



Kokomo Computer Club



A great Users Group is the most important accessory you can have for your computer !

Presidents Message

by: Mark Pendergast - Da Prez



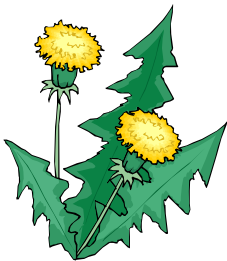
Rain and temperatures in the 60's - must be April. We have begun computing lean season. I have already been pulling dandelions. I hope my computer doesn't get lonely over the summer. Maybe I could make a spreadsheet to track all my honey-dos. I could probably Google a good crab grass preventer. I guess I'll just have to put up with all this nice weather for the next six months. I hope my computer isn't mad at me in October.

If you have a computer passion you would like to share with the Group, we would love to have you present it at one of our regular meetings. Some of our best presentations come from our own Group members talking about the programs and hardware they love.



We will now send out an email if the meeting is canceled due to bad weather. If it is bad out, please check your email before you come.

If you feel that you would like to become involved in the leadership of the Group, please volunteer to be an officer. We are looking for people to participate in the leadership of the Group. Just contact one of the current officers.



We continue to offer warm hospitality and engaging meetings. Please take a moment to invite a friend to one of our regular meetings. We offer first class presentations, good fellowship and an informative question and answer period. If they join our group they will also receive our wonderful newsletter. A good Users Group is the most important accessory you can have for your computer.

If you have any tips or tricks for improving our enjoyment of our PCs, please write them up in a short article for the newsletter. We would love to learn your secrets.

Library Genealogy Open House

by Mark Pendergast

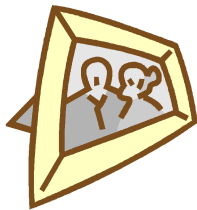


The Kokomo-Howard County Public Library will be holding an open house of the Genealogy and Local History Department at the Main Branch (downtown) on Saturday April 14 from 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

At the same time, the Howard County Genealogical Society will be holding a membership drive.

I know that many of you in the club are into Genealogy so this will be a great opportunity for you to take your research to the next level. (To kick it up another notch.)

You will be able to tour the Genealogy & Local History Department. If you are lucky you will get to see the archive of the Kokomo IBM PC Users group newsletters. We have been sending them to the Local History department for many years. Although, I am sure that they have other interesting exhibits as well.



The library staff will provide demonstrations of the genealogical databases that are available through the library. You will be surprised at the amount of information you can get with out having to go to Fort Wayne or Salt Lake City.

Howard County Genealogical Society members will be on hand to answer questions about the society and sign up new members. This will be a great opportunity to ask questions of knowledgeable genealogists. You can learn their tricks for wrestling with an uncooperative branch on the family tree.



For those of you who are just getting started, you will learn how and where to start your genealogy research. You will receive a free genealogy beginner's packet. This packet will be well worth the effort to mosey on down to the library.

If you need a little excitement in your life, door prizes will be given away. You can't win unless you attend.

The Open House is open to adults and older teens.

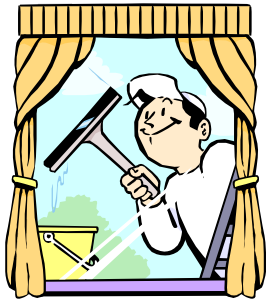
No registration required.

Saturday, April 14th 2:00-5:00pm



Microsoft has been battling a number of issues as Windows Vista has been rolling out to users. I will give you some highlights in no particular order.

The Windows Vista Express Upgrade program has hit some snags. This program allowed people that ordered Windows XP PCs before Vista was available, to get Vista for a discounted price. The plan has not lived up to expectations. Upgrades are based on a Certificate of Authenticity number pasted on the PCs. Many of these number show up as invalid when the user tries to execute the upgrade process. It takes many phone calls to get it resolved. The upgrades are often late due to the huge demand.



The Windows Vista Certified PC hardware program is also running into some snags. It seems that although the certification ensures that the PC will run all core Windows Vista features, the AREO 3D user interface is not one of them. The user community pretty much expected AREO to be a core function. Microsoft is doing some pretty fast dancing. To explain how the GUI can be an optional feature.

The world at large seems to be waiting for Service Pack 1 before looking seriously at Windows Vista. Unfortunately for the world, Microsoft is keeping mum about content or availability. (In fact one blogger who cobbled together a proposed patch list by reading the Microsoft Knowledge base and reading other blogs has been contacted by the Microsoft legal department with a cease and desist order. He has since taken down the list. The best estimate that I have heard is that the SP1 for Windows Vista will be out in mid to late 2008. I guess this will give them plenty of time to work out the kinks.



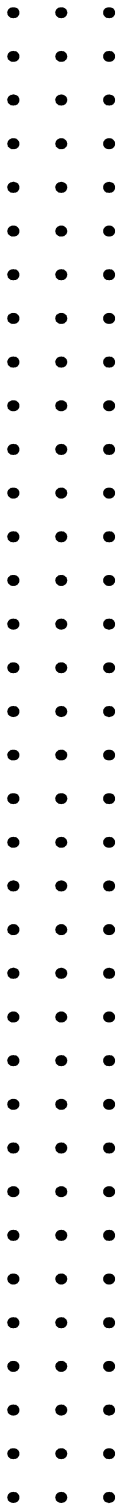
Microsoft has gotten a big security black eye with Windows Vista as well. It seems that there was a security flaw in the way animated cursors were managed by the operating system. This would have been bad enough to see that a security hole made it out through the new Microsoft security-first development process, but it is even worse. The animated cursor bug was found and fixed in Windows XP two years ago. If they can't find and fix bugs that they already know about, how can they keep out new bugs?



Well that is a summary of some of the hot Windows Vista news that has been sailing around the web. Combined with Jay's upgrade experience, it makes one pause and wonder why we should be looking at Vista any time before Christmas.

Halftoning Hassle

by Mark Pendergast



I have been on a quest for about a year to get a recognition award made for my employees art work. You would think this would be easy to do - and in fact I have done it several times before. The problem comes down to me trying to be economical and getting an idea in my head that I just can't give up on.

I wanted to make a coffee cup with our project logo on it to give to all the team members. Our logo is in color, so this would make a pretty expensive coffee cup. I figured that I could convert the logo to grey scale and save some money, but I found that to get the real discounted price it had to be a single color - not grayscale.

Enter my stupid idea. I remembered that the newspapers print all their pictures in black and white. They use different size dots to simulate a grayscale picture. This would be perfect.

I fired up Adobe Photoshop and started to look for the 'Newspaper-ize' command. No such luck. I could do oil paintings and charcoal sketches. But no newspaper format. I even played around with brightness and contrast for a while, but couldn't get a reasonable image.

I gave up for a while and then thought of contacting our resident image expert. I asked Jay Eitelman if Irfanview could do something like what I wanted. He went away for a few days and came back with no answer. He asked for me for a sample of the image and said he would post it to his forum to see what came back.

After some time, I talked to Jay again and he told me what I wanted to do was called halftoning - and that it couldn't be done. Now I figured that if something had a name it could surely be done somehow. Jay said that it was part of the high speed printing process and was not available without it. He thought that the printer could do it. I reminded him that I only needed 40 coffee mug and I doubt that they were printed at high speed - probably silk-screened one at a time.

Since then I have found a feature called color half-toning in Adobe Photoshop. It is pretty useless and generally makes the photo into abstract art. This is not real halftoning, but something with a similar name and very different results.

If you have any ideas, I would love to hear from you. As of yet I have made no progress other than finding the name of the process I want to use on the picture.

New computer by Mark Pendergast



I am in the market for a new computer. I think I may just buy my first laptop computer. The landscape has changed a lot since the last time I bought a computer - and it looks like buying a laptop introduces all kinds of issues that I never had to consider when I was buying a desktop system.

I will try to keep you guys up to date as I pursue my new system. I would like to have it by July. I would like to take it on vacation with me. I have some strange idea that I will write the great American novel on the way out and back.

I may have to buy a second laptop for my son. I promised him one if he completed his Eagle Scout award in the Boy Scouts of America. Well, he is almost there, so I better start looking. Maybe he can help me with mine.

Windows is getting fat by Mark Pendergast



I have noticed that my computer is slowing down and having sluggish performance when I open multiple applications. This was not the case in the past and I have been wondering what is going on.

I am beginning to suspect that Windows is getting fat. It seems to me that every time I get a Windows Update the system slows down. This is probably just my imagination, but I suspect that there is a grain of truth to it as well.

All these virus fixes and compatibility fixes take up memory. So at some point I will just run out. When Windows runs out of memory it does not crash, but it starts to save chunks of RAM memory out to the hard drive for later reference. This process is called swapping. Needless to say your hard drive is hundreds of times slower than your RAM memory so this introduces a performance problem.

If you are just on the good side of your memory needs, your system will run very well, but as soon as you step over the line - bam - you slow down a bunch. I plan to look through my Windows performance tools and see if I can see what is going on. I'll let you know what I find.

MEETINGS: Second Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM at IVY Tech, 1815 East Morgan Street. Look for a notice of the room assignment as you come in the main East entrance. If the meeting location is changed, it will be announced on Page 1 of the newsletter. If a meeting is canceled due to inclement weather, we will send email by 5:00 PM on the day of the meeting.

MEMBERSHIP: Annual membership fee is \$10. Checks should be made payable to the Kokomo -PC Users Group and mailed to: Rodney Malkoff, 3209 Janice Dr., Kokomo, IN 46902 (or pay at the meeting). Persons interested in joining the Group may receive two free issues of the newsletter. Contact the editor at kpcc@insightbb.com.

BENEFITS:

1. A one year subscription to the Group e-Newsletter.
2. Great presentations on interesting topics at each meeting.
3. Question and Answer session at each meeting.
4. HELP from other Group members who have been down the road before, and with whom you can share your experiences.

President	Mark Pendergast, 455-2229
Vice-President	Jay Eitelman, 455-2916
Vice-President	Jerry Henry 453-4144
Treasurer	Rodney Malkoff - acting
Membership Services	Rodney Malkoff, 453-1159
Newsletter Editor	Mark Pendergast, 455-2229
Newsletter Distribution	Jane Ober, 455-1583
Group WWW site	http://www.geocities.com/rood/pcusers

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES: Articles may be submitted to kpcc@insightbb.com two weeks before the meeting.

April 12th

Genealogy

The delightful Regine Brindle present another interesting session on Genealogy for our edification. She has given some great presentations in the past. Don't miss it.

Hope to see you there!

**Join us on the 2nd
Thursday of each month
at Ivy Tech at 7:00 pm**

**Computer News & Reviews
Questions and Answers
Great Presentations
Fun and Fellowship
Monthly Newsletter**

More details about the computer club are published on the web at www.geocities.com/rood/pcusers

Also, see some inks to cool information and free software on the web on kpcc.home.insightbb.com