

Mountain Bits & Bytes

The Award Winning Monthly Publication of the Mountain Computer User Group

Vol. 9, Issue #1

MCUG Annual Christmas Auction Big Success



By George Donegan, MCUG Member

The annual MCUG Christmas auction held recently by MCUG was a huge success. As a result of the donations by many local businesses and many contributors in the software and hardware industry a total of \$1,040 was raised. The funds will be donated to local charities.

The following is a list of the contributors that made our auction a success: Computer Connection, 1 HP All-in-1-Printer; Total Computers, 2 computer cleanup certificates valued at \$73.50 each; and Discount Office Supply, an assortment of computer items.

Certificates for meals were given by Cross Roads Restaurant, Enricos Restaurant, Doyal's Cedar Hill Restaurant, Country Cottage Deli, Asiano Restaurant, Michael Lee's Chocolate Café, Daniels Steak House and Monte Alban's Restaurant.

Additional items included Orally Publishing Company, 8 Great Books; Sandy Berger Publishing, 8 Great Books; Iolo Software-5 Copies of System Mechanic; Gene Barlow, User Group Relations, 3 pieces of software; Sunbelt Software, 10 packages of Vipre AntiVirus & AntiSpyware; Acoustica Software, 3 packages of Gold Bundle and Andy Markem of Markem Communications, large assortment of valuable software and miscellaneous items.

Raxco Software provided 2 Perfect Disk programs; Nero, Inc, 2 Copies of Nero Burner; D-Link Systems, Inc, a wireless router; Ai Squared, Inc, a copy of Zoomware, Techsmith, Inc, 4 Copies SnagIt 9; Sandhill Publishing, Inc. a subscription, Applian Technologies, 4 copies of their software and Plasq Software, 5 copies of software.

7 p.m. Mon. Jan 12

Video Tapes to DVD Easy Way

An easy and economical way to convert your old video tapes to DVD will be demonstrated by Jim Bell 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 12 at the MCUG meeting.

See full story on Page 2.

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January 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".

Transfer Old Video Tapes To More Secure DVDs

By Jim Bell, MCUG President

Jim Bell, MCUG president, will demonstrate Pinnacle's new economical video transfer converter at the MCUG meeting 7 p.m. Jan. 12.

The hardware and software combination works on most computers to simplify transferring your old video tapes to DVD. "Maintaining the old equipment to enable to view them and storing priceless data on a fragile magnetic medium seems like a poor strategy," he said.

Operation of the Pinnacle Video Transfer converter is quite simple and the results are quite satisfactory, he added and the cost of hardware and software is less than \$100.

From Our Members

Etiquette . . .

A number of our members have remarked that they have difficulty hearing program speakers during our meetings due to side conversations in the audience.

Please respect our speakers and other your fellow members by holding your comments for the discussion period or until the meeting is over.



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
 m c u g 1 2 2 0 @ h u g h e s . n e t .

Broadsides By Broadhurst . . .

Recover Recycle Bin, Backup, Print Email Addresses

by Ron Broadhurst, Space Coast PC Users Group, Inc., Florida

These ideas are compiled from years of accumulations from various magazines, books, on-line sites and my own personal experience. I claim neither originality nor ownership to any of its contents. My only intent is to share the various “tips, “tricks” & “hints” in hopes of helping and maybe enhancing your computing experiences. They are all intended for anyone who uses a PC. It is for beginners as well as advanced users. Enjoy and use as you will.

I ACCIDENTALLY DELETED MY RECYCLE BIN IN VISTA - HOW DO I GET IT BACK?

Go to Control Panel and click on the Personalization options:

Click Change desktop icons and you'll get this handy little dialog box: Click the Recycle Bin checkbox as highlighted above, click OK, and your Recycle Bin should reappear on the desktop.

PRINTING E-MAIL ADDRESSES IN OUTLOOK EXPRESS

TO PRINT YOUR Email Addresses:

Print each name and address on one line:

Open OUTLOOK EXPRESS click on File, Export, Address Book, Select Text File (Comma Separated Values) and click the Export button.

Name the file, click Browse button to save in Desktop and at the bottom line, SAVE it in Text File (*.txt), click

Next, Deselect everything except NAME and Email Address then click Finish. Click on the Text File and Print it.

OUTLOOK EXPRESS ADDRESS BOOK BACK-UP

From Outlook Express, click on Tools/ Address Book, then File / Export / Address Book

Choose a storage location and give it a file name. Click save E-MAIL SHORTCUT /

RIGHT click on the Desktop and choose NEW, then SHORTCUT.

In the Command line type:

mailto:yourfriend@whatever.whatever

For example mailto:yourfriend@cfl.rr.com

Then click Finish and you have a short-cut to your E-mail friend. Double click and your E-mail opens up ready to go.

CONTROL PANEL SHORTCUTS

If you're tired of multiple clicks to get to your floppy drive, CD-ROM drive, D-Drive, E-Drive or to the Control Panel, you can put a shortcut on your desktop for instant access.

Open MyComputer, RIGHT click on the icon for your floppy drive, CDROM drive, E or D-Drive or whatever you want and then select “Create Shortcut”. This will place an icon on your desktop for instant access to what you chose.

You can use this technique for any folder you access frequently by putting the shortcut on your desktop. Now, your desktop becomes your operations center with quick access to any application, folder, or file on your PC.

SHORTCUT FOR SHORTCUT

You can assign a Keyboard key combination to any Shortcut. If you RIGHT click on any shortcut icon and choose Properties, you can then type Ctrl+any letter to assign the key combination that will open your Program. It should be a unique key and something you will remember. e.g. S for solitaire. This would be of great help if you wanted to go to another program when you cannot see your Desktop.

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MCUG Christmas Auction Pictures

Photos by Rea Williams and John Yandell





Advanced System Care Free V3– New Version Improves Your PC's Performance

By Ira Wilsker,

APCUG Director; Columnist, *The Examiner*, Beaumont TX;
Radio Show Host

One of the most frequently asked questions on my weekly radio show (KLVI 560AM, Mondays, 6-7pm) has to do with improving the performance of a sluggish computer. One of the utilities I most recommended was the free version of IObit's Advanced Windows Care – Personal Edition, version 2. Recently IObit released an upgraded and



updated utility renamed Advanced System Care Free V3, which IObit claims has over 10,000 improvements and updates. Being a fan of system improvement utilities, I had to download and install this new version, replacing the older version 2 that I have been happily using for about the past 18 months.

Going to the IObit website at www.iobit.com, and downloading the new software was an easy experience, as I was given the choice of multiple download sites. I selected one of the Texas mirrors of MajorGeeks, a major download service, where the download counter of this new version 3 has been downloaded from MajorGeeks alone. The download was about 7.6 megs in size, and downloaded remarkable fast for a download that size, to the credit of the bandwidth available at the Texas MajorGeeks website. Once downloaded, I clicked on the file to install it, and it recognized my

older version 2, which it replaced. I was given the choice of language, and “skin” (background color scheme), and selected the white (really a soft light blue) as the easiest to read.

Once the install was complete, I chose to run the program. I was displayed a clean fresh graphical interface that on the left of the window gave the choices “Maintain Windows”, “Diagnose System”, “Utilities”, and “Home”. Whichever icon is selected opens the right half of the window. For my first test of the software, I chose to Maintain Windows. I was offered a check-box selection of “Spyware Removal”, “Registry Fix”, “Privacy Sweep”, and “Junk Files Clean”. I selected all of them and clicked on “Scan”. In just a few minutes, Advanced System Care Free V3 detected 20 items it labeled as spyware (all were tracking cookies), 66 correctable errors in my registry, 29 privacy issues, and 394 megs of junk files that could be deleted. I prefer to not blindly follow what is found, so I clicked on each of the findings to review what was found. After some minor tweaking, I decided to accept what was found, and clicked on the “Repair” icon. In just seconds, all of the corrections and deletions were carried out.

Selecting the “Diagnose System” icon, I was given the now familiar check boxes for “System Optimization”,



“Security Defense”, “Disk Defragment”, and “Security Analyzer”. I checked all except Disk Defragment, as I had just recently defragged my hard drive using IObit's free standing and excellent disk defragmentation utility,
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Free Software Outperforms Expensive Versions

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and wanted to save the time, despite IObit's claim that the integral defragmentation utility is up to 10 times faster than some other competing products. System Optimization detected about two dozen "system bottlenecks" and corrected the system settings to improve performance. The Security Defense feature can immunize the computer against thousands of malicious websites, illicit tracking cookies, browser hijackers, dialers, and other malicious software. Security Analyzer examines running programs to detect and disable any malware that may be currently running on the computer.

The Utilities selection offers 20 distinct utilities to tune-up the computer and its applications; examine the security settings and backup critical system files and settings' and "Admin Tools" which includes an uninstall utility, as well as my personal favorite, a startup manager to identify and control what programs startup when the computer is booted. By cleaning up the startup, the computer will run faster, boot quicker, and have fewer conflicts, because fewer programs will be automatically loaded. Under the Tune Up tab, I found that Firefox (my preferred browser) can be optimized for maximum performance.

The "Home" icon displays program version, database updates, most recent scan, user account (free or paid "Professional" account), and the cumulative results of the scans that had been performed. The center "Care" icon automatically runs the system optimization utilities, as a one-click performance improvement function.

As is to be expected, IObit has a comparison chart that compares the features of Advanced System Care Free V3 with its software competitors, both free and commercial. The features listed on the chart are "All-in-one secure, repair, clean, and optimize", "Optimize and speed up PC and Internet", "Complete registry care", "Security features", "1click solution", and "Price". This software is compared to seven major competitors (1 free and six commercial), and comes out feature rich compared to the competition. To be fair, some of the products listed have features and capabilities not included with Advanced System Care Free V3, but comparing system utilities and clean up

programs, this program compares very well.

It is inevitable that users will ask why IObit would give away software this powerful; the reason is that IObit clearly wants the satisfied user to upgrade to the Pro version, which has more features and capabilities, and is currently on sale online for \$19.95 (regularly \$29.95) directly from IObit. The Pro version has additional performance improving features, a deep registry scan that roots out many more useless registry entries (the Pro version detected over 3000 useless registry entries on my computer, compared to only 66 in the free version), additional tune-up features to both improve hardware performance and web speed, and free technical support.

The excellence of Advanced System Care Free V3 has been recognized in the media with several awards, including high ratings from ZDnet, Tucows, Softpedia, Download.com, PC World, PC



Magazine, and other publications. Download.com claims that Advanced System Care Free V3 is its number one most downloaded system utility, with about 9.5 million downloads, even though it has only been available for the past several weeks.

For those wanting a powerful, and feature rich utility to improve computer performance, the free version of Advanced System Care Free V3 would be a very good choice. For those who want additional features and capability, the Pro version, currently on sale for \$19.95, would be a very good choice.

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Almost Everyone Needs A Little Help With Word

By Linda Gonse, Editor and Webmaster, Orange county IBM PC Users' Group, California

Bear with me while I quote John Dvorak from his August 2008 PC Magazine column, then I will tell you what my point is.

Regarding Vista, he said: "Vista isn't completely unusable; It's simply hard to use. Menus have been reorganized for no apparent reason, features of XP appear to be missing or need to be turned on from some remote directory, and basic functions are now obfuscated.

"In a nutshell, Vista manages to be more complicated than XP, performs more poorly than XP, and is more expensive than XP."

Now, substitute Word 2007 for Vista and Word 2003 for XP and my point is made. Compared with Word 2003, Word 2007 is an involuntary learning experience for anyone already proficient in Word and productive with one or more of the features. To name



a couple I use often, are: Mail Merge, tables, labels, and fields. But, first users have to discover where basics like Help, Save As, Print and Close are.

To say Word 2007 has a steep learning curve may not scare everyone. But, to say it has a steep learning



The "Ribbon" options that correspond to the Home tab curve for experienced Word users should scare everyone, as well as be a cause for serious concern.

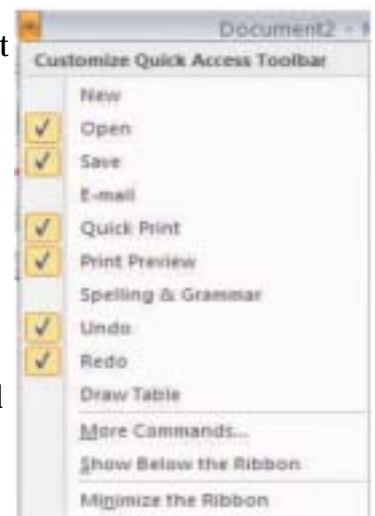
Unfortunately, I didn't fully understand how an Office 2007 upgrade for Office 2003 functioned. If you haven't taken the step, yet, let me caution you. The upgrade wipes out Office 2003 and you cannot downgrade. I believe this step was automatically taken by the installation. Perhaps with a full version, you would be given a choice to install the newer version into another directory, leaving the older version intact.

The first thing you notice when you open Word 2007 is the highly touted "ribbon." Nine tabs take the place of menu items across the top of the window. The tabs do not have the same names as the old menu items. In fact, a couple of the tab categories—Home, References and Add-Ins—are enigmatic. And as they say on "Dancing With The Stars," the tabs "are in no particular order."



Clicking on a tab opens a segmented toolbar of options across the top of the window that relate to that tab's category. Although you may want to add to or rearrange the commands on the Ribbon or change or remove a command or group on the Ribbon — as you might have done with the menu and toolbar of earlier Word versions — you cannot.

And, you can forget about being able to revert to Word's old style toolbars and menus. But, Microsoft helpfully advises that if you are fluent in XML programming code, you can add tabs to the Ribbon.



In Photoshop, the ribbon concept is intuitive and natural, and actually speeds up productivity. In Word, it can be chaotic and time-wasting.

Now, that you have this background in mind, you will better understand the images and steps that follow which is a short tutorial for simplifying Word 2007. My suggestion for anyone using the new Word version is to first set it up to make the features you need easy to locate.

With that in mind, I'll show you how to create a custom toolbar for the tasks that you need to perform most often. It will help to take the aggravation and time-wasting practice of hunting around and calling

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'It's An Involuntary Learning Experience'

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on Help to figure out where things are and how to use them.

Incidentally, speaking of Help, here's a tip. When you need to turn to Help, don't look for a tab or menu item. Just as in the old days of DOS, you must press the F1 key to make it appear!

In the upper left corner of the Word window is a round Windows logo, called the Microsoft Office Button. It will remind you of the Start button in Windows. Click on this button, it is a kind of command center temporarily until you get Word customized the way you want it. Or, it's possible, you may prefer to use it, rather than the Quick Access Toolbar. (Nah.)

The Quick Access Toolbar is just to the right of the Microsoft Office Button. It can be likened to the Quick Launch Toolbar in Windows. (Do you see a pattern here?)

When you first open Word, the Quick Access Toolbar is empty. Click on the down arrow a slight distance away from the Microsoft Office Button. A dropdown list appears, similar to the ones you saw at the end of toolbars in Word 2003. It contains many of the general commands that you might use frequently.

Click on the commands that you want to be on the Quick Launch, er... Quick Access Toolbar. The icons will be added to the bar and available to you with one click.

It's almost too easy isn't it? Well, keep in mind that with this Word version, whatever effort you save in one area, you are going to earn by working harder somewhere else.

You may want to fill in the basic commands on the Quick Access Toolbar with different commands not on the dropdown list. In that case, right click on the down arrow for the dropdown menu and go to More Commands... at the bottom. There are five categories, so click through them to see what they offer. You'll be surprised. In each category, there are dozens of commands for just about any task and circumstance.



When you find a command you want to use, click to select it in the left window and click on the Add button with the arrows to move it to the right window.

Alternatively, you can click on the Microsoft Office Button. At the bottom of the dialog box click on Word Options. Then, in the list that appears on the left, click on Customize.

A familiar box with a double window will open. It is the same box that you can open from the down arrow next to the Quick Access Toolbar.

My Quick Access Toolbar has several preset command buttons and one macro that I recorded (to add the pathname to the bottom of documents). Without intentionally doing so, I nearly recreated the Standard Toolbar offered in earlier versions of Word.

The commands that I found useful to add were Open, Blank Page, Save, Undo, Redo, Page Setup, Print Preview, Print, Show/Hide, PathName (the macro), and Close.

Although a couple of the commands are available by clicking on the Microsoft Office Button, it is still faster and less distracting to have them at the top of the window and only one click away, rather two or more.

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Why Security Precautions are Absolutely Necessary

By Bob de Violini, a member of the Channel Islands PCUG, California

First off for the holidays, there was a story that illustrates just why you should always enable encryption on your wireless router (for those who use one) AND why you should be leery of any public computer for Web sites you need a password to access.

A college student in Kentucky has been charged with identity theft, among other crimes, for planting malware on computers in his school's library. The malware was a keystroke logger that captured user names and passwords for any pages fellow students logged into. He then used this information to access their e-mail accounts and send out e-mails attempting to extort these same fellow students. He also used an unsecured wireless router to access these accounts, making it look as if someone else were actually sending the e-mails. The attempted extortion took the form of a threat to divulge personal information the thief had stolen from the compromised e-mail accounts.

WPA Encryption

That leads me to our next item, WPA encryption.

As of the beginning of November, a pair of computer security researchers in Europe disclosed a technique they'd developed to partially hack WPA encryption used by a great number of wireless routers today. Before anyone thinks the sky is falling, rest assured it isn't. Their hack involves only the traffic being sent from the router to a computer and only a small number of data packets can be cracked before the router resets its encryption. However, it is enough to be able to send just enough rogue data to a computer to compromise it with any number of known vulnerabilities. Specifically, it involves the TKIP protocol that WPA and WPA2 are allowed to use. The specifics of just how this trick is accomplished have been made available to hackers in many areas of the Internet, so it's just a matter of time before it begins spreading. TKIP and AES encryption are selectable by the user in many wireless router configurations, and some have WPA with TKIP selected by default. I strongly recommend you check your wireless router's encryption configuration, and if it's set to use WPA

with TKIP, you switch to WPA2 with AES if at all possible. This is especially important if you use a wireless router to run a network for a business. I have my Linksys wireless router set to use WPA2 with AES encryption. AES is significantly harder to crack than the older TKIP protocol. One final note on this, however. For AES encryption to work, both the router and the network adapter in the computer must be able to use it. Some older hardware may not support AES encryption, so an upgrade may be needed. If you'd like some more information, please drop me a line at the email address at the top of this article, and I'll gladly send you a link or two.

Scare of the month department

Even though Halloween has passed, we have the Scare of the Month Department chiming in with some news. There is a new phishing e-mail making the rounds disguised as a warning from the U.S. Federal Reserve. The message bears the usual dire warning of a scam and contains links for readers to follow to get more information. However, there are a few clues that give the message away as a hoax, the biggest one being poor grammar. The links in the e-mail lead unsuspecting readers to a fake site that will redirect them to a search page for porn, which will download a PDF file with malware to their computer. The malware comes in various forms, including one that attempts to make your computer a member of a botnet. A brief notice can be had here, courtesy of USCERT: <http://tinyurl.com/66lzv9>. The link does go to the US-CERT site; I just used TinyURL to shorten the URL's length.

Patches Galore Department

As I mentioned above, there have been some exploits on the loose for a bit for Adobe Acrobat, and the full program and the reader have been updated as a result. The latest versions are 8.1.3 and 9.0. Adobe has also updated its Flash player, standard fare in most browser installations, to version 10.0.12.36 to patch publicly reported vulnerabilities last month as well. Not to be outdone, Mozilla has also issued a patch for its Firefox browser and Thunderbird e-mail client. These patches

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Protect Your Computer

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address several bugs that have been brought to light in the past month to month and a half. The latest

iterations of Firefox are 2.0.0.18 and 3.0.0.4. The latest version of Thunderbird is 2.0.0.18. I have read reports of some problems with version 3.0.0.4 and 2.0.0.18 of Firefox, with most of the reports being about version 3.0.0.4. The solution for those having problems after upgrading to 3.0.0.4 has been to go back to 3.0.0.3. I have updated my version to 2.0.0.18 and have had no problems. Some patches take longer than others to develop and test, however. One of the patches issued by Microsoft on November's Patch took them seven years to develop and test.

The bug it patched was first reported by a security researcher in March 2001. Microsoft claims that it tried patching it when it was first reported but wound up killing off most networking applications with the patches when they underwent testing. However, they didn't give up and finally found a way to patch the vulnerability earlier this year.

Replacing One Care

While we're speaking of Microsoft, it has announced plans to abandon its One Care concept of computer protection service and develop free anti malware applications for release in 2009. The new concept is code named "Morro." As usual, folks are coming down on both sides of pro and con when it comes to this development. Microsoft hasn't given a firm release date for the new software, but has said that One Care will come to an end on June 30. Well, that's all for now.

Always practice safe computing by keeping your applications and your anti-malware applications fully up to date. Make sure to run your anti-malware scanner(s) once a week, even if they don't flag anything in between scans.

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SP3 Access Denied?

By Bob Elgines, President & Editor, Colorado River Computer Club, AZ

I tried installing the Windows XP SP3 upgrade several times and, after talking with Microsoft reps, I shut off my antivirus, updated my BIOS, but nothing seemed to work. Then I decided to do a search and found "Access Denied" information and over 340, 000 other people had used this same area. For some reason a changeable entry in the Register is locked and will not allow SP3 to change it.

First, do a right click on "My Computer" icon and select "Properties" to see if it has been installed.

Here is what you need to do, if the Error message read "Access Denied" or "Service Pack Installation Did Not Complete". First read your **Svcpack.log**, located under the Windows folder in case you forgot what the error message said, it should be at the bottom of the log.

Next Backup your Register, then download and install "**Subinac.exe**" from www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=e8ba3e56-4a91-93cf-ed698Se3927b&displaylang=en

```
Start Notepad, then enter the following text:cd /d
"%ProgramFiles%\Windows Resource Kits\Tools"
subinacl /subkeyreg HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE /
grant=administrators=f /grant=system=f
subinacl /subkeyreg HKEY_CURRENT_USER /
grant=administrators=f /grant=system=f
subinacl /subkeyreg HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT /
grant=administrators=f /grant=system=f
subinacl /subdirectories %SystemDrive% /
grant=administrators=f /grant=system=f
subinacl /subdirectories %windir%\*. * /
grant=administrators=f /grant=system=f
secedit /configure /cfg %windir%\repair\secsetup.inf
/db secsetup.sdb /verbose
```

Save As "**Reset.cmd**". Now double click on this file. It will take a while to complete its job.

Reboot your computer, you are now ready to install Win 'XP SP3. Go to windows update if you need to find SP3 update.

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Mountain Computer User Group January 2009 Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					2	3 <i>Stephen Foster</i>
4	5	6 <i>Gary Mashburn</i>	7	8	9	10
11 <i>Shirley Trendel</i>	12 MCUG Meeting 7 p.m. Q&A 6 p.m. <i>Carroll Miller</i>	13 <i>Ronald Larson</i>	14	15	16 <i>Newsletter Deadline</i>	17
18	19 <i>Vincent Grobbell Jack Guthrie</i>	20	21	22 <i>Tom Allen Doris Mott</i>	23	24 <i>Virginia Grobbel</i>
25	26	27	28	29 <i>Nina Webb Betty Greenhaw</i>	30	31



January Anniversaries

1-29-1958 Walt & Sharon Scott 51 yrs