THE PRINTER

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Happy New Year Everyone!

I hope 2005 is your best year yet. There are plenty of new and exciting things going on in the world of computing this year. With 64-bit computing nearly a reality (with the release of the Microsoft products to take advantage) and the maturity of the products released in 2004, new technology is on the rise. The Chesapeake PC Users Group is committed to keeping you informed of the latest developments and how they will affect your computing experience.

Upcoming Meetings:

January: Wireless Home Networking

At the January 12 meeting we will demonstrate Wireless home networking. Many people have a broadband Internet connection and want to share it among multiple computers. If you have a wireless computing device (laptop, PDA, PC, etc) feel free to bring it along to demonstrate how easy a network is to setup.

February: Selling on eBay

Last year everyone seemed to enjoy the demonstration of eBay. This year, we will show you how to set-up your own auctions on eBay to sell products. This should be a very helpful meeting to everyone who has questions about working from

Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Emoticons (Smilies)

by
Fran Damratowski

As I said in previous issues of **The Printer**, because there are thousands of abbreviations used, only selected abbreviations and symbols will be presented here. For those who haven't seen earlier issues, an emoticon is a way of expressing emotions when sending e-mail - an emotional icon (look at them sideways). If I missed an important or favorite abbreviation, acronym, or emoticon between A and T, email me at fdamratowski@comcast.net. I will include it in the final list. We will continue with the letter:

U

U: Unit
UA: User Area
UAC: Universal Access Control
UAE: Unrecoverable Application Error
UAN: Universal Application Network
UART: Universal Asynchronous Receiver Transmitter
UAS: User Application Software
UBE: Unsolicited Bulk E-mail
UBR: Unspecified Bit Rate
UCE: Unsolicited Commercial Email

President's Corner- cont'd

March Meeting: Photo Story v.3

home with this type of business.

The latest version of Photo Story is now available form Microsoft for FREE! If you would like to download your copy, simply visit http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/photostory/default.mspx Windows XP and Media Player 10 are required for this to function. At the March meeting there will be a demonstration of how to put together a Photo Story show with still pictures.

Inclement Weather

Just a reminder, if the schools are closed for any reason, our meeting is canceled. And as for the meeting topics, they are generally postponed to the next months meeting.

See You At A Meeting!

Chesapeake PC Users Group

OFFICERS

President

Mike Young..(410) 551-4411
president @chesapeakepcusersgroup.org

Vice President

David Cunningham..............................(410) 268-2384
vice-president @chesapeakepcusersgroup.org

Treasurer

Karl Richmond....................................(410) 268-3860
treasurer @chesapeakepcusersgroup.org

Secretary

Jim Quinn..(410) 647-2947
secretary @chesapeakepcusersgroup.org

Publisher/Editor

Mike Regimenti...................................(410) 974-0649
editor@chesapeakepcusersgroup.org

CHAIRPERSONS

Programs Chairperson

Craig Barlow.......................................(410) 266-6829
programs @chesapeakepcusersgroup.org

Education Chairperson

Sam Shepherd.....................................(410) 647-6077
education @chesapeakepcusersgroup.org

Membership Chairpersons

Mike Regimenti/Margaret Duggan..(410) 974-0649
membership @chesapeakepcusersgroup.org

Public Relations Chairperson

Fran Damratowski..............................(410) 544-7047
pr@chesapeakepcusersgroup.org

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)

New Users Group

Sam Shepherd.....................................(410) 647-6077

Investment SIG

Len Lindenmeyer.................................(410) 647-9142
investments @chesapeakepcusersgroup.org

Internet SIG

Mike Regimenti...................................(410) 974-0649
internet@chesapeakepcusersgroup.org

Computer Recycling SIG

Jerry Moskowitz..................................(410) 268-2019
recycling@chesapeakepcusersgroup.org

Webmaster

Mike DeLucia......................................(410) 721-2991
webmeister @chesapeakepcusersgroup.org

Portable Media Storage Devices
Part 3: Hard Drives
by
Fran Damratowski

The operating system needed to transfer data from the storage device to the computer, will be identified, as well as the software included with the storage device. The type of media will refer to the type of disk, flash memory card supported and whether or not an adapter is needed to read the card. The cases in which the DVD and CD writers allow disk spanning, as well as the type of media that can be played back on the storage device, are also included. DVD and CD devices can sometimes be used as external writers for DVDs, CDs, and flash memory. An LCD just displays data; a color LCD will display images. Dimensions are given in inches and weight in ounces with, and in some cases, without the battery. Price information consists of either the manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP) or an on line quick search price range. Some items such as card adapters are options at additional cost. See the websites and print media or on line reviews for additional information.

Key: CF = Compact Flash, MD=MicroDrive, MMC=MultiMedia Card, RS-MMC=Reduced
     Size-MultiMedia Card, MS=Memory Stick, SD=SecureDigital, SM=SmartMedia,
     xD=Extreme Digital

CompactDrive PD7X, www.compactdrive. info. USB 2, Win 98, 2000, ME, XP, Mac. Cards supported: CF I/II 4 GB, MD 4 GB, MMC, MS/Pro, SD, SM, xD. Mac. Hard drives: none supplied to 80 GB. Plays: LCD Power: AA NiMH, AC. Dimensions and weight5.2 X 3.3 X 1.3 inches, 15.7 oz., 6.7 X 5.4 X 1.4 inches, 26 oz. On line: $100-400.

Epson P1000 www.epson.com. USB, Win 98, 2000, ME, XP. Cards supported: CF I/II, MD, MMC (adapter), MS (adapter), SD (adapter), SM (adapter), xD (adapter). Hard drive: 30 GB. Plays back: LCD, Video, JPEG, raw. Power: Li-Ion, AC. Dimensions and weight: 5.6 X 3.7 X 9.1 inches, 11.2 oz. MSRP: $600

JOBO GIGA 2, **JOBO Giga Mini**, and **JOBO GIGA Vu Pro** www.jobodigital.com. USB 2, Win 98SE, 2000, ME, XP, Mac. Cards supported: CF I/II, MD, MMC, MS/Pro, SD, SM, xD (adapter). Software: Driver CD. Hard drives: 20 GB (2, Mini), 40 GB (Mini, Vu Pro). Plays back: LCD (Mini), color LCD (Vu Pro), JPEG, Raw, MPEG 1, MPEG 2, MPEG 4, MIVX 1, MIVX 3, MIVX 3. Power: Li-Ion, AC. Dimensions and weight: 5.9 X 3.2 X 1.3inches 11.8 oz. (2), 4.8 X 2.5 X 0.8 inches, 5.6 (Mini), 5.7 X 4.2 X 1.5 inches, 14.8 oz. (Vu Pro). MSRP: $250 (2), $370 (Mini), $550 (Vu Pro).

Kanguru Media x-change 2.0 www.kanguru.com. USB 2, Win 98SE, 2000, ME, XP. Cards supported: CF, MD, MMC, MS, SD. Hard drives: 20 to 80 GB. Plays: LCD. Power: Li-Ion. Dimensions and weight: 5 X 3 X 1 inches, 8 oz. MSRP: $200 - $280.

Media Gear Flash-HD To Go www.mymediagear. com. USB 2. Software: Dantz Retrospective Backup Express, Adobe Photoshop Album SE. Cards supported: CF I/II, MD, MMC, MS/Pro, SD, SM, xD (adapter). Hard drives: 20 GB to 60 GB. Power: Li-Ion, AC. MSRP: $200 to $300.

Nikon Coolwalker http://nikonimaging.com. USB 2, Win 98SE, 2000, ME, XP, Mac. Cards supported:

U - cont'd

UD-DVD: Ultra Definition Digital Video (or Versatile) Disk
UDB: Universal DataBase
UDC: Universal Decimal Classification
UDF: Universal Disk Format; User-Defined Function
UDI: Unrestricted Digital Information
UDO: User-Defined
UDP/IP: User Datagram Protocol/Internet Protocol
UFS: Unix File System
UFT: Unsolicited File Transfer
UG: User Group
UHF: Ultra-High Frequency
UHL: Universal Hypertext Link
UHP: Ultra-High Performance
UID: Unit Identifier
UIN: Universal Internet Number
UL: UpLoad
ULV: Ultra Low Voltage
UMA: Upper Memory Area
UN/EDIFACT: United Nations Electronic Data Interchange For Administration Commerce and Transport
UNE: Unbundled Network Element
UNICODE: UNIversal CODE
**: — \ Undecided Smiley
UOW: Unit Of Work
UPC: Universal Product Code
UPG: UPGrade
UPnP: Universal Plug aNd Play
UPS: Uninterruptible Power Supply
URL: Universal Resource Locator
USART: Universal Synchronous/Asynchronous Receiver/Transmitter
USASCII: United States of America Standard Code for Information Interchange
USB: Universal Serial Bus
USENET: USEr's NETwork
USQ: UnSQueezed

USR: US Robotics
USSA: User Supported Software Association
UT: Universal Time
UTI: Universal Text Interchange
uTOK: User's Tree Of Knowledge
UTOPIA: Universal Test and Operation Physical Interface for Atm
Physical layer specification for local connectivity between ATM devices
UTP: Unshielded Twisted Pair
UTRAN: Umts Terrestrial Radio Access Network
UUCP: UNIX to UNIX Copy Program
UUID: Universal Unique Identifier
UUT: Unit Under Test
UV: UltraViolet
UWIN: Unix for WINdows
UXGA: Ultra eXtended Graphics Array

http://www.acronyms.ch/
http://www.steves-digicams.com/digi_dictionary.html
Toshiba Glossary
Add ins

Don't miss the next exciting and breathtaking installment of

Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Emoticons

Exchange Traded Funds
(EFTs)

by
Len Lindenmeyer
Investment SIG

Not everyone is comfortable picking and then investing in individual stocks. There are other choices, and these choices offer reduced risk with the advantage of spreading your investment over many different sectors of the market. One choice is to invest in a Mutual Fund, and there are many choices available. The larger families of funds offer dozens of specific funds. Among these are Fidelity, T. Rowe Price, and Vanguard to name but a few. Another choice is to invest in an Exchange Traded Fund or ETF. I wrote this back in June, just before school ended. Thought I would publish it again, to show what an ETF can do. The QQQ index is now at 39.87 as I sit in front of my computer on December 2, 2004. I'll let you do the math to see what this fund is now worth - 31.3679 shares at 39.87 = ?????. Your gain is in excess of 40 % - a very nice profit indeed.

There are many choices in Exchange Traded Funds. Many of these are small, and thus more risky and more subject to price fluctuations. A safer bet is to invest in one of the big three - 1) The Dow Jones average, 2) the NASDAQ average, and 3) the Standard & Poor 500 average. These are known by their stock symbols as DIA for the Dow Jones average, QQQ* for the NASDAQ 100 average, and SPY for the Standard & Poor 500 average. To see the performance of any of these funds just go to the web site for Bigcharts (www.bigcharts.com) and key in any one of these symbols. If you want more information on ETFs, then go to Morningstar's site (www.morningstar.com) and click on ETFs.

Investing in the QQQ average in January of this year would have produced a 40% gain in price through December 2004 while spreading the risk among 100 companies. An even better way to invest might be to buy an ETF on a dollar cost averaged basis. To see the results of investing in the QQQ since January of 2002 on a dollar cost average basis, go to Bigcharts and look at the chart. A dollar cost average investment of $25 per month would have had a gain of almost 40%. To dollar cost average use a site such as www.sharebuilder.com

*The new symbol for the NASDAQ 100 is QQQQ.

Travel Planning Using the Internet
Save 40-50%

1. Contact the Country's Embassy in Washington

   www.embassy.org
   Click also on Country Profile for information & weather

2. Search Country Sites for Travel ideas based on when you plan to travel

   www.travelbritain.com   for example

   www.holiday.scotland.net   for example, etc.

3. Check the Weather forecast for best travel seasons

   www.weather.com   or   Check the country site

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THE PRINTER   *January   2005*   **ChPCUG dues are $40 per year**   *http://www.chesapeakpcusersgroup.org/*

Real Estate Investment Trusts
(REITs)
by

Len Lindenmeyer - Investment SIG

Real Estate Investment Trusts are a special type of investment because they are covered by a special section of the IRS Tax Code. Because a REIT does not pay any income tax, it must distribute about 90% of its net income to its shareholders in the form of dividends. For this reason, a REIT typically provides a yield much higher than even the best dividend paying stocks. Excellent dividend paying stocks may pay 3-4%, whereas a REIT will pay 5-8% or more in yield alone. That yield coupled with some growth, may yield annual returns in the range of 8-15% (combining both dividends along with growth in the price of the stock).

There are hundreds of REITs from small to large. You will probably recognize the names of some REITs because you see their names in the news or along the side of the road advertising their properties for lease. Among some common names in this area are Rouse, the developer of Harbor Place, Kimco, a REIT involved in commercial real estate, and Public Storage, a builder of short term storage properties.

While there are many classes of REITs, the larger ones can be broken into categories based on the properties in which they specialize. Some of these are:

1) Mall REITs such as Rouse.
2) Commercial property REITs such as Kimco.
3) Small Strip Mall REITs.
4) Apartment REITs.

5) Public Storage REITs of which the company **Public Storage** is but one.

Some companies will own a mixture of properties. There are also specialty REITs that specialize in particular classes of properties such as hospitals and Health Care property. One large REIT specializes in building automobile showrooms which are then leased back to the dealers.

There are several advantages of owning a REIT:

1) They generally pay a much higher dividend than other stocks, so people looking for income will get superior returns with a REIT.
2) Their Total Return is more consistent on a per year basis ranging from 8-15% on average.
The good REITs typically increase their dividend every year or every two years so the income increases if you hold the REIT for several years. The returns on REITs the past several years have been spectacular because of the low interest rate environment.

The disadvantages of owning a REIT are:

1) It will generally grow more slowly than many good growth stocks,
2) They can be highly leveraged with too much debt. When interest rates rise, they may have trouble servicing the debt which can jeopardize the income (dividends).

Part 2: Hard Drives - cont'd

CF I/II, MD, SD. Hard drive: 30 GB. Plays back: Color LCD JPEG, TIFF, NEF (raw), Quicktime, WAV, remote. Power: Li-Ion, AC. Dimensions and weight: 3.2 X 5.1 X 1.4 inches, 12.3 oz. Warrantee: 1yr. MSRP: $500?

NixVue DA Lite, **NixVue DA II**, and **NixVue Vista** www.nixvue.com. USB 2/1, Firewire (Vista), Win 98, 2000, ME, XP, Mac, Linux (Vista). Cards supported: CF I/II, MD (Vista), MMC (adapter), MS (adapter), SD (adapter), SM (adapter). Hard drives: 10 GB to 60 GB. Plays back: Mono LCD Thumbnails (Lite, II), Color LCD JPEG, TIFF, BMP, raw images (Vista), TV, remote (Vista), MP3 (Vista). Power: Li-Ion (Lite, Vista), AA (II), AC (Vista), car. Dimensions and weight: 5.8 X 5.3 X 1.1 inches, 10 oz. On line: $320 - $465 (Lite), $330 - $560 (II), $416 - $445 (Vista).

PDS www.cappuccinopc.com. USB 2/1, Win 95, 98/SE, 2000, ME, XP, Mac, Linux. Cards supported: CF I, MD, MMC, MS/Pro, SD, SM. Hard drives: none supplied to 100 GB. Plays back: LCD, MP3, WMA. Power: Li-Ion, AC. Dimensions: 5.8 X 3.4 X 1. MSRP: $139-$459.

SmartDisk FTX www.smartdisk.com. USB 2/1, Win 98SE, 2000, ME, XP, Mac. Cards supported (adapter for a all but CD & MD): CF I/II, MD, MMC, MS/Pro, MS Duo, MS Duo Pro, SD, SM, xD. Hard drives: 20 to 80 GB. Plays back: Color LCD, video, JPEG, Tiff, raw, MPEG, MP3, WAV. Power: Li-Ion. Dimensions and weight: 3.6 X 5.6 X 1.3 inches, 12 oz. Warrantee: 1yr. MSRP: $400-700.

Super DigiBin 2 www.leadingspect.com. USB 2, Win 98SE, 2000, ME, XP, Mac. Cards supported: CF I/II, MD, MMC, MS, SD, SM. Hard drives: 20 to 80 GB. Plays back: LCD. Power: AC. Dimensions and weight: 5.6 X 3.4 X 134 inches, 10.8 oz. Warrantee: 1yr.
MSRP: $269 – 409.

Wolverine SixPac www.wolverinedata.com. USB 2/1.1, Win 98SE, 2000, ME, XP, Mac, Linux. Cards supported: CF I/II, MD, MMC, MS/Pro, SD, SM, xD (adapter). Software: CD driver. Hard drives: 20 GB to 60 GB. Plays back: LCD. Power: Li-Ion., AC. Dimensions and weight: 5.1 X 3 X 1 inches, 11 oz. Warrantee: 1yr. MSRP: $220-$300.

Travel Planning Using the Internet - cont'd

4. Search for Accommodations such as Bed & Breakfasts near major towns. Frequently staying near a major town, will yield substantial savings on accommodations

5. Book your own Travel - compare airport departures for surrounding areas. Frequently flying from an airport other than BWI can yield air ticket savings

6. Book some Sight seeing through the Bed & Breakfast. Many Bed & Breakfast will be happy to suggest places to visit, etc. And may even book you a reservation. They will also know local sites you might not otherwise discover.

7. Book some of your visits when you arrive at your destination. Check the local area for Tourist information sites that can provide local information.

8. Save your receipts for purchases and collect the VAT taxes you paid. At the departing airport you can collect the VAT taxes you paid on purchases. These frequently range from 15 to 30% of the price of the purchase such as souvenirs, clothing, etc.

Happy Traveling!

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from the Secretary's Desk

Minutes of CHPCUG Board meeting on December 16, 2004

Attendees: Mike Young, Len Lindenmeyer, Fran Damratowski,
Mike Delucia, Jim Quinn, Karl Richmond

Due to the holiday season, this months meeting was short, however Mike Young wanted to make sure that we had subjects planned for our 2005 meetings. Most of our meetings are spent discussing the subjects of our monthly meetings. The board is not really sure that the subjects we arrive at are the ones that the members want. It is important for everyone to know that if there is a subject you want discussed at our general meetings contact a member of the board and let them know what it is so we can schedule it.

Meetings planned for 2005 are as follows:

January 12 - Wireless Home Networking-Mike Young (bring your laptop and your questions)

February 9 - Selling on E-Bay - Mike Young
             - Bloggs and Blogging

March 9 - Cleaning the Registry - Mike Regimenti

April 13 - Lynda.com- Photo Story #3 - Fran Damratowski

May 11 - What your money is doing! - Len Lindenmeyer

June 8 - OPEN

Treasurer's Report:
Karl Richmond indicated that the club has money to meet it's requirements. However it is important for all members to pay their dues in a timely manner.

SIG Update
The CRSIG is up and running in it's new location.

Happy 2005 to Everyone!

Jim Quinn
Secretary

More Favorite Websites
from the Board of Directors

www.dvd-rwmedia.com - a good source for all the CD & DVD + and - R media, and the harder to find Dual Layer and high speed DVD media. They also sell the burners and various other computer accessories.

www.ehow.com - as their website says "Clear Instructions on How To Do (just about) Everything" . It is an interesting website & fun to visit. It lists catagories to select - Automotive, Careers/Education, Computers, Food/Entertainment, Home/Garden, Pets, Travel, etc.

www.xe.com/ucc/ - if you're planning a trip abroad, this site will keep you abreast of the current exchange rate between the US $ and just about any currency in the world. Of course, it also allows you to convert any two currencies with a drop down menu.

www.oanda.com/cgi/convert/cheatsheet - is another good site that allows you to select a currency & then will create a chart (cheat sheet) that you can then print & carry with you on your trip.

www.moviefone.com - a site that my wife uses frequently to check movie listings & times by Zip Code. You can order your tickets on line with a credit or debit card & pick them up at one of the ticket machines in the theatre.

www.newegg.com - is an on-line computer store that I've used many times. Their prices are reasonable, the products are usually in stock, and their shipping is both quick and reasonably priced. I just ordered the retail box Lite-On SOHW-1633S 16x Dual Layer, Multi-format DVD burner as a gift for my son. I paid $73 (delivered with sales tax) and it is currently selling for $129 at circuitcity.com

www.ask.com - the proper name for "ask Jeeves". A really good site to help you with the odd crossword puzzle answer or a product review on the latest Yamaha home theatre receiver.

www.cnet.com - a great all around computer oriented site featuring, product reviews, software reviews, Special Features, latest news, commentary, and articles.

www.imdb.com - (Internet Movie DataBase)"the earth's biggest moviedatabase" is the place to go for all things movies (it also covers DVD releases). Can't remember who played the Senate Majority Leader in the 1993 movie "Dave" (Parley Baer) who was also the voice of Chester in the radio series Gunsmoke. Chester's last name - Proudfoot.

www.clusty.com - Clusty (currently in Beta release) is a clustering search engine similair to Vivisimo - www.vivisimo.com These search engines will catagorize the "hits" in a menu format on the left side of your screen. Each of the menu items with multiple hits, will have a plus box & with a drop down feature to see the hits in greater detail.

www.pcworld.com - The official site that gives you access to PC World magazine and much more. There are product Reviews (more than just what is in the magazine), Downloads, News, Reviews, How-To, Tools, plus you can get 2 risk-free issues of the magazine.

www.pcmag.com - The official site of PC Magazine. It has Reviews, Downloads, News, Columns, Shop, and Discussions. You can also subscribe to the magazine at $1 per issue.

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Wal-Mart Launches Sub-$500 Laptop

by
Jennifer M. DeFeo

Leave it to Wal-Mart to come up with a laptop for less than $500. The Balance 14.1-inch Notebook Computer with CD-ROM Drive is the latest addition to the Balance 14.1-inch laptop computer line. For $498, you get a 1.0GHz Via C3 processor, 128MB memory, 30GB hard drive, CD ROM drive, and a 14.1-inch display. The brains of the system is Lindows/Linspire version 4.5, which offers a pseudo-Windows experience. Not a bad bargain, but definitely not the one you want to spend your hard-earned cash on.

If you're looking for a seriously inexpensive notebook, spend the extra $50 and choose the Balance 14.1-inch laptop with the Mobile AMD Athlon 4 processor. This system, which is the same size as the Lindows notebook, will purr much better thanks to its 1.1GHZ Mobile AMD Athlon 4 processor, 40GB hard drive, and DVD-Rom drive—not to mention wireless; a must have these days—and Microsoft Windows XP home. Now that is a bargain notebook to be proud of.

Samsung TS-H552B 16x Dual Layer DVD Burner

Guide Rating - * * * * *

The Bottom Line

While not being the fastest drive available for Dual Layer or DVD-R media, the Samsung TS-H552B provides solid overall performance for each of the various types of media to merit it as a top choice for consumers looking for a DVD Burner.

Pros

High Speed 16x Burning with DVD+R   Dual-Layer Compatibility
Good CD-R Speeds

Cons

Only Supports 12x Speed for DVD-R   Limited to 2.4x for DVD+R Dual Layer

Description

Samsung 16x Dual Layer DVD Burner - Cont'd

- 16x DVD+R and 12x DVD-R Recording Speeds

- 4x DVD+RW and DVD-RW Recording Speeds

- 16x DVD-ROM and 8x DVD+/-RW Reading Speeds

- 40x CD-R Recording Speed

- 24x CD-RW Recording Speed

- 48x CD-ROM Reading Speed

- 2MB Buffer

- EIDE/ATAPI Interface

- Available in Beige or Black

- Nero Express 6, InCD4, WinDVD Creator, WinDVD Recorder and DVD Copy Software

Guide Review

Samsung TS-H552B 16x DVD Burner DVD burners used to be very expensive, but the change in the market was so rapid, that now, even top of the line brands can be found at or below $100. Samsung previously was an outsider in terms of optical storage, but they are now one of the top names for CD and DVD burners with the TS-H552B. As with most drives on the market, the TS-H552B is compatible with both +R and -R formats. It also supports the new dual-layer DVD+R media for nearly twice the storage capacity. Support for CD recording is strong with 40x speed for CD-R and 24x for CD-RW.

Testing of the drive was done using Nero CD/DVD Speed application on a variety of media. The drive performed at/or above specifications for all of the media types. This is very impressive as many manufacturers tend to overestimate real world performance. Especially impressive was the CD reading speed, that was closer to 52x, than the listed 48x speed. Dual-layer media does provide for increased storage, but the limited speed of 2.4x means that roughly 4 DVD+R's can be burned in the time it takes to make a single DVD+R dual-layered disc.

Another nice feature with the TS-H552B, was the relatively low noise generated by the drive during reading and writing operations. This has become problematic for some drives with the increases in the spin rate of the media.

Overall, the Samsung TS-H552B is a very good all around drive. It isn't the fastest at any one media type, but it has strong performance for all of them.

**The Next Regular Meeting will be at
The Severn River Middle School**

**Wednesday,
January 12th, 2005
Meeting will be held in the large meeting
room.
It starts at 7:00 PM with club business
and a short discussion period.**

There will be a Presentation on

Wireless Networking

**Members and their friends are welcome to
come, ask questions and become enlightened.**

How to Find: Severn River Middle School

SRMS is close to the Arnold, MD campus of the Anne Arundel Community College. From Annapolis and parts south, take Rte 2 (Ritchie Highway) north about 3 miles from the intersection of Rt. 50, **turn right on College Parkway**. At the first light, turn left on Peninsula Farm Road. (Of course, if you are coming from points North, you would turn left on to College Parkway) about a half-mile down the road the large SRMS school building, set back off a large two level parking lot, will be visible on your right. Park here and go to the main entrance. Signs will be posted to direct you to the **Large Group Room** where we will be meeting.

How to find: The Internet SIG, A ChPCUG Special Interest Group**

The meetings are held at the SRMS in the Library.

Chesapeake PC Users Group

**1783 Forest Drive #285
Annapolis, MD 21401**

FIRST CLASS

Note: *The date above your name on the mailing label is the expiration date of your membership. Contact the Membership Chairman (see page 2, column 2) to update.*