



AVMUG NEWSLETTER

October Newsletter

Antelope Valley Microcomputer Users Group

Next AVMUG Meeting:

Wed. Oct. 20, 2004
7:00 P.M.
Lancaster Senior Center
777 West Jackman
Lancaster, CA
Information: 661/940-9680

Important Information

Read this Newsletter carefully your name might appear in one of the articles.

October Meeting

Program for October Meeting:

October marks a return to our workshop meeting format. After a short general club meeting, we will have a refreshment break, then adjourn to our three individual workgroup meeting rooms for about an hour. After the workgroup meetings, we will re-assemble for drawings and raffles. This is your opportunity to do some "hands on" PC work or ask questions and share information in a small workgroup situation. Visitors are welcome to visit and observe.

Nuts and Bolts Workgroup:

Ken Henderson/Bob Lion,
Group Coordinator's

It's back to the operating table as we continue dissecting some PC's and examining the components. This is a good starting point for those who have never opened their computers and have wanted to see what's inside a PC. You might want to bring a Phillips and standard screwdriver with you. We will also have some tools available to share. Probably two or three people will share each computer.

103 Workgroup - Ray Coronado,
Group Coordinator

As of press time, our "overachievers" haven't decided what new horizon to explore-looks like their topic will be a surprise.

The F.A.Q. Workgroup

J.B. Brown, Group Coordinator

Greetings Everyone!.....In the October meeting, our group, the FAQ group, will be answering your questions regarding your PC hardware and software, so bring your questions regarding any problems you may be having and I'll supply the answers. I always try to supply the answers immediately, but if that wrinkle hasn't been formed in the gray matter, I will research the question and provide the answer by email. I'm looking forward to seeing you and responding to your questions. Take care and I'll see you at the meeting.

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Our Internet Site:

<http://www.avmug.av.org>

Our Phones:

AVMUG 661-940-9680

Keep Your Cool – Your PC Cool That Is by Ira Wilsker, APCUG Board of Directors

Heat is one of the primary causes of premature computer and component failure. Today's microprocessors, video cards, hard drives, CD and DVD burners, memory, and other components produce much more heat than their earlier brethren. One simple indication of the amount of heat generated in today's newer computers is the power supply; older computers could run well with a 150 watt power supply, while many newer models utilize a 400 watt or larger power supply. While it is uncommon for computers to use all of the power capacity of the power supply, the immutable laws of physics state that much of the power used will be turned into heat, and heat can kill computer components.

Many newer motherboards and computers now come with some form of thermal monitor to inform the user of potentially damaging or dangerous overheating, and a device may even shutdown a computer unexpectedly if temperatures inside the computer get too high. If there is too much heat buildup, and the internal temperatures get too high, parts degrade or fail at a rapid rate. Expensive CPU chips, hard drives, memory, and video cards that fail are often the result of overheating. Sudden lockups and computer errors may be due to an overheated CPU chip. Our critical data may be lost forever if our hard drives overheat and fail. If our computers can be protected from overheating, not just will they last longer, but they may perform better.

Intel provides a free temperature monitoring utility for its motherboards and chipsets that support this feature. According to Intel, desktop Pentium IV chips work best when below 130 degrees F, may have problems at 150 degrees F, and may start to degrade or fail at that temperature or higher. AMD chips, such as the Athlon may suffer a similar fate from overheating. For this reason almost all modern CPU chips have an attached heat sink and fan. In order to improve thermal conductivity between the surface of the chip and the heat sink, a thermal grease substance is used between them. The purpose of a heat sink is to provide a greater surface area to enable the dissipation of heat down into the surrounding air. Most CPU chip heat sinks are topped with a small fan to blow air through and around the heat sink to better cool the chip. While simple in concept, and inexpensive to produce, this is also a common cause of overheating that is easy to rectify. The same dust and debris that can clog our household furnace filters can accumulate and clog the passages in the heat sink, and obstruct the blades of the chip fan. It is good practice to periodically unplug the computer, practice safe electrical safety, and remove the "dust bunnies" from the fan and heat sink with a small vacuum, canned air, or a cotton swab. You may also want to read the label on the chip fan to see if it is a "sleeve" or "ball" bearing. Sleeve bearings tend to have a shorter life before they fail, and can lead to premature chip failure due to overheating. Ball bearing fans are slightly more expensive, but tend to last much longer, providing for more reliable chip cooling.

The power supply also has a fan, which for many computers, is the primary cooling component that exhausts the hot air from inside the computer.

If this fan fails, or becomes obstructed with dust

Keep Your Cool – Your PC Cool That Is by Ira Wilsker, APCUG Board of Directors

and other debris, the computer will overheat. This fan must also be frequently inspected, and cleaned as necessary with a small vacuum, or canned air. If the fan starts to squeal, or otherwise appears to fail, it is imperative that either the fan or the entire power supply be promptly replaced.

Many computer cases have a space and mounting for an additional fan; if available, the additional fan should be installed. They are readily available, and inexpensive.

Supplemental cooling is also available, and can be easily self installed. One of the simplest to install is an exhaust fan that sits in a vacant PCI slot, which almost all desktop computers have. These fans which typically exhaust air from the computer can either be powered by the PCI slot, or by a power cord connected to a plug inside the case. These are especially effective at cooling video cards which generate a lot of heat; Intel recommends that the video cards be kept below 105 degrees F. Again, the slightly more expensive ball bearing fans are considered superior to the less expensive sleeve bearing fans. I installed one of these in my computer, and internal temperatures are consistently about 20 degrees F cooler than before.

Other formats of supplemental cooling are available, such as fans that can be mounted in the front of the computer in a vacant drive

erful turbine fans, and can either push cool outside air into the box, or exhaust hot air from the box. Other fans can be mounted on a hard or CD/DVD drive to cool those hot running devices. Some powerful computers, such as the popular gaming machines may now utilize a water cooled device, similar to an automobile radiator, complete with antifreeze. Notebook computers, which are often especially subject to overheating may be cooled by mounting them such that air can circulate all around the case (some people sit their notebooks on a cake rack), or on a notebook cooling pad that contains its own fans. One pundit has been recommending those black painted aluminum sheets from a dollar store that are advertised to quick defrost frozen foods, as they are an excellent heat sink.

Whatever you do, keep your cool – your computer cool, that is.

November Meeting:

Don't forget to register for next year.

Anyone who registers for next year (2005) during the November meeting will be given an extra ticket for the drawings. The drawings will be for a \$25.00 and a \$50.00 gift certificate.

Disclaimer:

<>"By following any of our tips, advice, or recommendations (for software, hardware or otherwise), you agree not to hold AVMUG or any of It's MEMBERS responsible for any problems that may arise in following said advice. All of our tips, recommendations, and information are intended for you to use at your own risk.

Although all information given is proposed to be accurate at the time of publication, we make no guarantee, either expressed or implied, that the Information in this newsletter is totally error free and 100% accurate".

AVMUG Newsletter President's Corner - October

HOW TO KEEP CURRENT WITH YOUR PC

At the risk of sounding like a commercial, I'd like to share my experience with Smart Computing Magazine, and how they could benefit you and the club.

I came across Smart Computing Magazine (Sandhills Publishing) at the SW Computer Users Group Conference. This company is user group friendly and has designed their site for easy navigation. They also publish Computer Power User, PC Today, and CE Tips magazines.

I found out that many user groups have registered under their User Group Program, to receive one free subscription for every five paid subscriptions from their membership-these free subscriptions can be used as fund raiser raffle prizes or door prizes. I decided to try them out so I registered for an on line subscription.

I'm happy to report that this is a great source of current information and can be a win win situation for AVMUG.

Smart Computing Magazine can help you learn to better use your PC, keep you current on troubleshooting as well as provide tips/tricks, reviews and instructions on thousands of tasks ...and much more, all at a great discount. All subscriptions include full access to SmartComputing.com, ComputerPowerUser.com, PCToday.com and CETips.com.

With my Smart Computing password, I have access to multiple publications, articles and reports simultaneously. It's like having an entire current tech library at my finger tips. In addition, I can select articles to save in my Personal Library portion of their site.

There are many other features available at their website, www.smartcomputing.com I recommend you check out their website. When subscribing, be sure to use the pull down user group menu and select AVMUG as your user group.

Smart Computing was courteous enough to send me some sample magazines – please contact me at the meeting to get your free copy. I will have information at the meeting that will save you up to 70% off the newsstand price. Current rates are \$29 for 1 year, \$48 for 2 years and \$36 for 3 years for printed magazine subscriptions. YOU ALSO CAN GET A WEB ONLY SUBSCRIPTION (no print magazine) FOR ONLY \$17 FOR A YEAR! Check out their site-you might like it.

Bob

Reminder:
November will be election month. This is the opportune time for you to make a difference in the club by becoming an officer. Your new fresh ideas can help guide the club in its growth cycle. Please contact me with your nominations or express your interest in a club position.

Tech News:

**By Sue Crane, Vice President / Editor,
Big Bear Computer Club, CA**

The Check Clearing Act for the 21st Century Act goes into effect Oct. 28 and will encourage the banking industry's use of image technology. If you ask for a canceled check for proof of payment, you'll likely receive an IRD (Image Replacement Document) instead.

Software Update:

AdAware 6.181 is a spyware detection program that is being replaced by a newer version. **AdAware SE** is out now and being updated on a regular basis.

To download this update goto:
www.lavasoftusa.com and click the box on the right that looks like



This will bring up another window then click on **Download Now**. Run this program from where you saved it and it will install and leave an icon on your desktop.

Double click on the AdAware icon and run the program. The first thing to do is click on check for updates. After the updates are installed it is time to run the program. The program will find most if not all Adware on your computer. Click the boxes on the left to indicate the ones you want put in quarantine.

You should review the help section to learn the other features of the program.

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To Join AVMUG, Please fill in appropriate blanks, mail it (or bring to meeting) along with your check to
PO Box 2942, Lancaster, CA 93539-2942

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Membership Includes Immediate Family

Names: _____
If you would like name tags for family members please include their name.

E-Mail Address: _____
If you want to receive our news letter.

Phone #: _____
(optional)

How did you hear about us?: _____
(optional)

PC Computer Information

Operating system: _____

How do you connect to the WWW?

Dial UP • DSL • Satellite • Other •

What are your application interests?

Annual Dues \$25.00. Please mail a check to:

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