Keynote Speaker for TCF 2009 — Dr. Alain Kornhauser

Dr. Alain Kornhauser will talk on "The Robotic Car of the Future", a truly autonomous highway vehicle that can drive itself. Don't miss the car on display in the exhibit hall.

Saturday April 25, 2009

http://www.acgnj.org

Founded 1975

Bylaws Revision Committee Interim Report

Our December 2008 Constitution and By-Laws amendments were passed at our Annual Meeting on December 5th. After that, at the suggestion of Bill Farrell, we sent them to a lawyer for review. The results of said review are now in. On the advice of our attorney, we have proposed fifteen *further* amendments to the By-Laws. As required by those same By-Laws, these amendments will be posted on our website for member review. After that, a vote to accept or reject them has been scheduled to be held as part of our Main Meeting on May 1st , 2009.

Dr. Alain Kornhauser will talk on "the Robotic Car of the Future", a truly autonomous highway vehicle that can drive itself. Dr. Kornhauser led the team from Princeton University that competed in two DARPA Challenges and that is now designing vehicles of the future. One of their cars will be on display in the exhibit hall. Saturday April 25, 2009

This talk will focus on the efforts of Princeton University Undergraduates to develop a truly autonomous road vehicle. Efforts began as part of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Administration's (DARPA) Grand Challenge (2005) and the Urban Challenge (2007). Now it is focused on developing a vehicle that can safely, reliably and independently share the existing road infrastructure with normal road vehicles. Achievements to date will be described as well as the challenges that remain. The current autonomous vehicle, Prospect 12, will be on display and available for demonstrations.

Dr. Alain L. Kornhauser is a Professor of Operations Research and Financial Engineering at Princeton University. He is also Director of Princeton?s Transportation Research Program, Co-Director for the New Jersey Center for Transportation Information and Decision Engineering (NJ Tide) and Vice chairman New Jersey Commission on Science and Technology.

He received PhD and MA degrees in Aerospace and Mechanical Sciences from Princeton University, and MS and BS degrees in Aerospace Engineering from Pennsylvania State University. His research interests include Optimization of Flows in Stochastic Networks, Computer Vision and Automatic Control of Vehicles and Design of Decision Support Systems for Individuals.

He was co-editor of several books and has authored over 100 scholarly papers. He was Team Leader for Princeton?s entry in the 2005 DARPA Grand Challenge, which earned a 10th seed, and for Princeton?s entry in the 2007 DARPA Urban Challenge, chosen to participate in the National Qualifying Event. 🖳

In This Issue

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Window Pains	John Raff	(973) 992-9002	Vendor Liaison	Arnold Milstein	(908) 753-8036
			Webmaster	John Raff	(973) 992-9002

ACGNJ News

Editor

Barbara DeGroot
145 Gun Club Road
Palmerton PA 18071
Tel: (570) 606-3596
bdegroot@ptd.net

Publisher

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Submissions: Articles, reviews, cartoons, illustrations. Most common formats are acceptable. Graphics embedded in the document must also be included as separate files. Fax or mail hard copy and/or disk to editor; OR e-mail to Editor. **Always confirm**. Date review and include name of word processor used, your name, address and phone *and* name, address and phone of manufacturer, if available.

Tips for reviewers: Why does anyone need it? Why did you like it or hate it? Ease (or difficulty) of installation, learning and use. Would you pay for it?

Advertising: Non-commercial announcements from members are free. Commercial ads 15 cents per word, $5 minimum. Camera ready display ads: Full page (7 x 10 inches) $150, two-thirds page (4½ x 10) $115, half-page $85, one-third $57, quarter $50, eighth $30. Discount 10% on 3 or more consecutive insertions. Enclose payment.

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Address Changes should be directed to Martin Rosenblum (*m.rosenblum@ieee.org*) and/or to his attention at ACGNJ at the address below.

Membership, including subscription: 1 year $25, 2 years $40, 3 years $55. Student or Senior Citizen (over 65): 1 year $20, 3 years $45. Family of member, without subscription, $10 per year. Send name, address and payment to ACGNJ, PO Box 135, Scotch Plains NJ 07076.

Typographic Note: The ACGNJ News is produced using Corel Ventura 5. Font families used are Times New Roman (TT) for body text, Arial (TT) for headlines.

E-Mail Addresses

Here are the e-mail addresses of ACGNJ Officers, Directors and SIG Leaders (and the Newsletter Editor). This list is also at (*http://www.acgnj.org/officers.html*).

Bruce Arnold	barnold@ieee.org
Jim Cooper	jim@thecoopers.org
Barbara DeGroot	bdegroot@ptd.net
Mark Douches	pcproblems@pobox.com
David Eisen	ultradave@gmail.com
Bill Farrell	wfarr18124@aol.com
Manuel Goyenechea	Goya@acgnjdotnetsig.org
Bob Hawes	bob.hawes@acgnj.org
Sol Libes	sol@libes.com
Malthi Masurekar	masureka@umdnj.edu
Don McBride	don@mcbride.name
Gregg McCarthy	greggmc@optonline.net
David McRichie	dmcritchie@hotmail.com
Andreas Meyer	lunics@acgnj.org
Arnold Milstein	mrflark@yahoo.com
John Raff	john@jraff.com
Mike Redlich	mike@redlich.net
Matt Skoda	som359@aol.com
Keith Sproul	ksproul@noc.rutgers.edu
Paul Syers	paul.syers@acgnj.org
Lenny Thomas	lennythomas@technologist.com
Scott Vincent	scottvin@optonline.net
Frank Warren	kb4cyc@webwarren.com
Evan Williams	tech@evanwilliamsconsulting.com

Moving into the Future

Bob Hawes (bob.hawes@acgnj.org), ACGNJ

It's time for me to "put my money where my mouth is". Last month, in *OS Wars: The Penguin Strikes Back* (I just couldn't resist using a movie take-off as my title), I stated unequivocally that I will ***never*** "upgrade" to Vista. That applies to Windows 7 as well. It could only be even worse. Right now, for some things, I'm going to have to stick with XP. That's not to say that I actually *like* XP. Since our initial encounter, I've often thought that there's nothing wrong with Windows XP that a deranged maniac with a chainsaw couldn't fix. In other (less melodramatic) words, I've always considered it to be intrusive bloatware; but at least (up to SP2, anyway) it wasn't *evil* intrusive bloatware. Unless you added SP3 or turned on Automatic Updates. Either of those actions would install Microsoft's spyware rootkit (also known as the WGA tool). From then on, your computer would turn against you, sending who knows what kind of personal information to Microsoft (and to any other Internet criminals who might learn how to tap into the stream).

For the last year or so, my three must-have, most-often-used "productivity" programs (Firefox, OpenOffice.org and Scribus) have actually been Windows versions of Linux programs. For well over a dozen years now, my three must-have, most-often-used "utility" programs (Ghost, Partition Magic and Spinrite) have still been floppy booted (or floppy-image-run-from-a-CD booted) DOS programs. They really ***don't care*** which higher level operating system you use to run the rest of your programs. Furthermore, the only viable contenders to replace my rapidly aging DOS versions of Ghost and Partition Magic would seem to be Linux programs. If I made the move to Linux now, it looks like the only must-have, most-often-used program that I'd lose would be Solitaire. (Recapping briefly: It seems that each and every Linux version of Solitaire does something that I ***really don't like!*** For further details, see *OS Wars: The Penguin Strikes Back* in the March 2009 issue of ACGNJ News). Even though I haven't done any professional programming for about ten years, maybe I still know enough to download the source code for a Linux version of Solitaire, and then change it to work the way *I* want. It's possible. So: Onward!

I like building computers, both for myself and for others. About a year ago, I made what was intended to be a "semi-permanent" Ubuntu installation. However, the hard disk that I used there developed the "click of death" almost immediately, and had to be discarded. So much for that idea. For a while now, I've had vague plans for a new "main" computer. It would have a quad-core processor, multiple Gigs of memory, and would be a Linux box right from the get-go. Unfortunately, budgetary considerations keep putting it off. (As of right now, for at least another year). Fortunately, there's an alternative. My current "main" computer has an unusual history. I built it, but I didn't build it for myself. Therefore, I built it according to the wishes of its intended owner, rather than my own prefer-

ences. Even though I didn't own it, it was always meant to be kept at my house. It was the owner's "backup computer", for me to use as needed to help him run his business; and for him to use in an emergency. Also, but to a limited extent, for my own personal use. When my former "main" computer was no longer allowed to connect to the Internet (after Microsoft discontinued support for Windows 98 SE), I transferred more of my stuff to that "backup" computer. Now, it's been given to me outright, so I can use it as my test subject and finally reconfigure it ***my way***. (Cue Frank Sinatra).

A little bit of history: Our subject computer has an AMD Athlon XP 2900+ processor, with 1 GB of RAM. It was assembled in August of 2005. Its original 60 GB hard disk was split into four equal-sized "15" GB drives. (The quotes are there because a so-called 60 GB hard disk actually contains quite a bit *less* than 60 *real* GB). There was one FAT32 primary partition containing the Windows 98 C: drive, and one extended partition containing three logical FAT32 drives for data. In April 2006, that C: drive was deleted and replaced with an XP C: drive in an NTFS partition. (That *wasn't* my idea, especially the NTFS part; but the owner insisted). The data drives were unchanged. In June 2007, the 60 GB hard disk was replaced with a 160 GB hard disk. Ghost was used to transfer the XP NTFS primary partition to the new disk, resizing it to approximately 40 GB at the same time. Three new "40" GB replacement data drives were created, and the data files were copied to them in much the same way as I'll be describing further below. Two were FAT32, but the third (F:) was NTFS. This time, using NTFS *was* my idea (albeit reluctantly). I was experimenting with files larger than 4 GB, and the FAT32 file system can't store files that big. (I really don't understand this. The FAT design is very simple. It's just a chain of addresses. It ought to be able to go on forever, with *no* limitations; but apparently not). At the time, the only alternative I knew about was NTFS. Now, as you'll see below, I know better.

Part of the arrangement by which our subject computer was magically transformed into my very own personal property requires that it still be available in case of a business emergency. Since the business programs are XP-only, I can't completely eliminate XP; but I *can* marginalize it. It's time to do some hard disk swapping. So bring in the removable drive drawers! I've used these handy accessories for *at least* fifteen years. Back in my 486 days, I had drawers containing 500 MB drives for OS/2, NT 3.5.1 Workstation, NetWare 3.2 and 4.1 Servers, several different configurations of DOS/Windows 3.1, and maybe one or two others that I've since forgotten about completely. Now, I'll set up drawers for Linux and XP.

My initial scheme: I'd use Ghost to relocate the XP C: drive from the current 160 GB hard disk to a spare 20 GB hard disk that it would have all to itself. (That would actually ***shrink*** the NTFS partition just about in half; but since it

Continued

contains "only" 9 GB of files in total, this shouldn't be a problem). I'd make a new installation of Kubuntu in a spare 40 GB hard disk. (Kubuntu is Ubuntu with the KDE desktop environment pre-installed). While I'm a bit leery because I get a "Gates-like" vibe from Ubuntu founder Mark Shuttleworth, there's no doubt that Ubuntu has an extremely large and potentially most helpful user community. (An essential resource for a "newbie"). I picked the Kubuntu variant because I've already had some experience using K3B (the CD/DVD burning program that comes with KDE). With removable drive drawers, I can swap out those two hard disks as the computer's primary master. (My goal being to use the Kubuntu drawer as much as possible and the XP drawer as little as possible). What about my data? All the files in those three logical data drives would be copied to a brand new 320 GB hard disk located in another drawer connected to the computer's secondary master, where it could be accessed by either operating system; and could also be removed if necessary for safety's sake.

That was the plan. Here's what actually happened: Ghost *couldn't* copy the XP drive. It kept getting a mysterious error (which I suspect involved the NTFS file system). I had to use Partition Magic instead. While I was at it, I did something I'd never tried before. I also used Partition Magic to convert the newly copied partition on my 20 GB hard disk from NTFS to FAT32. (If it had been left up to me, I'd have installed XP in an FAT32 partition right from the start; but it wasn't. Such an installation isn't the Microsoft default, but it's easy enough to do). During the conversion, I got two interesting warning messages: "Multiple data streams are present. Are you sure you want to continue the conversion and lose this information?" and "A file with special attributes is present. Do you want to continue the conversion and lose this information?" I hit the "Yes" button both times. Because of those messages, I was a bit surprised when my now-FAT32 20 GB C: drive booted correctly, but it did; and so far I haven't found it to be deficient in any way. (Except, of course, that it's still running XP). Nevertheless, I'm going to stick the unmodified 160 GB hard disk in a corner somewhere for at least the next few months "just in case", before I eventually erase it for use in some other project.

My new Kubuntu installation to the 40 GB hard disk went without incident and worked perfectly. It automatically created a primary partition containing a 35.7 GB Linux Ext3 drive, and an extended partition containing a logical 1.6 GB Linux Swap drive. Sadly, space considerations prevent me from going into any further details here. (Maybe in another article someday). As for my new 320 GB data-only hard disk, I split it into seven approximately equal chunks. Since that new disk's *true* capacity was 298.2 GB, I created a 41.8 GB Linux Ext2 primary partition, and an extended partition containing six FAT32 logical drives (two 41.8 GB and four 43.2 GB). Why Ext2? Well, around 2002 a German student named Stephan Schreiber had an idea for getting Windows NT 4.0 to access the Linux file system, which he turned into his college thesis project. Since then,

he's expanded his *freeware* "Ext2 Installable File System for Windows" (IFS for short) to include XP and the rest of the NT family. (See his website at *www.fs-driver.org*). Anyway, I downloaded Ext2IFS_1_11a.exe and installed it. Then, using the new "IFS Drives" icon that appeared in XP's Control Panel, I assigned drive letter L: (for Linux) to that Ext2 primary partition. (In case you haven't guessed, Ext2 supports files larger than 4 GB, thus allowing me to eliminate NTFS). Finally, after temporarily bypassing the data drive drawer and directly connecting both the 160 and 320 GB hard disks to the secondary IDE cable (as master and slave), I drag-and-drop transferred all of my data files. I copied 7,526 files (in 231 directories, totaling 32.1 GB) from my old D: drive to my new D: drive, 31,412 files (in 77 directories, totaling 40.1 GB) from my old E: drive to my new E: drive, and 9,449 files (in 1,649 directories, totaling 33.2 GB) from my old F: drive to my new L: drive. (Of course, one of those D: drives and one of those E: drives actually had *different* drive letters at the time those copies were made, but why add more confusion here?) Then, I used MD5 checksums to verify that all 48,387 of my files had been copied correctly. (The copy process has gotten pretty close to perfect, but it can *never* be guaranteed to be *absolutely* perfect. In situations like this, I always double-check). In addition, since (as I stated above) the 160 GB hard disk won't be erased just yet, I've effectively got a complete "backup copy" of all my data (at least for a while). For the record: It only took you a few minutes to read these last three paragraphs, but it took me *42 hours* of real time (*not* counting eating and sleeping) to do it.

So now I'm striding boldly into a hopefully glorious future, where Linux and other Unix-like operating systems rule;

Back Issues Needed

The editor is attempting to build a CD containing all issues of ACGNJ News in pdf format, but our collection is incomplete. We're hoping some faithful reader has been hoarding them and will be willing to lend them to us just long enough to scan them. We promise to return them quickly. Thanks Joseph Gaffney, who loaned his collection for scanning. Below is a list of what we still need.

1985: June, July, August, September

1984: August

1976: January, February, March, April (pamphlet-size booklets)

1975: All issues except #1 (June). These are also pamphlet-size booklets.

If you can supply any of these missing issues (or scanned images or good clear copies), please contact the Editor by email (*bdegroot@ptd.net*). Those who supply missing issues will receive a free copy of the resulting CD as our thanks for your help. 💻

Capture Any Streaming Media with Applian

Ira Wilsker

I am frequently asked by callers to my radio show how they can record my show from the streaming broadcast on KLVI.com. I am also occasionally asked how to capture streaming media from a variety of sources, and how to convert the captured media to other formats for distribution. Now there is a single source solution for capturing any streaming audio or video on the internet, Applian Technologies, a privately held company located in San Anselmo, California. I have seen Applian products demonstrated at the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG) events in Las Vegas, but really had never used one of them until recently. Now that I have used Applian products, I am favorably impressed.

I watch videos from a variety of sources, including YouTube, and my personal favorite, Hulu. For those who may not have seen my review of Hulu earlier this year, Hulu (*www.hulu.com*) has thousands of full length TV shows and movies, as well as other features to view. For those who want to capture video and audio from any online source, play the media, convert the media to other formats, or split large media files into smaller more manageable files Applian offers its premier product, Replay Capture Suite. The Replay Capture Suite, which integrates the full versions of seven of its major products, is a $99 marvel that can do it all when it comes to streaming media capture, file conversion, media playing, and other related functions. Included in this Suite are Applian's most popular individual titles, consisting of Replay Media Catcher, Replay Video Capture, Replay Converter, Replay Music, Replay A/V, Replay Media Splitter, and Replay Player. Obviously, each of these titles can be purchased separately, but the Suite is the most economical for anyone wanting a combination of titles; if purchased separately, all seven programs would total $220, making the Suite quite a deal.

Replay Media Catcher can download streaming video and audio from almost all websites that offer streaming, including my show on KLVI.com and Hulu. Naturally, Replay Media Capture also works with YouTube and countless other sources. One very interesting feature that makes this software very easy to use is the simple process of clicking "Start Recording" which not only records the streaming media (both video and audio), but also has an intelligent feature which can automatically figure the name of the song or video being captured, and name the saved file appropriately. With this $39.95 software, downloading MP3 files is extremely easy, especially with the automatic file naming feature.

Replay Video Capture allows the user to capture or create a video directly off of the PC screen. This capture includes any video playing from any website in any protocol, DVDs, webcams, PowerPoint, video calls on Skype or other telecommunications services, video chats — anything that can appear on a monitor. Using this software is very easy; simply click on "Get Window" to identify the portion of the screen desired, and then click on "Record"; the software does the rest. Audio can be either captured along with video, or simultaneous narrations can be recorded with a microphone, such as if it is desired to explain a PowerPoint, or anything else that can be displayed on the screen. Files can be saved in the popular MPEG-2 or Window's Media Format (WMV), which can be played on almost any other computer. For either $39.95 by itself, or as a part of the Suite, this software can be a lot of fun to play with, as well as be very useful for productive purposes.

We likely have videos or audio files that have been recorded in a variety of formats, and sometimes we may need the capability to convert seamlessly from one format to another; this is where the $29.95 Replay Converter shines among its competitors. Replay Converter converts between all popular audio and video formats, including Windows Media, Real, MPEG-4 Video, Flash Video (SWF and FLV), QuickTime, AVI (DivX and xVid), MP3, OGG, WAV, iPod Video, and PSP Video, all easily and without prior technical knowledge.

Replay Music is a music recorder that captures songs from digital music subscription services, online radio stations, and other sources, and automatically save the files in MP3 format. The file are automatically tagged with artist, title, album, and genre, and can be burned directly to CD, or copied to an MP3 player or iPod. This software is included in the Suite, or can be purchased a' la carte for $19.95.

Replay A/V does everything that Replay Music does, but adds support for streaming videos, including the ability to capture streaming videos from multiple streams at the same time. This $49.95 program is also included with the Suite.

Another program included in the Suite or by itself ($29.95) is Replay Media Splitter, which enables the user to easily extract or remove portions of audio and video files. This program supports WMV, ASF, WMA, AVI and MP3 formats directly, while other formats can be converted to one of these formats using Replay Converter.

The final component of the Suite is the $9.95 Replay Player, which allows the user to play recorded radio shows on the computer. Replay Player is activated by a single click from the desktop, and can open, play, pause, increase playback speed, and skip forward or backwards in convenient increments. By skipping over commercials, traffic reports, or other unwanted content, an hour radio show can be heard in a fraction of the original time.

Not included in the Suite, but available for free download from Applian, is a very useful browser toolbar, called Freecorder Toolbar. With this toolbar, the user can record online songs, record the audio portion of videos, capture internet radio, record from a microphone or line-in ports (from external sources like tape or CD), and record any other audio that can play through the PC speakers.

Applian makes some excellent products, and I recommend the Replay Capture Suite. Applian also offers a free trial of all of its products at applian.com/downloads.php, where trial versions can be downloaded. Please consider downloading some of the trial software, and purchase full versions of whatever titles you like, keeping in mind that the Suite may be a better buy than individual titles.

From The DealsGuy

Bob (The Cheapskate) Click, Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

*Try This One On For Size

Three months ago, I purchased a digital picture frame, but when I hooked it to my desktop machine via the USB cable, "My Computer" was unable to "see" the picture frame's memory, which had software on it to install for processing my pictures automatically and sending them to the frame's memory. I tried repeatedly and it might finally see it briefly, but once you clicked somewhere else, then back, it was gone. Windows Explorer didn't work with this frame's memory any better. I tried it on my other desktop computer with the same results. Both of these computers have an Intel Pentium-4 3.06 Gigahertz motherboard. I adjusted the pictures with another software and put them on an SD flash card, inserted it in a memory slot on the picture frame, and it would run the picture slide show fine when standing alone. As I said, neither machine could see that frame's memory, except for a brief glimpse occasionally. I returned the picture frame for a refund thinking it was defective, and the store manager agreed with me after I explained.

I bought another digital frame the other day, bigger and better. When I tried hooking it up to my desktop with the USB cable, I got the same results all over again. I was unable to "see" the digital picture frame's memory with "My Computer" to install the software that came with it. I finally decided to download the software in question from their Web site and install it on my desktop. After that, I ran the software to access the pictures from the My Pictures folder, process them, then send them to the frame's memory, but it gave me a message that it couldn't find the memory. I couldn't find it with Windows Explorer either, except briefly on rare occasion, then it would disappear, however, during that brief viewing, I did notice that there were actually three pictures that got loaded before getting the error message.

After several tries using different USB plugs on the computer, different USB cables and always the same response, I gave up and tried it on my other desktop, with no better luck. I have used many USB items on my desktop machines with no problems. I decided there was a coincidence here and tried hooking it up to my laptop, which has Vista on it. Both desktop machines use XP Professional. It works fine on my laptop and I am at a loss to figure out what's wrong on the two desktop machines that work well otherwise. A knowledgeable friend worked with me on the phone one evening, with no luck. I am out of ideas.

*Want To Get Modern, Stable and Futuristic?

Do you need a modern, stable and free user interface with 3D effects for Windows Mobile? Touch Shell is now available. MobilityFlow announced the release of Touch Shell Free, a modern user interface integrated with 3D effects for Windows Mobile. With the release of Touch Shell Free, MobiltyFlow combines the full screen customizable user interface with a cutting edge 3D effect user interface, giving users the most advanced and intuitive Windows Mobile user interface available on the market today. Touch Shell

Free, with its ground-breaking functions, features and design offers much more than other user interfaces with 3D effects on the market today. Many of them are only available on very expensive high-end devices sold direct from the mobile carriers. MobilityFlow also has a Touch Shell Pro version of the application that offers additional functions and features.

I included this item because there is a free version, but according to the Web site there is also a 50% discount on the right side of their Web page for the Pro version, making it $9.98. However, I don't know how long that discounted price will last.

Touch Shell Website: *http://www.touch-shell.com*

*Tired Of Quicken or MS Money? Try This One

Alzex announced Personal Finances 3.2, the newest version of a personal finance manager that will help users track income and expenses quickly and virtually automatically. With a glance at its reports and graphs, users will understand their earning and spending patterns, find areas of excessive expenditure and cut down unnecessary expenses. Personal Finances also provides future planning. Users can project expected spending and income, and know their exact financial situation at a future date.

The budgeting task is a snap. Running the program will open a simple, uncluttered interface that puts all the financial details, tools and options that matter most to you up front. First the user needs to start budgeting by seting up accounts, categories, and subcategories. Personal Finances allows for any number of accounts, so the user can set up accounts for your bank, credit card, and cash. Next, set up categories and subcategories. They will classify and sort income and expenses and help the user see this important data in a meaningful and detailed way through reports and graphs.

Next for budgeting is to enter transactions that can reflect income and expenses. Transactions can be one-time or scheduled, which makes Personal Finances handy for regularly occurring expenses, such as tax payments, electricity bills, Internet, etc. Transactions can be identified in a number of ways including categories, family members, and tags. Tags provide a way to differentiate between similar transactions that fall into the same category. Categorization by family members will show spending habits of each member of the family in reports.

Personal Finances offers a summary view of all transactions, reports by categories, family members and tags to see how much of the budget is allocated to each category or family member, and identify areas to cut spending if the budget comes out on the negative side. The user can generate reports that cover any period of time. Results can be printed out, or saved to one of the formats: HTML, CHM, or TXT.

With Personal Finances, one can have the convenience of the personal finance software without carrying around the

Continued

QuickMonth Calendar

Ken Peters (product.review (at) hhicc.org), Hilton Head Island Computer Club, SC (http://hhicc.org)

If you're tired of double clicking the clock to get the calendar up, then this program is for you.

http://www.codedawn.com/qmc/quickmonth-calendar-download/

QuickMonth Calendar is a freeware program which displays a small popup calendar on your Windows desktop whenever your mouse hovers over the clock in the system tray. The calendar display may also be toggled on and off by using the Windows+Q keyboard shortcut. The program works with XP and Windows 2000. Click the clock once to make it appear. Vista already has a popup calendar.

You can get QuickMonth Calendar by visiting the download page. QuickMonth Calendar is free and does not include any adware or spyware.

NOTE: Some antivirus programs have incorrectly detected QuickMonth Calendar as a Trojan horse. Do not be alarmed — this type of erroneous detection is called a false positive. If you receive a virus warning message regarding QuickMonth Calendar (qmc.exe), please report the false positive to your antivirus software manufacturer so they can update their definitions. Here are a few of QuickMonth Calendar's features:

To quickly jump to today's date, right-click on the calendar or left-click the bottom of the calendar where it says "Today." Use the buttons at the top of the calendar to change the month. You can also left-click on the name of the month to see a popup menu of all the months.

Left-click on the year to quickly change the year.

The calendar automatically detects the location of your Windows taskbar, so if you move the taskbar to the top, left, or right side of the screen, the calendar will still display next to your system tray clock (you may have to restart Windows once for the change to take effect).

The look of the calendar changes according to what your system colors are (as determined by your current Windows theme or visual style). The calendar will appear in any program when you put the pointer over the clock. I have found this program very handy when trying to find a date when writing an email or other document. When I need to look up a date, it's very nice to have the calendar popup just by hovering the pointer over the clock. It's also helpful when on the telephone and trying to settle on a date.

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From The DealsGuy, *continued*

laptop. When the user goes out of town, they can install Personal Finances onto a USB flash drive and keep track of all purchases. Simply plug the USB flash drive in to any computer, update transactions and unplug it. No traces are left behind on the host machine.

New to version 3.2 are 50 icons for accounts and 200 icons for categories. Now the user can see the summary for a month, confirmed and non-confirmed transactions, and can group transactions by name.

Personal Finances runs on Windows 98/NT/2000/XP/Vista and comes in two editions: Professional and Freeware. For more information about the products, visit *http://www.financessoftware.com*. You can download the 30-day trial version, an absolutely "free" version or the paid version. For the paid version, user group members are offered a 20% discount on the purchase of Personal Finances 3.2. The coupon code is pf43M5G. They failed to respond when I asked when the discount will end, but right now the discount code will still recalculate the price so I hope it's still good when you read this.

Also, be aware that the description I included above is for the paid version, so do your homework if you want the free one and look at the comparison columns on their Web site. Several features in the paid version aren't in the free version. Also, I'm not sure if it tracks securities, which MS Money and Quicken will do.

*Multiple items on the clipboard

Gerry Gerstenberg of Broward Personal Computer Assn. Inc. wrote a review of Clipomatic in their C:\BPCA NEWS, the group's newsletter (*http://www.bpca.com*). Its a handy product that allows you to save up to 64 text items that it will hold in a cache, and you can retrieve them singularly when you need a particular one. They will be saved even when you shut your computer down, and be available again next time you start it up. She was happy with the performance and it is a free program that can be obtained at *http://www.mlin.net/Clipomatic.shtml*, but the author is open to donations, which I consider worthwhile if you like it. She said it's not clear if Clipomatic is compatible with Vista, but it works with other Windows versions. Gerry's review is in their august newsletter at *ftp://bpca.com/newsletter/2008/bpca0808.pdf*.

That's it for this month. I'll have some more new product announcements on my Web site that didn't offer discounts. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how

My PayPal Account's Been Hacked

Steve Bass, founding member of APCUG

The e-mail from PayPal said I'd sent $400 to a gaming firm in Germany. It's a dopey phishing expedition, I thought, and authentic-looking, for sure, but nothing to worry about.

The trouble was that when I logged on to PayPal, I really did have a $400 withdrawal. It was clear that someone had my password.

Quick Password Tips Here are the three essential things you need to know about password security:

• Use a password generator, a program that will create a long, complicated password.

• Don't ever use dictionary words, even if you stick in symbols, like bill$gate$. They're very easy to break using simple hacker programs. (LOL — Thanks, Rod.)

• Use a different password for every important site. Using the same password on every site, especially critical ones, such as banking, is risky. Imagine using your one password on an unsavory, and possibly unscrupulous site. With that golden password, and a few guesses on your login name — stevebass, steve_bass, sbass — and they're in like Flynn.

Who's Got My Password? I contacted PayPal (888/221-1161), supplied the details, and they opened up a case. My account is frozen and I don't doubt PayPal will credit me for the loss. (As I started editing this newsletter, PayPay reversed the charges.) PayPal is investigating, but I don't think they'll ever find out how someone got into my account, though it was clear the person had my password. The rep said I probably fell for a well-crafted e-mail spoof.

That's a blow to my ego. I see myself as suspicious — verging on paranoid — when it comes to phishing e-mails. What better prize than bragging rights to hacking a PC World guy, right? So I'm as vigilant as my dog is when I try to get her to take a pill wrapped in peanut butter. (Hey, you can't fool me, pal, she probably thinks...)

If an e-mail — suspicious or not — refers to any of my important accounts and provides a link to click, I ignore the offer. It's safer to manually type the URL into my browser's address field. And yes, I'll cover phishing hassles — and ways to guard against it — in a future newsletter.

Password: z24x680uBS4!44

I'm also careful with my passwords and, at least until now, thought they were super stealthy. For example, on PayPal I used four numbers, a symbol, and three letters. According to Microsoft's Password Checker, my standard password pattern — 1600%wtf — is strong. But it could be better.

Microsoft says that the most effective passwords are 14 characters and have a combination of upper and lower case letters, numbers, and a symbol or two. For example, z24x680uBS4!44 is strong enough for them to call it "best."

Test your passwords on Microsoft's site and see how well they stand up. Then browse Microsoft's excellent Strong passwords: How to create and use them. I promise you'll learn something. *http://tinyurl.com/2e7tmw*

Use Microsoft's Password checker to test your password's strength. You might be surprised. *http://tinyurl.com/ypc3dc*

Generating Strong Passwords Creating a strong password is easy, provided you don't try to think one up on your own. There are dozens of Web sites that'll create passwords, but I don't use any of them. The last thing I'll do is trust someone online watching me create new passwords. Instead, download Password Generator, a freebie, and crank out all sorts of 14-character passwords. *http://tinyurl.com/4j8e8*

Keeping Track of Your Passwords I just looked and counted roughly 220 sites I use that require a password. Some site passwords, however, are immaterial. For instance, I use a simple-to-remember word for spots I rarely visit, places such as newspapers that force you to register and log in just to read articles, or tech sites with forum messages. However, ever since the PayPal fiasco, I've changed every significant password on my system to a 14-digit gorilla.

Remembering all those passwords is a PITA , so you ought to consider using a password management tool. There are lots available. Many people like KeePass , a freebie; others swear by LargeSoft's $30 Password Manager . I anticipate easily 100 e-mails — no make that 200 — kvetching that I haven't mentioned your favorite. But as far as I'm concerned, RoboForm is the best one around, and I've used it since it was first introduced.

RoboForm, The Master at Passwords RoboForm is a $30 program with more features for password management, privacy, and password identification than any other program I know. You provide RoboForm with all the vitals you might need to complete a site's form — name, address, phone numbers, and even credit card numbers. When you click the Fill Forms button, the program does just that. I've created multiple identities, each with different info. For instance, I have one with MasterCard info, another with VISA accounts. I have another identify I call "anonymous" that I use to fill in forms on sites that I'll never visit again.

Click a Web site from the RoboForm Passcard screen, and RoboForm transports your Web browser to the site, logging you in if necessary. Need an industrial-strength password? RoboForm will generate one for you. And don't worry about security: RoboForm is itself password-protected. The program will also safely send an encrypted password through e-mail to another RoboForm user. (I was recently discussing with my wife the fact that neither of us can function without it.) BTW, RoboForm foils keyloggers (programs that watch keystrokes) because instead of typing, RoboForm inserts characters into form fields.

Here's a summary of RoboForm's features (*http://www.roboform.com/features.html*), a comprehensive FAQ (*http://www.roboform.com/faq.html*) with answers to your most technical RoboForm questions and a way to compare the free and Pro versions (*http://www.roboform.com/why-pro.html*).

Juice Your Broadband Speed

Vinny La Bash (vlabash (at) comcast.net), Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, *www.spcug.org*

People prefer broadband internet connections because of the obvious speed advantages over dial-up and satellite links. Then why is it that broadband never seems to be fast enough? Are you getting the speed promised by your ISP? Broadband can cost $100 a month or more, but does the provider really provide the advertised speed? Is the connection reliable or does the modem need a reboot several times a day? Fortunately, there are ways to achieve high, reliable throughput without having to have an engineering degree. Here are some suggestions to get every bit per second possible from your modem without technical hiccups or interruptions in service.

Start with your computer and TV equipment. A common source of line noise can be traced to improper grounding of anything that plugs into household electrical circuits. This can seriously degrade performance of cable equipment. Every electrical device, especially those in the same room as the cable modem, should be plugged into properly grounded outlets. The best connections are with polarized plugs oriented in the correct direction, and please don't use any three prong to two prong adapters. Get up-to-date gear. Electric outlet testers are cheap. Buy one and use it to test for excess voltage on your cable wiring. Any problem could indicate a serious safety hazard. Engage a licensed electrician to fix it.

Almost anything manufactured today in the consumer electronics world is light years ahead of its predecessors manufactured only two or three years ago. Cable modems are no exception, so if yours is more than three years old get a new one from your provider. Most providers will make a free exchange, but some will require an extension of your contract. You want to do this because the latest modems conform to the DOCSIS 2.0 standard. This offers higher upload and download capabilities and supports other advanced broadband applications, including online gaming and peer-to-peer computing.

Ask your ISP if they automatically update firmware for the modem. If they don't, have them supply the website address of your modem's manufacturer so you can download the most recent firmware. Check the website about twice a year for new updates.

Next, go to a test site such as PC Pitstop, and check your upload and download speeds to see if they match the terms of your service contract. If they don't, give your ISP a call and have them reset the modem's settings. While you're at it, have them check the signal-to-noise ratio. Too much noise can cause interference, and your modem will then have to resend information cutting down on your throughput.

It's possible that your cable wiring may contain too many splices or simply be too long. That can be fixed by a visit from your ISP technician. Have the technician check the line quality leading to your house. If the signal is good and you're having problems, the house wiring may be the culprit. The definitive answer for cable modems is to create a split directly after the junction box and then run a new cable directly to your modem. The other side of the split will take care of your television sets which aren't nearly as sensitive to line noise.

After you've done everything from a hardware and firmware standpoint, and your cable connection is as clean as possible, you're ready to fine tune the system for best performance. Vista users don't have to do much of anything to optimize the operating system since Vista does TCP stack tuning dynamically. Any internet performance adjustments can be made through the browser. Firefox users may want to try Firetune or Fasterfox. They are both free utilities and allow adjustment to cache memory, capacity and other settings such as pipelining.

If you do a lot of downloading, you can save time by installing a download manager like Flashget. This widely used utility claims the highest number of users on the internet. It uses MHT (Multi-server Hyper-threading Transportation) technique. It's very easy to use and comes with exceptional document management features. Best of all, it's free.

After all this work, it would be a tragedy if you didn't keep in mind that sometimes the simplest solutions are the best ones. Most cable modems and routers have reset features. Many a mysterious internet ailment has been corrected simply by resetting the equipment. Turn off the computer and the modem. Unplug the modem for a few minutes and then

My Paypal, *continued*

If you need portability, RoboForm2Go gives you the same protection when you carry your passwords on a flash drive and use it outside the office. Both the RoboForm program and your password files reside on a USB key, so you can take them from one computer to another. The tool costs $40, but if you buy it at the same time you get RoboForm, the price drops to $20. If you dig around, you'll occasionally find discounts. (Google RoboForm discount.)

Siber Systems offers a 30-day trial of both products. They work in all versions of Windows and support IE and Firefox, but not Google Chrome, Opera, or a few other browsers. Take a look at the compatibility list. *http://www.roboform.com/browsers.html*

There's lots more to say about password management, but I'm almost out of space. So while you're hot on the topic, read Bitmill's smart series of Password Security 101 articles. They're less basic than you might imagine. *Http://www.thebitmill.com/articles/*

Steve Bass is a former Contributing Editor with PC World, a 23 year veteran of PIBMUG, and a founding member of APCUG. He's also the author of PC Annoyances: How to Fix the Most Annoying Things about Your Personal Computer, O'Reilly Press. It's available on Amazon at dirt cheap prices. *http://snipurl.com/annoy2*. This

Sandbox Computing

Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D. (bwsail (at) yahoo.com), Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, FL (www.spcug.org)

I spend a lot of my time surfing the web looking for research material; computer tech sources, genealogy data, vocal music and other information. This means that I am downloading many web pages, clicking on many links and generally opening up my computer to all types of malware. I always have to be aware that there are many traps on web pages that are just waiting for the unwary surfer. It used to be that having an up-to-date virus checker, a working firewall and parasite scanners, you could adequately protect your computer. That changed to some degree when the "drive by" downloads appeared. Now with the constant appearance of "holes" in the Windows operating system (XP & Vista) and the various web browsers, it is less obvious that you can protect your computer from unwanted visitors. Microsoft recently (October 22, 2008) released an out-of-cycle patch (patch 958644) for Windows for what has been described as a very serious opening that could be exploited regardless of the browser you are using. There have also been recent articles on "clickjacking". In this situation "buttons" or links are floated behind the link you think you are clicking. The only option to prevent this is to disable JavaScript. That creates more problems as JavaScript is a very important part of the whole web experience and is used on almost every page. So when you do know that you can run a script and when you can't? Well, the "Sandbox" may be a way to surf safely and avoid the installation of malware on your computer without having to disable JavaScript.

My Sandbox experience is based on using the sofware application "Sandboxie" (*www.sandboxie.com*) with Windows XP and Firefox 3.0. As with everything related to computing, your results might be different. Sandboxie is a very small program, approximately 450 KB. So it is quick to download and doesn't require a lot of memory to run.

Next, let's take a look at what is meant when I talk about a computer sandbox. The sandbox is a complete "virtual computer" running in your computer's memory. This virtual computer is isolated from the real operating system files and creates any files it needs for use within the sandbox. When the sandbox closes, everything in it disappears unless you chose to keep it. It's like having a bank vault within a building where everything can be locked within the vault and nothing is removed without special permission. The neat thing is that nothing that happens within the sandbox can have any effect on your computer. This means that Trojans, rootkits and other malware have no chance to affect the operation of your computer outside of the sandbox. If a problem occurs when you are running in the sandbox, all you need to do is shut it down, you are returned to your normal computer operations and the malware is erased.

When Sandboxie is started it creates a sandboxed folder which contains a drive folder, user folder, and Registry "hives". The "hive" is Microsoft's term for collections of related Registry keys stored together. The parts of the Registry needed for sandboxed operations are stored in a hive which is then integrated into the Registry. There are also instances of Windows services stored within the sandboxed folder that can be accessed by applications running within the sandbox. These are referred to as "process objects" and are needed for normal operations. When the sandbox is running there may be instances of these objects running both sandboxed and non-sandboxed. Also, you can run an application within the sandbox at the same you are running it outside the sandbox. The complete operating system is not loaded into the sandbox. This reduces the memory required for the sandbox operations.

Applications running in the sandbox can not hijack non-sandboxed programs. Therefore they can not operate outside the sandbox. New files or other created objects have a path assigned by Sandboxie which directs them into the sandboxed folders. Sandboxie prevents any programs running inside the sandbox from loading drivers directly. It also prevents programs from asking a central system component, known as the Service Control Manager, to load drivers on their behalf. In this way, drivers, and more importantly, rootkits, cannot be installed by a sandboxed program. This is one of the features that prevents rootkits from being installed outside the sandbox.

In actual operation, using Sandboxie is very simple. To make it even simpler, there is a short tutorial available on the Sandboxie web site. This can be accessed from within the program the first time you run it or directly from the Sandboxie home page by clicking on the "FAQ & Help" link.

After installation it can be set to load whenever the computer is started. This puts an icon in the system tray. Clicking on this icon brings up the Sandboxie Control Center. This window lists all sandboxed applications and object. When I started it, the window indicated nothing was sandboxed. So, using the menu I selected run an application and then selected Firefox. This changed the list in the window to show Firefox as well as the two RegHive files. With Firefox up, I did my usual web surfing. Along the way I received a message from Sandboxie that a new version was available that I could download. At this point, I really couldn't tell that anything was different from my previous surfing experience with Firefox. So I went to the Sandboxie page and downloaded the new version. After finishing I closed the Sandboxie Control Center. Then I went looking for the download so I could install it. Well, it didn't exist anywhere on the hard drive! I had closed Sandboxie without marking the update to be saved! As a result the download was deleted, along with all the other sandboxed files when I closed the Control Center. So I opened the Control Center, restarted Firefox and downloaded the update. This time I selected it to be saved before I closed the Control Center. Then I was able to install the update.

I should also point out that now I have an icon on the desktop which automatically runs Firefox sandboxed. Sandboxie

Continued

Magic Word Brings Email to the Offline World

Gabe Goldberg (Tiplet (at) gabegold.com), Computers and Publishing, Inc.

If you've ever wondered how to bring email to the techno-phobe in your life, the answer isn't Abracadabra, it's Presto.

If you're reading this online, you own or have access to a computer. But you likely have friends or relatives — perhaps elderly, budget-restricted, technophobic — who don't. So they're not in close touch and can't share online family or community activities.

Presto <*http://www.presto.com*> is a combination color inkjet printer and paid Web-based service which allows people without computers to receive email, including attachments.

Setting it up is simple: after purchasing the device, someone with just a bit of tech savvy creates the account, picks an email address (such as gabeg99@presto.com), and lists people allowed to send email to the address. At specified times of day, the printer dials a toll-free telephone number, downloads accumulated email, and prints it.

With only two controls — Volume and Stop — it's easy to operate. It plugs directly into a telephone jack and doesn't need a separate phone line or jack or even a splitter, since an existing telephone or accessory (answering machine or Caller ID device) can plug into it, daisy-chain style.

Presto is ideal for letting seniors receive email from children, grandchildren, friends, former colleagues, military buddies, etc. And it's useful when businesses request customer email addresses to conduct or simplify transactions. It handles pictures and many attachment formats nicely, printing them as if it was a FAX machine. So it allows sharing any online or computer content as PDF files such as maps and directions, travel itineraries, Web pages, spreadsheets with financial or family contact information.

Simple steps authorize new people to send email, and when ink runs low, the printer is smart enough to either alert the person who set up the account or automatically order new cartridges.

After failing for a dozen years to excite my in-laws about email — they steadfastly resisted being online — my re-tired Navy father-in-law fell in love with a Presto I loaned him, discovering that it let him hear from his old Navy buddies around the world. And receiving color pictures of the grandchildren sealed the deal.

The printer costs $150 or less (always comparison shop online!) and the service costs $12.50/month with yearly subscription. The only thing missing is the printer downloading paper and ink through the phone line — but that would need real magic!

Sandbox Computing, *continued*

can be set up to isolate your browser automatically whenever you open it. To do so, add the name of your browser's executable file, such as firefox.exe or iexplore.exe, to the list of programs Sandboxie always opens in a sandbox. If you don't do this, Sandboxie will not set your browser to open automatically in the sandbox.

As you can tell from these comments, Sandboxie does not require a reboot to start the sandbox process. Sandboxie does sandbox access to files, but not to the complete hard drive. It does sandbox access to registry keys. It also sandboxes access to many other classes of system components, in order to trick the sandboxed program into believing that it isn't being tricked. So you can open and close Sandboxie repeatedly while you are using your computer without having to do any rebooting.

If this discussion has interested you and you would like to take Sandboxie for a test run, the free version can be downloaded from: www.sandboxie.com. This application is free for personal use. However, there is a Pro version available for $30.00. If you like the program and can afford it, buy the Pro version. This software is the work of one person, Ronen Tzur, and this payment is his means of support to continue working and improving this software. After some experience in running Sandboxie, I can highly recommend it as an excellent method of protecting your computer from malware. :

Dr. Lewis is a former university and medical school professor of physiology. He has been working with personal computers for over thirty years, developing software and assembling systems

SIG News

C/C++ Programming
Bruce Arnold (barnold@ieee.org)

This group is devoted to programming languages in general and C, C++, and C++ for Windows programming in particular. Each month a small but hopefully useful program (complete with source code) is presented for discussion.

This month we have to Step Back to avoid a Catch-22 problem. Most of the programs that I have written in the past few years have be designed for Microsoft's .NET Framework. Unfortunately, when a program is run on a computer that doesn't have the proper updates nor the .NET package installed, the program stops with a very unfriendly error message giving no clue as to the problem. Of course, Microsoft has a "solution" called "Deployment" but unfortunately it doesn't apply to anyone using the Express versions of the DOT NET compiler. The Express versions versions don't include "Setup" or "Clickonce" options for their projects.

Here's only one of several vague error messages that may be received: "This application has failed to start because the application configuration is incorrect. Reinstalling the application may fix this problem." There's probably nothing wrong with the application. The computer just needs its software updated. (Check the software documentation just in case the software does need something special.)

This program, Query Dot Net, can be run on any computer to test compatiblilty. By "any computer" I mean Windows 98, Windows 98 Second Edition, Windows Me, Windows 2000, Windows XP, Windows Server 2003, Vista, Windows 7, etc. It reports the installed versions, if any, of .NET software and provides a button to go to the Microsoft web site and download the latest files. For many applications, this is enough. Complex "Setup programs" are not required or even desired, since often the user does not want to a) Modify the registry. b) Create new directories. c) Add Startup Menu items, etc.

Main Meeting

Mike Redlich (mike@redlich.net)

Next meeting: April 3 ▯

Window Pains
John Raff (jraff@comcast.net)

Our intent is to provide members with Windows oriented application discussions, Microsoft and Linux style. Presentation to be directed to more heavy technological level of attendee, although newbies are welcomed.

Our next meeting April 17. ▯

Web Dev
Evan Willliams (tech@evanwilliamsconsulting.com)

This SIG is an open forum for all Website Development techniques and technologies, to encourage study and development of web sites of all kinds. All languages will be considered and examined. Anyone interested please contact the Chairperson. The current project is a CMS for the club. Anyone interested in starting a new project, come to the meeting and announce / explain. Provide as much detail as possible. WebDev should be an all-encompasing development and examination forum for all issues, applications, OS, languages and systems one can use to build Websites. We currently have two Web dev languages .NET and Java as SIGs but the other langages and OS need to be investigated, examined and tested; Windows, Linux, UNIX, DEC, Vax, HP etc. Intel-PC, Motorola-MAC etc.

Java
Mike Redlich (mike@redlich.net)

The Java Group covers beginner, intermediate, and advanced level Java programming. Primary focus is on developing useful/practical applets and applications, but can include topics such as Java I/O, JavaBeans, Reflection, object-oriented programming and software design issues.

March 10: Getting Started with Stripes Framework. Stripes is a presentation framework for building web applications using the latest Java technologies. Most modern web frameworks in the Java realm are over complicated and/or require a significant amount of configuration. Struts is featurelight, but has some serious architectural issues. Others, like WebWork 2 and Spring MVC are much better, but still require a lot of configuration where you seemingly have to learn a whole new language just to get started. Stripes provides simple, yet powerful, solutions to common problems. Developers can extend Stripes with minimal configuration and ramp-up time for getting started with this framework is less than 30 minutes. We introduce the Stripes framework including a review of a small sample application to demonstrate some of its features.

Investment Software
Jim Cooper (jim@thecoopers.org)

The Investment SIG continues with presentations on how to use analysis programs TC2000 and TCNet. Large charts are presented on our pull down screen and illustrate the application of computer scans and formulas to find stocks for profitable investments. Technical analysis determines buy points, sell points and projected moves. Technical analysis can also be used on fundamentals such as earnings, sales growth, etc. We're no longer focusing on just Telechart -- if you are using (or interested in) Tradestation, eSignal, VectorVest -- or just in learning how to select and use charting and technical analysis, come join us !!

Our next meeting: April 9. ▯

Preventive Computer Maintenance

Stuart Rabinowitz (s.e.rabinowitz (at) att.net), Hartford User Group Exchange, CT (www.huge.org)

The single most important maintenance item that should be done on a regular basis is **back up your data**. What the schedule is depends on much data you can afford to lose. Try daily/weekly to an external hard drive and monthly to a CD/DVD, or use a backup application. Make sure that your software is updated; primarily the operating system and your primary browser.

Use utility software: get a sense of how your computer operates when it's operating correctly. For the Mac use "Activity Monitor" or "Tech Tools". On the PC (in the control panel) administrative tools / performance. You can also check your internet connection speed at:

http://reviews.cnet.com/internet-speedtest/?tag=ont.int.band

For the PC users — do regular spyware/virus scans. Make sure the definitions are up to date. Primarily for PC users — defragment your hard drive (this may take a while). Mac users do not really need to do this since OS X (10.3 +) does it automatically.

Free up some space on your hard drive (PC users can use disk cleanup; Mac users can use CacheOutX). Clean out old files that you don't use, after you've backed them up. Uninstall those programs that you don't use. Apple recommends that you have at least 10% free, a bit more for PCs, this will improve virtual memory and may improve disk performance.

Clean the Hardware — to clean the monitor and keyboard use a dry microfiber cloth (be sure the computer is turned off) and gently (don't press hard) wipe the monitor, unplug the keyboard and wipe. If there are hard to clean areas, spray the cloth lightly with a vinegar/water solution and then wipe. For an optical mouse wipe the bulb gently. You'll need to open a mechanical mouse to clean the rollers. Use a cotton swab with isopropyl alcohol.

If your computer case is easy to open (i.e. not an iMac or Mac Mini), then open it up (after shutting down and unplugging it) and use compressed air to blow out the dust. Do not use a vacuum since it may create a static charge that could damage the electronics. After closing the case you can clean out the fan in the back.

You'll also probably want to have the following tools:

- Screwdrivers — standard, phillips, and torx in different sizes (especially the small ones)
- Nutdrivers — 1/4" and 3/16"
- Pliers, part grabbers, and tweezers
- Compressed air
- Microfiber cleaning cloths
- Antistatic strap — especially if you want to put your hands inside the computer

Stuart Rabinowitz is Editor-in-Chief, the PULP, newsletter of the Hartford User Group Exchange, CT. This article is distributed by APCUG. Original, uncopyrighted articles appearing in the PULP may be reproduced without prior permission by other nonprofit groups. ⌨

Join ACGNJ and see newsletter graphics in color, use hot links instead of typing URLs!

SIG News, *continued*

Layman's Forum

Matt Skoda (som359@aol.com)

http://www.acgnj.org/groups/laymans.html

We meet on the second Monday of the month (no meetings in July and August) to discuss issues of interest to novice users or those who are planning to get started in computing. Watch our Web page for updates and announcements. ⌨

FireFox Activity

Firefox@acgnj.org

This SIG is intended to be an open forum for **all** FireFox and Mozilla techniques and technologies, to encourage the study and development of web sites of all kinds. All the browsers will be considered and examined. All are encouraged to "think out of the box" about new web site design. All members and guests are invited to check out the design concepts and voice their opinion.

Our next meeting April 20. ⌨

LUNICS (Linux/Unix)

Andreas Meyer (lunics@acgnj.org)

http//www.acgnj.org/groups/lunics.html

LUNICS is a group for those who share an interest in Unix and similar operating systems. While we do quite a bit with Linux, we've also been known to discuss Solaris and BSD too. We generally meet on the first Monday of the month at 8 PM at the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad. See the web page

NJ Gamers

Gregg McCarthy (greggmc@optonline.net)

http://www.NJGamers.com

www.lanparty.com

The next Friday Night Frag will be April 10, 6 p.m. to Saturday 12 noon — 18 hours for 5 bucks!

BYOC - Bring your own computer

BYOF - Bring your own food.

and if you don't like sitting on metal chairs... BYO chair! ⌨

Guru Corner

If you need help with any of the technologies listed below, you can call on the person listed. Please be considerate and call before 10 PM.

Software

HTML	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
ColdFusion	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
CSS	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
Java	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
C++	Bruce Arnold	908-735-7898
	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
ASP	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
Perl	John Raff	973-560-9070
	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
XML	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
Genealogy	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
Home Automation	Frank Warren	908-756-1681

Operating Systems

Windows 3.1	Ted Martin	732-636-1942

Discount Computer Magazine Price List
As described by the DealsGuy

	1 yr	2 yr	3 yr
Computer Games	$10.95	20.95	29.95
Computer Gaming World	14.95	28.95	41.95
Computer Shopper1	16.97	32.95	47.95
Dr. Dobbs Journal	15.95	30.95	
Mac Addict	10.97		
Mac Home Journal	15.97	29.97	
Mac World	12.95		
Maximum PC	9.95	18.95	27.95
Microsoft System Journal	21.95	39.95	
PC Gamer	12.95		
PC Magazine (22/44/66 Issues)	25.97	48.95	68.95
PC World	16.95		
Wired	6.00	12.00	17.00

These prices are for new subscriptions and renewals. All orders must be accompanied by a check, cash or Money Order. Make payable to Herb Goodman, and mail to:

Herb Goodman, 8295 Sunlake Drive, Boca Raton, FL 33496

Telephone: 561-488-4465, e-mail: *hgoodman@prodigy.net*

Please allow 10 to 12 weeks for your magazines to start. For renewals you must supply an address label from your present subscription to insure the correct start of your renewal. As an extra service I will mail a renewal notice about 4 months prior to their expiration date. I carry more than 300 titles at excellent prices — email for prices. ⌨

ACGNJ MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Sign up online at *http://www.acgnj.org/membershipApplication.html* and pay dues with PayPal.

Dues

	US/CANADA	FAMILY OF MEMBER (No Newsletter)	FOREIGN	STUDENT	SENIOR CITIZEN (Over 65)
1 Year	$25	$10	$55	$20	$20
2 Years	$40				
3 Years	$55				$45

Mail this application and your check to:
AMATEUR COMPUTER GROUP OF NEW JERSEY, INC., P.O. BOX 135, SCOTCH PLAINS, NJ 07076

☐ New Member ☐ Renewal   ☐ Address Change

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Phone _____

Mailing Address _____ E-Mail _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ URL _____

What topics would you like to see covered at club meetings? _____

Other Local Computer Groups

Princeton Macintosh User Group: 7:15 pm 2nd Tuesday, Jadwin Hall, A-10, Washington Rd, Princeton, (609) 252-1163, *www.pmug-nj.org*	**Linux Users Group in Princeton:** 7 pm, 2nd Wednesday, Lawrence Branch Mercer Library, Rt#1 & Darrah Lane, Lawrence NJ *http://www.lugip.org*	**New York PC:** 3rd Thurs, 7 pm, PS 41, 116 W 11th St. For info call hotline, (212) 533-NYPC, *http://www.nypc.org*
Computer Education Society of Philadelphia: Meetings & Workshops at Jem Electronics, 6622 Castor Ave, Philadelphia PA. *www.cesop.org/*	**Brookdale Computer Users Group**: 7 pm,3rd Friday, Brookdale Community College, Bldg MAN Rm 103, Lincroft NJ. (732)-739-9633. *www.bcug.com*	**NJ Macintosh User Group**: 8 pm, 3rd Tuesday, Allwood Branch Library, Lyall Rd, Clifton NJ. (201) 893-5274 *http://www.njmug.org*.
PC User Group of So. Jersey: 2nd Mon., 7 pm, Trinity Presb. Church, 499 Rt 70 E, Cherry Hill, NJ. L. Horn, (856) 983-5360 *http://www.pcugsj.org*	**Hunterdon Computer Club:** 8:30 am, 3rd Sat, Hunterdon Medical Center, Rt 31, Flemington NJ. *www.hunterdoncomputerclub.org*, (908) 995-4042.	**NY Amateur Computer Group:** 2nd Thurs, 7 pm, Rm 806 Silver Bldg, NYU, 32 Waverly Pl, NYC. *http://www.nyacc.org*
Morris Micro Computer Club: 7 pm 2nd Thurs., Morris County Library, Hanover Ave, Morristown NJ, (973) 267-0871. *http://www.morrismicro.com*	**Central Jersey Computer Club**: 8 pm, 4th Friday, Rm 74, Armstrong Hall, College of NJ. Rich Williams, (609) 466-0909.	**NJ PC User Group:** 2nd Thurs, Monroe Rm at Wyckoff Public Library, 7 pm. Maureen Shannon, (201) 853-7432, *www.njpcug.org*
Philadelphia Area Computer Society: 3rd Sat, 12 noon Main Meeting, groups 8 am-3 pm. Upper Moreland Middle School, Hatboro PA. (215) 764-6338. *www.pacsnet.org*	**NJ Computer Club:** 6:15 pm, 2nd Wednesday except Jul & Aug, North Branch Reformed Church, 203 Rt 28, Bridgewater NJ. *http://www.njcc.org*	**Princeton PC Users Group**: 2nd Monday, Lawrenceville Library, Alt Rt 1 & Darrah Lane, Lawrenceville, Paul Kurivchack (908) 218-0778, *http://www.ppcug-nj.org*

Classified

FREE TO MEMBERS. Use our classified ads to sell off your surplus computer stuff. Send copy to Classified, ACGNJ NEWS, P.O. Box 135, Scotch Plains NJ 07076 or e-mail to the editor, *bdegroot@ptd.net*. Classified ads are free to members, one per issue. Non-members pay $10. Send check payable to ACGNJ Inc. with copy. Reasonable length, please.

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Personal Computer User Groups
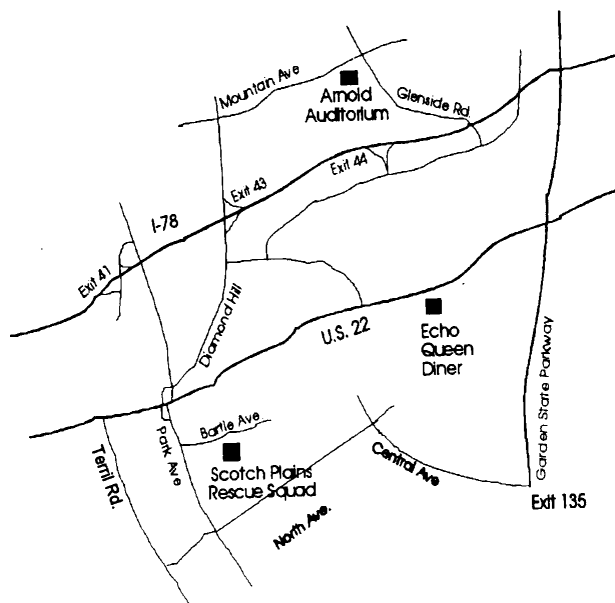
http://www.apcug.net

Radio and TV Programs

Computer Radio Show, WBAI 99.5 FM, NY, Wed. 8-9 p.m.

Software Review, The Learning Channel, Saturday 10-10:30 p.m.

On Computers, WCTC 1450 AM, New Brunswick, Sunday 1-4 p.m. To ask questions call (800) 677-0874.

PC Talk, Sunday from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., 1210 AM Philadelphia. 1800-876-WPEN, Webcast at *http://www.pctalkweb.net*.

Directions to Meetings at Scotch Plains Rescue Squad, 1916 Bartle Ave., Scotch Plains NJ

From New York City or Northern New Jersey

Take Route 1&9 or the Garden State Parkway to US 22 Westbound.

From Southern New Jersey

Take Parkway north to Exit 135 (Clark). Stay on left of ramp, follow circle under Parkway. Bear right to Central Avenue; follow to Westfield and under RR overpass. Left at light to North Avenue; follow to light in Fanwood. Right on Martine (which becomes Park Ave). Right on Bartle Ave in middle of shopping district.Scotch Plains Rescue Squad (2-story brick) is located on the right. Do not park in the row next to the building — you'll be towed.

From I-78 (either direction)

Take exit 41 (Scotch Plains); follow signs to US 22. Turn right at light at bottom of hill and use overpass to cross Rt. 22. Follow US 22 Westbound directions.

From US 22 Westbound

Exit at Park Avenue, Scotch Plains after McDonalds on the right, diagonally opposite Scotchwood Diner on the left, immediately before the overpass. After exiting, turn left at the light and use overpass to cross US 22. Bear right at bottom of ramp to continue south on Park Avenue. Turn left at the second light (a staggered intersection). Scotch Plains Rescue Squad (2-story brick) is on the right. Do not park in the row next to the building — you'll be towed. We meet on the second floor, entering by the door at the right front of the building.

From Western New Jersey

Take US 22 Eastbound to the Park Avenue exit. The exit is about a mile past Terrill Road and immediately past the overpass. Exit onto Park Avenue South and follow the directions above to the Rescue Squad building.

ACGNJ MEETINGS

For the very latest news on ACGNJ meetings visit the ACGNJ Web Page (*http://www.acgnj.org*)

Friday, April 3
8 P.M. - Main Meeting, Mike Redlich (*mike@redlich.net*).

Monday, April 6
8 P.M. - Lunics, Andreas Meyer (*lunics@acgnj.org*)

Wednesday, April 8
7 P.M. - WebDev SIG, Evan Williams
(*tech@evanwilliamsconsulting.com*)

Thursday, April 9
8 P.M. - Investing, Jim Cooper (*jim@thecoopers.org*).

Friday, April 10
6 P.M. to 5 A.M.- NJ Gamers. Gregg McCarthy
(*greggmc@optonline.net*), 732-721-6507. Break 8 to 10 P.M.

Monday, April 13
8 P.M. - Layman's Forum, Matt Skoda (*som359@aol.com*),
908-359-8842. No meetings in July or August.

Tuesday, April 14
7:30 P.M. - Java, Mike Redlich (*mike@redlich.net*)
908-246-0410.

Friday, April 17
8 P.M. - Window Pains, John Raff (*john@jraff.com*).

Monday, April 20
7 P.M. - Firefox Activity, David McRitchie (*firefox@acgnj.org*)

Tuesday, April 21
7:30 P.M. - C/C++ Users, Bruce Arnold (*barnold@ieee.org*),
908-735-7898

Friday, April 24
8:30 A.M. - TCF IT Professional Conference until 5:00 P.M.

Saturday and Sunday, April 25 and 26
Trenton Computer Festival
Vendor Sales Hours: Saturday 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. and
Sunday 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Flea Market Hours: Saturday 9:00 AM to 5:00 P.M. and
Sunday 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Tuesday, April 28
7 P.M. - Board of Directors meeting.

Friday, May 1
8 P.M. - Main Meeting, Mike Redlich (*mike@redlich.net*).

Monday, May 4
8 P.M. - Lunics, Andreas Meyer (*lunics@acgnj.org*)

Friday, May 8
6 P.M. to 5 A.M.- NJ Gamers. Gregg McCarthy
(*greggmc@optonline.net*), 732-721-6507. Break 8 to 10 P.M.

Monday, May 11
8 P.M. - Layman's Forum, Matt Skoda (*som359@aol.com*),
908-359-8842. No meetings in July or August.

Tuesday, May 12
7:30 P.M. - Java, Mike Redlich (*mike@redlich.net*)
908-246-0410.

Wednesday, May 13
7 P.M. - WebDev SIG, Evan Williams
(*tech@evanwilliamsconsulting.com*)

Thursday, May 14
8 P.M. - Investing, Jim Cooper (*jim@thecoopers.org*).

Friday, May 15
8 P.M. - Window Pains, John Raff (*john@jraff.com*).

Monday, May 18
7 P.M. - Firefox Activity, David McRitchie (*firefox@acgnj.org*)

Tuesday, May 19
7:30 P.M. - C/C++ Users, Bruce Arnold (*barnold@ieee.org*),
908-735-7898

Tuesday, June 2
7 P.M. - Board of Directors meeting. 🖥

**All meetings, unless otherwise noted, are at Scotch Plains Rescue Squad, 1916 Bartle Ave., Scotch Plains, N.J.
Directions and map inside back cover.**

Reading Adobe Acrobat Files in Single Column Mode

David McRitchie (dmcritchie@hotmail.com), ACGNJ

Tips for looking at PDF files on a computer as single column rather than in multi-column mode as on a printed page with the free Adobe Reader (adobe.com) using an accessibility feature found in HELP. View, Zoom, Reflow To return to normal columns uncheck Reflow. Reflow won't work for all files or for all pages, but most PDF documents can be reflowed. May not look the best, but the main thing is that you can simple scroll up and down without having to scroll across to read other columns.

For full screen Ctrl+L, for Reading Mode (eliminates a toolbar) Ctrl+H. Both are toggles so to undo hit the same keys again.

If you are looking at PDF files in your browser, you will not be have full access to controls, so I suggest you do not use the plug-in and let the file be opened by Adobe Reader.

For one time only: Windows Paste the url address into "My Computer" address bar. or into Run, or if on Vista into system Search would work.

Firefox users: To open a specific link to a PDF with adobe reader you could set up "Launchy" extension to do so.

To remove use of plug-in from Firefox, or to permanently remove plug-in, see *http://kb.mozillazine.org/Adobe_Reader*. Information is also available on the adobe site (*adobe.com*) in a FAQ.

HTH, David McRitchie Firefox Custom:
http://www.mvps.org/dmcritchie/firefox/firefox.htm

To flow pages in a PDF file with the Free Adobe Reader View, Zoom, Reflow (Ctrl+4) and it is a toggle.

More information in
http://www.mvps.org/dmcritchie/excel/pdf.htm#reflow 🖥