

Mountain Bits & Bytes

The Award Winning Monthly Publication of the Mountain Computer User Group

Vol. 9, Issue #2

MCUG Christmas Auction Benefits Local Charities



Jim Bell, President of the Mountain Computer User Group, left, presents a \$500 check to Kathy Hollis, Executive Director of the S.A.F.E. organization as George Donegan Sec/Treasurer of the Mountain Computer User Group, looks on.



Jim Bell, President of the Mountain Computer User Group presents a \$500 check to Harold Cornwell, founder of the Wilderness Scouts, as John Yandell, Vice President of the Mountain Computer User Group, looks on. The funds were raised recently at the MCUG annual Christmas auction.

Google On Program Feb 9

The 7 p.m. February 9 MCUG program will feature the world of Google.

Google started as a search engine designed to help us find web sites of interest on the world wide web and has grown far beyond that.

Our program will cover advanced searching as well the myriad applications available in the Google family. Configuring the Google start page, using add-ons and configuring your preferences are just a few of the topics we will cover.

The program will be lead by Jim Bell, MCUG President and will open to all. Bring a friend and come join us.

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Pictured left to right is Donna Howell of the Mountain Regional Library in Young Harris accepting a check from George Donegan of the Mountain Computer User Group. This money will be used update technology books in the library.

February 2009

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MCUG Monthly Meeting Schedule

The Mountain Computer User Group (MCUG) meets at 7 p.m. on the second Monday of every month in the Wilson Lecture Hall (Room 201) of the Goolsby Building on the campus of Young Harris College in Young Harris, GA.

The regular meeting is preceded by a question and answer session at 6 p.m.

All regular monthly meetings and SIGs are open to everyone regardless of membership status.

MCUG Membership

Annual dues are \$20 and extend membership privileges to two (2) members of a household. Membership privileges include: special discounts on vendor products, access to products for evaluation and review, and association with a great bunch of people.

Affiliation

The Mountain Computer User Group is a member of APCUG, a nonprofit international organization dedicated to promoting communications between PC user groups and the computer industry.

Group Purpose

The Mountain Computer User Group is a nonprofit, tax-exempt educational organization without corporate or vendor affiliation. Its purpose is the encouragement and advancement of computer information and knowledge through "users helping users".

Door Prize winners:

Here are the winners of door prizes at the January MCUG meeting.

Jim Bell

Roger Hove

Gary Mashburn

Judi Boulware

Nancy Kelly

John Sherer

Shirley Tendel

FastStone Is Versatile Tool To Capture Items From Screen

By Richard Kennon Member Amador Computer Users Group, Jackson, CA

Sometimes there are other things you may want to copy from your screen that may not lend themselves to the PrtScr method, says Dick Carricato of the Tri County Computer User Group in Florida, in his article about copying pictures from your computer screen

This is especially true of lists in drop down boxes that require a scroll bar down the right side. PrtScr will only show the portion of the list that shows. For instance, I write a (almost) monthly newsletter on the web and usually include a bunch of pictures. I like to have a hard copy of the picture thumbnails at hand to remind me of things to say. This is always a scrolling window. Often I want a hardcopy of a menu, too.

I have found FastStone Capture to be a perfect answer to my needs. You can try it free by going to <http://www.faststone.org/>. Then, if you like it, as I do, you can purchase a lifetime license for \$19.95.

You can capture and annotate anything on the screen including windows, objects, menus, full screen, rectangular/freehand regions and scrolling windows/web pages. Editing tools include annotating, resizing, cropping, sharpening, watermarking, edge effects and many more. Of course, you can transfer the image to any editor of choice. You can either print the copy or save it in one of eight different formats. I choose JPEG. Further, you can choose the resolution of the saved image. I don't know if it actually improves the resolution or just resizes to more pixels.

Of course, it features a bunch of hot key combinations but, with my memory, this is not useful. Instead I rely on the small box of choices at the bottom right of my screen. I find it extremely useful and use it almost every day.

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Software Review...

Zoomware Boon To Vision Impaired Computer User

by George Donegan, MCUG member

Zoomware is a simple, affordable screen magnifier product designed for individuals with early vision loss. Those of us who squint at the computer screen and lean in to read the fine print.

Zoomware is easy to learn and use, all the features are just a click away. Installation was a snap and took a matter of minutes to complete the installation and registration.

With Zoomware, its product features and screen enhancements relieve eye strain and fatigue from viewing a computer screen. It does not matter if you use it at home or at work doing reports or checking your email. This product allows you to get a much clearer view of everything on your computer screen.

The Zoomware user interface has all the controls for using Zoomware. The interface consists of intuitive buttons, toolbars, menus and dialogs that are quick and easy to learn. The menu button provides access to a variety of Zoomware program settings, including saving and restoring settings, the Zoomware help system and program options.

The **On/off** button turns Zoomware on and off without exiting the program. When Zoomware is turned off all magnification features are disabled.

The **Zoom In** button increases magnification 2x.

The **Zoom Out** decreases the magnification level...

The **View Tab** displays controls for selecting the magnified view: Full View, Large Lens or Small Lens. The **Color Tab** Displays Controls for selecting the color mode: Normal,



Reverse Video, or Tint

The **Pointer Tab** displays controls for choosing the appearance of the mouse pointer: Normal, Small Colored Pointer, or Large Colored Pointer.

The **Cursor Tab** displays controls for choosing the appearance of the text cursor: Normal Cursor or Enhanced Cursor.

Using Zoomware is a snap. You can leave it open and sitting in the middle of your screen for immediate access. A single click will put it to work for you at once. Click on the On-button and you are off and running. Click on one of the icons under view for full screen, large view or the small view and you are in business. From there you can move in any direction you please or

should I say any direction you need to go. You can click on the zoom-in button to increase to magnification up to 2x or as much as you need up to 2x, that depends on the individual. A quick click on the color tab changes everything for you. You can go from Normal to reverse video which gives you a black background with white text or your next choice gives you a choice of a multitude of colors that you can choose from. I am sure you will find one that pleases your eyes.

Next we move to the pointer tab, we go from the normal pointer to the colored normal tab then to the large colored pointer. Something for everybody, just play with it until you find the one you like. Then comes the cursor tab, it makes your cursor do weird things. You'll have to work with it until you get it down pat. All in all I found Zoomware to be a very good program and to be a big asset to those with vision loss. Zoomware has system requirements of Windows Vista or XP only, 1GHz Pentium 4 or equivalent, 1.5 GHz for Vista, 512 MB of Ram, 1 GHz for Vista, 50 MB of free hard disk space Zoomware can be purchased on line at www.getzoomware.com for \$149.00 downloadable only. You can download it and also receive a hard copy for \$175.00.

**The Mountain Computer User Group Thanks Generous Donors
Who Made the Annual Christmas Auction A Huge Success**

Members of the Mountain Computer User Group

**Enrico's Restaurant
Hiawassee, GA**

**Monte Alban
Hiawassee, GA**

**Doyle's
Cedar Hill Restaurant
Murphy, N.C.**

**Crossroads Restaurant
Hiawassee, GA**

**Country Cottage Deli
Hayesville, N.C.**

**Discount Office Supply
Hayesville, N.C.**

**Always Christmas
Hiawassee, GA**

**Totally Computers
Hiawassee, GA**

**Computer Connection
Hayesville, GA**

**Michaelle's
Chocolate Cafe
Hiawassee, GA**

**Daniel's
Steak House
Hiawassee, GA**

See The Old Vinyl Look Now In Verbatim CDs

A Review by: George Donegan, MCUG Member

Since its beginning in 1969, Verbatim has been at the forefront of the evolution in data storage technology. Today, more than 39 years later, Verbatim remains one of the most recognizable names in the data storage industry. Verbatim's leadership role is especially apparent in the evolution of optical media recording including MO and the CD/DVD family of products.

The product I tested was the new CD's with the Vinyl coating. They closely resemble the "old" 78 RPM records. They have a series of 3 tracks on them and come in 3



different colors, rose, green and blue. They look like a miniature of the old vinyl records of long long ago. My first test of the Verbatim CD was to burn a rose colored CD with 40 MP3 songs and it came out perfect. It sounded so good you would have thought it came off the shelf at Wal-Mart. I can highly recommend these CD's for your recording projects. They will certainly stand out from the regular run of the mill CD recordings. The vinyl coating along with the different colors has put these Verbatim CD's in a class all by themselves.

Windows 7 Coming To A Computer Near You Soon

By Sandy Berger, CompuKISS

If you ask 100 people their impressions of the Microsoft Vista operating system, 95 of them will tell you that Vista is no good, even if they have never seen or used it.

It is obvious that public opinion of Vista is in the mud. Microsoft made some major blunders when they introduced Vista. There were not enough drivers ready, so many printers, scanners, and other peripherals were incompatible. There

was no noticeable speed increase over Windows XP. Vista requires much additional memory and more hardware, so it was often impossible to upgrade

current Windows XP computers. Also, Microsoft did not woo the press as they did when they introduced Windows XP, so Vista got a lot of awful publicity. Vista is not a bad operating system, but Vista has gotten a bad name. Microsoft has lost the battle and they know it. So they are working on a new Windows operating system.

Microsoft hopes to make a clean break with previous Windows operating systems with this new version of Windows. They are especially distancing the new operating system from the "wicked" Vista operating system. This is obvious in the name they

have chosen for the new OS. They are not using year names like Windows 2000. They are not using what they refer to as inspirational names, like XP or Vista. Instead,



Find What You are Looking For . . .

Perfecting Search Techniques Can Save You Time

By Sharon Housley, VP, NotePage managing Marketing for FeedForAll

Performing and perfecting search engine results can save web surfers lots of time and energy.

Understanding the nuances of searching allows researchers to immediately drill down and locate the information they are seeking, without having to wade through a myriad of irrelevant search results in the process. The increasing complexity of search engines has made understanding search engines a necessity for those who spend any amount of time online. The following search tips are standards that will work in most of the major search engines.

How To Find What You Are Looking For?

As the popularity of the Internet grows, more and more results are returned for even the most obscure search phrases. In order to save time, web surfers need to increase their search relevancy. It is advisable to use multiple search terms to produce better search results. Searchers should use specific words and phrases to find what they're are looking for, while filtering out irrelevant and unwanted results.

In searching, more usually means less. Using more keywords in a search will help qualify the search and make it more specific to what you are looking for. It is all about striking a balance; more search terms will reduce the number of search results, but those results will be more accurate. Remember that you can always refine the search further if there are too many results returned in the initial search.

Capitalization Is Irrelevant

The major search engines ignore capitalization. Upper case and lower case search phrases will deliver the same results.

Order Matters

Keep in mind that the order in which the terms are entered into the search box will affect the search results. The most important terms should appear first in the list of search words.

Word Stemming

Major search engines will provide results that use word stemming. Word stemming includes variants of the terms that were searched for. For example, searching on the term fish in a major search engine will

generate organic search results that also contain the terms fishing, fishes, and fisher.

Be Precise

Using quotations around a search phrase will generate search results that contain only that specific search phrase, exactly as it was entered. For example, searching on the exact phrase "rocking horse" in a major search engine will only generate search results that contain the phrase rocking horse. The results will not include any results that contain "horse rocking" — even though both terms appear, they do not appear in the proper order for an exact match.



Do Not Include

Adding a (-) negative/minus sign

before a search term will filter the results so that they contain the first term but not the negated word. For example, entering the search phrase horses -rocking into a major search engine will return search results about horses but not about rocking horses.

Must Include

If you want search results that only include a specific word, just type a (+) plus sign in front of a search term. The results produced will always contain that term. For example, conducting a search horse + carousel will result in all search results that contain carousel, and may include horse as well.

Similar Words

Adding a (~) tilde character in front of a search word will generate search results that not only include the specified search term, but will also include all words considered to be related to the original search term. For example, using the search term ~soda will result in organic search engine results that not only include soda, but also include Pepsi, pop, cola, coke, bottle, and soft drink.

Either/Or

Adding an OR parameter between two search terms will result in search listings that include either the first or the second word in the search results. For example,

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Perfect Search Techniques For Better Results

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searching on the terms soda OR bottle will generate search results that may contain both terms soda bottle or it will produce results that contain either soda or bottle but not both in the same search listings.

Advanced Searches And Segmented Searches

Many search engines allow you to specify the type of content you wish to search in. For example, you can often search just news articles, just blogs, or just images. If you are looking for a specific type of media, segmenting your search can be helpful. Searches can be conducted to locate webpages that contain a specific language, or a specific file type (ie. pdf, rss, etc). Simply use the search engine's advanced search option and select the content, language, file type, etc to filter your search results.

Search Meta Words

Meta keyword searches give search engines special instructions. When the meta search words are used, a specific type of search is conducted. Here are some of the most common meta search terms...

define: When define: is used at the beginning of a search word or phrase, the search engine results will be a definition of the word or phrase.

site: When site: is entered in the search box, followed by a domain, the search engine locates all documents within a specific domain and all of its subdomains. This is an easy way to get a rough idea of the number of pages indexed on a domain.

link: When link: is used and followed by a URL, the search results will include all the web pages that are indexed by the search engine which contain links to the specified URL.

inurl: When inurl: is used, followed by a keyword or phrase, the search results will include links to web pages that contain the specific keyword or phrase in the urls themselves.

intitle: When intitle: is searched on in conjunction with a keyword or phrase, the search engine locates search results that contain the specified keyword or phrase in the web page title.

Web surfers can save large amounts of time and energy by optimizing their search techniques with these helpful tips.

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Windows 7 Is Coming Soon

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small Netbooks that are now running Windows XP or Unix because Windows Vista cannot run on their small solid state drives.

Windows 7 will boot up and shut down faster. It will have improved battery life on laptops. It is also promised to have an easier-to-use interface and to be easier to network in a home environment.

Although Microsoft is officially targeting January 2010 for the launch of Windows 7, logic indicates that they will have Windows 7 ready for next year's holiday selling season.

This holiday season you'll find some great prices on computers running Microsoft Vista. If all goes well, when the holiday season rolls around in 2009, the stores will be filled with computers running the next version of Windows, Windows 7. Microsoft has made mistakes before, but I think they will do everything they possibly can to make Windows 7 a winner. So if you are looking to buy a new PC, this year will be a good time to buy, but, if you can wait, next year may be even better.

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If you have any comments, criticism, ideas or suggestions for the newsletter, subjects you would like to see discussed or questions in general please Email them to mcug1220@hughes.net.

A Software Review...

Roxio Improves CD/DVD Burning Applications

By John Roy, President, TPCUG (The PC Users Group of CT), CT

Roxio, a division and brand of Sonic Solutions, continues as the premiere must have CD/DVD burning suite. This product is a collection of key applications bundled into an attractive launching interface.

Key applications provided are CD/DVD burning tools, Audio, Photo, and Video tools, and more. The Roxio suite provides support applications necessary to effectively use your computer just like Microsoft Office suite provides key office software.

When I reviewed Easy Media Creator Version 10 last year I was impressed with how clean the interface was for the multitude of applications within the suite. The latest version further simplifies the application selection process with the use of pleasing colors and descriptive icons. It also provides a direct link to online tutorials and other information. The only distraction from the clean interface is the "Learn More" window that connects to the Roxio website to promote the sale of additional products.

The application interface Home Page presents the core tasks for most users. The tasks include burning and labeling discs, ripping audio, copy and converting DVD video and backing up files. Selecting one of the primary applications will quickly open the application and you are ready to start.

There was some initial confusion of how to return to the previous page because the new page did not have a cancel button. If you closed the page with the standard "x" selection it would close the whole product. After a short examination I realized that the left set of icons were still available to select and return to home or another application. Although further review disclosed inconsistencies in returning to the home page depending upon which application you opened. So some applications you must close using the "x" and others if you use the "x" you will close everything down and have to reopen the whole product. This area needs better consistency.

When you select an application group using the left icons (Data-copy, Video- Movies, Music-Audio, Photo, and Online) a clean screen opens up with sub grouping to further home in on your desired application. The Data-Copy screen provides three groupings of Create, Copy, and Backup. Each grouping contains subtasks to further refine your application selection. There are nine defined tasks associated with Data-Copy. The long time favorite Roxio Creator Classic is now disguised as "Burn Data Disc - Advanced" but it still opens the original application and still reflects the original name. It

appears that this popular tool is still the same with a different entry skin. The application was always sound so the fact that it is still there in its original attire is not a problem other than the interface name.

The Video-Movies group, Music-Audio group, and Photo group all contain four subgroups (Import, Edit, Create, Enjoy) with eleven to sixteen subtasks each. The names are very generic which in my opinion keeps concepts familiar. Executing a generic name launches a familiar Roxio application.

In addition to the icon selections there are three pull down windows, File, Tools, and Help. The file and help selections are pretty standard. The Tools pull down provides a couple of ease of access clicks like ejecting and closing the drive tray, getting disc information and some alternate ways to jump to a few selected applications. There is an extensive Options choice to configure user defaults.

The latest Roxio Creator 2009 version does provide some new tools like the ability to capture High Definition (HD) video and burn it onto standard DVDs. There is now an Audiobook Creator that makes it easy to convert and enjoy books on iTunes, iPod, iPhone or other portable players. There is an audio beatmatching tool to produce studio like fades and mixes.

I found the new SyncIt desktop gadget tool cool but short on instructions. It converts and sends digital media directly to your portable device. Since I don't own a portable device I couldn't appreciate its value. You can now share photos and slideshows on line including uploading directly to YouTube.

I tested this version of Roxio on my new Vista 64bit system with an AMD Quad-Core processor and 5 GB of memory. I didn't experience any installation problems but it was disconcerting that some applications did not load crisp and fast as expected even though my system is clean and devoid of startup programs.

Okay, what is the bottom line on this latest version? If you don't already own a Roxio suite then I highly recommend you give serious consideration to purchasing this since it will serve as a primary computer application suite. If you presently own Easy Media Creator version 9 or 10 and it meets your immediate requirements then you can afford to wait if the new features and enhancements are not important to you.

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The Art And Science of Creating Great Presentations

by Gregory West, Editor for the Sarnia Computer Users' Group

There is nothing worse than a bad presentation. We have all, at one time or another, have been forced to sit and watch a slide show presentation, praying it will improve with time. Unfortunately, the odds are against us.

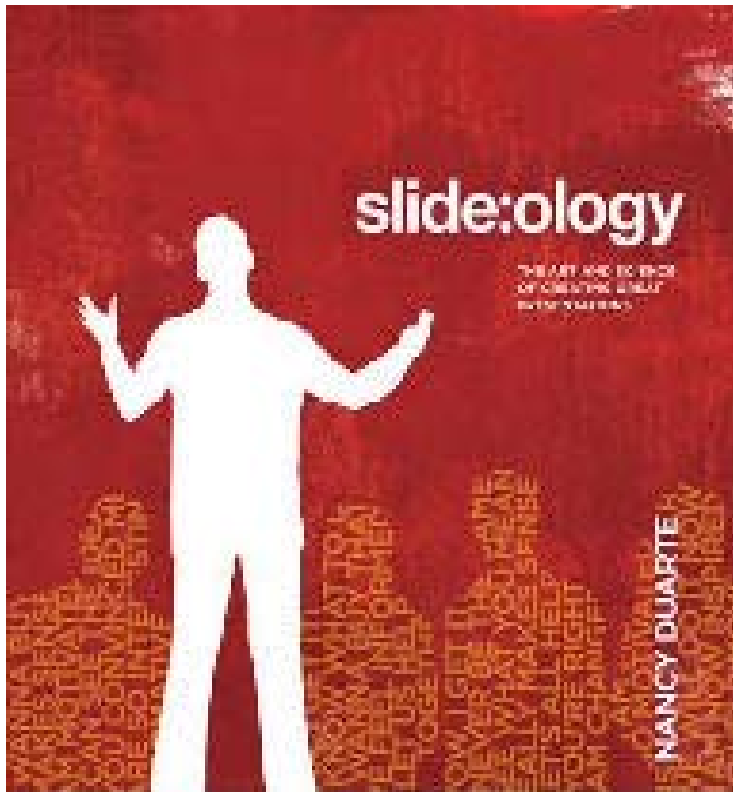
Sadly, these are professionals giving these presentations; so it must get better, right? Unfortunately, all-too-often these professional presentations go sour and chase instead of attract potential interests. What goes wrong? The answers are on each of the 274 pages of this book.

The introduction clearly points out that this book is not a manual for PowerPoint; it is a book is a "reference book" and it teaches the "why". The format is a coffee-table design, laying flat for easy reference, with large vivid colour pictures and designs throughout. The book begins giving you a brief history of presentations and why presentations are an important part of companies who "spend millions of dollars on advertising, marketing, and PR to attract and retain customers" and they have a need to create effect presentations to get their message out to prospective clients.

You will find several interesting Case Studies that Durate has created to show how some companies create "World Class Presentations" in simply terms, and quite frankly very easy to create. For example, one Case Study shows how Mark Templeton used communication and story telling "and his innate ability to think visually" in order to make it pay off.

There is a lot of behind-the-scenes psychology in creating presentations and Durate is ubiquitous in providing ongoing information. From the concept of "Creating Ideas, Not Slides", to "Thinking Like a Designer", Durate shows how simple it really is to create professional presentations that promote

interest using "Visual Elements" and "Creating Movement". There is are amazing sections on color psychology and text typesetting styles that go well beyond slide presentations that you may ever read twice as I did. I love the "Dissecting a Font" section where you learn the "personality" of various fonts and why they are used in various forms of presentations to make a point or grab your attention without you realizing it.



As you travel through this book you will look at a presentation with a new sense of vision. And if you have to do a presentation you will not make the mistakes that all-too-many professionals do each and every day throughout the world.

This book is a good read from cover to cover. It can be opened at any chapter where I guarantee you won't be able to put it back down. It is a great reference book to give you the insight and boost you may need to make your presentation work for you and your audience. I highly recommend this book to not only presenters but also viewers who just may become the best critics out there.

Watch this video for a taste of the book:

<http://www.shockmd.com/wp-content/slide-ology1.jpeg>

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The Art And Science
of Creating Great Presentations

by Nancy Duarte
Published by O'Reilly Media

US/CAN \$34.99

Writing Tablet Is Handy Addition For A Computer

By Jerry Goldstein, Vice-President The PCUG of Connecticut

Tabula rasa (blank slate) has new meaning when you hold a pen to a writing tablet. Your creativity expands. After the stilted motions of a mouse you get free flowing precision to transfer your thoughts to the screen when you use a writing tablet and pen. For graphic work and photo editing the writing tablet is as invaluable as the palette is to an artist.

Writing tablets, aka digitizing, drawing, or graphic tablet have been around since 1888 when the Telautograph was patented. They have come a long way since then with one manufacturer carving out its own market niche. That manufacturer is Wacom. Wacom created and patented passive tablets that use electromagnetic induction technology. This technology uses horizontal and vertical wires that transmit and receive electromagnetic signals between the tablet and a pen or mouse. For the non-scientists amongst us that means the wires let the tablet know where the pen is on or above the tablet and translates that to the screen. The pens are equipped with pressure sensitive technology as well. This allows you to adjust what you do on the screen just by how hard and the angle by which you use the pen. Electromagnetic power also eliminates the need for a battery for the pen.

Wacom patents prevent competitors from using its technology. That has kept Wacom the premier tablet company for artists, graphic designers, architects, and, well . . . anyone wanting to use a graphic tablet. Other technology for tablets include Active Tablets, that use a battery energized battery to transmit a stylus's signal to the tablet, Optical Tablets, that use a small digital camera in a pen that matches patterns on paper, (watch future newsletters for an article on this emerging technology for note-takers), and Capacitive Signal Tablets, that use electrostatic signals. Touch screens are also similar to graphic tablets but you don't get the high level of precision a touch screen gives you. None of these other technologies is as popular as the electromagnetic tablets that Wacom offers.



When buying a writing tablet you have choices depending on your budget and needs. Budget considerations may over ride your actual needs but this is not a time to save. Wacom's basic or amateur level tablets used to be Graphire technology but Wacom has since introduced a new basic tablet and called it Bamboo. The Graphire line is only available now as a reworked Bluetooth wireless tablet. Between my own research and what I have discussed with others who use graphic tablets you don't want to buy the entry level Bamboo unless you want to quickly be frustrated by its restrictions. Intuos is much more sensitive allowing precision detail in your work that is sorely missing in the Bamboo level tablet. I'm not saying that the Bamboo is a bad product for the money. It just isn't enough for most user's needs. You will pay almost double for the Intuos over the Bamboo. It is worth it.

Part of the value in buying a writing tablet is the bundled software that usually comes with your purchase. Wacom offers Adobe Photoshop Elements, Corel Painter Essential, Nik Color Efex, and Wacom Brushes with the Intuos tablet. Separately these softwares would cost you some \$200.00. They come free with your Wacom tablet. Adobe Photoshop Elements is the basic level version of the well-known digital photo

editing software.

Corel Painter is used to turn your photos into paintings and Nik Color Efex applies lighting filters to your photos. Wacom Brushes customizes the brushes used with Photoshop. When I researched purchasing a tablet I found a wide difference in what was being bundled with the offered tablet depending on the seller. Be careful what you are buying as what seems like a good deal could be a reseller offering older product with outdated software.

As you can see in the table at right the Wacom tablet comes in a variety of sizes. Wacom provided me with the 6"x11" size tablet (about \$370.00) to review based on my working with dual monitors. When buying a tablet you want to buy the largest one that fits your budget. Stretching your budget for a bigger size will benefit you greatly later. The tablet space translates to

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Tablet Models Are Available For Various Skill Levels

Continued From Page 10

you are working on a larger tablet that understands minute motions. You can adapt a smaller tablet to work in tighter areas but that requires extra work which gets tedious. If you are working with only one monitor the 6x8 tablet is your best buy.

The tablet itself defaults as matching your monitor screen for size. When you reach the edge of the tablet surface you are also at the edge of the monitor. For dual monitors the tablet moves smoothly across the monitors as if they are one. The tablet divides itself in half so you work on both monitors like one big surface. The only problem I had with this was that my main monitor sits directly in front of me with the second monitor off to my left and up against the main monitor. This meant the tablet area that I mostly worked on was furthest from me when I worked with the tablet to the side of the keyboard. I found it easier to switch the tablet to work with just one monitor when I was doing quick photo fixes. The tablet comes with two sets of programmable hot keys to make the switch from one monitor to two relatively easy. When I wanted to work in depth with the tablet I found the extra sized tablet came in handy and made editing easier. The tablet is also light and sturdy enough to sit comfortably in your lap for those long editing sessions.

The tablet's installation is mostly plug and play, easy and quick. I say mostly because of the learning curve on the bundled software. The tablet itself is almost instantly understandable and useable. The software bundle is where the learning curve comes in. You'll have to do a lot of experimenting and manual reading to get the most out of the tablet software.

You will also want to experiment with the 1024 levels of tip and erasure pressure sensitivity that you get in the Intuos Grip Pen. As mentioned before the Intuos pen is battery free. That lightens the pen and avoids problems with using a pen with weak batteries. I found the pen easy to hold and maneuver around the tablet. The pen comes with a holder that allows you to keep track of where you put it between uses. It also includes a handy electronic eraser for easy fixes. I have not used the pen long enough to notice but other reviews I read indicate that the nibs on the pen do wear down with use. The pen nibs are replaceable. The

pen is so sensitive that it has tilt sensitivity like a real pen or brush.

A nice touch to the tablet are the two touch strips placed strategically on the tablets. They made it easy to scroll and zoom the work for easier editing. The tablet also comes with a five button scrolling mouse that is ball and optics free. It works off the tablet's surface so no additional USB plugs are used for the mouse base. I did find it somewhat annoying using the tablet mouse as my sole mouse. You are restricted to the active tablet surface with the tablet mouse. I often found myself with a mouse that was not reacting to my

motions when I went outside the tablet sensitivity surface. The tablet surface has a large non sensitive area that provides a great hand rest when working but no mouse control. It was distracting when doing general computer work, like writing this article, and using the tablet's mouse. For this reason I keep my old mouse handy for non-tablet work.





When buying an Intuos level writing tablet you may find it necessary to go to the stores website to find your tablet. Retailers can not afford to stock a wide variety of tablets in each of its stores. You probably won't even find a store display tablet for you to try out before you buy. Your research is going to mostly based on the reviews you find of which there are many.

All in all I found the Wacom Intuos3 tablet to be a great addition to my computer repertoire. As regular readers know I love making home videos and mixing up photos with my PowerPoint presentations. The tablet makes my prep work easier and more comfortable. I definitely recommend the Wacom Intuos tablet as part of your photo editing or graphic work solution

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Mountain Computer User Group February 2009 Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 MCUG Meeting 7 p.m. Q&A 6 p.m. <i>Bill Heath</i>	10	11	12	13	14 Valentine Day 
15	16	17 <i>Dewaine Olson</i>	18	19	20 <i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28



February Anniversaries

2-5-55 Dick & Donna Generas 54 years

2-18-72 Larry & Gerda Jones 37 years