought.

Good OS also has a small Linux OS called Cloud. From what I read, it looks very like the one described above. Cloud is "optimized for netbooks"—but seems to me it could be

Continued on page 6...Cloud



EXECUTIVE BOARD

President: Open

Vice-President: Vivian Forrester
v4omugvp@yahoo.com

Secretary: Larry Jensen
secretary@olymug.org 456-3555

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Newsletter Editor: Sr. Dorothy Robinson
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Director at Large: Tonney Yamane
director2@olymug.org 943-2287

Director at Large: Open
director3@olymug.org

Past President: Max Whippes

KEY MEMBERS

APCUG Representative:
John Gerecht (see page 6 for email)

Audit Committee Chair:
Wim Verhoef

Budget Committee Chair:
Shirley Bellinghausen

Database Manager:
Gary Bigger 426-7055

Elections Chair:
Don Hertzog

Historian: Open

Membership Chair: Open

Newsletter Distribution Coordinator:
Phil Vogel

Nominating Committee Chair:
Open

Public Relations Chair: Open

Scholarship Committee Chair:
Bob Wing

SIG Coordinator: Open

Special Activities Coordinator:
Open

Visitors Coordinator:
Open

The Olympia Microcomputer Users Group is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization dedicated to helping computer users improve their skills with computers.

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A Full Slate of Candidates...

By Larry Jensen
OMUG Secretary

Vice President Vivian Forrester opened the March 12 General Meeting at 7:00 PM. There were 36 present. Vivian began by introducing two new members, Nancy Moss and Huldah Martin.

Vivian explained that we had a problem; elections to the Executive Board are to be held in April and we still don't have a complete slate of candidates. There was nobody running for President or Vice President and without those officers, the club would not be able to continue.

Paul Braget volunteered to run for President, so Vivian then described the role of the Vice President, who, aside from standing in for the President in his/her absence, would be responsible for obtaining

programs for the General meetings. She said that she had had no problems finding programs and that she had had very positive reactions about OMUG from the people she had contacted.

During the course of the meeting, Huldah Martin volunteered to run for Vice President so the slate of candidates, as of the end of the meeting was:

President:	Paul Braget
Vice President:	Huldah Martin
Secretary:	Richie Cunningham
Treasurer:	Bill Smith
Webmaster:	Conrad Schuler
Newsletter Editor:	Sr. Dorothy Robinson
Director at Large:	Arlene Kapner
Director at Large:	Vivian Forrester
Director at Large:	Noral Baughman

Editor's note: See page 3 for updated slate.

Vivian mentioned that it was desirable that members of the board have assistants that can sit in at meetings when they are unable to attend.

The second part of the meeting was a "Town Hall" where it was intended that the problems the club is having—finding candidates, filling committee positions, low member turnout and declining membership—could be discussed and solutions suggested. There was a prolonged discussion where many different ideas were offered. These seemed to divide into two parts; what should the club be offering and how do we get the word out.

Welcome, New & Returning Members!

Huldah Martin
Joseph Svinth

Thanks for Renewing!

Vincent & Lenora Hughes
Clyde Bachman
Conrad Schuler and
Vanessa Klimkova
Dean French
Joanne & Joe Homolka
George & Helen Lanning
Marilyn Hanna

Continued on page 5...Elections

...And Then Some

By Larry Jensen
OMUG Secretary



Vice President Vivian Forrester opened the March 19 Business Meeting at 7:10 PM. **Present:** Vice President Vivian Forrester; Secretary Larry Jensen; Treasurer Gary Bigger; Newsletter Editor Sister Dorothy Robinson; Director at Large Tonney Yamane. **Absent:** Past President Shirley Bellinghausen; Webmaster Pat Sonnenstuhl; Director at Large Arlene Kapner **Visitors:** Members Joe Ryan, Don Hertzog, and Paul Braget

Vivian reminded us that the election of officers will be held at the April meeting. The program will be a continuation of the discussion of the future of OMUG which was begun at the last General Meeting. Since Vivian won't be here to conduct the meeting, Secretary Larry Jensen will have that privilege. The May program will be a discussion of Excel by Glenda Reed.

The minutes for previous meetings were accepted.

Total income in February was \$147.00. Expenses were \$440.78. Net income was -\$292.88. At the end of February we had 146 Primary Members, (20 fewer than a year ago), and 65 Associate Members, (23 fewer than a year ago).

In unfinished business, Gary reported on TechSoup. TechSoup Stock is an on line product donation service that connects Non-Profits such as OMUG with technology product donations from more than 25 leading corporation and non-profit technology partners. At the board's direction, Gary will order several programs for use by OMUG. Total cost will be \$120.00.

Gary also talked about our brochures. We don't know how many we have left because Max has some of them. He will bring them to the Lunch Bunch Tuesday. If it turns out that we need more, we will ask Noral about printing them. We could then take them to Office Depot to be folded. They will charge \$6.97 to fold 300. Gary has made some minor changes in the brochure which were approved by the board, subject to proof reading.

Vivian will see to it that we are listed in The Olympians' annual "Source Book."

In new business, according to OMUG standing rules, "Nominations are closed at the end of the March business meeting. Write-in candidates are allowed at the election."

Gary nominated Larry for Secretary, and as of the close of this Board meeting, the candidates were as follows:

President:	Paul Braget
Vice-President:	Huldah Martin
Secretary:	Richie Cunningham Larry Jensen
Treasurer:	Bill Smith
Newsletter Editor:	Sr. Dorothy Robinson
Webmaster:	Conrad Schuler
Directors at Large:	Noral Baughman Vivian Forrester Arlene Kapner

Vivian appointed Don Hertzog as Chair of the Election committee.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM 🖨️

OMUG Income & Expenses February 2009



Income: \$148

(Membership Dues \$140, Raffle Sales \$6,
Bank Interest \$2)

Expenses: \$441

(Senior Center Donation \$50, Newsletter supplies \$312,
Farewell cake for Max \$37, Membership Committee Stamps
\$27, Speaker gift \$15)

Net Decrease: \$293

OMUG Treasury as of 3/18/09

Savings Account Balance:	\$2,870
Scholarship Account Balance:	\$2,010
Checking Account Balance:	\$ 543
To Be Deposited:	\$ 0
Less Outstanding Checks:	\$ 57
Treasury Total:	\$5,366

OpenDNS

By Sister Dorothy Robinson
OMUG News Editor

I have started using OpenDNS for our small business/home office network, and as a result have become aware of things that were, before, invisible to me.

First, I didn't know that one could choose Domain Name Servers! I thought that the ones given us by our ISP were cast in stone until *they* decided to change them (which has happened at least once).

OpenDNS offers servers that they say run "some of the largest DNS caches on the Internet and do it on our own high-performance network, running our own software" and therefore, they say, these servers are much faster than many ISP DNSs.

Also, "the more people using OpenDNS, the more addresses our caches are holding at any given time. Our global routing technology makes your DNS requests route automatically to the OpenDNS server closest to you, making Web sites load noticeably faster." What this means is that instead of having to refer your request on to another server (or more) which might have the address you want, you get a response from the first server—at OpenDNS; at least, this is their working premise.

OpenDNS also provides security in the form of web content filtering and phishing protection. There are many other services included; check it out by going to <http://opendns.com>

I found out while nosing around my OpenDNS dashboard that I

could block domains that we don't want on our network. General levels of blocking are available--

High: Protects against all adult-related sites, illegal activity, social networking sites, video sharing sites, and general time-wasters.

Moderate: Protects against all adult-related sites and illegal activity.

Low: Protects against pornography and phishing.

Minimal: Protects against phishing attacks.

Custom: Choose the categories you want to block.

And in addition to these general categories, I can look at the traffic on our network via the dashboard and block individual domains, e.g. the ones that I know are ad-related. OpenDNS-related domains cannot be blocked. OpenDNS is a free service, and they make money with ads—which is a small price to pay for the protection provided. I haven't noticed any obnoxious ad behavior from them.

As I was going through the domains that were on the traffic list for our network, I looked up some of them just to see what they were before deciding to block them or not. I ran across one with several variations but all ending in "s.ytimg.com," and when I did a search I found a

blog called Keith's Place at <http://www.keiths-place.com/blogs/keith/2008/stop-youtube-sytingcom-video-camera-spying> Keith has information that sounds very Big (Commercial) Brother-ish. This may not be news to you, but I found it surprising.

Apparently Adobe's Flashplayer, used to view videos and play games, etc, has the ability to access the microphone and webcam of individual computers. It is possible to deny this access—but who knew?? A global way of denying it is to go to http://www.macromedia.com/support/documentation/en/flashplayer/help/settings_manager02.html#118539 and change the settings.

The Settings Manager looks like an image on the page, but is actually the manager. On the Global Privacy tab, click on Always Deny (access to your microphone and camera), then click Confirm in the confirmation box which pops up.

Keith also details a way to turn off this access just on youtube.com.....but why would you want to do just one website?

So after I did this resetting of Flashplayer, I thought I'd block all the s.ytimg.com domains shown in my OpenDNS dashboard, so I did that. However, when I looked at youtube.com again, there were no pictures--just text links to videos. I unblocked s.ytimg.com and the pictures showed up again.

But when I right clicked on one of the video pictures, there was the option to block s.ytimg.com, so I

Continued on page 5...OpenDNS

There were several suggestions about the General Meetings:

*SIG leaders put on a demonstration SIG meeting to show the members what goes on at those meetings.

*Find out what programs people would come to. (David Campbell volunteered to develop a survey form that could be put on the website).

*Target different skill levels at different meetings.

*Consider a night other than Thursday.

*Fewer meetings.

*Have a night when members could bring in their laptops.

*Have programs aimed at specific audiences.

There was some discussion of why people might not come to meetings. Conflicting meetings on the same night and lack of interest in the subject of the meeting were suggested. On the other hand over one hundred members that seldom come to General Meetings continue to be members, so they must be getting something out of it. The Reflector and the Newsletter are obviously valuable.

Getting the word out about OMUG was discussed and there were some suggestions for what we might do differently were offered:

*Make sure that each member has a supply of brochures to hand out to friends and acquaintances.

*Greater distribution of brochures to store bulletin boards and other public places.

*Put notices on local radio and TV stations

*Look at putting information on the Senior Center reader board

John Gerecht noted that we cannot expect to get the younger people. They have grown up with computers and don't need our help. The people that we need to approach are the middle aged who are just now deciding to learn to use computers and don't know where to turn for help.

Shirley Bellinghausen told everyone how pleased she was by the turnout. She had been very worried that if people didn't come together, the club would cease to exist.


Paul Braget described how the people interested in Linux were able to form a group in OMUG which has expanded from one meeting a month to one a week.

Vivian reminded everyone of the April elections and asked if people would like to continue this discussion at the April meeting. There was general agreement that they would, so that, and the election will be the April program.

Sister Dorothy Robinson won the drawing. 

clicked it and Firefox gave a message that those would always be blocked, with an Undo possibility. So I busily right clicked on some other video pictures and found s.ytimg.com with other numbers attached, and blocked those too. Suddenly I found that the pictures were disappearing.....and there was no Undo. Eeek!


OK, back to my research! By searching Firefox knowledgebase I found that someone had a similar problem, and the solution given was to remove the website in question from Tools—Options—Content—Load images automatically—**Exceptions**. Well, duh.

So my conclusion is that it's a good thing to be able to block unwanted domains...but also that one must exercise a bit of caution! Also, I am not certain that our connections are faster...but our Linux SIG leader, who has also started using it, says his definitely are faster. 

RadioTime

I took my SmartComputing magazine along to read while waiting at the dentist's office recently. One of my favorite people is, yep, Mr. Modem. I like his sense of humor, mostly, but also his tips and his occasional list of websites to investigate.

One of the websites he listed this time was <http://radiotime.com> which I hadn't seen before. Although I've done a bit of radio-browsing on the Internet, Radio Time is a really good source for

streaming radio shows—music, sports, talk, news—local and otherwise. Not every station I tried worked, and I found that if it did not connect fast it was not likely to connect at all. While connecting, there is a hint about how reliable the connection is—and usually the ones that said “100% reliable for all [or most] users” worked for me, but some of the others worked too. There is a listing of Internet Only radio with a lot of different music genres. If you haven't listened to radio online before, check it out! 

—Sr. Dorothy Robinson, Editor

Continued from page 1...**Cloud**

used for just about anything. Of course, there may be reasons why not.....but hey, I can dream!

OK, feet back on the ground. According to the website, Cloud hasn't been released yet, and will "initially be released online for specific netbooks only." They plan a "private Beta" which they say should begin in March this year—but I don't think it has happened yet. A notice that "Specific target Netbook platforms will be listed here prior to the private beta release" is posted on the Private Beta page, but none are listed yet. I don't happen to have a netbook, or I'd be getting on the list for this! If you do have one and want to participate in Beta testing, email your name and netbook model to beta@thinkgos.com The website address, if you want to do some snooping yourself, is <http://thinkgos.com>

Lots of us do web email and some of us do other kinds of Internet business—i.e. using online word processors and other programs. Online photo and other file storage is also gaining ground. I suspect that for anything other than basic functions, though, having the program or application on one's own computer is still the best way to go—because those applications, so far, are still much more complex and allow us to do more sophisticated things than cloud applications. That could change.

But *right now*—we could be getting online in seconds! Now some people wouldn't get the thrill, but I know all you OMUGers will resonate. 🖥️

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
Cartridge Care, Inc
Ubuntu
Canonical, Ltd.

**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.

