The Sound of Silence
BY JANICE BLANTON

"The Sound of Silence --- a Computer Crashing!

Protect Yourself from the Bad and the Ugly!!!!

Computers are amazing. We can access educational resources, create documents, communicate via email, and preserve all that we’ve discovered or created--unless, of course, your computer CRASHES and you haven’t "backed-up"! I would like to share with you my tale of woe in the demise of my PC and, hopefully, you can minimize the pain when it happens to you!!! From what I know now, it probably will happen to you and the silence is deafening!! I will share with you the bad, the good, and the ugly.

The bad

There were no signs or symptoms prior to my computer crashing. I have had my Compaq Presario for two years exactly and it has performed beautifully. Every technician that I have been in contact with in the last two weeks was asked the same question, "How can this happen?" The answers I received were basically that the numerous components delicately interact with each other and are vulnerable to a myriad of influences such as environment including fluctuations in temperature, dust, insects, etc.; viruses of course, which can be acquired via anything that you download; incompetence of the user where you are moving too quickly, too recklessly through the system- and then the miscellaneous category which can be anything. Once your hard drive crashes and there are no warnings, it is difficult to ascertain how it happened.

I did not back up my programs or files as I was spending so much time inputting and accessing that the thought of spending extra time backing up seemed over-whelming time-wise. Also, I was not very knowledgeable in this area and, after all, my computer was only two years old. I realize now that this was foolish thinking. I have learned that there are numerous, innocuous ways to back-up such as on floppies or internal and external secondary hard drives. Two of the types mentioned by the technician were I-Omega and scuzzis? There are many more; I am researching this. There are specific hard drives, I understand, that back up automatically.

The good

Last summer, after due deliberation as it is expensive, I purchased an extended onsite warranty on my PC when it was offered from Compaq. Therefore, a new hard drive was installed at my home within five days of the crash. Of course, the installation technician could not activate my computer's functions as I needed to request special QuickRestore software from Compaq. (Someone along the telephone train could have mentioned this.) This took five more days to receive in the mail. Once I was up and running, I realized that there was much more downloading to do off the Internet to recapture the level of upgrades that I had previously enjoyed. I downloaded Internet Explorer 4.1 which took at least two hours. The "good" in all this is that I was able to resume my computer functions within two weeks.

There was also "good" in that I had an extensive paper inventory of my class syllabus, assignments, hand-outs, etc. as I did lose everything from my original hard drive. With a little white-out, I was able to begin my classes at Long Beach City College quite smoothly. In a world of advanced computer technology, simple paper and white-out became my salvation!
The ugly

Losing everything on your hard drive is ugly, indeed! Taking two weeks to resume functioning on the computer was ugly also--particularly days before the semester was beginning. As remarkable as the computer is, it is not infallible. The computer is an incredible tool which was indispensable to me during graduate school and now in my college teaching and professional and personal correspondence. However, there is an "ugly" feature built-in where it can crash without notice and if you have depended heavily on this incredible tool without proper protection for your valuables, it is ugly.

In closing, research your options to purchase extended warranties and back up provisions. The time spent is invaluable. The timing of your computer crashing could be most inconvenient. I am sure that there is some philosophical bent in depending too much on any one thing in life, but that may be a subject for another forum. Please heed the knowledge of my experience and protect and prepare yourself for what may be the inevitable.

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Historian Wanted!

REG is looking for someone who would like to be our historian. This will consist of taking photos at our events and helping us keep our album up to date. If you are interested, please contact JoAnne Greenbaum at (714) 278-2758.

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Technology Talk
By: JoAnne Greenbaum

If you haven't yet logged on to the REG web page you should not waste another day.

REG now has an updated and improved web presence. The site includes links to the REG Mission Statement and Constitution, The REG Executive Board, The Hancock Fund, an archive of REG newsletters, a multitude of Educational Organizations on the web, and a question and comments forum. You can still access the REG webpage by 1) going to the CSUF home page at: http://www.fullerton.edu 2) clicking on Schools and Departments 3) clicking on School of Human Development and Community Services 4) clicking on Elementary, Bilingual, and Reading Education 5) clicking on Special Programs and 6) clicking on Reading Educators Guild.

If you would like to go directly to the REG web page you can do so by typing:

http://pages.prodigy.com/REGweb

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Photos Wanted!

REG is compiling a photo retrospective, and we'd like your help. If you have photographs that were taken at any REG events, we would love to have a copy for our album. We are especially interested in photos taken at dinners, meetings, Concert Under The Stars, and graduate receptions. Please send them to the Reading Program Office EC 379 in care of JoAnne Greenbaum. Thank You!
Recommended Reading

By: Carla Thomson

You Saw the Movie Now Read the Book!

Good Will Hunting: The Screen Play
by Matt Damon, Ben Affleck, Gus Van Sant

Ready for a quick, but satisfying read? As one reader said, "If you've seen the movie but haven't read the screenplay, you're missing out on some excellent dialogue that never made it to film. Great Screenplay." The Oscar winning film is about Will Hunting (played by co-author Matt Damon), a self-educated mathematical genius who is employed as a janitor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and is discovered by an MIT professor. Hunting, from a working class family in South Boston, is neither interested in, nor emotionally prepared for, exploring and using his talents in the academic world. His MIT professor introduces him to Sean McGuire (Robin Williams), a community college professor, who breaks through to this angry young man. When is the last time we saw a pop-culture film about teachers and students at community college?

Another reader, from Vancouver, British Columbia wrote: "Damon and Affleck have written a brilliant story which most working screenwriters only wish they could do. I cared about the characters, and I was concerned about the outcome. I was rooting for them, hoping that goodness and happiness would come their way. It is entertaining throughout. And yes it made me shed tears. Twice! The scenes are peppered with short speeches that are so natural and realistic that you will be tempted to think that it must have been easy to write this stuff. No wisecracking James Bond here, folks. Meaningful and realistic dialogue. The writers took a chance that there is an audience out there for a well crafted and moving story. This is a story. Did you get that? I said, 'a STORY!' I'm not talking about a plot that unfolds like three acts all tied up into a neat little package, like butter on your popcorn. This isn't just devices and tricks. It is a story! You will remember the dialogue because you have heard it before. In real life. People actually talk this way regardless of the Bostonian accents. And where did they get this mathematical information. I don't know, it's either made up or well researched. It doesn't get any better than this, folks. If you have a heart, it will be cracked when you listen to what these characters have to say to each other. Yeah, you will care. Check it out. You'll actually give a damn, Scarlett."

Concert Under the Stars

Approximately forty Reading Educators Guild members and their guests enjoyed an evening of music, food and fun at the annual Cal State University Fullerton concert under the stars. Four reserved tables accommodated the group as they took time out from their busy schedules to relax and visit with friends and colleagues while the University Music Department provided entertainment.

Our president and undergraduate faculty member, JoAnne Greenbaum, received the Volunteer of the Year Award for CSUF Support Groups at the September concert.

She was honored for her work as president of REG. During JoAnne's presidency REG membership has grown, attendance at all events has increased, the newsletter has been expanded and revamped and we are online with our own web page. Attending the concert and picnic along with REG guests, were 2000 other university and community members. Congratulations, JoAnne!
Congratulations to Susan White, Reading Program Alumna and language arts teacher at Esperanza High School, on being named Teacher of the Year for the Placentia - Yorba Linda Unified School District. The award process began when she was nominated by the Language Arts Department at Esperanza and named Teacher of the Year at the school level. Her name was subsequently forwarded to the district where she was selected for the top honor from dozens of outstanding candidates.

Susan serves as co-chair for the Language Arts Department at Esperanza high School and does not compromise when it comes to providing a positive image and model for the other members of the faculty. Highly organized and extremely positive with her students, her personal philosophy is that teachers cannot afford to have a bad day.

Susan White's classroom is distinguished by the personal touch she brings to teaching her students. For example, she effectively implements various journaling activities. There is a class journal that is passed from student to student, each adding their thoughts or responding to others. Every week, she adds her response as well, and in this fashion, students are able to develop connections with each other and with their instructor.

Another journaling activity was to have students write a response after each section of a novel was completed. She also effectively utilizes alternative assignments that tap a variety of students strengths. One method she employs is to encourage students to connect to literature through activities that incorporate art and music. While there is great rigor in the level of reading and writing assignments in Susan's classroom, there is also the expectation that students will exercise creativity in their assignments.

As a graduate of the Reading Program, I feel a special sense of joy as a parent when at Back to School Night, the Language Arts teacher announces she has a Master's degree in Education specializing in Reading from CSUF. I have been fortunate to have this experience three times now. As a parent of one of Mrs. White's students I was able to see the outstanding program she designed for her Sophomore Honors Language Arts class. It is always exciting when you know that your child's teacher has received excellent preparation, and extremely satisfying when it is clear that this teacher can put that preparation into effective practice. As the school year developed, it was clear from a parent/educator's perspective that my daughter was receiving very high caliber instruction.

It was not a surprise when I heard about Mrs. White's recognition. I'm certain members of REG will want to join me in extending a hearty congratulations to Susan White for this prestigious award commending her high level of professional excellence in the classroom.

Reading Educators' Guild Newsletter Staff

Faculty Footnotes: Kathi Bartle Angus

Recommended Reading: Carla Thomson

The Sound of Silence: Janice Blanton

Technology Talk: JoAnne Greenbaum
If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, by being a regular column writer or just an occasional article donator, please contact JoAnne Greenbaum at jgreenbaum@fullerton.edu. We need all of you to help make REG great!

Recommended Reading: Carla Thomson

The Reading Connection: Janice Blanton

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