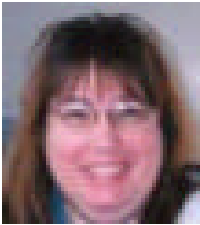




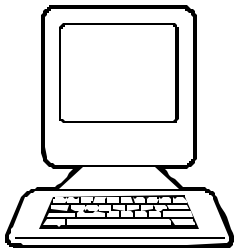
## THE PREZ SEZ...



Happy New Year! Well a brand new year has begun, and I'm excited about all the new things that I'm going to do and learn in the coming months. We have some awesome programs headed our way. Have any of you made your new year resolutions? Have you broken them yet? Hehe Resolutions are very easily made, but not so easily kept. Everyone has their own goals they need to work towards, and NO ONE is too old to work on getting there. My goal this year is to try to learn something new every month. Maybe a new piece of software, or a new tool to use in my work, or visiting a new place and learning about it's history. What does all this have to do with computers you

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Lon's Freeware of The Month



**.lwhis@hotmail.com**  
**trueSpace3.2** [21.9M] Win98/2k/  
XP FREE

3D animation has advanced above and beyond what we ever thought was possible. Just look at movies

such as Finding Nemo and Shrek. Technology keeps advancing, and with these improvements, our eyes are going to be surprised even more as time goes on. The ability to create complete 3D characters and worlds has intrigued some people to the point where they want to learn how to do it, as well. This usually means laying down massive amounts of money for complex design software. The money alone may deter some people from getting into this field, but it doesn't have to be that way. To get your design groove on for free, check out trueSpace. This is an older version of the software, but it still works just fine.

*(Continued on page 4)*

## "HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM YOUR DIGITAL CAMERA" Workshop

The Digital Photo Guy (TDPG), aka Lee Otsubo, presents Workshops for regular people who simply want to know how to use their digital cameras and get more out of their digital photos.

"How To Get the Most From Your Digital Camera Workshop" provides digital camera owners with useful hints, tips, and tricks to produce quality images, print and share photos, and process and manage their photo files.

During the 60-minute Workshop, attendees will learn about:

- selecting a digital camera for their photography needs,
- the six major parts of a digital camera,
- the four most popular ways to share and display digital photos, and
- the secrets to consistently printing good quality photos

TDPG uses humor and lively anecdotes throughout the Workshop presentation to emphasize key points. After the presentation, Lee will have several digital camera-related, multimedia, instructional CDs available for purchase at a special Computer User Group discounted price. CDs are also available for sale at [www.thedigitalphotoguy.com](http://www.thedigitalphotoguy.com).

Biography: Lee Otsubo, The Digital Photo Guy, has combined the skills and experience he gained during his career as an engineer, marketing executive and assistant professor to create the popular "The Digital Photo Guy" Workshops and multimedia CD product series. Lee has presented his Workshops to over 5,000 persons in Southern California, Nevada, and Arizona. Lee likes to photograph sports, particularly professional bicycle races, and flora and fauna, including an often uncooperative house-cat named Alf, near his home in Escondido, CA. For additional information, contact Mary Raver, Chief Administrative Officer (aka, "Lee's wife") or visit

[www.thedigitalphotoguy.com](http://www.thedigitalphotoguy.com)

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*Take a look and take the poll*

**Meeting Time and Place**

2nd and 4th Tuesday

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Seventh-day Adventist Church

29885 Bradley Road

Sun City, CA

**THE PREZ SEZ...**

*(Continued from page 1)*

say? Well, quite a lot! I'm sure you've heard that your new computer is outdated before you open the box. In the wonderful world of computers there is always something new happening, something new to learn, something new to do and something new to explore. I challenge each of you over the next few months to explore an interest with your computer. You can wander the endless information highway of the internet or stroll the vast aisles of computer software at the stores (or online) or relax among forests of bookshelves at the bookstore. Whatever you choose, it will be a wonderful way to begin (and continue through) your year. After you learn something new, don't forget to share it with your fellow members and friends. After all, THAT's what we're all about. Friends Helping Friends. So, write a short article about what you've learned for our newsletter, or do a short presentation at one of our meetings. It's a great feeling sharing what you know with others.

I wish you and your family happiness and health in the coming year. I look forward to sharing it with you here at every meeting!

Joannie



**Computer Classes**

Looking to get the most out of your computer? Then CCMV Computer classes are for you. Computer classes keep you informed and learning, and you get to meet a great group of people!

You can sign up at the back table at the next CCMV meeting, at the Kay Cenicerros Community Center front desk or contact the Registrar, John Cope, to sign up at: copepiano@earthlink.net

**Evening Classes By Joannie**

Joannie's evening classes continue. Each class is two evenings and runs from 5:00 PM-8:30 PM, on Tuesday & Thursday. \$55 fee includes class and step by step manual. Find complete schedule and class outlines at: www.ByJoannie.com.

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

**APCUG MEMBER DISCOUNTS**

CCMV is a member of APCUG and as such are eligible for User Group discounts at certain stores and online. The current list of participating vendors can be found on our website. (www.CCMV.net)

Please read the discounts and instructions carefully to be sure you get your discounts when purchasing products from these companies. Enjoy!

## Problem With Downloading Emails From mchsi.com

(Submitted to the mchsi.com users and to CCMV.net 10/17/2004, re-submitted to the newsletter 12/2004)

By Frank Verano

For all of you mchsi.com users: Once in a while, you'll notice that your cable modem seems OK. Your computer seems OK; Outlook or Outlook Express works OK. Except that you can't get your email. When you click on Send/Receive the download seems to start then it aborts.

Problem: This happens some times when there is a peculiar message waiting on the server for you and for some weird reason it will not download and nothing else will download either. You are ready to call mchsi.com.

Let me suggest a solution. Go to mchsi.com website and get into web-mail. Look over your messages. You'll find a message that is the culprit. You usually will know which are the good messages. But you may not know immediately which one is hanging up the downloads. Select a likely culprit. Then go back to OE or OLK and try the download again. You'll find which message is giving you a problem. Don't ask me why this happens.



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*Teachers & Assistants*  
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**Sign Up for a Class TODAY!**

### Product Review – Pixifun™ Photo Key Ring Kit

by Dwight Jenkins

Product: Pixifun™ Photo Key Ring Kit  
Manufactured by: Pexagon Technologies  
Web Site: <http://www.Pixifun.com/Pixifun/>  
Price: \$12.99 MSRP

#### Thumbnail Impression

This is a product that is priced fairly, but the software needs a complete rework to come close to user friendly. If you're looking to make a dozen or fewer key chains, it's a fair value. However, if you are looking to make a lot of key chains as gifts or promotional items, there are better alternatives.

Manufacturer's Description: Complete kit that contains software, acrylic key rings, and photo inlays. Use your PC and digital pictures to create cool key rings for the whole family. Design & create personal style photo key rings in minutes. Ready-to-use templates to assist in your design. Contents: Software CD, 6 acrylic key rings, 18 photo inlays, 2 printer test sheets and alignment page.

Let's talk about the best parts of this kit first.

The key chains themselves are attractive and appear to be well made. They assemble easily, and look professionally done. I would expect one to last for years with normal use. With six in the starter kit at \$12.99 and six more in the re-fill kit at \$9.99, that works out to about \$2.16 each for the first six or \$1.90 each for 12 key chains; certainly a good value for such a small quantity. At this time, there is only one style of key chain, a 1.5 by 1.5 inch square clear plastic, suitable for two pictures back to back.

Now the picture starts to fade a bit.

The photo papers supplied with the kit are small pages with pre cut stickers. When you peel off the stickers they have a perforated center that makes folding it in half easy, thereby having one picture on each side. This is great, but getting the pictures aligned on the sticker can be a challenge. The kit has test papers, and a transparent overlay to help you with the alignment, and the software

(Continued on page 4)

## Product Review – Pixifun™ Photo Key Ring Kit (continued...)

*(Continued from page 3)*

allows you to 'nudge' the pictures up and down and left to right to position them. I'm thinking a full page of paper and a pair of sharp scissors makes more sense.

And speaking of the software...

Don't expect any photo editing other than resizing and cropping. The program has a selection of backgrounds and clip art, and you can add text, but as for your photos, (and that's the whole purpose, isn't it?) if you need red eye removal, exposure fixes, or any other help for your photos, you'll need to do that first with another program.

So since this program does one thing, you'd expect it to do it well. Well, it really doesn't. The tools are scattered here and there, and while the program takes you through step by step, I hardly think 'wizard' is a term that fits. The whole interface appears to have been designed by committee. I would expect to import my photo, and see an outline of my target, the finished size. Then I would have the choice to resize and/or crop to fit the outline and I'm ready to print. Let me be clear, the program works, it just takes some futzing with it to get where you want to be.

Besides the key chain kit, there are four others; photo magnet kit, photo album kit, photo ID badge kit, and CD/DVD label kit. To me, it would have made sense to include ALL of the kits in one software package, to encourage sales of their other re-fill kits, and to give me a break on loading five different programs that do basically the same thing.

As I said above, if you are looking to produce more than just a few key chains, a quick Google search found me a company that sells very similar key chains, in a variety of shapes and sizes bulk packages for far less than the Pixifun™ kits.

To order Pixifun™ kits, go to their web site, <http://www.Pixifun.com/Pixifun/>. CCMV members will receive a 10 percent discount if you use this promotion code when ordering. COMPUGRPQ404. *(Continued...)*

## Lon's Freeware of The Month

*(Continued from page 1)*

Seeing as this software is free, you may start to think that it skimps on features. Not true. The software contains tons of tools that will help you to get your feet wet with how you can create your own 3D models and animation. The interface may appear to be very daunting at first, but the interactive tutorials will help you to feel right at home. Try and see what kind of cool stuff you can create with trueSpace. If you're like me, your best efforts will result in a giant sphere. Watch out, Pixar... there's a new designer in town.

**Note: We gave Pexagon Technologies the opportunity to respond to our review. Their comments follow:**

Dwight,

My name is Linda VanWilgen and I am the Director of Business Development for the Pixifun product line. Kerri Hoyt forwarded me your review of the Key Ring Kit and I'd like to respond to a few of your comments.

We appreciate that you took the time to review the sample we sent you and welcome your comments as they help us to make improvements to our product. I'll respond to your comments in the order they appear.

1.) Yes there are other alternatives for making a key ring or a magnet, but there currently isn't another line that puts everything you need into one kit. The value of the product lies in the inclusiveness of the kit. For the cost of between \$9.99 and \$12.99, you get software, pre-sized paper, an alignment page, test sheets, and 6 key rings. The line is targeted towards the print at home end user who normally wouldn't need a lot more than 6 key rings for any one application. Professionals and those looking to make larger volumes would probably look elsewhere for either wholesale or bulk product.

2.) The photo paper supplied is pre cut and pre sized so you don't have to use scissors or buy extra paper to make an item. Again, the value lies in the inclusiveness. And while it might take a bit to figure out the printing process, once you've got the hang of it, it's quite easy. It was our assumption that print at home users are somewhat more computer savvy to start with and that the 'alignment' issue is one they would be familiar with.

3.) The included software is one component of the kit only, not the major feature. That being said, the software doesn't allow for any 'extras' at this value price point. Again we made an assumption that consumers would use existing images that they were already happy with to make the key rings or magnets. We will certainly keep your comments in mind for the future.

4.) I'm happy that at least you report that the software works, it does. As to your other points, we agree with some of them. We're currently in the process of revising the software to be more user friendly and expect the new version, complete with new interface, in the first 6 months of 2005. The icons should be more universal and the layout a bit more clear. We will make sure you get to see a version of that when it's released.

Dwight, again we appreciate the time you spent using and reviewing our product. We welcome end user comments and try to incorporate the best ideas into future products. While the vast majority of reviews we receive are much more glowing, I value your opinions.

Please let me know if I can provide you or your group with anything else.