



# MEGAPHONE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRAL MARYLAND USER GROUP

## President's Message How To Answer the Question?

from Mike Kerwin

OK, I'm not being mysterious but addressing an issue that most Geeks encounter often. I suspect that most of you have been asked The Question many times by friends, relatives, and acquaintances. I refer to the expectant "What do you recommend as the best \_\_\_\_\_?" (Fill in the blank for PC, notebook, PDA, digital camera, camcorder, DVR.) Folks who know me and my penchant for gadgets and gizmos frequently ask me this. Lately the most popular subject is notebook computers. Now I do get a bit of a stroke that I am asked for my opinion about things digital, and I do understand the seemingly overwhelming number of choices being marketed, but I also get frustrated when my response elicits blank stares.

My thinking is that people ask this due to despair at the multitude of choices currently available and the wide range of pricing options. And, of course, the options lead to even more confusion. A few years ago the world seemed to be simpler when the number of manufacturers of notebook PCs diminished to just a handful. Today, despite the consolidation, the remaining firms now offer several complete "lines" of notebooks along this continuum: superlight, ultralight, mobile performance, entertainment, general purpose, budget, desktop replacement... You could probably suggest even more categories. Now too we have designer notebooks in a range of case colors and branded logos (Ferrari, LiveStrong, Hello Kitty). Then there is screen size and the directly linked weight factor; since LCD screens use glass front panels and glass is rather heavy, the larger the screen the heavier the device is to lug about.

### Answer a Question with a Question

So what do I have to offer in the way of advice? I've learned to follow the

experts on my reply: from the online Buying Guides back to Socrates, the recommendation is to answer with a question. (I don't think Socrates knew about decision trees, but that's what we have here.) Specifically I first ask, "Do you have a price point in mind?" followed by "Do you have a brand preference?" These two questions narrow the choices considerably. I know some individuals and organizations are strictly wedded to one brand, such as Dell, and that becomes a major factor in deciding on what is the "best" in that environment. Price is also a great divider of the pack with budget machines being advertised under \$500 and high-end performance units listed for prices around \$3K – a very wide range.

The next question along this tree is, "What do you intend to do with the computer?" The answer will be very different for a Road Warrior backed by a corporation which can deduct business expenses versus a student heading off to college, or someone who just wants to use it for email at home without being tied to a cable. For example, the weight of a notebook can be a major consideration if you travel frequently, as everything gets heavier at the end of a long flight or stressful day of sales calls. For travelers the features needed can also be important considerations as some of the lightest notebooks don't have built-in optical drives (see Dell) but use optional peripherals which can add to weight, bulk, and extra parts to keep track of. (My



### Next General Meeting

Our speaker will be Mr. Youlong Yang. He will show us some of his pictures of China, and discuss how he uses Photoshop to work with them.

Wednesday, August 15, 7:30 pm.....Florence Bain Senior Center

### Next Windows SIG Meeting

Topic: Tuesday Night Special

Tuesday, August 28, 7:00 pm.....Florence Bain Senior Center

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recommendation is to have as few pieces as possible for simplicity's sake.)

## The Fine Print

Speaking of weight, you must read the fine print of the specifications, as I learned this week looking at the new Toshiba Protégé line of notebooks. This company is making great claims for this "superlight" line. Digging a little further one soon discovers that the quoted weight is for the main clamshell case and internal parts. This is really light at under 2 lbs and is possible through the use of solid state memory in place of a traditional spinning disk HD. But, it won't do much without a battery, which adds at least 0.6 lbs additional for the limited capacity, standard battery; an optional, long-life battery weighs more. And then there is the transformer (aka brick) which weighs in at 0.5 lbs. Then one might look at whether the 68 GB of HD equivalent would be sufficient running Vista which reportedly takes nearly 10 GB just for the OS and then allocates an additional 15% of the HD for Restore points. These can take up lots of the internal HD and then one would have to consider carrying an external drive for storing data, presentations, pictures, etc which could add additional weight. And for all of this one would pay nearly \$3K.

At the other end of the price scale are the budget models which barely have enough onboard memory (or capacity) to run the old WinXP. As more Vista applications become available over the next couple of years, these machines may be left in the dust, unable to accommodate current versions of software. This could lead to early replacement before the expected lifespan of 3-5 years.

Then there are optional/necessary features you might want in a notebook. One feature is an optical drive which most, but not all, units have as a standard feature. Then there are different flavors of CD/DVD readability and writability. Virtually all of these units will read and write CDs and DVDs, but perhaps not all three formats of DVD, plus the capability for dual layer data storage and, in some cases, LightScribe technology to burn labels on the back side of special disks. Unfortunately the industry has not settled on a standard technology for a new generation of disks to store HD movies (and eventually data), so if this feature is important to you, you might plan to add the capability externally



**And this is my new laptop!**

sometime in the future.

Another common feature is WiFi. This technology has advanced from A to B to G and now to N, but not all notebooks support all of the types so again you have to read the fine print.

For a notebook to be sent off to college, you might look for a built-in webcam to keep in touch and help ward off homesickness by the young adults.

You'll also want to look at anti-theft features such as locking adaptors and "phone-home" software. Some of the new anti-theft features are biometric password-type locks such as fingerprint scanners and wireless proximity alarms (if the PC goes one way and the owner with the alarm gets too far away then the alarm sounds).

Another consideration is the warranty provided. Notebook PCs are very compact so popping the top to add or replace defective parts is not something to be undertaken lightly. I recommend checking to see how long any unit is under warranty and what is covered, such as what is the turnaround for repairs and where are they done (and who is responsible for getting it there).

In the end, I think the process is straightforward, though it may require several decision branches to arrive at the "Best" recommendation for a specific individual. These details always seem nagging pests when searching for instant gratification, but the old adage of "Buy in Haste, Repent at Leisure" can be avoided by taking just a little time up front to make a good choice. I hope this approach might of use to some of you.

## Thanks

On to local business: Many thanks to Kacey Fisher of Fisher Theatrical ([www.fishertheatrical.com](http://www.fishertheatrical.com)) for demonstrating the use of specialized applications in support of theatrical productions. Who knew how much was involved in putting on an interesting show?

For this month we will have Youlong Yang to show his digital photographs of China and discuss how he uses Photoshop to work with them. I look forward to seeing you at the Bain Center on Wednesday the 15<sup>th</sup>.

*Digitally,*

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## Deals from the DealsGuy

by Bob Click, Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

### Help for Road Warriors

I read this interesting article about using a USB flash drive on the road instead of lugging your laptop along (plug the USB flash drive into someone else's computer): [www.informationweek.com/hardware/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=199906066](http://www.informationweek.com/hardware/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=199906066). A few of the applications available are mentioned, and even the possibility of using an operating system on the flash drive, but a USB flash drive won't boot on just any computer. Some user groups have already had demonstrations on this unique technique. Best of all, after you use your special USB flash drive on another computer and remove it, it leaves no tracks because all of the applications you use are on your flash drive, along with your data.



### What's Going On?

When my monitor's on/off switch started acting up, I decided to leave my computer on full time, although I could have used a surge protector strip to control it. I have friends who leave their computers on 24/7 and say they prefer that method because most failures happen when you boot up. Lately, I started having a problem with the screensaver not working

and my monitor seemed to be active all the time. However, I noticed that Zone Alarm was occasionally telling me about blocking an unknown action, so I began to wonder if something was working from time to time internally, therefore not letting the screensaver work.

I decided to run Spybot to see how much stuff it would find, and was surprised to see it find 117 items to remove. I had run it not long ago and it found 5 items, normal in the past. Then I noticed that I had never installed AdAware so I downloaded and installed it and let it scan the HD. What a surprised when AdAware found 158 more items after Spybot had already scanned the drive and removed 117 items. I spend very little time on the Internet so I still wonder why so much crap is on my HD lately.

I was even more surprised when the screensaver started working normally after cleaning all that junk off, but that tells me that even though I have a firewall, and a router, which also has a firewall, somehow the malware has found my HD anyway. Also to my surprise, my browser history was now gone. I try to be careful about websites and checking my email. I guess there was more than I realized running in the background. Maybe I should unplug the Internet connection when I'm not on it. By the way, my computer runs better now, although something warned me a new program was trying to install in my startup group, which I declined.

## Upcoming Meetings and Help Needed

As was announced previously, Andrew Rein has stepped down from his job as Program Director. So CMUG is in need of someone who can coordinate presentations for our general meetings.

The presentations are an important part of the educational mission of our user group. The Program Director acts as a central coordinator, and as liason between the group and the speaker. So, this is an important job. On the other hand, I don't think it's particularly time-consuming; we only have 11 presentations a year, after all, and most of the communication can be done via email. If you have questions about the workload or are otherwise interested, you might speak with Andrew (or one of the other officers) at the meeting.

**September 19:** To be determined

**October 17:** To be determined

**November 21:** To be determined

## Windows SIG August 28: Tuesday Night Special

The Windows Special Interest Group (SIG) meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month. The SIG focuses on using and maintaining Windows, all platforms. We take questions, present tips and techniques, demonstrate freeware/shareware and even feature some web topics using a little trickery.

This month, our topic will be "Tuesday Night Special." If you have a suggestion or a topic for a future SIG meeting, please email me at [mikes\\_line@hotmail.com](mailto:mikes_line@hotmail.com).

Remember that the meetings are at the Florence Bain Senior Center, and begin at 7 pm. See the CMUG website at [www.myCMUG.org](http://www.myCMUG.org) for maps and directions.

Hope to see you there.

- Mike Hayes



## Was I on TV? Maybe!

We had an interesting experience when my wife and I were called to go over to Daytona Beach and work crowd control at the Speed Channel booth ([www.speedtv.com](http://www.speedtv.com)) for two days during the week of the NASCAR Pepsi 400 race. It was fun and if you were watching their two-hour program called Race Day, you might have seen us (wearing security uniforms) without knowing who we were. We were behind the fence (with Home Depot advertising slipcovers on it) for the crowd control during the telecast and we noticed the boom camera looking our way at times. A person holding up an undesirable sign was sometimes a problem. Home Depot was the sponsor and had their own distinctive stage that the audience could surround. Kenny Wallace was the surprise guest that day. By the way, Coca-Cola just signed a new contract with NASCAR for that race so it's safe to assume it will no longer be the *Pepsi* 400.



## Consumers Get Financial Help in 2009

I read an article in *Twice Magazine* (picked it up at the wireless show) about the government program that will help people purchase a digital converter for their analog TV if they can't afford a new digital TV by February 17 of 2009. I found it interesting and informative. It's online at [www.twice.com/article/CA6428026.html](http://www.twice.com/article/CA6428026.html) **q=Digital+Foci**. The coupon program starts this coming January.

## Help from My Readers

Last month I mentioned a product for creating a PDF file, but the free version used a sponsor page. I received a message from Ira Wilsker (APCUG board member) telling me about this one; "Look at **CutePDF Writer** which is **FREE**: [www.cutepdf.com](http://www.cutepdf.com)." They do offer the Pro version for \$49.95. I met Ira at an APCUG event when I first started writing this column, and he has given me good tips ever since.

## Scrub That Registry Well!

Wise Cleaner has released **Wise Registry Cleaner 2.8**, a freeware tool that enables you to clean the Windows Registry safely and quickly. Each time you install an application it writes a few entries in Windows Registry, but when the software is uninstalled, the entries often remain in the registry. Over the years, your registry accumulates entries from the software you no longer use. To achieve top performance again, simply clean your registry. **Wise Registry Cleaner** will scan your registry for incorrect and obsolete entries and let you fix any found issues to

make your computer run at the peak speed it's capable of. The scan is quick thanks to the enhanced scan engine, and after a short time, you can see a list of issues that need to be repaired. You can view each issue individually and bring up its detailed description to help figure out how to deal with it best, then repair it or leave it unchanged.

The program will automatically back up all changes done to the registry, so that if there is anything wrong, you can undo it easily with a click. If you are a non-techie user and know little about the Windows Registry, you can rely on the program's Artificial Intelligence and let it repair issues automatically. New to version 2.8 is enhanced security, improved multi-language support, an ability to report when some entries cannot be removed and some other features.

**Wise Registry Cleaner 2.8** runs on Microsoft Windows 9X, NT, 2000, XP, 2003, and Vista including X64 version. Visit their website for additional information on the product, its manual, and to download the program: [www.wisecleaner.com](http://www.wisecleaner.com). The program is free, but they welcome donations via PayPal.

Direct download link: [www.wisecleaner.com/soft/WRCSetup.exe](http://www.wisecleaner.com/soft/WRCSetup.exe).

Email: [support@wisecleaner.com](mailto:support@wisecleaner.com)

## Organize All of Your Feeds

ExtraLabs Software unveils **Feed Editor 4.5**, a full-fledged RSS editor that offers you an easy way to create and maintain RSS feeds and podcasts. Designed for the Windows OS, it enables you to create, edit and publish RSS feeds and podcasts surprisingly quickly and easily. It includes support for various RSS formats, podcasting support, a WYSIWYG HTML editor, an XML editor, an RSS Feed preview, an FTP upload and publishing capability, automatic date management and the ability to convert CSV or HTML to RSS.

To create a new RSS feed, you can use a **New Feed Creation wizard** to guide you through the RSS setup process in a step-by-step fashion. Included is a built-in WYSIWYG HTML editor that allows you to edit a feed. You can format the text, apply styling and insert images and hyperlinks. "Feed Editor" can generate a feed from a CSV and HTML file. Once a feed is ready, you can preview it and publish online using an FTP upload facility.

Read more about Feed Editor at: [www.extralabs.net/feed-editor.htm](http://www.extralabs.net/feed-editor.htm). Free evaluation version: [www.extralabs.net/FeedEditorSetup.exe](http://www.extralabs.net/FeedEditorSetup.exe) (2.1 MB)

Feed Editor 4.5 runs under Windows 95/98/Me/2000/NT/XP/2003 and costs \$39.95 (USD). User Group members get a 30% discount. Follow this link for registration: [www.regnow.com/softsell/nph-softsell.cgi?item=13371-1&](http://www.regnow.com/softsell/nph-softsell.cgi?item=13371-1&)



# Backing Up Your Computer

## Cloning vs Imaging

by Al Edmister, via APCUG

Backing up your computer has always been an important and sometimes confusing subject. As most people know by now, backing up on the same HD only helps when the main file gets corrupted, which really doesn't happen very often. It is of no help when your hard drive (HD) fails. I've had two fail. The first failure was soon after I bought the machine; the HD was defective. The manufacturer replaced it and, luckily, files could be copied. But all programs had to be reinstalled.

The second time the HD motor quit. That was hard to find; HD motors are really quiet and who would think to put ones head into the box to listen? Anyway all was lost. Well, not all, because I had started keeping all my files backed up on a second internal HD, so I had everything but an OS and programs. I bought a new HD and installed an OS and programs again, then copied back my files. Very time consuming, but at least I was back in business. But there had to be a better way should failure happen again.

At one time I thought CD-RWs and read-only disks would be the answer. In fact, I'm using this method with another computer, which doesn't get much action or have big files. It doesn't have space for a second HD, and only has USB version 1, which makes for slow transfers of big files. In this case, a CD-RW backup system works well, since there's not that much to backup (no music, for example).

But my main computer is another story. Backing up to CDs would take forever. So I looked into alternatives.

### RAID

I heard about RAID (Redundant Array of

Independent Drives) and found out that it requires a card on the mother board and two or more HDs depending on the array. RAID has multiple HDs all running containing constant backups; if one drive fails then, without shutting down, you remove & replace it with a clean drive and RAID recreates from the remaining drives. No downtime is the key advantage here. It can get expensive.

There are all kinds of RAID arrays. One of them is with 2 HDs and is called "striping" where info is written alternately to the disks. Makes for much faster reading and writing, and is really helpful when doing videos.

### Zip Drives

I also heard about Zip drives. Never used them but I think they came into use before there was USB 2 and before large HDs. A Zip drive is removable and contains compressed files. It is handy not only for same computer back up and additional storage but as a system to transfer files from one computer to another.

But the largest Zip disks are 750 MB. That's great for backing up data, but you'd need a lot of disks to do a full back up of your system. [Ed. note: the current Zip drives run around \$150 for an external USB 750 MB drive; the disks are about \$12 each.]


### Bring in the Clones

Then I heard about cloning and imaging. These are two different things, which it took me a while to figure out. (This is my understanding, which may not match everybody's take.) Cloning is making an exact, complete, bootable copy; imaging is making a compressed copy where the files are compressed versions of the original in a dedicated file format. It can then be used to create a working duplicate of the original on a blank HD disk.

The clone or image can be stored on an externally USB-connected drive or an internal one. A clone takes about the same space as the original, while an image take less. But you'll more space over time. For example, when I use True Image ver. 10.0 by Acronis ([www.acronis.com](http://www.acronis.com)), each time I do a back up, it stores an incremental image or "slice", which tracks everything that's changes since my last backup. Programs like True Image can keep you automatically updated on a scheduled basis or you can do an update when you feel it's necessary and you have the time. Working on imaged files might be possible but I have no idea how. They are "just there" for use in recreating an HD.

But I wanted a duplicate, bootable HD running as a D drive in case my C drive fails. That is, I want a clone of my HD not an image. I already had and keep via "save as" all my files on my D drive. I mean **all!** But, I did not have the OS or programs on it. Also, I wanted to switch D & C as disk now, as D: is bigger and better suited to be in the C: position where I can put large temporary files. (I have no need of partitioning, so neither drive is split.)

I tried Casper XP by Future Systems Solutions ([www.fssdev.com](http://www.fssdev.com)), a really good cloning program. Unfortunately for me, there is a conflict with the way Casper works and something in my computer that prevents it from functioning completely. This very likely is an isolated problem; but still, even with Casper's built in history and status utilities, their tech and I working together could not find it. I was

 **ss\_coupon=EXTR-3G8L**, or use this coupon: EXTR-3G8L. Registered customers are entitled to free lifetime updates and premium technical support. Discounts for volume buyers are available. Additional information on Feed Editor 4.5, as well as its 30-day evaluation version is available from [www.extralabs.net](http://www.extralabs.net).

### That's All Folks

That's it for this month. I'll have more new product announcements on my Web site (most not offering a discount): [www.dealsguy.com](http://www.dealsguy.com). Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound.

- Bob (The Cheapskate) Click

*bobclick at bellsouth dot net*





impressed with their tech guy. I got prompt answers and personal help. He even called me the first morning after I had emailed a help request and I have his direct line number. Emailing the self-generated reports was easy and we were able to remove some old Win98 fragments. But the conflict remained. We gave up. I gave my copy of Casper to Diane Prior.

I then went to True Image 10.0, which I thought only did imaging. I gave it a try, imaging my C: drive to an external USB-connected H: drive. That took seven hours, and I have yet to figure out how the restore process works because their restore page doesn't use the terms "source" and "destination" but something obscure to me. Anyway I have an image on a removable drive ready if I should need it.

(Let me briefly mention that in addition to the Casper XP and Acronis True Image software, I also worked with Maxtor's MaxBlast, which will only work with Maxtor drives. You can find several additional backup products by doing a Google search for backup programs. Among the 100,000,000+ finds on searching for the words "backup programs", I was reminded that Windows Backup System [part of XP] and Norton Ghost are both backup program available.)

For the next part, I wanted a cloned back up running as a second HD, as I intend to keep using "save as" as I go along rather than wait for a scheduled time. My work is important to me and even losing a few minutes of effort is not acceptable. I also wanted a bootable second HD fully backed up (OS, all programs, settings as well as files) in case my C: drive failed. Tucked away in True Image 10.0 is a button to create a clone, any disk to any disk. True Image 10.0 did the job and in less than an hour I had moved over 30 GB of OS, programs and files to another internal drive.

I opened up my computer case; swapped C: and D: and turned on the power. The cloned drive (old D:) came up as if it had always been there as a C: drive. Everything was exactly as I had left it, down to the partially filled Recycle Bin. Great, now for checking out the drive in D:, which now held my old C: drive. No drive could be found. It just wasn't there. I opened the computer and checked the connections and pinning; they were fine. I then went to [www.techguy.com](http://www.techguy.com) with the problem. Back came a reply to go to disk manager and send a screen shot. While there I saw that the drive had not been assigned a letter, which I thought XP did automatically. I entered the letter D and went back to see what had happened. I was in business. All drives function as intended. I was as happy as a mosquito in a blood bank.

### Future Backups

The future might be in flash drives already available as thumb or flash gizmos. They are getting bigger, over 2 GB ones are available, and are great for transferring files. Hang one around your neck on a lanyard or just stick one in your pocket, these drives are smaller than a disposable cigarette lighter, so they travel well. No moving parts is a huge advantage as there's no mechanism to fail. [Ed. note: Of course, they fail anyway!] Internal HDs might eventually be made similar to flash type drives. But before this can happen, they will have to be

## More Exploring Windows Explorer

by Jim Sanders, via APCUG

This is part two of Exploring Windows Explorer with the idea of learning how useful this tool can be.

### Getting to Windows Explorer

There are several ways to bring up Windows Explorer. In the instructions below, "click" means left click. Unless, of course, it's preceded by the word "right." In no particular order, here are 11 different ways to start Windows Explorer.

1. Click on Start, hover the mouse pointer over All Programs till the window with all options appears, click on Accessories to open the sub-window, then click on Windows Explorer. On most machines, it will open with the My Documents directory/folder highlighted and expanded.

2. Right click on Start to open the options window, click on Windows Explorer. On most machines, it will open with the Start Menu directory/folder highlighted and expanded. This is usually down four directory levels with the path - Local Disk (C:)/Documents and Settings/(current user name for that machine)/Start Menu.

3. Click on Start, then click on My Computer (on the default XP menu), this opens Windows Explorer in the Task Pane mode. This is also true if you click on My Documents, My Pictures, My Music, or My Network Places. For most people this means navigating down a path one directory at a time,



over 200 GB to take the market.

There is a new wrinkle to cloning a HD that I just discovered and used. My new computer, while a definite upgrade in speed, has space for only one HD, which was an 80 GB. That is actually big enough for my purposes but I wanted a second bootable HD for back up even though I'll have to run it as an external drive in a USB port. Therefore, recently I bought a 160 GB Maxtor drive.

It came with the usual installation disk, but it included a feature I wasn't aware of until opening it. I put the drive into my external drive holder, plugged everything in and began with the configuration, then the disk copy. Forty minutes later, I had a cloned disk; I swapped that into my computer, pinned as master and I am up and running again. This time it is on a 160GB (120GB available) and I have the old 80GB HD as a bootable HD in the external case as back up.

Note: Additional programs for backup, security, the Internet and disk organization, including Acronis True Image, can be purchased by user group members from <http://www.ugr.com>.

*This article comes to us via APCUG, the Association of Personal Computer User Groups, of which CMUG is a member. Al Edmister is a member of the Napa Valley PC User Group ([www.nvpcug.org](http://www.nvpcug.org)) in California. He can be reached by email at [AeinNapa\(at\)aol.com](mailto:AeinNapa(at)aol.com).*





then backing out one directory at a time with the left arrow in the green circle. If you have followed the advice in part 1, at least you can see the path to where you are at in the address bar. Very few people that use this mode make use of the history file provided by the little down arrows next to the left and right arrows. The history files can speed up navigation quite a bit, but in my opinion are nowhere near as efficient as having the Folders Pane visible instead of the Task Pane. Clicking on the Folders icon in the Menu Bar causes the full tree structure to be displayed in the left hand pane. That allows much more efficient navigation of the files on your disk(s).

4. Double click on the My Computer icon on the desktop - takes you to the same place as #3.

5. Depressing either Windows key (the ones with the MS flag icon and the word "start" on them) and then tapping the "E" key, opens Windows Explorer in the Folder mode with My Computer highlighted.

6. Depressing either Windows key, and then tapping the "F" key, opens Windows Explorer in the Search mode with the left pane asking: "What do you want to search for?" You then have the option of choosing several different categories of search including my most common choice – All files and folders.

7. Clicking on Start and then Search opens Windows Explorer in the same mode as #6.

8. Right click on Start, then click on Search, opens Windows Explorer in the Search mode with the left pane stating: "Search by any or all of the criteria below." This is the same location you end up at if you choose path #6 and then click on – All files and folders.

But wait, if that's not enough ways to open Windows Explorer, there's more!

9. You can make Windows Explorer part of the Start menu with the following sequence: Start -> All Programs -> Accessories -> right click on Windows Explorer -> Pin to Start menu

10. You can put a Windows Explorer icon in the Quick Launch portion of the Taskbar with this sequence: right click Start, click Explorer, click on the Windows folder. In the right pane, scroll down to explorer.exe and right click it, when the option window opens, click on "create shortcut", place the mouse cursor over the new shortcut, depress and hold the right mouse button then drag the new shortcut to the Quick Launch part of the Taskbar. Release the right mouse button and click on "Move Here."

What! you say you don't have a Quick Launch area? That's probably because the XP default for that feature is set to disabled. You can fix that by right clicking on the Taskbar, hovering over the Toolbars entry till the options window opens, then click on the Quick Launch entry to set a check mark next to it and enable that feature. Once the icon is in place, a single click on the Windows Explorer icon will launch it.

11. You can put a Windows Explorer icon on your desktop with this sequence: right click Start, click Explorer, click on the Windows folder. In the right pane, scroll down to explorer.exe and right click it, when the

option window opens click on create shortcut, then click and drag the new shortcut to the desktop. Right click on the shortcut icon you just created and when the option window opens, click on Properties. When the Properties window opens, click on the Shortcut tab and edit the Target line to have Window Explorer open with the directory of your choice displayed. This is an example of an edited Target line:

**C:\WINDOWS\explorer.exe /e, /root, c: /select, C:\Documents and Settings\Jim.LIAN-LI\My Documents\NOCCC related files**

By substituting the path of your choice for the "C:\Documents and Settings\Jim.LIAN-LI\My Documents\NOCCC related files" portion of the above example, you can have Windows Explorer open and display the directory of your choice.

## Customizing File Display

As noted in part 1, the default columns that are displayed in the Window Explorer detail view are: Name, Size, Type, and Date Modified. But you should know that these are just four of the 45 (!) possible column types. Not all column types are pertinent for a given file type. For example, Bit Rate is not going to be very useful in a directory full of \*.jpg or \*.tif files. Camera Model is not very useful in a directory full of \*.mp3 files.

As hard disks are humongous today, more and more people have large collections of pictures, video, music and Microsoft Office document files on their computer (and far too many are not backed up). The ID3 headers on MP3 files can provide a lot of information about each track. To easily see that information, you need to turn on more column details. You **can not** break anything by playing with these options. Click on View, when the menu opens, click on Choose Details, click on an item in the list to place a check mark in the box which activates the feature, then click on a directory and look at the results. If you don't like the results, repeat the procedure to remove the check mark and it is gone.

The following is the complete list of possible column types: Name, Size, Type, Date Modified, Dimensions, Title, Date Created, Date Accessed, Attributes, Status, Owner, Author, Subject, Category, Pages, Comments, Copyright, Artist, Album Title, Year, Track Number, Genre, Duration, Bit Rate, Protected, Camera Model, Date Picture Taken, Episode Name, Program Description, Audio sample size, Audio sample rate, Channels, Company, Description, File Version, Product Name, Product Version, Profile, Width, Height, Duration, Bit Rate, Frame Rate, Sample Rate, Keywords.

More to come, in part 3.

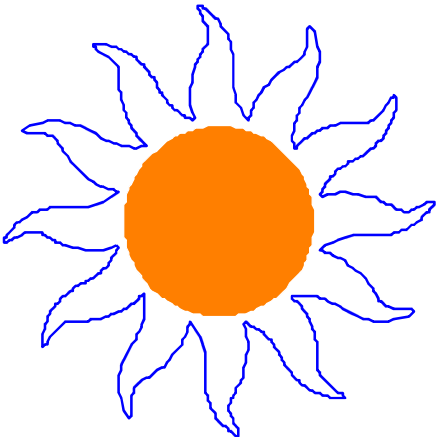
*This article comes to us via APCUG, the Association of Personal Computer User Groups, of which CMUG is a member. Jim Sanders is Vice President of the North Orange County Computer Club ([www.noccc.org](http://www.noccc.org)) in California; he can be reached via email at [vicepresident\(at\)noccc.org](mailto:vicepresident(at)noccc.org).*



# CMUG MEGAPHONE

George Coffin  
8652 Open Meadow Way  
Columbia, MD 21045

Meeting:  
**Wednesday, August 15, 7:30 pm**  
Mr. Youlong Yang will show us some of his pictures of China, and discuss how he uses Photoshop to work with them.



## CENTRAL MARYLAND USER GROUP

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Use any of these formats: ASCII (text), RTF, or Word.

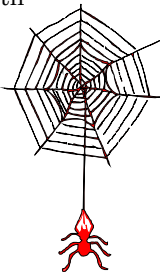
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General meetings are held the third Wednesday of every month at 7:30 pm at the Florence Bain Senior Center, near the Harpers Choice Village Center in Columbia MD. The number there is 410-313-7213.

Membership in the user group is currently \$30 (cheap!). Membership includes a monthly subscription to the CMUG Megaphone, a membership directory, full access privileges to the Website, and drawings for free and review software at meetings.



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