

A Newsletter from the
Gold Country
Computer Learning Center



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Bits & Bytes is published bimonthly by the Gold Country Computer Learning Center. If you have news or information you would like to see included, please send an email to the Editor @ publicity3@gcclc.org or call (530) 432-2418

Bits & Bytes



The GCCLC Newsletter is Back

by Cheryl Marshman, Editor

I'm very pleased to be on board as the new Editor for the Bits & Bytes. My plan is to publish Bits & Bytes bimonthly, beginning with this November issue. So look for future issues in January, March, May, July, and September.

I would really like this newsletter to be something you enjoy reading and sharing with others. With that in mind, please don't hesitate to send me your ideas for future articles or regular features. I would also welcome articles you've written that could be published in this newsletter.

I can hardly believe its fall already and Thanksgiving is fast approaching with Christmas and the New Year right behind it! Where did this year go? With only a few months left in 2006, I realize I have a lot to be thankful for.

I'm thankful to have become part of the GCCLC in September. What a great organization and a great group of people, both Volunteers and Students. The GCCLC is an entirely Volunteer run organization and the level of commitment is amazing! I want to commend everyone involved.

For 2007 my New Year resolution will finally be an easy one. I resolve to continue my involvement with the GCCLC. I hope everyone reading this will make the same resolution for the New Year!

Volunteer Profile: Ron Kowalka

Ron heads-up Tech Support for the GCCLC and is a coach/instructor. He and his team of volunteers setup and maintain the computers used in the GCCLC classes.

I was born and raised in Toledo, Ohio. I then moved to Columbus to attend college at Ohio State University. My interests at the time centered on horticulture – working at the family nursery and Christmas tree plantation. As a young man this was exciting time learning about landscaping plants, agriculture, machinery, and marketing in our nursery business.



After college the US Army took me to Germany and I returned to Ohio where I taught horticulture in a "joint vocational high school". Higher education returned me to Columbus where I completed a MS and PhD. in vocational education and curriculum development.

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*Volunteer Profile: Ron Kowalka
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College teaching brought me to California in 1974 where I was an assistant professor in an off-campus bachelor's degree teacher education program located at Travis AFB in Fairfield.

The work path took me into Silicon Valley where I settled at Hewlett Packard as a software engineer concentrating on system management and training. During this time I met my wife Hally while square dancing.

Although my formal education was in ornamental horticulture (plants used around the home and business), most of my work experience has been of a technical nature in telecommunications and computers and always related to teaching and support with some sales and marketing experience thrown in.

My responsibilities of worldwide support for HP products took me to a number of countries where I enjoyed the travel. During this time I was always longing to get back into horticulture and work with plants.

This became a reality when we purchased property here in Grass Valley. I was able to landscape it, have a vegetable garden, and more recently begin pasture and stream management

My wife, who recently passed, really loved the Grass Valley area and we decided this would be an ideal location to settle in. We bought property in Grass Valley on You Bet Road in 1996 then moved there in 2002 and discovered it was too small. We expanded to the Chicago Park area where I retired in 2005.

After retiring from HP I wanted to keep involved in computers and teaching. These are areas I enjoy. The challenge of fixing computer software issues and passing my knowledge onto others is very enjoyable. The GCCLC is an ideal group in which to be involved. I also enjoy photography and woodworking and have joined several Welcome Wagon groups in Grass Valley. Additionally, square dancing is still a passion and I am a member of the GV Gold Dancers

How the Community Center Repairs Will Affect GCCLC Classes

There has been some concern about the announcement that the Community Center is going to close down for repairs. There will be work done on the foundation of the Community Center similar to what was done under the deck and lounge last year. The lounge and the GCCLC classes should not be affected; however it could be noisy at times while the work is being done.

The repairs will primarily affect the kitchen and possibly the bathrooms. The center administration is investigating suitable alternatives if the bathrooms should need to be closed. It is possible that they may be closed one at a time leaving one to serve as a unisex bathroom. Another alternative may be to bring in portable bathrooms.

The repairs will begin in January 2007 and should take about six weeks.





Tips & Tricks: What to do if your computer freezes up

by Doug Worthy

It happens! There will be times when your computer absolutely “freezes up” meaning you can’t do anything, except perhaps move your mouse & hit keys fruitlessly. If your sound is turned on, you may hear some protesting beeps. You may also get a black or blue screen. Here are some tips to try before you panic and start calling a technician. This applies to Windows XP operating systems.

FIRST, check all cables to be sure they’re tight!

TIP #1: Press the ESC key on Keyboard twice (This usually doesn’t work, but try it first)

TIP #2: Press Ctrl, Alt and Delete keys all at the same time! (This is sometimes referred to as “the three finger salute!”) *NOTE: When this is done, you should see a message that you have received an ‘Unresponsive Application’. The Task Manager lists the names of the currently running programs including the one not responding. This is the one to click & then select END PROCESS. Unfortunately you’ll lose any unsaved work. (You may get the Ctrl, Alt, Delete combination by accident. If so, just press ESC to return to Windows.)*

TIP #3: If Tip #2 didn’t work, push the Computer RESTART/RESET Button on the face of the computer. (Many computers have this and it is *not* the Start Button). When the TURN OFF COMPUTER box appears, choose RESTART.

TIP #4: If using the Reset Button doesn’t work, you may now choose the START Button to shut down. When the TURN OFF COMPUTER BOX appears, choose RESTART. IF all else fails, press the button in for 15 seconds to shut down.

Additional Notes:

- Since computer freezes can occur without warning, you should save your work from time to time. It’s very upsetting to lose a long letter, long e-mail, or a chapter for a book you may be writing.
- Many new computer users are unaware of the RESET BUTTON, so take a look to get familiar with its location (newer computers may *not* have this button).
- Don’t just start pulling plugs out to shut things down!
- If you are using the Windows XP operating system, you may be able to use the keyboard keys to shut down. How? First see if you have those WINDOWS ICON KEYS on your keyboard. (It may say START on the key also) If so, strike one of those Windows Icon Keys, then strike the letter “U” on the keyboard. When the shut down dialog box appears, strike the “U” key again. This procedure can be used anytime to shut down the computer. No mouse needed!

A computer and a cat are somewhat alike -- they both purr and like to be stroked, and spend a lot of the day motionless. They also have secrets they don't necessarily share.

-- John Updike, U.S. writer



Email Mistakes

Don't let this happen to you!

It's wise to remember how easily email -- this wonderful technology -- can be misused, sometimes unintentionally, with serious consequences.

Consider the case of the Illinois man who left the snow-filled streets of Chicago for a vacation in Florida. His wife was on a business trip and was planning to meet him there the next day. When he reached his hotel, he decided to send his wife a quick email.

Unfortunately, when typing her address, he missed one letter, and his note was directed instead to an elderly preacher's wife whose husband had passed away only the day before.

When the grieving widow checked her email, she took one look at the monitor, let out a piercing scream, and fell to the floor in a dead faint. At the sound, her family rushed into the room and saw this note on the screen:

Wife, I just got checked in. Everything prepared for your arrival tomorrow.

P.S. Sure is hot down here

General Information

GCCLC Location:

Gate 2 Nevada County Fairgrounds
Grass Valley, CA 95949

General information:

Call 273-0497

Volunteer Info:

Karen 470-0270

You can also volunteer online @

<http://gcclc.org/volunteer.htm>

For seminar or user group info & signup:

Joan 273-6955

Also call the Community Center at 273-4961

Course registration:

Carol 273-3029

You can also register online @

<http://gcclc.org/classes/register.htm>



Upcoming Events

Seminar

Date: Weds, Nov 15

1:00 – 4:00

Community Center Lounge
Cleaning the Cr@p From Your Computer

Presented by: Roger Thornburn

This seminar will cover the 10 step recovery program to computer happiness! Not only will your computer disk recover valuable space, but its speed and performance will be improved

Call 273-4961 for reservations or sign up at the Community Center Info Desk.

User Group Meeting

Date: Thurs, Nov. 16

9:00 – 11:00

Community Center Lounge
Fact or Fiction – Hoax Busters

Presented by: Don Tweedie

Handouts, Selected Myths.....what are they. Differences between scams, myths, chain letters, etc.

Registration for January GCCLC Classes begins in mid November

Look for the goldenrod flyer, coming soon in your mail, to announce the actual registration date.