Q BITS

Wednesday
August 8, 2007
7:00 PM

Moline Public Library

www.molinelibrary.com
presented by
Eileen Ackerland

more info: page 2

The Quad Cities Computer Society gratefully acknowledges

R Internet Revealed

(offering QCS members a discount)
http://www.revealed.net
for providing the site for our Web Page at
http://www.qcs.org

This Month in Q BITS ..

The *QCS* is a member of

apcug

Monthly meetings are open to the general public.

QCS Review Photography & Digital Cameras

www.creativitycom.com
jane@foxtrot.com
presented by Jane Swanson

by Joe Durham

Jane Swanson has worked in the magazine and photo industry for over thirty years. Over time she has discovered that her photographic style has remained the same in the digital age. There are many benefits in using digital cameras. By sharing with us her collection of digital photos Jane described the many improvements currently available to the amateur and professional photographer alike.

When she began work with high end digital cameras for her magazine layouts, the cameras were expensive and four megapixel in capacity. Now four megapixel cameras are considered low end. Cameras with 10 megapixels or more are common. Therefore a low end 4 megapixel camera is an excellent starting point.

Your photographic style: portrait, action or scenic is more important in camera selection than megapixel size. Jane said to focus on other digital camera components: optical zoom, memory card size, len size, photo speed and shutter speed.

After you have selected your camera, purchase two sets of lithium rechargeable batteries and a battery charger. She emphasized that you never want to be shorthanded with no power when that perfect shot comes along.

Most cameras come with 32 megabyte (MB) storage. You will soon discover that more capacity is warranted. So purchase at least a 512 MB memory card for your camera. These cards are inexpensive and you will allow you to store up to 154 high quality pictures.

Action photography requires a quick digital refresh for your next shot. So a more powerful digital camera

may be required. Scenic and portrait shots are not as time intensive so a lower end digital camera would be in order.

Do not purchase a camera that doesn't have a viewfinder. It is common to see people taking pictures via the LCD screen. This gives the photographer the wrong perspective and also runs down your batteries prematurely. It is better to take your shots through the viewfinder and then look at it through the LCD screen later to see if they are acceptable.

But above all, Jane said, take many many pictures. On a digital camera they are easy to erase if they don't meet your satisfaction. By doing so you will have a better chance of selecting that photo that will last a lifetime. She reminded us that these pictures are free to be discarded with out remorse. Unlike the film photography era where each picture had its developed price. Jane offered some common sense photographic principles and photographic examples of her work.

Vacation photography can be enhanced by choosing to go off season. The difference in climate will offer greater photographic variety to your work. A picture from a foggy day in Utah described this effect. The low horizon brought mystery to the picture.

Always try to include people in your photos. Jane captures people in their moment unawares. This is more revealing and powerful than posed settings. She displayed picture of an eagle in flight. For an action shot like this, you need a camera with a fast shutter speed and a fast digital refresh. It took her over 100 shots to achieve the right picture.

When are you have gathered the shots you like, a touch of photo editing will enhance their appearance and effect. Jane was able to emphasize a machine dealer's equipment and company by editing out the background clutter of homes and inserting a better photo of the owner.

Jane uses Photoshop to edit and manage her photographs. Although you can do similar things through the less expensive Photoshop Elements and Paint Shop Pro.

Once you have prepared your photographic collection, always continue to back up your work at least in two locations. Archive your work to CD's or DVD's. External USB hard drives are becoming reasonably prices and are a good backup alternative. Additionally there are online storage sites available for a fee. Take steps to protect your valuable memory record.

Jane emphasized several times: get a camera, take many pictures, and keep shooting many pictures. You find that your ability and selection of that perfect shot will become a reality. The QCS would like to thank Jane for her fine presentation and insight into the exciting world of digital photography.
Brett Neese won the raffle of the Microsoft Digital Imaging software that was given away.

Attention QCS Members
by Brett Neece

Got an ole computer llying around taking up space? Let me take it off your hands! I'm looking for "vintage computers" from the 19980's and early 90's to rebuikd tinker, and play with. I'm especially looking for **working** Apple II's, early Macs, and a 20th Anniversary Macintiosh. but may ettle for other types and/or in worse condition. Please email me at: fbnfmsgeek@gmail.com for more information.

CyberNews
by Gary Stanley
www.gary.stanley.net/cyber_news.htm

The battle of the browsers is heating up with Apple throwing their contribution into the ring. CEO Steve Jobs recently announced that Apple will release "Safari" **www.apple.com/safari** in a windows version. Right now it's in beta (testing phase). So, you'll have a choice between Microsoft's Internet Explorer, Firefox, or Safari. Firefox will soon release version 3.0 which promises to be a winner **www.firefox2008.com/us**. I have used Firefox for over a year and love it.

Speaking of browsers, if you are using Microsoft's new IE7 you'll notice that the menu bar is missing by default (File, Edit, View, etc.). Sometimes change is not better if you have to go looking for something that you're used to. To view the menu bar simply tap the ALT key or right click on the tool bar and click on Menu Bar.

There is a new version of Google Earth now **earth.google.com**. If you are using this program you know how fantastic it is and should update to the new version. If you don't know about it you should have it! You can zoom into any place in the world and it's just like being there. Buildings and terrain in 3D and many other features. This is the program that all major news networks use including CNN to show you places that are in their featured news stories. The best part; it's free! You can read about it and download it. You should have a high speed connection to the net and have a reasonably fast computer for best results.

Sometime this winter Microsoft will release "Surface." This is a very exciting product and I can hardly wait to see it in action, or better yet have one in my family room! It's a coffee table with the surface being a touch controlled computer. Watch Bill Gates as he demonstrates it **www.flixxy.com/ bill-gates-multitouch-surface-computing.htm**. If that perked your interest here's where you can click

on three separate demos. **www.microsoft.com/surface/Phot o** Pretty neat huh?

Computer tip of the month. The vast majority of people are now using a high speed connection to the Internet such as cable or DSL. Occasionally you might find yourself not being able to receive your email, or you'll get a message that says "This page cannot be displayed" when opening your browser. Here's the quick fix that will work 99% of the time. Unplug the power cord to your modem, wait 15 seconds, then plug it back in. If you're using a wireless router unplug it also, wait, and plug them both back in. Presto, you're back "on the air." If the problem continues you're probably experiencing an area outage and you can obtain a status report by calling your cable or DSL company.

The digital age is is truly amazing and just keeps getting better and better. Digital photography has changed our lives, providing a way to capture the beauty of the world around us, and to share and preserve those memories. Photos on the Internet will soon be all linked together and will be viewed by something like "Photosynth." **www.ted.com/index.php/talks/ view/id/129** Watch a demo of this technology and then play with it yourself! l**abs.live.com/photosynth/view. html?collection=BBC/Ely/index3. sxs&st=coll** Click away, and zoom with your mouse wheel.

I have a couple of photo tips for you. Most of the time your photo's subject will look better if it's off center, but if you do that how do you focus on the subject? If you're using a DSLR then you'll have multiple focus points that you can choose with your cursor. Most people use a "point and shoot" camera where the focus point is in the middle of the shot. If you want your subject off center, move the camera until the center focus point is on the subject then push half way down on the shutter button. This will lock

the focus. Hold it down and move the camera back to how you want to frame the picture and then push the shutter button all the way down to take the photo. You'll have a more pleasant shot now with the subject off center and it will be in focus.

When using your printer, get the best print possible. Let's say you have nice photo and want to print a 5x7. Most people will take the original picture, resize it to 5x7 then click on the print button. This will work, but your photo could look a lot better, besides if you save it as a 5x7 and later want to print an 8x10 you're out of luck. You can take a big picture and print it smaller but you can't take a smaller picture and print it bigger.

Now here's the secret for a great print. If you're using a photo editor like Paint Ship Pro, click Image, then Resize. Take the check mark away from "Resample using," then type in the width or the height. Notice that when you type either one the other size will appear automatically for the proper aspect ratio. You'll notice that when you click OK your picture will still look big on your screen, but you'll now be able to print your 5x7 at a much higher resolution. Also for best results use good paper and preferably the same brand as your printer. You can use glossy or matte and be sure to tell your printer which you are using. To do this click File, Print, then click the properties of your printer to enter the proper specifications.

If you would like to see pictures that I have taken you can visit my Photo Web Site **www.pbase.com/gary_stanley**. There are more than 500 photos in 22 galleries that have been viewed by over 64,000 people.

YouTube has become extremely popular on the Internet. Anyone can make a video and upload it to this site. Some are very amateurish and some are very good. There are videos of everything you can think of including clips from TV shows.

You can spend hours at this site as I did recently watching old clips of Tim Conway on the Carol Burnett Show. I thought he was one of the funniest people ever. It's easy to find what you're looking for by using the search feature **www.youtube.com**.

Moline Public Library

Eileen will share the features and services available at the new library. She will discuss basic genealogical resources available and the data that have been traferred to the Rock Island Historical Society.

Innovation: How to Fry an Egg on an XP

Vist this web site to see a creative use of your CPU's heat: **www.phys.ncku.edu.tw/~htsu/humor/fry_egg.html**

The Age of Digital TV Approaches!
www.dtv.gov/

Visit this government website to learn the details on the switch from Analog to Digital TV. There are several different types. Be an informed citizen that can make the right selection for their budget and lifestyle.

Back-Ups Made Easy
A new solution for an old problem
By Carey Holzman
www.computeramerica.com
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Carey@ComputerAmerica.com

By now you're probably well aware of the importance of making copies of your valuable data (referred to as 'backing-up'). You've probably read numerous articles about ways to back-up your data and prevent disaster. The problem is, most advice offered on this subject is not truly complete and many of the 'solutions' offered are expensive and time consuming.

There are numerous ways you can lose your data in spite of backing-up regularly. How you back-up, what you back-up, when you back-up and where you store your back-up are just a few important variables that come into play on that miserable day that you require it.

Still, that's better than eight out of ten customers that approach me for PC repairs who do not have any kind of back-up. After all, any form of back-up is better than no back-up…but just barely.

First it's important that you understand the existing problems with the back-ups most people create.

1)External hard drives: There are many problems with backing up your important data to an external hard drive. Since most people keep their external hard drives next to, or in the same building, as their computer, any fire or flood will render both the PC and back-up useless. Also, if you are a victim of theft, the crook now has all of your data, and it's probably not encrypted or protected in any way on your PC or your back-up device. Since your back-up device is also a hard disk drive, there is a good possibility

that it will fail and need to be replaced. Ironic since that it what you are protecting your data from. If you always leave your external hard drive hooked up to your PC for automated back-ups, then it is prone to viruses and other malware that may cause the loss of data that you are attempting to protect yourself from! Then there's the high cost of around $150 for these devices.

2)Internal hard drives/RAID: Some people have a secondary hard drive or partition in their computer and simply back-up from one disk to the other. Here again, viruses and malware will render both drives useless at the same time. Fires, floods and thefts also leave you with no back-up source. This back-up is only useful if your internal hard drive fails. But as you can already see, hard drive failure is not the sole cause of data loss. Also, a RAID MIRROR (where one drive constantly mirrors what the other drive is doing) will not help if you accidentally delete a file. The RAID MIRROR will simultaneously delete that file at the same time.

3)Drive images: Some people believe an image or 'clone' of their entire hard drive onto an external drive or DVD is a good back-up, but it's not. If your computer has a serious component failure, such as a motherboard, or if your computer is stolen or lost in a fire or flood, you'll have to replace it. Once you restore your drive image, your new motherboard will most likely require different hardware drivers and Windows will most likely not start. All you'll get is the Blue Screen of Death. Sure, your data is theoretically fine and well, it's just too bad you can't get to it. Because full images copy everything on your hard disk, they tend to be very time consuming and, as a result, are not done often enough to be current.

4)Flash Drives: Flash drives are more reliable than CDs, DVDs or external/internal hard drives, but they are very slow and very limited. Flash drives are also prone to theft and being misplaced. Most people

do not encrypt their data and, as a result, may have inadvertently just given some stranger all of their personal data simply because the flash drive fell out of their pocket somewhere or they can't remember where they left it.

5)Tape drives: Seriously? Does any consumer still use tape? Next to the floppy drive, it's the most unreliable way to back-up data and tape drives require a special reader and software to restore the data. In case of data loss, just get your back-up tape, reinstall Windows, reinstall your tape back-up device, reinstall your tape back-up software and then you can start to restore your data. That is, the data not damaged on the tape.

What's Left?

Why will you need a back-up? What will happen? Will your hard drive fail? Will your PC be stolen or will your PC just stop working one day? Will you be involved in a theft? An earthquake? A fire? A hurricane? A flood?

We can't answer those questions without a time machine, but we do know that even in the best of circumstances, all hard drives eventually fail. It's not a question of "IF" but a question of "WHEN?"

If you only have one hard drive, then you only have one hard drive that can fail. Backing-up your data to another drive doubles your chances of experiencing a hard drive failure in addition to not guaranteeing your data will be there when you need it for the reasons listed above.

We also know that most data is irreplaceable. Whether it's a database of your customers, your personal finance, photos from your vacations or of family and friends, your music collection, your email, favorites and address book, once it's gone, it's gone.

Hard drive data extraction services can help recover data from a failed hard drive and even hard drives damaged by flood or fire. Expect to spend $800 - $2500 and

expect to wait from two to four weeks with no guarantee which or how much data can be recovered.

Say Hello To My Little Friend!

I wear a lot of hats as a computer talk show host, author, instructor, technician and business owner. I like to think that being a consumer advocate is a hat that firmly sits upon all the others. If you're familiar with any of my work, then you're well aware of my passion for free and helpful software and services. However, very rarely a product comes along that is not free, but is still such a bargain I am compelled to write about it.

Allow me to introduce you . Carbonite is a small, downloadable application for Windows XP and Vista (Mac version coming soon) that uses your high-speed Internet connection to automatically upload your selected data securely, off-site and in background.

For $49.95 a year, Carbonite offers UNLIMITED storage space. That's right, you can store as much data as you want. Installation is quick and easy. Carbonite's online backup service starts automatically and works quietly and continuously in the background while your computer is on and connected to the Internet. If you've accidentally erased something, don't worry; you can restore deleted files with just a few clicks on your PC. If your PC crashes, just visit their website to recover your lost files.

Your data is stored safely - No one can see your data but you because your files are encrypted *twice* before they leave your computer using a combination of encryption techniques similar to those used by online banks and financial institutions.

Carbonite online back-up software is always looking for new or recently changed files on your PC. The moment you add or modify files, Carbonite swings into action. Whenever your PC is connected to the Internet (at home, the office, a hotel or airport, etc…) Carbonite

automatically and continually backs-up all your files (but not system files or applications by default). And it will never slow down your PC or Internet connection.

Once you install Carbonite, simply tell it what you want backed-up and you never have to think about it again. Set it and forget it. It's not loaded with tons of bells, whistles and features because it's designed to be simple and do just one very important thing: keep your data safe.

Carbonite offers a free 15-day trial and no credit card is required to take advantage of the free offer.

Is This A Paid Advertisement?

Whenever I get passionate about a product that is free, no one asks me if I am being paid to promote it. I see customers everyday who lose data due to unforeseen circumstances and lack of a proper back-up. I like and I use it myself. In fact, it's running and backing-up my data, securely and off-site, as I type this! I like this product so much, I've asked the folks at Carbonite to sponsor my radio show and to offer our listeners and readers a discount to help encourage proper, secure, automated, off-site back-ups.

Skeptical? Try it for yourself, free for 30-days! Read more about how Carbonite works .
Most people with high-speed Internet connections barely use them. Since your Internet Service Provider is charging you the same, regardless of how much or how often you use it, why not take advantage of that and utilize your unused bandwidth for backing-up your valuable data? I welcome your comments and feedback concerning back-ups and this article.

Editor's note: There is a user group special. Information will be recieved by QCS members by email. If you do not have an email address, contact Judi McDowell at (309) 314-1780.

Be sure to check you mailing label for your member expiration date.

QCS Meeting Notice!

September Program Meeting Moved to Wednesday September 19th

Due to a scheduling conflict the QCS will be meeting one week later than normally scheduled. **Verizon Wireless** will be coming to share their insight about the latest cell phone technology and services: smart phones.

Mark it on you calendar so you don't miss you participation in this fast moving field of consumer electronics!

QCS Meeting Dates

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri	Sat
	September 2007					1 Sep
2 Sep	3 Sep **Labor Day**	4 Sep	5 Sep	6 Sep	7 Sep Deadline for QBITS articles	8 Sep
9 Sep	10 Sep	11 Sep	12 Sep	13 Sep	14 Sep	15 Sep
16 Sep	17 Sep	19 Sep	19 Sep 5:45 PM Beginners SIG * 7:00 PM **Verizon Wireless Smart Phones**	20 Sep	21 Sep	22 Sep
23 Sep	24 Sep	25 Sep		27 Sep	28 Sep	29 Sep
30 Sep						

QCS Meeting Dates

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Fri	Sat
		August 2007	1 Aug 6:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	2 Aug	3 Aug *Deadline for QBITS articles*	4 Aug
5 Aug	6 Aug	7 Aug	8 Aug 5:45 PM Beginners SIG * 7:00 PM **Moline Public Library**	9 Aug	10 Aug	11 Aug
12 Aug	13 Aug	14 Aug	15 Aug 7:00 PM Digital Media SIG **NO MEETING!** normdun@revealed.net	16 Aug	17 Aug	18 Aug
19 Aug	20 Aug 7:00 PM Genealogy SIG **NO MEETING!** judylenstevens@msn.com	21 Aug 7:00 PM Internet SIG **Ted Huberts** **309-792-9470** slowhand54@sbcglobal.net	22 Aug	23 Aug	24 Aug	25 Aug
26 Aug	27 Aug 7:00 PM Windows SIG Larry Stone 309-787-5574 lstone521@mchsi.com	28 Aug	29 Aug	30 Aug	31 Aug	1 Sep
2 Sep	3 Sep **Labor Day**	4 Sep **September 2007**	5 Sep 6:30 PM QCS Board Meeting Judi McDowell 309-314-1780 jmcdowell@mchsi.com	6 Sep	7 Sep *Deadline for QBITS articles*	8 Sep

*Beginner's SIG meets at Tri-City Jewish Center before the QCS program

**ALL QCS MEETINGS NOW HELD AT TRI-CITY JEWISH CENTER
2715 30TH
ROCK ISLAND, IL 61201
ALWAYS CALL AS INDICATED ON THE CALENDAR
TO VERIFY MEETING TIME, LOCATION, AND TOPIC INFORMATION
ALL QCS MEETING FACILITIES ARE HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE.**

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Moving? Send an
address change to:
felspaw@sbcglobal.net

**QCS Home Page URL
http://www.qcs.org**

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Membership Level

		New	Renewal
Full Time Student	$20	☐	☐
Individual	$30	☐	☐
Family	$40	☐	☐

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Tri-City Jewish Center
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Rock Island IL 61201

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