QBITS

QCS Review:
ABC's of Digital Photography
presented by
Gary Stanley

Gary Stanley returned to the QCS to share his lifelong interest in Photography and the tips to help make our photography more useful, and endearing. Photos tell a story. He was here to help us tell ours. His first digital camera was a 1/3 mega-pixel one that used a 3.5 disk for storage. Today he uses a wide range of digital pictures on his travels around the world.

He has wonderfully condensed some photographic principles that we all can use. First off he related that sales people will emphasized megapixels. Some of today's point and shot cameras have 14 mega-pixels. A 5 megapixel camera is all you need. The large capacity mega-pixels cameras are needed only for large sized blowups of your photos. Most of us will never need this res-olution. We usually will print 8 x 10 prints at the most and 5 megapixels will sustain that quality. In fact, the Flixr photo web storage site high-lights that the most used camera for its site is the iPhone4 which has a 5 megapixel lens.

Point and shoot digital cameras have automatic settings by default. Gary explained that these settings

will give you OK pictures. But for a better outcome, it is preferable to select the program mode so that you can fine tune the camera to fit your photographic perspective.

One of the essentials features of creating a good photo is to under-stand and manage the white balance in it. Note the lighting conditions before you take your shot. Is it out-doors in the sun or indoors under incandescent or florescent lighting. Select the appropriate setting. If you take an outdoor shot with a in-candescent setting the picture will turn out blue. If you pick the flores-cent setting in an outdoor shot the picture will have a purple cast. Mark sure that your camera is set properly.

He suggested that you take your photos at a 90 degree angle to the sun, this will add depth to your sub-ject. Also view your subject through the lens. Will it look better in a vertical or horizontal mode? Conform to your subject and it will improve the quality of your shot. For example: get down on the same level of kids and animals. Enter their world and your pictures will come to life.

One of the more interesting set-tings is the camera timer which is usually prefigured at 2 seconds and 10 seconds. The 2 second mode al-lows for a perfect shot with a tri-pod. Press the shutter button down half way to allow the camera to cal-culate all of the configurations.

Now you can lift your finger from the trigger and walk away from the camera as the still camera takes the shot a second later. The 10 second mode allows one to take the picture and also be a part of it.

On the photo walk in LeClaire, he reminded the participants to always check their settings before they began their work. Also take many pictures, unlike the old days they are free. Professional photographers usually get a good photo with a 200 to 1 ratio. Let creativity be your guide.

When we are finished with our photo set we need to transfer them, edit them and store them. Gary re-commended that we transfer our photos by removing the memory card from the camera and placing them in a card reader to your com-puter. This saves the battery life of you digital camera. Using a USB inadvertently, with a low battery can risk losing your photos entirely.

When you transfer them it is im-portant to select them all on the memory card with a Control-A, then right click on a photo, select COPY from the menu. Next, on your computer create a folder for your images, right click in that folder and select PASTE from the drop down menu. This method

The QCS is a member of

apcug

places your photos in three places until the process is finished: on the memory card, the computer memory clipboard and the hard drive. Always a good fail safe method.

There are many free photo editing software packages on the Internet, however Gary recommended Windows Live Photo Gallery from Microsoft. Paid image editing software offers more advanced options. Good choices in this category are : Photoshop Elements, and Paint Shop Pro Photo X3.

Gary emphasized that we need to back up our precious photographic moments to an external hard drive. He mentioned they are very reasonably priced, as low a s $49. There are several brands: Seagate, Western digital, Maxtor. He has a Western Digital MyBook external drive that has a feature that he likes. It backs up your data as soon as it is created on your computer. For him photographic backups are essential as he has over 70,000 photos that he has taken over the years and doesn't want to lose them. Likewise we wouldn't want to lose those memories either.

Gary offered a delightful presentation filled with humor, insight and detail. An enjoyable evening and learning experience all in one. Be sure to visit his Blog: **gary-stanley.blogspot.com** as it will have many of the presentation details on the internet from this meeting. Also visit his fine photo gallery online, a wonderful collection: **www.pbase.com/ gary_stanley**

He ended the night with "special" Internet photographic slide show which featured creative pictures of Paula Sands holding one of his landscape pictures in a photo gal-

lery. A Time magazine cover featuring himself. These were created with three clicks on the Internet. Go to **www.writeonit.org** or **www.loonapix.com**. On these fake picture sites, you create the picture display, browse your computer to select your own image, then right click the finished product to save it to your computer.

The QCS thanks Gary for his fine presentation. The large crowd of friends, members and visitors is testament that QCS enjoys Gary's style and expertise.

He said:

"Birth Certificates show you were born."

"Death Certificates show you died."

"Photos show that you lived."

QCS Reminder!
The dues are
NO MORE prorated!

Many Free Programs from Microsoft

by Ira Wilsker

www.techsupportalert.com/
content/best-free-microsoft-
downloads.htm

Microsoft is one of those companies that many of us have a love-hate relationship with. Despite some possible ill will towards Microsoft based on our experiences with Vista, BOB, and a myriad of other software issues, Microsoft does have a kind and generous side when it comes to producing and releasing for free, numerous pieces of useful software. My favorite free software directory, Gizmo's TechSupportAlert.com recently compiled and published a comprehensive directory of free software from Microsoft, which can be found at www.techsupportalert.com/content/best-free-microsoft-downloads.htm.

Gizmo, and his volunteer staff, have tested and reviewed all of the free Microsoft software titles listed, and only those that met subjective quality and performance standards are listed. According to Gizmo and his staff, "An unavoidable fact is that some alternatives will be better than programs listed here, but the programs listed here are still good and useful - however, if a Microsoft program is ridiculously inferior to other free alternatives and simply not worth using, I won't include it. If a program has a loose affiliation with Microsoft but is not actually a Microsoft product (e.g. Paint.NET), it won't be listed here."

The Gizmo listings of free Microsoft software are categorized into eleven types of utilities, including security software, internet, system tools, desktop, multimedia, office, educational, programming, online services, entertainment, and miscellaneous. At the top of the directory is a listing of recently added free Microsoft software. A few of these recently added programs include Standalone System Sweeper (creates bootable CD to scan and remove malware), Microsoft Safety Scanner (comprehensive computer scan to detect and remove malware), and Fix it Solution (Microsoft's automated utility to repair or correct many common Windows and Microsoft software problems).

I have been a strong proponent of securing our computers, and have repeatedly encouraged users to utilize any one or more of the many free or commercial security utilities that are available. For those who may like the idea of using free security software from Microsoft, such software is available. One of Microsoft's most popular free software utilities is Microsoft Security Essentials, a decent and often well regarded utility that can provide real-time protection from viruses, spyware, and other common forms of malware, as well as scan for malware already on the computer. In its review of Security Essentials, Gizmo says, "This may be the best free product ever from Microsoft, and it was chosen as Gizmo's Freeware 2010 Product of the Year. MSE is a free anti-malware program with an interface ideal for average users, and effectiveness ideal for advanced users as well." Microsoft Security Essentials will run on any computer with Windows XP, Vista, or Windows 7. While this is an "essentials" program, only providing adequate protection against the most common threats, it does lack many of the features incorporated into other competitive free and commercial security products.

I am frequently asked about parental control software, programs that can give parents control over their children's internet activities. Microsoft obliges with its free "Windows Live Family Safety", which comes in versions for Vista, Windows 7, and a special version for XP. This program can filter web content, and restrict email contacts. Windows Live Family Safety can also create an activity log that allows parents to see who has been on the computer, and a list of which websites the child has visited.

Many Windows users like to tweak their computers in order to eke out any available performance increase, or to better manage the software that is running on the computer. Microsoft has several excellent free system tools that can perform these tasks and more. One of my favorites, which I frequently use, is Microsoft's Sysinternals Suite, a comprehensive collection of about 70 system utilities and troubleshooting tools that can be used to monitor and maintain most functions on the computer. Not all tools will run on all Windows machines (but most will), as some tools are XP only, while others will not run on XP, and some tools are for 32-bit systems only; still the majority of these utilities will run on most Windows machines. Another way of improving computer performance and speed, as well as to improve boot time, is to control what programs load when the computer is booted; Microsoft offers for free one of the finest startup managers available at any price, and

this program is "Autoruns". Autoruns can also be used to identify and disable malware that loads itself in the boot process, a critical step in the removal of many types of malware. Autoruns, which will run on any XP or later computer, is one of the programs that I routinely install on almost all computers that I work on, and is seen by many IT professionals as a mandatory item to use to analyze potential PC problems.

Under the heading "Image Tools" in the Multimedia category, is another of my favorite free utilities, Microsoft Image Composite Editor (ICE). This program performs a task that most users are unaware of, but once used, becomes a fun task to accomplish when manipulating a series of digital photos or images. ICE is a "panorama stitcher" in that it can seamlessly merge a series of overlapping photos, and use them to create a panoramic image. Once this panoramic image is created, ICE can be used to crop, rotate, and otherwise manage the image, and then save the new image in a variety of popular image formats. If the user chooses to do so, images created with ICE can be uploaded to Microsoft's Photosynth website (photosynth.net) where they can join the 50,000 panoramic images that users have decided to share with the world.

Since taking digital photos and video have become some of the most popular personal activities, many of us have found a need to be able to edit our images and videos, but are often unwilling to pay for expensive editing software. For those who want a decent but free utility to accomplish those tasks, Microsoft offers Windows Live Photo Gallery and Windows Live Movie Maker. The Photo Gallery software enables the user to easily edit, organize, and tag digital photos. Like most of Microsoft's other free programs, Photo Gallery is totally adequate to carry out the most common image tasks, but it lacks many of the enhanced features found on more comprehensive competitive products. Windows Live Movie Maker, like Photo Gallery, offers the user the most common video editing functions. Movie Maker can also directly upload videos to YouTube, Facebook, and some other video hosting services. For anyone wanting to create a slideshow using digital photos, Photo Story 3 is a powerful program that can do that and much more. Photo Story 3 can create transition effects between images, pan, and zoom in on images, as well as add text to the images, audio narration, and music to the slideshow. Slideshows created with this software are saved in the popular and universally viewable WMV (Windows Media) format.

One of my favorite programs in the Educational section is Microsoft Mathematics, which is a full featured mathematical and graphic calculator. This free program can solve equations, perform unit conversions, display 2 and 3 dimensional graphs, and can process algebra, trigonometry, and calculus. One very useful educational feature built in is its ability to display simple instructions on how to solve math problems, which is a valuable teaching and tutorial function. Microsoft originally sold this program commercially, but the newest version was released by Microsoft as freeware. One other interesting feature in Microsoft Mathematics is that it integrates with Word and OneNote as an add-in, which incorporates the math features into those programs.

These are but a few of the many free programs that Microsoft has made freely available to Windows users. It may be a worthwhile and profitable exercise to review the list of free software from Microsoft before purchasing some commercial software. All of this software is available for download directly from Microsoft for an excellent price, that is hard to beat - free!

Open Source Lab History of Open Source Software

By Cal Esneault, President of CCCC (Cajun Clickers Computer Club) and leader of many Open Source Workshops & SIGs
July 2011 issue, *Cajun Clickers Computer News*
cccclinuxsig.pbwiki.com
www.clickers.org
ccnewsletter@cox.net

In the 1960's, computers were large ("main frames") and each manufacturer had a unique operating system (OS). Attempts to develop a more universal OS failed, but Bell Lab developers used these efforts to make a new OS (Unix) that ran on smaller "mini" computers (size of a refrigerator versus size of a kitchen). Since there was little commercial interest in smaller "personal computers" in the early 70's, they were allowed to offer source code to universities. Unix became a key tool to develop computer professionals since results could be openly published in contrast to proprietary systems.

In 1984, AT&T was broken-up

into the "baby Bells," and they took the opportunity to ask for return of rights to Unix since PC's were now a big commercial item. However, a lot of additional code had been written since 1975 by others on which AT&T had no claim.

Developers set about to write missing pieces taken back by Bell Labs and to further develop robust operating systems that would be freely available to all users. On the US east coast, Richard Stallman launched the GNU Project and developed the GNU Public License (GPL) as a legal tool to ensure future software would continue to be free. On the west coast, a group at the University of California at Berkeley worked on and improved the Unix system and built applications for their Berkeley Software Distribution (BSDUnix).

It was not until the early 1990's that Unix versions unencumbered by any AT&T license requirement were available. Bill Jolitz developed 386BSD for PC's which spawned a family of operating systems – NetBSD, FreeBSD, and OpenBSD). Linus Torvalds implemented a new kernel (Linux) and used utilities from the GNU project to inspire a family of GNU/Linux systems – Red Hat, Debian, Slackware, etc.)

Given the essential software base and necessary legal standing, software developers pushed to create programs for these new systems. Initial programs were limited, however, to using a Command Line Interface (CLI) which was different from the Graphics User Interface (GUI) used by proprietary systems at that time. To address this, GUI desktop" front-ends were developed. The two most popular desktops were GNOME and KDE.

In addition, "package management" software was developed to aid the normal user in finding and installing software free from the Internet.

With a wide variety of freely similar options, groups had to bundle selected software into an infrastructure of operating system and applications that worked well together. These sets of programs are called distributions ("distro's"), and over 300 distro's are available today.

In 1997 the term "open source" became popular to define these non-proprietary works. "Source" code is a set of computer instructions written in a type of computer language that can be read by humans. It is later "compiled" into a machine-code readable by computers. With source code "openly" available, programmers can make modifications and additions to the original program with little effort. Thus, once the original work is done by dedicated volunteers, incremental improvements require very little time and programs can be offered without cost to users.

There are now many sophisticated open source programs available for major PC operating systems (Windows, Mac OS, Linux, and BSD). Some examples are:

1. OpenOffice.org (personal productivity)
2. Firefox (Internet browser)
3. Thunderbird (e-mail client)
4. GIMP (photo editor)
5. Inkscape (vector graphics program)
6. Audacity (audio editor)
7. Avidemux (video editor)

Due to slower development of open source programs in general and momentum of established pro-

prietary systems, open source OS has only a small share in the PC arena. The situation is different in the mobile market, however, where the open source Android OS for smart phones is currently the most popular platform. Android development is being led by Google, and over two dozen handset and tablet manufacturers have implemented it on their equipment.

From humble beginnings, open source software has grown to be a key factor in modern technology.

By Gary Stanley

Since everyone is talking politics, and will be for the next year, let's see how you do on this test. 23 out of 30 is considered a passing grade. Supposedly 96% of all high school seniors failed and more than 50% of all individuals over 50 did too! Give it a try and find out what you don't know.
games.toast.net/independence
Living "On the Edge." In position, camera one, check, camera two, check, camera three, check, helmet shield down.... three, two, one, JUMP! (Settings, 720p, full screen.) GO. **goo.gl/wTDU8**

They say that laughter is the best medicine. There is nothing more fun than to be around people who laugh a lot. It's always a feel good situation. With that in mind let Tim Conway introduce

you to Dan Nainan. **www.wimp.com/hilariousdan**/ This might be the best 9 minutes you will spend all day!

Still, lots of iPhone 5 rumors are flying. That's the big success story behind the iPhone and the iPad is rumors. Apple loves to get people's curiosity boiling, and all the hype of camping out at a store days before the unveiling! At this point the announcement date for the new iPhone is rumored to be October 4th. I won't camp out or stand in a long line, but I'll have one soon after the debut! More from CNET. **goo.gl/iqdft**

Facebook will launch its long-awaited iPad app at Apple's iPhone 5 launch event on October 4th. In addition to the iPad app, Facebook is also expected to release a revamped version of its iPhone app. The full story here. **goo.gl/8fdnm**

Speaking of Facebook, is it getting better or worse? Are they going to start charging you? Does Facebook monitor your online activities even when your not logged in? Will they show all your photos even without your permission? If you use this social network then this is a definite read. **goo.gl/v5eDE**

HP, the largest manufacturer of Windows-based computers, has recently stated that they're considering getting out of manufacturing consumer PCs. They cited disruptions in the business caused by the iPad, which is stealing sales from the inexpensive netbooks and laptops that have been so popular in recent years. With HP's decline, should Microsoft start making computers? More on this from *The Atlantic*. **goo.gl/DPBcg**

Windows 7 wasn't even out the door and Microsoft had already started work on Windows 8. The idea was to completely redo the operating system. Not just a change to the shell or pretty clothing but a completely new operating system. It's the biggest change since Windows 95 and it's all part of future computing. Read all about it and watch a video here. **goo.gl/QFHsb**

Firefox version 7 has just been released. The company promised a faster browser, a fresh new look, using less memory and added security features. You can download the latest version here. **goo.gl/Ma0kF**

Did you run CCleaner on your computer today? In my opinion, one of the best utilities in the world! If you're not using it, you should be. It will keep your machine clean of unused files. It will also clean your registry and start-up programs. Details here **gary.stanley.net/ccleaner.htm** on where to find it, how to download, install, configure and run it.

After all these years, Elton John is still going strong! On September 28th Elton unveiled his new Caesar's Palace show entitled "The Million Dollar Piano" in Las Vegas. The story from USA Today. **goo.gl/cmLwH**

We featured a couple of high resolution photos last month that were quite interesting. Another one has come to my attention that is truly spectacular and is a world record! Thousands of photos were taken to compose this masterpiece in Sevilla, Spain. Pan and zoom this photo, click on the tabs at the top of the page to read how the photo was made. All I can say is wow! **www.sevilla111.com/ default_en.htm**

Photo Tip of the Month: Learn techniques for taking better landscape photos! "It's all about light." For years, landscape photographers have lived by this motto. It's not really a technique—it's a philosophy, a way of life, an existential state of being. It's about chasing those rare magical moments when Nature displays her finest. Here are 10 tips for brilliant landscapes from Outdoor Photographer Magazine! **goo.gl/7wpYl** Check out my personal Photo Site. You'll see over 1,500 pictures in 38 galleries that I've taken from around the world. We have had over 438,000 views on our Photo Site, **www.pbase.com/gary_stanley** thanks in part to Cyber News readers! Check out this month's photo. **www.pbase.com/gary_stanley/ image/126585726**

Check out my Blog. There you will find my thoughts about anything and everything with the latest entry being "Take Your Best Shot" **gary-stanley.blogspot.com/**

More Free Academic Classes and Free College Textbooks

by Ira Wilsker

WEBSITES: **www.khanacademy.org www.flatworldknowledge.com www.apple.com/education/ itunes-u**

Some time ago, I wrote about sources of free academic classes

and free college textbooks. Since writing that column, the selection of free courses and textbooks have grown exponentially. Three of the major providers of free academic resources are Khan Academy, Flat World Knowledge, and Apple's iTunes University.

Readers should be aware that these free resources are excellent for people of all ages, ranging from elementary school arithmetic lessons, to graduate school level economics. Content is appropriate not just for students, but also for anyone who desires to improve or enhance his intellectual abilities. In many of the college classes that I teach, I routinely show my students the resources of the online Kahn Academy (**khanacademy.org**), which offers over 2600 instructional videos, and over 200 interactive practice lessons and exercises. Someone somewhere must be using the services of the Khan Academy; the counter at the top of the **khanacademy.org** website shows that about 80 MILLION lessons and videos have been delivered. The 2600+ videos are all hosted on YouTube and are listed on a menu under the headings Math, Science, Humanities, Test Prep, and Talks and Interviews.

For anyone needing help or other assistance with any type of math topic, Kahn Academy offers explanatory videos in basic arithmetic, developmental math, pre-algebra, algebra, brain teasers, geometry, trigonometry, probability, statistics, pre-calculus, calculus, differential equations, and linear algebra. Many of these videos are also supplemented with worked examples.

While the hundreds of math videos very clearly show and ex-

plain the concepts and how the problems are worked, for those who need or prefer to work interactive problems, the exercises section may prove to be both fun and beneficial. The basic format for the interactive lessons is the problem or question is displayed, along with a box in which to enter the answer (for those who may also need it, a digital scratch pad is also provided).

If some help is needed, clicking on the "I'd like a hint" button will display an appropriate hint (or series of hints). If even more help is needed, the user can click on "Stuck? Watch a video" which plays an appropriate video demonstrating the lesson.

In the Kahn Science menu, educational videos are offered in biology, chemistry, organic chemistry, healthcare, medicine, physics, cosmology, astronomy, and computer science. I have personally found the Healthcare listings most interesting, as dozens of videos are available that may be of interest not just for students, but for anyone who would like to have more information on a wide variety of health topics, including diabetes, A1C, heart disease and heart attacks, strokes, colon health, endocrinology, pediatric growth and development, cancer and oncology, vitamins, health care costs, and other very relevant health topics.

In the "Humanities and Other" directory are some of my favorite topics which I have used both for personal enrichment and well as supplementary material in some of the college classes that I teach. Some of these topics include history, civics, finance, money and banking, credit, and economics.

Many high school and college students are most aware of the

highly competitive college and graduate school admission process, and how important scores are on entrance exams. To help these students, Kahn Academy offers some helpful test preparation videos that cover the SAT Math exam, GMAT (entrance exam for MBA programs), California specific exams, competitive math tests, and national exams from India and Singapore.

Under "Talks and Interviews" are several dozen videos featuring Salman Kahn, the creator of the Kahn Academy, as well as recorded news stories about the academy. With the very widespread use of iPads, iPhones, and other Apple products, Apple's iTunes service has started "iTunes U" which offers over 350,000 free lectures, videos and films from universities, museums, and other educational resources (**www.apple.com/education/itunes-u**). It is not required that the user be a student, as most of the content is freely available to all users. Approximately 400 universities, including Stanford, Yale, MIT, Oxford, and UC Berkeley distribute their content publicly on the iTunes Store, and another 400 colleges and universities use the iTunes U service for the posting of syllabi, schedules, lecture outlines, study guides, notes, maps, and entire books. Much of this educational material is available in compliance with the open ePub standard, which will display not just on Apple products, but any compatible e-reader. Some documents are available in PDF, MP3, MPEG-4, and other universally accessible formats, which enable easy access

with almost any type of computer, reader, or smart device. While almost all of this iTunes U content is freely available in a variety of convenient formats, the access requires the installation of Apple's free iTunes software, available for both PCs and MACs from **www.apple.com/itunes.**

The number and availability of free college textbooks has been expanding greatly. I have recently been considering the free college textbooks offered by Flat World Knowledge for my students (**flatworldknowledge.om)**. As of the Spring 2009 semester, over 1600 college faculty at over 900 colleges have selected the Flat World Knowledge textbooks for their students.

At present, Flat World Knowledge offers textbooks in business, accounting, economics, management, marketing, humanities, social sciences, professional and applied sciences, mathematics (algebra), and natural sciences (biology, chemistry). The fully functional free textbooks are available as online e-books, accessible with any internet browser and with any operating system, and are written by many of the same authors that have written successful commercial college textbooks in the past. Being maintained and edited digitally, many of the free online e-books are more up to date then their expensive printed competitors.

While some students may prefer their own copies of textbooks, rather than fully online copies, Flat World offers optional relatively inexpensive alternatives, in addition to the free online version. One somewhat representative example is the current business law textbook that I am using in my class, which

is traditionally published, and retails for $180, a price many students find excessive for a new book (used copies are available for much less).

By contrast, the Flat World Knowledge business law textbook, which is a direct competitor to the one that I am currently using, with similar content, is free for the online version, about $20 if the student wants the entire text in a downloadable PDF format, about $30 for a black and white printed version, and about $45 for a printed color version. Individual chapters can also be purchased in PDF format for about $2 per chapter, and other supplemental materials such as student study guides are available for a nominal fee. The choice between the free, PDF, and printed versions is solely the choice of the students, and in a survey of my students, about half would choose the free online version. By choosing the free online version, the student can still save digital notes, highlight, and mark the online copy almost as they can a paper copy, with the content available wherever they have internet access, including on smart phones. For the college faculty member, nothing is lost as far as support, because printed desk copies, PowerPoint slides, test banks, teacher manuals, and other materials are freely available.

School and textbooks have changed substantially since I was last an academic student. With free resources such as the Khan Academy, iTunes U, and Flat World Knowledge, there are materials and support available for students and other learners of all ages. These new educational technologies may significantly change the models used by schools, colleges, and text-

book publishers. They are a feature rich group of free services that can go far in improving our level of educational attainment.

BrainGames
goo.gl/DO2JP

The National Geographic has recently broadcast a new series that explores the workings of our brains. This is the companion website that has many interesting things to try and discover for yourself.

Steve Jobs & Apple 1955-2011

The passing of Steve Jobs will certainly mark a change in the way we view computing and the new devices that surround us. He has been compared to many of the great inventors of our time and rightly so.

Here is collection of websites that examine his impact today and in the years to come:

www.apple.com/

www.bbc.co.uk/ news/world-us-canada-15195448

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_Jobs

The Greater Cleveland PC User Group have posted several videos of Steve Jobs. You may want to

watch them at the following:

Corel PaintShop Photo Pro X3 Ultimate

A software review by Sharon Rump, Member, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

July 2011 issue, Sarasota PCUG Monitor
www.spcug.org
pcugedit (at) verizon.net

I have been using other products for years to edit photos. When I was given the opportunity to check out Corel's latest offering, PaintShop Photo Pro X3 Ultimate, I eagerly jumped in to learn something new. I was very excited to open the box and find two small books included. The first one was the *Getting Started Guide* which just walks you through what you can do with this program. The second, the *User Guide*, while small, packs a lot of helpful information to get you on your way to working with all of the features offered in this program. Little software comes with a printed guide and that is what I find the easiest to use when you have a particular issue you want to find out about.

Installation was very simple with no problems. When I opened the program I was a bit disappointed as the work area was black which I really do not prefer. But, the program that I have used for a long time has gone to a dark background so I guess it must make the image that you are working with stand out more and after a while, you get used to it.

The program includes the Organizer, Express Lab and Full Editor.

Corel PaintShop Photo Organizer allows you to look at all of the photos on your computer and you can choose the size to view, the order in which to view (time taken, file size, name, format), the EXIF information and the ability to rate your images. Here you will find everything you could possibly want to know about an image.

The Express Lab presents many tools to quickly make edits to an image, many of them with one simple click.

Upon opening the Full Editor the first thing that I noted was "The Learning Center" which is a pallet down the left side of the workspace. There are lots of options which include *Get Photos, Adjust, Retouch and Restore, Collage, Text and Graphics, Effects and Print and Share.* Clicking on each of these options opens up a more detailed listing to give you more content to help with your learning. There is also a *Corel Guide* which is available from the Help menu or by clicking a small round red button on the right hand side of the screen. This opens up a window that has lots of hyperlinks to tutorials that are being added to the Corel website, templates and new styles available for download as they become available, trial software available from Corel and updates and improvements to the program. I was very impressed with all of the learning tools available.

There are lots of automatic things that you can use on an image when you aren't quite sure how to tweak or enhance an image and then if it isn't exactly what you want you simply use the History Palette to undo that step.

Palettes of the features available are simply turned on and off with a simple click so that you can set up your work area to meet your specific needs. Sometimes I seem to click the wrong place and things disappear. That is another learning opportunity as when I search to find out how to undo something that I lost I generally find some new things.

One of the new features is the Object Extractor which makes it easy to take something out of a picture and place it somewhere else. Since working with photo editing programs, I have learned that you should never rely on what you see in a picture as these programs make just about anything you can imagine possible.

The Smart Carver tool will let you also let you remove an object from an image and then you can change the scale of an image. It did a good job to make me look a lot thinner with no one else the wiser.

There are batch processing options that allow you to change the type of images you have or simply rename them with options you prefer. Most of the time an original image from a camera has a name that you would not be able to use to identify your image and these tools make it much easier.

There is a monitor calibration wizard that will help you adjust the contrast, brightness and color so you are seeing your work in the closest to natural colors as possible. You can pay big bucks to do this and Corel includes it in this program that is packed full of possibilities.

Also included on the CD is Project Creator that will guide you creating a photo book, greeting card, collage, calendar or slideshow. I had so much fun creating a few projects and it really make you look like a pro with all of the included templates. You can print these yourself or order them online directly from the program. There is also the capability of posting your photos or video that you create on Facebook, Flickr or YouTube.

There is so much packed into this one little box that I can't believe it retails for only $39.99 directly from the website at corel.com.

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MOSES, MEET STEVE. HE'S GONNA UPGRADE YOUR TABLETS...

Membership Corner

Any New Members joining and Members renewing in the month of July **2011,** your dues are
Individual : $ 30.00
Family: $ 40.00

**The QCS board has changed dues payments :
Dues are annual and due on July 1st.
Anyone
who joins in January or after
Individual will pay $15
Family will pay $20**

Name   _____

Company   _____

Address   _____

City   _____

State, Zip +4 _____

Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____

Email   _____

Referred by _____

QCS Meeting Dates – November 2011

S	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	5:30 PM Beginners SIG Jim Kristan 309-755-8277 **jmkris@gmail.com** **7:00 PM** **How Libraries Work In the Ebook Age Moline Public Library Eileen Ackerland**					**QCS Officers** President Judi McDowell **julee89@gmail.com** Secretary Diana Wolf **theqcs.sec@mchsi.com**
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	5:30 PM Genealogy SIG Len Stevens 563-359-9672 **judylenstevens@msn.com** **7:00 PM** Internet SIG Ted Huberts 309-792-9470 **slowhand54@sbcglobal.net**					Vice-President Nancy Polios **npolios@gmail.com** Treasurer Cheryl Heimberger **cheimbur@hotmail.com**
27	28	29	30			
	5:30 PM Digital SIG **Help Using Picasa!** Vicki Wassenhove 309-787-2239 **wazz123@gmail.com** **7:00 PM** Windows SIG Larry Stone 309-787-5574 **lstone512@mchsi.com**					
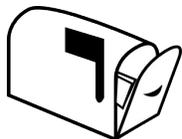
Moving? Send an
address change to:
felspaw@sbcglobal.net

This Month in *QBITS* ....

Monday
**November 5, 2011
How Libraries Work
In the Ebook Age
Moline Public Library
Presented by
Eileen Ackerland
7:00 PM
Butterworth Education Center
7th St and 12th Ave.
Moline !**