

Colin Campbell Computer Center

CoaComputerclasses.com on the Web.

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Fall 2009 Newsletter

The Fall session is well underway and we have full classes filled with enthusiastic students who want to get started with their new computer, or get more benefit from their use. Hope you will join us, or attend one of the lectures we are giving at the Community Center.

Please let us know what programs you would like so we can expand our selection. Use Contact Us from our website. The Microsoft Office© programs have not been given for a couple years due to lack of interest, so let us know if you would like to experience more about those programs.

This month, Joe Gagliano, our instructor for many different programs, has written a thought provoking article regarding programs to help with picture processing. I hope you enjoy it. JRK

Photo Editors – Chaos or Clarity??

Are you confused about photo editors? Do you need one? Which one is right for you? These are common questions. We'll try to provide some answers to these questions and clarify some of the chaos in the paragraphs that follow,

There are many programs that fall into the “**photo editor**” category, from the free, simple ones to the expensive, full feature ones for professionals such as Adobe Photoshop.

Photo Editors are designed with one or more of the following functions in mind:

1. **Organizing** – A filing system for categorizing, rating, dating and sorting your photos so you can find them more easily.
2. **Sharing** – A series of options that give you the ability to e-mail photos, include them on a website, upload them to a photo printing facility, prepare a slide show for viewing on the Internet, or burn them to a CD or DVD for distribution to friends and family.
3. **Creating** – A group of procedures or wizards to help you create photo projects, such as

greeting cards, calendars, brochures, flyers and scrapbooks.

4. **Editing** - An array of tools to help you fix red eye, crop a photo, change color or exposure, add special effects, insert text, erase parts of a picture, combine selected parts of different pictures into one, and many others.

The extent to which a photo editor can do the above functions varies from program to program or version to version. The right one for you depends upon what you want to do with your photographs. If, for example, you simply want to e-mail your photos, keep track of them, or make a few minor edits to them, the free **Picasa** program might serve you well. If you want to make photo greeting cards, photo calendars, photo post cards and the like, **Print Shop** (V. 23) might be a good choice. In the event you want to edit your photos extensively and add creative effects and text, **Adobe Photo Elements** (V. 6 or 7) is probably a better choice.

The three programs described above have differing costs. Picasa is free; Print Shop is in the \$30-\$50 range; and Photoshop Elements is in the \$80-\$100 range. Thus, cost is a factor, but there are quite a few free programs available, from very simple ones such as **Picasa** to programs like **GIMP** and **PhotoFiltre**, which offer good photo editing features. They are not quite as complete and flexible as PhotoShop Elements, but they have many very good editing tools and effects. **Windows Live Photo Gallery** is also free and offers features similar to, but more extensive than, Picasa. The photo editing features of Photo Gallery, in particular, are an improvement over Picasa. There are many other free photo editing programs available, including **Paint** which is part of the Windows Operating System. I don't use it much. You can find many lists of the free photo editors by “Googling” [free photo editors](#). Make

sure the program you want will work on your operating system as some of the free programs are earlier versions of current programs that are available for purchase. You can also access several "online" photo editors, some of which are free. You can also find these by "Googling".

There are many reasonably priced photo editors that provide a fairly complete range of photo editing tools, creative effects and photo filters. They also provide a varying degree of the organizing, sharing and creating functions. The ones with which I'm familiar, to one extent or another, are: Adobe PhotoShop Elements; Corel Paint Shop Pro; Serif Photo Plus; Nova Development Photo Impact Pro; ArcSoft Photo Studio; Roxio Photo Suite/Photo Show and Ulead/Corel Photo Impact. They generally range in price from \$50 to \$100. Several have a companion, less expensive supplement that focuses on organizing and sharing, with perhaps some minor editing and creating functions. I tend to favor Adobe PhotoShop Elements, Corel Paint Shop Pro and Serif Photo Plus, with PhotoShop Elements being the one I prefer the most. All four functions are combined into one program with Elements, so a companion, low cost supplement is not needed. A detailed comparison of several of these types of programs can be found at <http://photo-editing-software-review.toptenreviews.com>. Additional information regarding range of products available, versions/editions, features and pricing can be obtained from the manufacturer's website.

For those who want the top of the line, professional photo editor, for a cost of \$600 or more, the standard by which all others are measured is **Adobe PhotoShop CS4**©.

For those of you who have Microsoft Office 2003 or 2007, there is a Picture Manager tool included that is better than Paint, but not as good as Windows Live Photo Gallery. If you have the "professional" version of Office, it includes **Microsoft Office Publisher**©, which is a very good program for creating photo projects such as greeting cards, brochures, flyers, post cards, calendars and the like.

The above comments are based upon my observations, preferences and computer configuration. Your results will depend upon what you want and what you have.

Joe Gagliano

ADVANCED USERS CORNER

Are you fans of Mozilla Firefox? I am one of their users and just find it an excellent browser with many wonderful features. I am up to version 3.5.3. and am enjoying tabs for multiple websites. They have many add-ons on their website at [/addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/](http://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/) A couple that I particularly like are:

GooglePreview An add on that shows a thumbnail of the websites to which Google is referring. The eye helps to sort out the one that most closely matches your request.

Show IP- Displays the IP address of the current site in the lower right corner of your screen. If you like to use IP addresses for your Favorites, rather than depending your IP Hosts DHCP server to running when you are going to a site. I also am a bit fascinated with how the internet works, so this is a bit of fun.

IM Translator is added to your "tools" menu bar in Firefox to allow a quick translation of text you highlight. Great if you are visiting foreign websites that are not available in English.

WebMailNotifier will notify you regarding the status of your webmail: checks to let you know how many email messages are unread, and when new messages come in. Works with Gmail, hotmail and others. May not work well with Verizon and Comcast mail.

Video Download Helper will help you download videos from YouTube and other video sites if you enjoy sharing videos with others or storing them for your own use at a later time.

Screengrab allows you to easily save portions of a webpage to save. If you have Vista, I think that the included 'snipping tool' is much better.

Enjoy your time at the Screen. If you have any ideas for future editions, or would like to submit an article of your own, send it from our website in the Contact Us link!! We will be very interested to know your impressions of Windows7©. Let us know!!