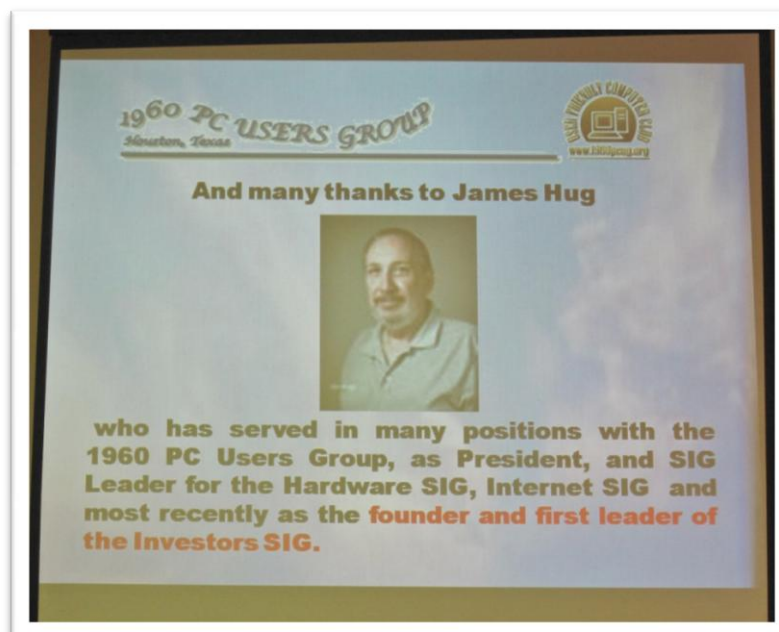




January 2010

Happy New Year! Another decade is behind us and it seems like just yesterday that the "Y2K disaster" was looming. The many changes and advances in technology and methods of communication which have occurred in such a short period of time are mind boggling. A major difficulty seems to be how to keep up with the latest and greatest in computers, photography, and all the related gadgets. Fortunately, we have many well-qualified and informed SIG leaders and members in the 1960 PCUG who can help members navigate through the seas of technology.

In 2009, a reevaluation of the Internet SIG led to the formation of an Investors SIG. James Hug and Ben Anthony initiated the new format by leading the way through the technical tracking and practical aspects of managing financial investments. Another example of how dynamic and flexible our leadership updates programs to meet members needs. Currently, Larry McKee (a new member in 2009), is leader of the Investors SIG after James Hug stepped down for personal reasons.



A change for 2010 will be the elimination of the Hardware SIG by incorporating hardware topics in other SIGS. Bill Wright has led this SIG for many years as well as serving as 1960 PCUG President for several consecutive years. We appreciate Bill's dedication, contribution, and service to the organization.

Marj Krisman, president-elect, and Board have many exciting and interesting programs lined up for 2010. Make sure you check the website, newspaper, and neighborhood newsletters for current scheduled events.

Christmas Party

Here are a few photos from the Christmas Party and movie night. As our annual tradition, Sam Sanderson furnished our movie and members brought many delicious and tasty foods and snacks. 2009 President, Gary Toll, was awarded (in absentia) a plaque acknowledging his service and dedication to the 1960PCUG, by Marj Krisman, president-elect.



The McKees



The Borings



Jean Olson, Betty Hesketh, Marj Krisman



Bob Argo and Ed Hesketh

January 2010 SIGs

General meeting and Digital Photography SIG

Thursday January 7, 6:30 p.m. The Forum meeting room

Presenter: Suzanne Chapman, Volunteer Coordinator in Training, Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens

Suzanne's program is entitled '**Pencil, Paintbrush and Pixel,**' which covers how to improve your eye and your composition when taking photos. This includes some basic art tips to making your compositions new and fresh. These techniques transition well from gardening to art to photography. She does not use Photoshop, only basic cropping when pulling a photo into a Word document. All of her cameras are basic point and shoots, and many of the photos in her program were taken with a 4 megapixel camera.

Bio:

Houston has been my home for most of my life, but I was born in England, the land of traditional watercolors. Watercolor painting recently came into my life through classes offered at the Watercolor Art Society – Houston (WASH) and The Art League of Houston. I have the good fortune of working at Mercer Arboretum & Botanic Gardens where I am now the Volunteer Coordinator. Previously I have been a Horticulturist and the Greenhouse Manager.

I love the natural world and try to capture it both in images with my digital cameras and with the watercolor brush. My camera for many of these shots was a point and shoot swivel body Nikon 4500. Recently I purchased a new camera which is also a point and shoot, the Panasonic Lumix DMC FZ28. I have the pleasure of an amazing garden where I can find inspiration and wonderful subjects for compositions.

Jim Sandham, 1960 PCUG Dig. Photog. SIG Leader
3710 Blue Lake Drive
Spring, TX 77388-5109
Ph. 281-353-4751
jsandham77@gmail.com

Software SIG

Tuesday January 12, Room 30, Annex Building, 7 – 9 p.m.

During our last meeting of the Software/Internet SIG in November we looked at the update installation of Windows 7 on a computer with Vista Home Premium installed. Complete installation did not finish during our meeting and consequently we did not see the final results. The good news is the installation restarted later resulting in an updated HP Notebook running Windows 7.

This month we will look at the result, a greatly improved operating system with many new features. These features that are included in Windows 7 are numerous and are a big improvement over prior systems. We will look at as many of these improvements as possible during our meeting. If you got a new PC with Windows 7 for Christmas this is the meeting you don't want to miss, if you are a Vista user come and see how you can make your computer run better by updating to the new OS. For you Windows XP users you will have an opportunity to see what will probably be your next windows version as XP slowly goes away.

In addition to looking at Windows 7 we will also have time to discuss any questions that you have concerning software or the Internet. If you have a laptop or notebook and have questions you need answered bring them and see if we can help solve them. Remember the whole purpose of our group is to learn more and to help one another.

Don Marvin
[Software/Internet SIG Leader](#)

Investors SIG, Larry McKee & Ben Anthony, leaders

January 14th, 2010, Room 30, Annex Building, 7-9 p.m.

The objective of the meetings is to provide helpful and interesting investment information to the attendees through presentations and group discussions.

Normal Agenda:

- Review current information that is affecting the markets and investment outlook
- Presentation and discussion of current month's special topic
- Open discussion of any special opportunities or cautions that any of the attendees would like to share with the group
- Inputs from the attendees regarding future special topics desired or improvements in the format of the meeting. Suggestions for a guest speaker are solicited and will be discussed.

The special topic will be on **diversification / allocation** of your investment funds.

Future Topics:

- Investing in new / break through technologies
- Types of investment advisors—their pros & cons
- Index mutual funds vs. managed mutual funds
- Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs) vs mutual funds
- Ideas for selection of investment candidates

During the month, we maintain an information exchange for useful data regarding current investment developments. Attendees are encouraged to email suggestions to me at: mckeelarryg@hotmail.com

Graphic SIG, Alex Dumestre, Leader

Thursday January 21, Room 30, Annex Bldg, 7-9 p.m.

Hi to all of the potential attendees at the Graphics SIG. This is an evening that I've been looking forward to for a quarter-year. It's been that long since my knee replacement and it looks like I should have no problems talking with you on our meeting evening. We will get back to talking about things Graphic, particularly about using a digital graphics editor (PaintShop Pro) and a high-end slide show creator (ProShow Gold). Because of my extended absence I will ask for questions from the floor (or via e-mail) to guide the details of the editing presentation. I will, of course, have several items prepared if the questions don't prove sufficient.

And since I've had a small trip since I last saw you, you will have to sit through 7 minutes of slide show from my trip to Cancun in October. There are several techniques that I would like to demonstrate in this slide show program.

Feel free to ask any questions you might have about computer graphics. It is likely that I or some other attendee will have an answer for you. Come join us.

Windows SIG, Sam Sanderson, Leader

Tuesday, January 26, Room 30, Annex Building, 7-9 p.m.

At the Windows SIG there will be a discussion of Windows features aimed at beginner and intermediate level users. The primary subject matter will be driven by the specific questions from the attendees.

Past meetings have covered a wide range of subjects including copy-paste, system configuration, HD television, virus detection and removal, setting up home networks, choosing the best ISP to use, and all MS Office products.

As always, I'm sure there will be lively discussion about everyone's new challenges brought on by our favorite operating system. Come and join in on the fun!

Genealogy SIG, Betty Hesketh & Alex Dumestre, Leaders

Thursday, January 28, 2010, Room 30, Annex Building, 7-9 p.m.

Please check the web site in late December or early January for the SIG topic.

During the break, Betty will continue to send the new genealogy newsletter to subscribers. If you have not subscribed and wish to do so, please e-mail Betty Hesketh at bhesketh1@gmail.com. Your genealogy web pages will also continue to be updated at www.1960pcug.org/gensig. Please e-mail any other questions to your SIG leaders.

Co-leaders:

Betty Hesketh bhesketh1@gmail.com
Alex Dumestre adumestre@att.net

Please check the 1960 PCUG website to locate archives or information for a particular SIG. There is a wealth of information located within the website archives.

APCUG Article

Use Caution When Upgrading to Windows 7

By Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director; APCUG Representative,

Golden Triangle PC Club; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, Texas; Radio Show Host (Mondays, 6-7pm Central Time, klvi.com)

iwilsker (at) sbcglobal.net

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

WEBSITES:

<http://social.answers.microsoft.com/Forums/en-US/category/windows7>

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/get/upgrade-advisor.aspx>

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/compatibility/windows-7/en-us/default.aspx>

A few weeks ago I wrote a column about how to determine if your computer could be satisfactorily upgraded to Windows 7. I mentioned Microsoft's Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor, and Windows 7 Compatibility Center, which should be run prior to any installation in order to determine hardware and software compatibility with Windows 7. I ran both of those utilities on my three month old Vista Home Premium 64 machine, and found that my hardware was compatible with Windows 7, and that some of my software needed to be updated, which I did. Rerunning both Microsoft utilities after making the recommended changes indicated that my computer hardware and software should run on Windows 7, and that no listed incompatibilities remained. With peace of mind that I should have no problems upgrading to Windows 7, I eagerly awaited the free upgrade discs that I had ordered under Microsoft's and my manufacturer's "Free Upgrade to Windows 7" offer for eligible computers.

A few days after Microsoft's much promoted rollout of Windows 7, my upgrade discs arrived in the mail. The envelope actually contained two DVDs, one the manufacturer's "Upgrade Advisor", the other Microsoft's "Windows 7 Home Premium Upgrade" complete with hologram and product key. Also in the envelope was a poster sized, multi-lingual, instruction sheet with detailed upgrade instructions. Knowing from past experience on my older computers (XP to Vista), it may take several hours to complete the upgrade I waited until the weekend when I might have the time to dedicate to the upgrade.

One of my most frequently used computing expressions is "Backup! Backup!, and Backup!". Prior to installing Windows 7, I made a set of Vista recovery DVDs, and a redundant backup of all of my critical data files. I can not understate the critical importance of this backup process, and that it is absolutely imperative to have a good current backup. If you have the software and media to make an image backup, which is a digital image of your entire hard drive that can be restored in the event of catastrophic failure, do it. This could be very useful, as it can restore the operating system, data, and all programs if necessary. The fact that I do have good backups may be my savior. I was heartened by the fact that the computer magazines and blogs were heavy with stories of successful upgrades and the high level of preliminary satisfaction that users had with their new Windows 7 upgrades.

After ensuring that I had good backups, I then proceeded to follow the upgrade instructions provided with my discs, and first ran the manufacturer's "Upgrade Advisor". It also ran the Windows 7 Upgrade Advisor (no problems found), and installed some updated Windows 7 drivers for the factory hardware. When completed, I was instructed to insert the Windows 7 Upgrade DVD.

The Windows 7 Upgrade DVD ran for a while and detected some factory installed software, mostly games and a few obsolete Microsoft utilities, that I was instructed to uninstall. The computer then rebooted back to my Vista Home Premium 64, and the list of items to uninstall appeared in a file on my desktop. I used my Revo Uninstaller, and uninstalled those items being sure to do a complete uninstall including any fragments and leftover registry entries.

I then restarted the computer and re-ran the Windows 7 Upgrade setup, as directed.

The computer ran for several hours, as I occasionally monitored its progress. There were no difficulties or anomalies so far, and as things were now running smoothly, I felt assured that I would shortly have the new Windows 7 Home Premium 64 installed on my computer. After running for nearly six hours, and completing an indicated 72% of the upgrade process, a window popped up which said that the install could not continue as my hard drive was full. That struck me as very odd, and a sense of disbelief came over me, as I knew that I had well over 500 gigs of available hard drive space prior to the upgrade! I was instructed by the upgrade software to restart my computer, and that my Vista would then be restored. Other than the annoyance of wasting six hours of my life on a failed upgrade, along with a modicum of disgust, I removed the Windows 7 DVD from the drive, and rebooted the computer. This is when things went terribly wrong.

During the reboot process, I was greeted with a black window with white print that offered two options; repair Windows 7, or restore my Vista. I selected the restore option, and the computer booted into Windows 7 (not Vista), and as it was loading a popup appeared that said, "The computer restarted unexpectedly or encountered an unexpected error", and instructed me to reboot. I rebooted, selected the restore function, and the same popup error appeared. I rebooted again, but this time selected the "Repair Windows 7" option, and the system loaded identically as before. I selected a variety of the Windows 7 repair options, ran them, rebooted, and the same error appeared. I put the Windows 7 Upgrade DVD in the drive, and ran the setup again, only to be greeted with the same error at the same place in the process. I tried over a dozen permutations of rebooting and selecting options, including a variety of repair options off of the Windows 7 repair menu, but always had the same error when rebooting. This became an infinite loop. Despite Microsoft's claims that Vista would be restored if the upgrade failed, the system would not restore my Vista, and the Windows 7 failed to install. Now I was left with a useless computer that would not load anything. I did finally boot off of a Linux CD, and saw that my files all appeared to be intact. With some difficulty, I was able to then boot off of my Spinrite CD, and did a thorough hard drive check; my hard drive was intact and undamaged.

Next, with growing frustration approaching anger, I went online with my trusty old XP computer (the same one that I am using to type this). I went to the Microsoft Windows 7 support forums, and found that I was far from alone. The Windows 7 forum "Install, Upgrade, Activate" had over 6,000 threads, and almost 25,000 messages. One forum, "Windows 7 - Upgrade Unsuccessful - Reboot Loop" had a post from Michael, a Microsoft support engineer. It says, "Hello,

For those who have attempted to perform an upgrade to Windows 7 and encounter a reboot loop, Microsoft is aware of this issue and is currently being investigated." It then provided a link to another forum, but at least I had some assurance that Microsoft was aware of the problem with the "Microsoft is aware of this issue" statement. That forum then linked to another forum, with the same title "Windows 7 - Upgrade Unsuccessful -Reboot Loop". That forum, which Microsoft "locked" (closed to new posts) has dozens of posts similar to mine, where users are complaining about the infinite loop reboot problem, and the failure to restore Vista. It appears that there may be two distinct and different issues involving the loop problem. Several dozen of the posts all indicated that their computer locked up at 62% of the install process, and many of them had purchased the student upgrade to Windows 7, and downloaded the upgrade. For

these unhappy users, Microsoft has offered an updated download file for them to use to reinstall Windows 7. Many other users, me included, had an authentic Microsoft Upgrade DVD which we used for the install, and all of us encountered the same problem. Microsoft posted a few suggestions on possible fixes, but from the user responses, these have not been successful. It was immaterial if the user was updating a desktop computer like mine, or a laptop, the failure was the same. Some of the users were so frustrated that they chose to do a full install, rather than an upgrade, which did indeed work, but it wiped out all of their programs and data files which would have been preserved had the upgrade install worked as promised. It is of little solace to me and thousands of other users with crippled computers that the vast majority of those performing upgrades completed them successfully. I guess that we were just the unlucky few.

It is not just the Vista Home Premium users that have encountered this problem, but users of other editions as well. In the Microsoft forums "Vista x64 Ultimate to Windows 7 Ultimate upgrade failing" an IT professional who was upgrading several computers encountered a similar problem with the Ultimate upgrade.

Several of the computer magazines and independent support forums have had readers complain with the identical issues, and inquiries to Microsoft have resulted in a "we are aware of the problem and we are working to find a solution". Some of the independent support boards also have members trying to find a solution, but so far none have been found that can either restore our computers to the way they were prior to the upgrade (Vista), or allow the Windows 7 upgrade to complete.

The one saving grace is that I do have a Vista backup so I can be up and running again on my newer computer, but according to the Microsoft forums, many users did not create a backup prior to installing the Windows 7 Upgrade. Unless Microsoft comes up with a fix, these users will likely lose all of their programs and files, and unsatisfactory outcome. Once again, this demonstrates that it is absolutely imperative to have and maintain a contemporary backup of all critical data files, and preferably an image backup which can restore the computer to an earlier state complete with all programs and files.

Most users who have installed the upgrade editions of Windows 7 to compatible computers had great success, but for the few, maybe thousands, of us who had a catastrophic failure during the upgrade process, we are not happy campers. Can I recommend the Windows 7 Upgrade to users with compatible computers? Generally yes, as the benefits of Windows 7 appear to outweigh the foibles of Vista, but I will only make that recommendation with one proviso; be absolutely certain to have a good backup before attempting the upgrade. I am thankful that I have a good backup. If someone wants to do a clean install, meaning that they are installing Windows 7 to an empty or reformatted hard drive that is fine, as there have been very few problems with a clean install reported in the forums.

I will continue to monitor the Microsoft support forums hoping for a satisfactory resolution of this problem. In the meantime, remember, "Backup! Backup!, Backup!"

End of article

I hope this article has been helpful for your Windows 7 installation. It will also be useful as an adjunct to Don Marvin's Software SIG this month. Many more articles and "Live Training Sessions" are available at the APCUG link on the 1960PCUG website page, lower right corner. Just click and wander through all the resources from APCUG.

Thanks to everyone who worked so diligently to make 2009 a success. A special "thank you" goes to Bill Franklin, leader of the Digital Photography SIG, since its inception four years ago. Bill's sharing of his expertise and professional skills has been invaluable to all of us amateurs. We appreciate all the time and energy you put forth to make this SIG a major asset of the 1960 PCUG.

Congratulations to the new Board:

Marj Krisman	President
David Gustine	VP of SIGs
BeaAnn Kelly	VP of Communications
Jean Olson	Membership Chairman
Gene Jackson	Secretary
Bob Argo	Treasurer
Gary Toll	Past President
Ben Anthony	Director at Large
Bill Franklin	Director at Large
Jim Sandham	Director at Large
Don Townzen	Director at Large

Bring a friend, neighbor, relative or any tech curious person to the 1960 PCUG meetings during 2010. After all, our motto of "*members helping members*" is practiced at all of our meetings.

Hope to see you at one of our SIX SIGs this month..... a great way to start 2010!

BeaAnn Kelly,

Communication Officer