

# Do your members know what FACUG is?

By Hewie Poplock

**M**ost of the FACUG newsletters include the FACUG logo and the APCUG logo, usually on the credits page. However, do the members know what FACUG is or what it does for them? I have spoken to many of the first time attendees at the FACUG Spring and Fall Conferences, and they had no idea of what to expect, other than they probably will go home with some software.

We as members and leaders of our groups sometimes forget that that many, if not most our fellow members are new to computer user groups. We say things similar to “It’s FACUG conference time. Are any of the officers or SIG leaders interested in attending?” Many may have no idea what that means, so they are not interested in attending another meeting, especially if it means traveling, paying a fee, and perhaps staying over night.

With the user group movement losing members, it is important for us as experienced leaders to pass on information to the newer or potential leaders. Those who do attend FACUG conferences go back to their groups with renewed enthusiasm and ideas for their group. However, if more of our members know and understand what information is shared at the FACUG conferences, more potential leaders will be interested in attending, and perhaps running for those offices that you find so hard to fill.



There are many ways to spread this FACUG information. All attendees should emphasize what is learned at the breakout sessions. The freebies should not be the attraction or your group’s representation loses its value. Making a written report for your newsletter or web site should be mandatory for all attendees. Those who attend could hold a discussion at your group’s main meeting and summarize each of the conference’s roundtables.

There is so much great information shared at each FACUG event, the attendees need to pass this information to all of the members and leaders who were unable to attend. There are many great articles about FACUG and user groups in the “FACUG Proceedings” that should be shared with your group. How many of your officers and members actually get to read the publication? Did you know that an Acrobat edition is available at the FACUG website? It can be posted on your group’s website or even e-mailed to each of your members. Articles from “FACUG Proceedings” can be printed in your newsletter.

Encourage your newest and potential leaders to attend the FACUG conference. They will reap the most benefit for your group. They will return to your group, enthused and armed with a lot of great ideas.