Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey NEWS

Last Minute Lunics *Un*-cancellation

Even though it's on the Labor Day holiday itself, the Lunics (Linux/Unix) SIG members have decided that they **will** hold their regularly scheduled meeting, on Monday, September 7th, at 8:00 PM.

Window Pains Speaker Announced

The speaker for the September 18th Window Pains Meeting will be Thomas Maffei. His subject will be Wireless Networking.

Planning Meeting Report

Our August 21st, 2009 Planning Meeting was a success. Attendance was lighter than we'd hoped, but those who **did** turn out came "loaded for bear". We needed 18 topics (and speakers) for our Main Meetings and Window Pains Meetings through next June. We got **30**. (There are 18 rather than 20 meetings because the September 4th, 2009 Main Meeting **will** be canceled due to Labor Day Weekend, and the January 1st, 2010 Main Meeting **will** be canceled because it's New Year's Day). We've assembled "first draft" schedules through June 2010 (listed below). Realistically, some "tweaking" will be inevitable; but we're off to a really good start for the next ten months.

http://www.acgnj.org

Founded 1975

09/04/09	(No meeting due to holiday weekend)
10/02/09	Computer Security, Viruses, Spyware, Spam
11/06/09	Green topics/PSE&G
12/04/09	Ebay buying/selling and PayPal
01/01/10	(No meeting due to holiday)
02/05/10	Ripping DVDs
03/05/10	PC Interfaces to PC (home security, home networks)
04/02/10	Digital Camera Overview
05/07/10	Home video's (VHS, 8mm, 16mm) to DVD
06/04/10	Open Street Map

Tentative Window Pains Schedule

09/18/09	Wireless Networking
10/16/09	Social Networking - Twitter and FaceBook
11/20/09	iPods (setup iTunes) & iPhone
12/18/09	Linux/Ubuntu (running Windows programs on Linux)
01/15/10	Interesting Internet sites
02/19/10	Open Office
03/19/10	How to Publish on YouTube
04/16/10	Smart Phones/PDA
05/21/10	Investing/Financial Software, Intro
06/18/10	Windows Live Meeting

In This Issue

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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.

Publication Exchange: Other computer user groups are invited to send a subscription to ACGNJ at the address below. We will respond in kind.

Address Changes should be emailed to *membership@acgnj.org* or sent to ACGNJ at the address below.

Membership, including subscription: 1 year $25, 2 years $40, 3 years $55. Additional family members: $10 each per year. Student : 1 year $20. Senior citizen (over 65) 1 year $20, 3 years $45. Send your 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.

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July & August Revisited

I missed our Anniversary. If I had a wife, and I said that to her, I'd be in **deep** trouble. Fortunately (or, I guess, **un**fortunately for **me**, personally), I'm not married. So I'll be spared that particular trauma; but then, exactly **what** anniversary did I miss? Why, my 50th article for this newsletter, of course. (As you'll see below, the July and August named in our title do **not** refer to those months themselves; but rather to the two summer 2009 newsletters that I constructed this year. They messed up my count). Anyway, this particular article now counts as my 51st "official" submission. Three months ago, in *Two Days in May*, I laid out my future schedule in such a way that my article for **this** issue would have been my fiftieth. (I took up a good portion of page 6 in our June 2009 issue describing those plans. Please refer back there if you want more details than just the brief recap I'm giving here). At that time, I said that I'd count *The Last Amendment* in our July 2009 issue as my 49th article; and (with the By-Laws taking up a whole lot of room) I had **no** plans to add content that was original with me to the August issue.

So what happened? Well, I had a "hole" in August. To fill it, I resurrected some newsletter related material I'd shown as part of the Scribus demonstration that I gave at our June 5th, 2009 Main Meeting. Since that material described various fonts used in ACGNJ newsletter mastheads, I called my filler piece *Fun With Fonts*. Once I'd used up those re-runs,

however, it still "needed something"; and I did, in fact, have more that I could include, mostly involving fonts and newsletters in one way or another. Having added that stuff, though, I could no longer pretend that *Fun With Fonts* wasn't an original article, and thus worthy of being counted as number 50. Actually, as you'll see, it's really **very** suitable for that honor.

So, what's so special about *Fun With Fonts*? Well, it's complex. **Way** complex. All of my previous submissions have consisted of just one single DOC file. (On those rare occasions when I sent two submissions in the same month, that would have involved just two DOC files). This month, for the **first** time **ever**, I'm submitting an image file to go with my DOC file. Don't get me wrong. I **have** sent images to Barbara (our editor) before; but that was in the course of general newsletter "business", not specifically as part of any previous article I'd written. To send Barbara just the contents of *Fun With Fonts* would have required **twenty** DOC files and **twenty-two** image files; and that would have carried only the raw information. The **structure** of *Fun With Fonts* required 24 text frames (some linked together), 22 image frames, and 17 **empty** frames. (Those are text frames which contain no text, but which have been given a solid white background). When placed "on top" of another frame, they cover over (and thus make disappear) any unwanted details or blemishes. Actually, I may have missed a few

more of those frames. By design, they're **invisible** when in use. So it's kind of hard to count them "after the fact".

Now, the main reason for that complexity is because *Fun With Fonts* was thrown together at the last minute from a hodge podge of mostly preexisting parts. If I'd been planning it from scratch, I could have consolidated a lot of the images and text; but in the end, I think it **still** would have been **too** complicated for submission to somebody else. Thus, it wouldn't have existed **at all** if it hadn't been assembled for a newsletter that was also edited by me. That makes it unique, and thus eminently qualified to be enshrined as my "official" 50th article. (Actually, *Fun With Fonts* isn't even **close** to being the most elaborate publishing project I've ever done, especially if you include presentations; but I think it will hold the ACGNJ newsletter record for a while). I'll have more to say about *Fun With Fonts* near the end of the *August In Detail* sub-section below, and also in *Appendix II: The Banner* and *Appendix III: A Contest*; but lets not get ahead of ourselves. We'll continue by "taking it from the top".

Scribus, my desktop publisher, is a free Internet download. Therefore, unlike a desktop publishing program that comes on a CD or DVD with plenty of room to spare, it **can't** include extras (such as whole bunches of clip art). In my End-of-June 200**8** Supplement, I used two clichés describing typical summer activities: "catching some rays" and "riding the wild surf". Not having thought of anything

better, I intended to re-use those metaphors again this year in both of the summer newsletters that I planned to produce "all by myself". Therefore, just about the first thing I did was to ask Barbara to look through **her** extensive collection of clip art for illustrations that combined computers with those two concepts. She came up with four images, all very good. I needed one for my July "cover" and one for my August "cover", so that left me two extras for use as "fillers". On my own, I searched the web and found a lot of stuff; but not much that I really liked, except for a girl relaxing on a tube in a pool. Sadly, she wasn't holding a computer, or doing anything else even remotely computer related. Happily, I was able to fit her in by having a computer hold **her**, instead. (She's displayed in a monitor on page 7 of the August issue).

I had three purposes for my summer newsletter issues: First, to advertise the club's schedule of summer activities. Second, to provide permanent reference copies of the club's latest Constitution and By-Laws. Third, to try out my new experimental "two column/half page" layout; and see if it looked as good in real life as it did in my imagination. The idea was to keep the "reduced eye movement" readability of the two column format, but to wrap the columns every half page instead of every full page. That way, an 8 ½ by 11 inch printed version of the newsletter would look and read pretty much the same, except that the columns would be shorter (which might actually **increase** their readability). Whereas the PDF version of the newsletter (when displayed

on a full size computer monitor) could be read from top to bottom in complete half pages, using only the down-arrow key, with **no** jumping around necessary.

There **is** some loss of content per page involved, though. A typical "middle" page (with no images) of a traditionally laid out newsletter might have a half inch margin and a quarter inch "Title + Continued" black bar on top, a quarter inch footer area plus a final half inch margin on the bottom, and two side-by-side text columns in the center, each 3.6 inches wide and 9.5 inches tall. My new format would add a quarter inch "Continued" bar in the middle of that page, leaving room for two new pairs of side-by-side text columns (one set above that new bar and one set below it). Thus, there would now be **four** text columns on said page, each 3.6 inches wide but only 4.6 inches tall. That adds up to a height loss of .6 inches per page. In a multi-page document, that could make a significant difference. Fortunately, there's some "wiggle room" available, both in the placement of the various elements on the page, and in the spacing of the text itself. (More about that later).

Note: To properly follow *July In Detail* (and *August In Detail* when we get to it), you really should open a second instance of your PDF reader and display that issue as well, so you can "jump back and forth" as needed. However, while **I** personally find these details interesting, I realize that not everybody else will. Therefore, if you were to skip right down to *Appendix I: Fan Mail* (containing an influential reader's reaction), I'd be disappointed; but I'd understand.

July In Detail

Now, let's talk specifics. In the July 2009 issue, page 1 isn't obviously split into half pages, but the "cover" image takes up most of the top left column, and the text on both sides is divided into several smaller sections, so it's easily readable when scanned from top to bottom. Page 2 is my version of Barbara's "boilerplate" page, which hardly ever changes. Anyway, it's **already** in a half page format. Page 3 just naturally split itself into two half pages. *About This Issue*, on top, is a 378 word editorial written by me. (As its title implies, its content refers only to the issue at hand, so I **didn't** count it as an article). *Brief SIG Information*, on the bottom, is just exactly what it says it is. (Since it's composed entirely of club information recycled from previous newsletters, I didn't count it as an article, either).

The Last Amendment, taking up pages 4 through 8, is my "official" 49th article, and the first multi-page document to be laid out in my half page format. It was also a **big** learning experience. It was originally written in December 2008, but never published. The first thing I had to do was re-write it to include details of the May 2009 By-Laws amendments. I did that in the word processor that I'm currently using, OpenOffice.org Writer version 3.0.1 (running under Ubuntu

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9.04). Then, I imported the updated document into Scribus version 1.3.3.12 (also running under Ubuntu 9.04). That's when I hit my first "learning curve".

Here, I have to back-track a bit. Scribus handles images and text differently. As I mentioned a few paragraphs ago, I put a "cover" image at the top of the left hand column on page 1. To do that, I first pulled down the Scribus "Insert" menu and selected "Image Frame". Next, I free hand swiped an empty image frame box in my on-screen "page", putting it more-or-less where I wanted it. (Later, I could adjust its exact size & location to within 1/10,000 of an inch). Then, I right-clicked inside that new empty image frame to get yet another menu, from which I chose "Get Image...". That popped up a window labeled "Open", which let me browse drives and directories to locate and select my image file. Finally, my image appeared inside my image frame, where I tweaked it until it looked exactly right.

Except that it **wasn't** really there. Scribus doesn't import the actual image into its working file. It just makes a pointer. You can easily verify this by deleting or just re-naming your image file. Do that, and the picture inside your Scribus image frame will disappear. Edit your source file outside of Scribus, using any image editor you choose, and the picture inside of Scribus will change, too. Only when you produce your final output file (PDF or otherwise) does Scribus actually import the contents of your image file. For text, it's the opposite. When you right-click inside an empty

text frame and choose "Get Text...", the contents of the file you select will immediately be imported into Scribus and stored internally. (Here we should emphasize that when Scribus says "text", it doesn't discriminate. It means any file containing readable characters, from ASCII plain-vanilla TXT files to highly formatted cutting edge word processor files).

Digressing further: As I've mentioned in previous articles, I edited a train club newsletter from the late eighties until the mid nineties. During that period, I upgraded to a "more modern" DOS desktop publisher several times. Each was sold under a different name, and each **did**, in fact, contain improvements; but each was also obviously descended from the **same** common ancestor. (I've always wondered what the "inside story" was). I also had several word processors at that time, but I hardly ever used anything other than WordStar for DOS. WordStar had several tricks that I've never seen duplicated by any other program. My favorite was the ability to switch from regular to "column" mode. There, you could do cut-and-paste type operations on vertical text selections. I worked a lot with space delimited text files (containing columns of numbers, names, etc). Column mode came in really handy there.

Another WordStar feature I often used would let me set **any** line height I wanted for empty lines. Thus, I could squeeze lots of information on to a single page by using only **very** tiny (but still perceptible) separator lines between para-

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graphs. With other word processors, I had to resort to a different method: a small "space above" paragraph setting and **no** blank lines at all. I figured that out **at least** fifteen years ago. Yet it took a year of intermittent Scribus use before it occurred to me that the same trick might be useful there, too. For my July and August newsletters, I formatted all source word processor files with no blank lines, and set each paragraph's "space above" from .02 inch to .06 inch, as needed. (In rare instances, I might have to go smaller or larger; but values in that range worked almost every time).

My good old DOS desktop publishing programs always said to do as much of your work as possible in a separate word processor first. Even today, the Scribus Authors **agree** with that philosophy. They say; "Write out the text in a word processor or text editor. Spell check, double check grammar, etc." Scribus has a built-in "Story Editor", which can do a lot of amazing things (most of which I don't think I'm ever going to need); but it's not intuitively obvious, and it's **not** a full fledged word processor. Despite its misleading name, its main purpose is to fine-tune the way your text **looks**, not what it says. You should use it as little as possible, and only as the very **last** step. Because if you've already made changes using Story Editor, and then you make changes to your source word processor file and try to import them into Scribus, it's quite easy to **lose everything** you did using Story Editor.

Now, back to *The Last Amendment*, which (as I said before) took up pages 4 through 8. Those **five** pages translated into twenty linked text frames, plus one non-linked full-page-width text frame at the top to carry the title. Right away, I ran into a problem. As page 4 was originally laid out, my first paragraph didn't quite fill the top left text frame. There was room at the bottom for one more line. Now, if that was just the first line of the second paragraph, there wouldn't have been a problem. Unfortunately, it was a sub-heading (*The Next-To-Last Amendment*). Thus, the sub-heading was at the bottom of one column, and the first line of the following paragraph at the top of the next column. That's a no-no.

I could have just forced that sub-heading to "wrap" to the next frame; but that would have left a lot of white space at the bottom of the first. Not an ideal solution. Luckily, I could fix it instead by using some of that "wiggle room" I mentioned earlier. My quarter-inch "middle" bar doesn't **have** to set its center line **exactly** 5.5 inches from the top (and bottom) of the page. It can be shifted up or down slightly without unduly messing up my half page format. So I shortened the two top columns by raising their bottom edges by .2 inches each. That way, my first paragraph exactly filled the top left text frame, and that sub-heading became the first line of the top right text frame. Then, I moved the "middle" bar .2 inches upward, and lengthened

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the two bottom columns by raising their top edges .2 inches each. That "regularized" the page, and made it pretty difficult to distinguish from an unmodified page.

I had no other column transition problems, and my text **just happened** to end at the last line of the last frame on page 8! Well, of course that's **not** true. It actually went a few lines over. I had to lengthen three frames from 4.6 to 4.62 inches (to get their bottom lines to fit), and widen one frame from 3.6 to 3.61 inches (to take care of an ugly word wrap problem). I also had to edit my source word processor file to eliminate or re-arrange some words; but even so, it was amazingly close (especially for a first attempt). I could have shortened or lengthened the total text by decreasing or increasing the "space above" setting for **all** the paragraphs; but I didn't have to. I'd hit the optimal value the first time.

About the Constitution on page 9 was a re-write of a re-write. It was first used as part of the 2008 By-Laws Revision Committee's "final" report to the Board of Directors. Then, it was modified to precede the versions of the Constitution that were posted on the club website in November of 2008. Finally, it was redone again for use here. (Although it was, in fact, originally written by me, in my capacity as Chairman of said By-Laws Revision Committee; and I re-wrote it both times as well, I decided **not** to count it as one of my articles). Even with the elimination of the "Title + Continued" bar at the top, it just didn't **quite** fit. So the two top frames were lengthened by .03 inches each.

Normally, such a small change would have been imperceptible. However, the "middle" bar was then deleted and replaced with two black lines, one above and one below the following message: "Please note that the ACGNJ Constitution was not revised in May of 2009. (Only the By-Laws)." That combination was a bit more than twice as thick as the "middle" bar alone, so the two bottom frames each wound up decreasing in height from 4.6 to 4.3 inches. That was still within the allowable deviation. Therefore, the integrity of the half page format was **not** compromised.

The Constitution filled the two shortened frames on page 9 and three of the four frames on page 10. Even with its "space above" set to .06 inches, it just barely reached the bottom of its last frame. That left me with one empty frame on page 10. I filled it with one of my "filler" images, plus a farewell message; "Have a Wonderful Summer". Then, I created a "final draft" PDF (on June 29th, **way** behind schedule), and sent it to Barbara for her review . She got back to me that same day. Her only comment was that words printed on the black bars in white italic type were hard to read. She suggested that I either bold them or enlarge them. I tried bolding one, and it looked **much** better. So I bolded them all, then e-mailed my revised PDF file to the club Webmaster for posting on our website. However, I couldn't "rest on my laurels" for long. July had been the easy one. August, containing the By-Laws, was the "biggie".

August In Detail

My August 2009 issue started out very similar to July. Page 1 had different content, but was laid out the same way, so the same (positive) comments apply. Likewise for page 2. Again, page 3 just naturally split itself into two half pages. I didn't write an *About This Issue* piece for August, so *Brief SIG Information* moved up to the top spot (but **still** didn't count as an article). *The First Linux Distro* (my new offering on the bottom) was simply a compilation of information that I'd used before, so I didn't count it as an article, either.

I copied *Planning Meeting* on page 4 from the club website. I paraphrased it slightly, but that wasn't enough for it to count as an article written by me. As first laid out, it filled three of my regular frames, with only **one** single line wrapping to the top of the fourth frame. I could easily have tightened up the text a bit and moved that last line to the bottom of the lower left frame, thus leaving the lower right frame completely empty. Then, I could have filled that frame with my one remaining "filler" image, and closed out page 4; but what if I needed that "filler" image further down? My other option would be to shorten the lower left frame, thus wrapping lines over into the lower right frame until there was an equal amount of text in both side-by-side columns. When I tried that, I wound up with two inches of empty space at the bottom of the page. A relatively small area, but potentially usable to start something.

Here, we've hit another way that my "half page" format differs from old style desktop publishing. Traditionally, new articles were always started at the **top** of a page. Any empty space left at the bottom of a page was used for filler pieces or "continued" items. In my format, the next article starts **wherever** the previous article ends. A filler piece **can** be used if it's the best fit, but there's **none** of that "continued on (and/or from) page 276" stuff. **All** the articles are contiguous. Each complete article follows the last, in a "stream of consciousness" fashion. So, how would *About the By-Laws* fit if started in those last two inches at the bottom of page 4? To find out, I had to experiment.

Like *About the Constitution* in July, *About the By-Laws* was a re-write of a re-write, first from the report to the Board, then from the club website. At that point in time, my working file was seven pages long. As indicated above, four were filled (mostly), and three were blank. (That is, they were laid out in my half page format, but none of their text frames contained anything). Leaving two pages as empty "buffers", I imported *About the By-Laws* into page 7, where it just about filled all four of the text frames. That didn't help me in any way. If I started *About the By-Laws* on the bottom of page 4, I'd get almost exactly the same two inch bare space at the bottom of page 5; and if I started the By-Laws there, where would they end? To find out, I had to skip over *About the By-Laws* and do an experimental import of the By-Laws themselves.

I took a guess that the By-Laws wouldn't be likely to fill more than ten pages. So (leaving *About the By-Laws* on page 7 for the moment), I appended ten more formatted but otherwise blank pages to the end of my working file. Then, I linked together all **forty** text frames on my new pages (8 through 17). Finally, I set the default "space above" in my source document to .03 inches, and used "Get Text..." to import the By-Laws. They filled pages 8 to 14, and took up only about half of the upper left frame of page 15. I took another guess that I was likely to run into "sub-heading at the bottom" problems a few times, and that fixing them would make the text run longer; but it **wouldn't** make it more than another frame's worth longer. Thus, having started at the **top** of page 8, I'd likely wind up filling up a good portion of the two top frames on page 15, but would probably leave the two bottom frames completely empty. That wasn't good, because my only remaining "filler" image could barely fill **one** of those frames.

Therefore, I went back and re-imported *About the By-Laws*, this time starting at the **middle** of page 7. Then, I re-imported the By-Laws themselves, starting at the middle of page 8. I did this because I had decided to process these experimental pages as if they were my **real** pages. If my estimates were correct, they **would** be. I included page 7 due to the words "just about filled all four of the text frames" that I wrote two paragraphs ago. When I shortened the two top frames on page 8 until *About the By-Laws* filled them

exactly, I was able to move the "middle" bar **up** .35 inches. Since I needed .45 inches for a small additional across-the-full-page text frame for my By-Laws title, the two bottom frames on page eight each **still** wound up being .1 inches shorter than usual. This almost proved disastrous.

My plan was to start at the beginning and work my way down, frame by frame, fixing "sub-heading at the bottom" and any other problems as I came to them. I hadn't even started when I hit my first glitch, actually involving **two** sub-headings at the bottom. Both "ARTICLE II: PURPOSE OF ACGNJ" and "Section 2.1" appeared in the bottom of the lower left hand frame on page 8, while the first sentence of Section 2.1 had wrapped to the top of the lower right hand frame. Unfortunately, if I forced **both** of those sub-headings to wrap to the right hand frame also, I'd be left with a large, unsightly white space at the bottom left side of page 8. My only chance to avoid this would be if I could tighten up the text enough that the first sentence of Section 2.1 would appear **below** those two sub-headings, at the bottom of the lower left hand frame. I changed the "space above" settings from .03 to .01 inches for five of the six "date" lines. (The first "date" line, May 1976, being located at the very top of the frame, was **already** set to zero). I also changed two of the three "Section" sub-headings from .03 to .02 inches, and that finally did it.

So much for my "run longer" prediction. My first fix had made the entire By-Laws text run one line **shorter**; but I

knew that couldn't last. As I progressed downward, I fixed a few further sub-heading problems; and I used my "move the middle bar *down* a bit" trick three times, as well as other techniques. Anything I've described before I won't bother describing again. So that actually leaves only one more thing. Occasionally, my default frame size would be just a hair *too short* to allow another line of text to fit, thus leaving an irritating amount of white space visible at the bottom. Sometimes, I could lengthen that frame enough without causing "overlap" problems; but sometimes I *couldn't*. Nor could I "tighten up" the text in that frame enough to un-wrap the last line from the following frame. In those cases, I just had to live with that white space; but I *did* have a way to mitigate it. I could move the entire offending frame down a bit. Thus, the white space below the text would decrease, while the previously almost unnoticeable white space above the text would increase. At equilibrium, I'd have two matching white spaces above and below the frame, each only *half* as annoying.

When I finally reached page 15, I found that my estimates had been correct. I filled three of its frames completely, and had extended just seven more lines into the fourth frame. Unfortunately, that seventh line was a one-word "orphan"; and a short word at that ("only"). It wasn't alone, either. There were another *eight* single word "orphans" scattered throughout the By-Laws. What can I say? Since I *couldn't* legally edit the text of the By-Laws, there wasn't much I

could do about them. Anyway, I deleted the no longer needed empty pages 16 and 17. Then, I filled the rest of that fourth frame with my one remaining "filler" image, plus a "See you in September" message. That finished off page 15 nicely, and used up all of my "filler" material; but it *didn't* finish off the newsletter. I still had a *big* "hole" to fill: two inches at the bottom of page 4, all of empty pages 5 and 6, and the top half of page 7.

That brings us back to *Fun With Fonts*. Now, it just so happened that *Fun With Fonts* filled that hole exactly; but it didn't *have* to. I could have deleted one or both of those empty pages, or even added more pages. I just needed to find *something* that could start in two inches and end in a half page. So I looked through my collection of stuff. As I mentioned earlier, I found material I'd presented at our June 5, 2009 Main Meeting that I could recycle. So I filled the last two inches of page 4 with a .75 inch high, full page wide text frame (to hold my title and by-line), followed by two side by side 1.25 inch high, 3.6 inch wide text frames. (Together, those last two frames just managed to hold five introductory sentences, which said pretty much the same things as I'm saying here).

On page 5, I squeezed in four screen shots of various newsletter mastheads, plus six blocks of text that overlapped them. On page 6, three more mastheads with three more text blocks (the rest of my "re-runs") ran down *exactly* half of the page. Now, at this point, I *could* have made do. If I'd

added those three mastheads and text blocks to the top of page 7 instead (and simply deleted page 6), I'd have caused a .1 inch conflict with the "middle" bar; but that *would* have been fixable. However, as I indicated earlier, I wasn't satisfied. It just "needed more". So I added four images of ACGNJ logos to the bottom of page 6 (plus quite a bit of accompanying text), and more images (plus lots more text) to the top of page seven. *That* finished it. On July 29th, I sent my "final draft" copy to Barbara for her review. On July 30th, she advised me that I'd made an error of fact in *Fun With Fonts*. (I'd assumed something that turned out not to be true. I should have known better). Red faced, I fixed my mistake and e-mailed my revised PDF file to the club Webmaster on July 31st. We're not *quite* finished with *Fun With Fonts*, however. It's mentioned in *Appendix II: The Banner* and *Appendix III: A Contest*; but first:

Appendix I: Fan Mail

On July 3rd, I got an e-mail from Sol Libes, our club's founder, first President, and first newsletter editor too. I'm reproducing it here in its entirety (except that I've removed several blank lines to save space): "Hi Bob, Congratulations on a very nice looking, and very readable newsletter. I like the way you are formatting it. I enjoy reading the newsletter. I tried clicking on one of the web page links and it did work. However, the mailto link, to send you email, did not work. Thanks for your efforts. Sol". I was happy to have received such positive feedback from such an experienced source. I also appreciated his response to my *Bug*

Alert on page 1 of the July issue. All in all, I was (and still am) elated.

Appendix II: The Banner

I have two after-the-fact nits to pick about *Fun With Fonts*. The first is that I neglected to cite the source for my image of the club banner (which I then edited into Figure 8 on page 7) . Its filename is P6010001.JPG. Unfortunately, its complete URL is *seventy-five* characters long, so I can't print it here; but I *can* tell you how to get to it, if you're curious. First, go to the club website (*www.acgnj.org*). Then, from the links on the upper left side, click on "TCF Images". You'll be taken to a page called "ACGNJ Picture Gallery". There, click on "6107 [3 pictures]". Then, click on the first picture to expand it. You'll see our then Vice-President introducing that meeting's speaker. The banner is in the background.

My second nit is that I didn't do a *really* close comparison of the three sets of ACGNJ logo fonts that I reproduced. I've done so here (at least for the letters A and C, anyway). The first A and C were copied from the logo Barbara has featured on our newsletter cover since December of 1996, specifically from a file named acgnj-1.gif. That entire file's pixel count is 197 x 62, and its size is 0.93 KB. The second A and C were copied from the logo that heads up our website. Its filename is acgnj2.png, its pixel count is 445 x 145, and its size is 2.1 KB. (Its fonts were used on our club tee-shirts, too). The third A and C were copied from my edited banner image. It has no "official" name, but I call it

BANNER.JPG. Its pixel count is 354 x 114, and its size is 13.1 KB. I'll leave you to draw your own conclusions (if any).

Note that each A and C came from a different file type. When I constructed my combined file (using GIMP 2.6.6), I

saved it in all three formats. Each file has a pixel count of 1495 x 328, and each seems identical to my eye when displayed by the default GNOME image viewer (Eye of GNOME 2.26.1); but their file sizes are *very* different. The JPG file size is 31.6 KB, the GIF file size is 77.7 KB, and the PNG file size is 103.2 KB. I'll leave you to draw your own conclusions about this, too.

Appendix III: A Contest

I've got a prize, so let's have a contest. There was one additional thing I did to *Fun With Fonts* that I didn't mention above. Once you know about it, it's obvious; but if you *don't* know about it, it might be undetectable. The first person to correctly tell me what it is will win the prize. So what *is* the prize? It's a brand new, pristine, never been

worn TCF 1998 purple hat. Now, I can't *guarantee* that this is the last one ever. (Twice before, we thought that we'd given away the last one, but then another turned up). However, given all the closet cleaning we've been doing lately, there just *can't* be many more "nooks and crannies" left where another one could be hiding.

So good luck, everyone!

Appendix IV: What Next?

As far as newsletter production goes, I won't be doing another *regularly scheduled* issue until next July; but there's my *still* unfinished End-of-Year 2008 Supplement. (When completed, it will contain permanent reference copies of the December 2001 Constitution, the December 2001 and December 2008 By-Laws, and more. It's *so* far behind schedule that it keeps getting displaced by newer stuff that I've still got a chance of finishing on time). What's more, I've got another project that I began just for myself, but that other people might be interested in, too. Having passed fifty articles, I've been having a hard time locating stuff I've done in the past (for reference, etc). So I conceived the idea of combining all my previous articles into one searchable PDF file. I've been thinking of it as "The Best of Bob". If I can get it *and* the 2008 Supplement done by this coming December, maybe I could use it as the basis for an End-of-Year 200**9** Supplement. What do *you* think?

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Appendix V: A Lame Closing Joke

Back when I was describing my "sub-heading at the bottom" problem, I thought about using a small excerpt from the "reading of the faculty rules" section of Monty Python's "University of Woolamaloo" sketch as an example. Ultimately, I decided it might only confuse things further, so I *didn't* use it; but having thought of it, I don't want to just throw it away, either. So I'm including it here:

Rule Six

There is *!!!no!!!* Rule Six.

The "*no*" should be shouted and drawn out. Then, there should be a pause (to allow the audience to make up their own joke, possibly obscene) before saying "Rule Six".

Now, you might say; "OK, those lines might have been funny in the context of the original sketch, but what would make them funny here?" Well, we've actually got *two* such instances in our By-Laws. Section 4.3 originally said; "No individual can be elected to the same Executive office in ACGNJ for more than two consecutive terms." That was a good rule when we had a lot of potential candidates, and wanted to promote diversity. After 2001, with diminished membership, we just couldn't afford it anymore. Section 4.7.4 originally described the duties of the Recording Secretary. After 2001, those duties were merged into Section 4.7.3 (which had originally described the duties of the Corresponding Secretary). Thus, Section 4.7.3 would henceforth describe *all* the duties of our single combined

Secretary. Now, Sections 4.3 and 4.7.4 both just say; "(Deleted by amendment December 2001)."

What! You *don't* think that's funny? How about ironic? No? Sigh! There's just no pleasing some people. Anyway, see you next month. 💻

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. 💻

From The DealsGuy: July

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

*Consider This!

Bob Elgines, President and Editor of Colorado River Computer Club, writes an interesting monthly column that is carried by many editors in their newsletters. I loved his comment about the $29.97 he paid for 1.42 ounces of black ink. He says that in comparison to gas, it works out to $2700 per gallon and that perhaps somebody should start drilling for ink. If that wasn't in your newsletter, now you know about a possible new business venture. With this economy, I'd try anything.

*Help With Your Data Disk Cataloging

Nowadays, people may own hundreds of CD and DVD data disks. How do you find the necessary information on disks without endless inserting and ejecting disks? Quickly find the disk that has a needed file, photograph, music track, or movie clip SearchMyDiscs, a handy software application that helps people with a large CD and DVD collection .

First, individually insert every CD or DVD that needs to be indexed into your PC. The program automatically scans the disk, cataloging its contents. It will store the file structure of the disk, thumbnail images for photos and movies, EXIF tags for digital photographs, ID3 tags for MP3 tracks and many other file properties (video codec information, textual documents' content, etc.). The program is then ready for

use. Next time you need to find a certain program or photograph, simply enter the name of the file or other search parameter, like the name of a song, performer or album, digital camera model, etc., and SearchMyDiscs will show exactly what CD or DVD contains the desired data.

The new version 4.0 contains a new powerful report generator that can export reports on files to many popular file formats: PDF, XLS, RTF, HTML, Open Office, CSV, etc.

A free 30-day trial download of SearchMyDiscs 4.0 is available at *http://www.searchmydiscs.com/* . The cost of registering it is $29.95 US Dollars, but user group members get a 25% discount with coupon code (DKLS-TRG2).

System Requirements: A PC with Windows 95 / 98 / ME / NT4 / 2000 / XP

Download: *http://www.searchmydiscs.com/searchmydiscs-setup.exe*

Order Link: *http://www.searchmydiscs.com/order.shtml*

I'll have some more new product announcements on my Web site that didn't offer discounts. 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 enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click. Visit my Web site at *http://www.dealsguy.com*.

From The DealsGuy: August

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

I've been writing the DealGuy column for 14 years and have not missed a month, but its time I took a month off, so don't look for the column next month. I need a break and thanks in advance for the opportunity. I'm finding less and less to offer anyway so a break is probably in order.

A while back, I talked about the FACUG spring conference and the attendance of about 140, but I was unable to find out how many user groups were represented. I was able to take a look at the registration recently and it looks like they came from 39 user groups, but remember that there were also several APCUG officers there who listed their own users groups. I'm glad it was successful, but next year's FACUG conference will be really something to look forward to. I'm sure you will read about it, and it looks like the attendance for that one will set a record.

I'm working on an article about trade show setups, but here is something else to think about. When you walk through the entrance to a trade show, you probably don't pay much attention to that obscure security guard who stands in the background and is checking for badges as you walk by. You probably don't even consider that the person you are walking by sees much more than you realize. I can't say this about "all" the people checking badges, but it is mostly true of the more experienced guards you see. They usually look like they are casually checking for your badge, but

here is what really happens with an experienced security guard:

They actually take a mental snapshot of your badge and automatically read the name on it to see if the name matches the gender of the person wearing it (is it a male name if the person is a male), some shows they may look for other traits; they read the year to make sure the person is not using a last year's badge, and they check for color codes that might be on it to allow certain people in only on certain days (sometimes the day of the week is there, but usually only a color bar on the bottom). For some shows there might be other info on the badge. A good guard can also spot a phony badge made with a computer pretty easily because they get used to seeing the right badge. Yes, people try all kinds of tricks to get in free because some shows have very high registration fees.

They also must be diplomatic when they run into a belligerent attendee who doesn't want to be bothered going to registration to obtain a proper badge. Some of them are ready to punch you when you stop them. As you can imagine, diplomacy is a good thing to master. They usually do all this for somewhere around eight or nine dollars per hour, depending on what city you work in.

Since I don't have very good vision, I try to avoid entrance door positions, although I don't mind working at loading

docks where you mostly see the same people going in and out while working, and you get so you recognize them when you see them. Since most of those workers wear colored wristbands for ID, they hate to wear them on their arm so you must look on the wrists, a belt loop (with their shirt hanging over it), or other spots to find it. Often you must ask them to see it if it is not in plain sight. Some convention center employees don't like to wear badges, but again, you get to know them, rather than argue with them. I once worked an entrance to a pharmacist job interview area where I had to watch for an ampersand on the badge someplace. That was a tough one for me. One person somehow got an interview without paying the fee and we were all given the name to watch for; and one guard found that person, who was then interviewed by show management.

*Worried About A Web Site's Safety?

A popular warning product for dangerous Web sites is McAfee's "Site Advisor" *http://www.siteadvisor.com*. I've read a couple of reviews that were not all that complimentary, but have not tried it myself. Another one that I have not read about either way is Site Hound. When you get there, these products warn you if a Web site is safe to visit. Site Hound is offered by Fire Trust *http://www.firetrust.com*. There is a free version, and also a pay version with more features for $29.95. They also offer MailWasher if you want spam protection and it is a popular product with a one time price.

There used to be free updates for life, but it doesn't look like that applies any more. Do your homework if you are interested in either of these. User group member discounts are available for Firetrust products through APCUG at *http://www.apcug.net*. Your user group must be a member to have access to the Sharepoint page for that information.

*Ever Consider A Virtual Cover?

(This is their announcement, but edited)

Insofta Development has unveiled the newest version of Insofta Cover Commander, a tool providing the effective solution to quickly and easily create quality custom-designed three-dimensional virtual boxes for software, e-books, DVDs, manuals, CD-ROMs and screenshots. Version 3.1 delivers a host of improvements.

Enhancements in the latest version of Insofta Cover Commander include support for batch processing from the command line, providing a perfect solution for creating a large number of similar virtual boxes, books, and many more. This is essential for those who create covers and boxes for on-line shops, catalogs and other large projects. The program also allows saving animation in SWF, GIF and AVI format.

The program enables creation of sophisticated and modern cover designs with very few mouse clicks; streamlining workflow. The program allows comprehensive customiz-

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ation of background color and transparency, gradient, shadow and reflection; what's more, the settings can be saved and used later. All the features are delivered in multi-lingual user interface (English, German, French, Spanish, Japanese, Hungarian and Russian).

Insofta Cover Commander is compatible with Microsoft Windows 98, ME, NT, 2000, XP and Vista, and costs $48.30 for a single license, entitling a user to 1 year of free updates. Further information on the product, as well as its free trial version, is available from *www.insofta.com/cover-commander*. User group members get a 20% discount by entering the code ICC-RRDJ-DUG in the proper space.

Direct download link:
www.insofta.com/download/covercommandersetup.exe

Company website: *www.insofta.com*

*Problems?

A while back I mentioned the problem I had not being able to access the memory in my digital picture frame with either of my desktop machines, but I could with my new laptop. Nobody was able to tell me what was wrong, but Bob Balogh, a past president of the Boca Raton Computer Society *http://www.brcs.org*, sent me a suggestion for finding the answer *http://www.blackviper.com/* and I am sharing his advice with my readers who might have their own problems. I have not had the time to go there to research it yet, but hope to get it done soon. Bob's suggestion is below:

"The above is one of the best sites available for learning about your computer. The section on Windows Configurations, left hand side, is most helpful." Bob also writes a monthly help column, and has traveled to other user groups in his area to do presentations."

I read Bob's column in their newsletter, Boca Bits, and here is something he recommended for their members. Bob likes to keep a monthly calendar on his desktop. This enables him to see the entire month at a glance. The one he suggests also has an array of other features that lets you enter events that are upcoming, etc. It is called Rainlendar Lite, and it's free at *http://www.snapfiles.com/get//Rainlendar.html*.

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 enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click. Visit my Web site at *http://www.dealsguy.com*. 💻

Online Backup Services
There are Pros & Cons but They are Up & Coming

Ira Brickman (president (at) iconpcug.org), ICON PC User Group, Inc., New York (www.iconpcug.org)

The changing face of how we use our computers includes the latest concept: using programs and services directly from the Internet. Many of us, for example, have found it more convenient to access our email using a Web browser (a.k.a. "Webmail") instead of a dedicated client like Outlook Express. The Internet's evermore ubiquitous nature means that receiving email is as simple as finding an available computer with browser software. Backing up your hard drive using an online service is one of the up and coming online services. The advantages are:

- No need to buy backup software or purchase external USB drives or optical media to backup to.
- Not storing backups where the computer is located secures against fire, theft, and other risks.
- Like Webmail, the backups are available from any computer with an Internet connection & a browser.

As good as that sounds, some of the other considerations are:

- There are some costs usually involved.
- Backup privacy and security is dependent on a third party and transmitting your data over the Internet adds privacy and security risks.

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- You become dependent the backup service staying in business. If not, you are out of luck.
- It takes a lot longer to backup or restore than using a local hard drive.
- There is no imaging which means you are not backing up a picture of your hard drive, including your operating system installation. Rather you are backing up folders and files.

All in all, the pros certainly make trying online backup worthwhile. The cons, however, mean you have to judge how private the files are and how large your backups will be. And the risk of a service folding means you should be wary of using smaller, totally free backup services for anything very critical to you.

There are some well-known, reliable services which can be free to use, within certain limitations. Or for a small monthly fee, you can get all the pros and limit your risks.

If you want to use an online backup services, there are three commercial services you can explore and consider to start with. They are: Amazon S3/Jungle Disk, Mozy, and Carbonite. All three have similarities:

- They require that you download and install a desktop client to configure backups, manage restores.

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- Once your first backup is created, the client program then works in the background to backup of new and altered files.
- All three encrypt your data before transmission and store it in encrypted form on remote servers.
- None require you to restore from the original computer.
- You can also restore your data to a different computer.

If you search the Web, you will find an abundance of reviews about each of these services. There is much that has been positively written about Jungle Disk and Amazon's Simple Storage Service (Amazon S3). The S3 service is part of a package of Amazon services meant to be accessed through third party software. Jungle Disk is the leading program to do that. It "mounts" the online storage so that it seamlessly appears as another drive in your Windows Explorer. Jungle Disk can schedule automatic backups, but the mounted drive means you can drag and drop to manually backup files and folders And it allows for incremental backups.

This last is important because there are costs involved. Amazon currently charges 10 cents per Gigabyte per month for storage and another 17 cents per GB for the data transfer . Incremental backups mean the transfer costs are kept to a minimum after your initial backup.

JungleDisk costs $20 after a 30-day free trial. Amazon S3: *http://tinyurl.com/qx87a*

Jungle Disk: *http://www.jungledisk.com*

Mozy, at *http://mozy.com/*, on the other hand, can be free if you use the "MozyHome" alternative, limited to 2Gb of storage. But for $4.95 per month, Mozy offers unlimited backup of a single home computer. Though not as convenient as Jungle Disk, the MozyHome software makes backing up easy and has many backup options..

Carbonite, *http://www.carbonite.com/*, offers a yearly subscription for unlimited backup of a hard drive, starting at $49.95 per year, with lower costs for upfront payment of multi-year subscriptions. This makes it a little less expensive than Mozy per year. The Carbonite software might be a little easier to use than Mozy. Some reviewers found Casrbonite to be slower and the Carbonite Web site does contain a caution about speed.

With costs potentially less than the upfront cost of a hard drive, these backup services are at least worth a look for their convenience for computer users.

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There Is More to Music Than the iPod®

Mike Morris (twriterext (at) gmail.com), Front Range PC Users Group, CO (http://www.frpcug.org)

There is more to music — and more to life — than the iPod. I think I can prove that statement with the words that follow. Please don't misunderstand me. I admire the iPod as a successful product — a success technically and financially — even though I don't have one. However . . . .

I need to start my "proof" by saying that in previous articles that I have written for this newsletter, I made a claim to being an Old Analog Guy (as a reminder, the acronym = OAG and is pronounced "ogre"). It is with that persona that I bring this subject to your attention.

I just completed a catalog of nearly 300 old LP's that belonged to a family member who died last year. And when I say old, I mean some of those LP's have release dates more than 50 years old. Some of the recordings are much older than that. There are many memorable, and even historic, performances recorded on those albums.

A small part of that music has been re-released on CDs. But there is much of that music — almost all Jazz — that you will not currently find in any digital format. So put down your iPod (or one of its imitators) and please listen to what I have to say.

I decided to create a database for this catalog using Microsoft Access®. One significant issue, as you might expect, is just how much information to include in the database. This database is for family use — not for radio station or other broadcast use. I did, however, want to make a record (no pun intended) of whatever information was necessary to properly document the collection. The most significant decision was related to the track (song) names, sequence and times on each side of each LP. Clearly, if I needed to document that information, both the data entry task and complexity of the database were going to be much higher. If the average number of tracks per side is 4 (it is probably higher), and I wanted to include all that information, then I was faced with a data entry task of 4 x 2 x 300 = 2400 entries (plus all the other information I wanted to include).

"No big deal" you say — there are many much much larger databases in the world. You are correct. But remember, I am an OAG (please correctly pronounce that acronym). Therefore I was looking for an "easy" way to complete this task. Credit is due to Ken Campbell of radio station KRFC (more on that in a moment), a local public radio station, for a solution. Ken told me about an online music database called allmusic.com (http://www.allmusic.com). It turns out there are many online music databases (a Google® search turned up more than 68,000, using the phrase "online music database"). The allmusic.com database was the best for my catalog project for the following reasons:

1. A successful search for an artist will provide an Overview, a Biography, a Discography (a list of all albums by the artist known to the database, with title, date and label), Songs, Credits, and Charts and Awards.

2. From the discography, one can click on an album and get information (usually) on the album tracks (including times), composer(s), recording date(s), release date, label, format (LP or CD), the label's catalog number, and, for some albums, a review of the album.

3. The search options include artist/group, album, song, classical work.

4. There is substantially more information about the Jazz genre that just a list of names and dates. For example, on the Jazz "home page," there are a number of "Related Essays" on Jazz, including "A Brief History of Jazz."

For a project such as the cataloging of an existing music collection, with LP's that are up to 50 years old, this database is the best choice by far of all of the databases examined or considered. It is the equivalent of an encyclopedia, and the functionality makes searching easy, with related data presented on a single page. The ability to link from a list of albums (discography) to a single album (or CD reissue) provides very efficient searching for a project of this type. That is not to say that it is error free. There are albums not included in the database — the web site makes no claim that it contains every album ever released. There are also tracks missing from some albums (or the

track order in the database doesn't match the order on the disk). An album may be in the database, but not in the artist's discography. And, there are numerous problems with release and recording dates. Still, the "pros" far outweigh the "cons."

There is a feature offered by this web site that is unique. Each page (any of the choices listed in item 1 above) has a "Corrections to this entry?" option, allowing the user to submit corrections. Those corrections are then researched for confirmation (if the web site statement is correct) before they are added to the database. That feature was used extensively during the research for this music cataloging project — although not every error or missing item was submitted.

For my project, the search by artist was the most effective. If an album was not listed in the artist's discography, a search by album was the alternate choice. Although the database has many very early jazz albums, there were a few albums in the collection, both old and new — or at least "newer"— by well-known artists that were missing from the allmusic database. So, although not perfect, the allmusic database is an excellent research tool, and you don't need the iTunes media player (or any other media player) to use it.

The database is not limited to research, however. You can listen to short sound bytes from some tracks, and there are

links that allow you to buy selected tracks or albums (correction – CDs).

OK, so your iPod and the iTunes media player are great for listening to (and buying) current and even "relatively" old music. But the iTunes media player is not going to help you — to same extent as the allmusic database will — find classic old Jazz performances (and perhaps classic performances from other genres). And, you must have the iTunes media player installed on your computer before you can do any searching with it.

You may be wondering why I am talking about online databases and why I consider a good online database important to my "proof." Yes, there is a relationship. But before I offer the conclusion, I have several comments on other databases.

Another online database used rarely was Gracenote®, a wholly owned subsidiary of Sony Corporation of America. Gracenote is used "…for digital media recognition of CDs, digital music files, and streaming audio. With the most comprehensive database of music information in the world, the Gracenote Media Database contains information for more than 80 million tracks and 6 million CDs…." This database is normally linked to media players, such as Winamp©, to automatically identify music on a CD or from a download. It provides album title (and, in some cases, an image of the album cover), and track names — if you con-

nect through a media player (or other audio/video equipment with the enabling software installed that is connected to the internet).

If you connect to Gracenote directly from a browser (*http://www.gracenote.com/*), the search options are artists, albums, tracks. A successful search on an artist returns a list of albums (a lot less than the allmusic database) released by that artist that are known to the database. It is important to note that the quantity information in the Gracenote advertisement makes an explicit reference to CDs. The album information is similar to that in the allmusic database, except that there are no track times. There are, however, links to the lyrics of some tracks — for those songs that have them. Also the "Buy" buttons are much more prevalent, and much more obvious in the Gracenote database, compared to the allmusic database.

Another online database examined briefly was Rhapsody®, *http://www.rhapsody.com/home.html*, a service provided by RealNetworks.com, better known for its Real® media player. The company claims to provide "Technology and services that help people enjoy digital entertainment whenever and wherever they want."

Connect to the Rhapsody website and the first thing you will notice are the annoying animated ads. Get beyond that and the search options are artist, keyword, track, album, composer, video, lyrics, and playlist. If a search for an al-

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bum is successful, you can, for most albums, get track information by clicking on the album image — but that track information (no times) is very probably going to be from a more current CD release, not from the original LP, depending on how old that original LP is and how popular the album was. However, there is nowhere near the same level of information available from this database, compared to the allmusic database. The Rhapsody database is organized for listening to (or buying) music that is already known to the user, either by song name or by artist (in my opinion). It is not an effective research tool for finding information on old LP's.

It is not necessary to have the Real player installed in order to search the Rhapsody database.

Now listen up everyone! Here is my reason for talking about music databases:

There is some great old music out there! In all genres. Please don't get so comfortable with your iPod that you ignore that music. Especially when you have a resource such as the allmusic online database to help you identify it, catalog it, find reviews on it and find some history of it.

I suspect that many of you reading this article (I hope there are many readers) have some of that "great old music" sitting on your shelves or in your cabinets. Or perhaps stored away somewhere. If so, "unstore" it. You will, I am certain, enjoy that music, especially with the added information available from the allmusic database.

And that is what I mean when I say "There Is More to Music than the iPod."

Here is the additional information I promised on radio station KRFC: Front Range PC Users Group (FRPCUG) has a partnership with KRFC, 88.9 FM in Fort Collins, CO. KRFC provides "Community powered music, news and entertainment." For more information, connect to http://krfcfm.org/. FRPCUG provides computer maintenance help to KRFC, and, in return, KRFC helps expand the knowledge of FRPCUG activities within the local community. An internet audio stream is available from the KRFC web site.

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What's in Your Wallet?

S. Jack Lewtschuk (Blacklion (at) royal.net) , Monterey Bay Users Group (www.mbug.org)

Credit Cards

While two credit cards might act and look alike, levels of consumer protection that each type of credit card provides can be different. Under federal law, if someone steals your credit card you're only responsible to pay the first $50 of unauthorized charges. However, if you notify the credit card issuer before a thief is able to make any charges, you may be free from all liability. If the credit card is not physically present when an unauthorized or fraudulent purchase is made (such as over the Internet), you're also free from liability for those charges.

MasterCard and Visa offer zero-liability protection where you don't have to pay any charges if someone uses your credit card to make an unauthorized purchase. Many credit cards offer additional benefits and supply a yearly summary of your spending.

Debit Cards

A debit card is a direct key to your bank account. The protection offered for debit card fraud is similar to credit cards but with a few exceptions. For example, your liability under federal law is limited to $50, the same as for a credit card, but only if you notify the issuer within two business days of discovering the card's loss or theft. Your liability for debit card fraud can jump up to $500 if you don't report the loss or theft within that time.

Debit cards provide a direct pass to you bank account. You may also face cash flow problems and bounced-check fees when thieves clean out your bank accounts.

If you are the type of person who gives a passing glance to your monthly bank statement, you could be totally liable for any fraudulent debit card charges if you wait 60 days or more from the time your statement is mailed.

Visa and MasterCard zero-liability protection applies to your debit card with them but only for transactions that do not involve the use of your PIN (personal identification number).

Additional protection against fraudulent use of your credit or debit cards may be available through your homeowner's or renter's insurance. Check your policy or with your agent for more information about your coverage.

You should avoid using your debit card for any online purchase or for things which are expensive. Why? The main reason is that it is much easier to dispute a charge when you use your credit card. If the gold-plated, limited-edition, hip-swinging Elvis wall clock arrives broken, your credit card company will remove the charge until the problem is resolved. With your debit card you are stuck dealing with the merchant directly to resolve any problems with a purchase. Don't fall for rumors about not signing your

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cards—all banks insist that you are much safer signing your cards immediately upon receiving them.

Just to make sure that you have all the necessary information should you become a victim of stolen or lost cards and other important documents:

1. Empty your wallet.

2. Place all your credit/debit cards and important documents on your scanner or copying machine.

3. Make copies of your cards, front and back.

4. Place the copy in a safe place: a safety deposit box, fire safe, or even your refrigerator is better than a desk drawer (in case of fire, the chances for survival of contents in your refrigerator are pretty good).

5. Check your wallet periodically. Thieves often steal just one credit card to make sure that you don't notice it's gone. By the time you notice, it's too late.

NOTE: When you give your card to a person to pay a bill, make sure that when you get it back it's your card and not an expired card belonging to someone else!

One last precaution: NEVER carry your Social Security card around with you.

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The Third Generation of USB

S. Jack Lewtschuk (Blacklion (at) royal.net) , Monterey Bay Users Group (www.mbug.org)

Many of you recall the old USB (Universal Serial Bus) 1.1. Its time passed when the much faster USB 2.0 was invented—it's the USB we all use now to connect our peripherals (mouses, printers, flash drives, etc.).

Last November we were given some good news:

• Good news #1: by 2010 we will be able to buy USB 3.0.

• Good news #2: it will be 10 times faster than USB 2.0 and it will feature improved power efficiency.

• Good news #3: USB 3.0 will be backwards compatible with USB 2.0 and 1.1 devices, which means that we will have time to upgrade our peripheral devices when we are ready.

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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.
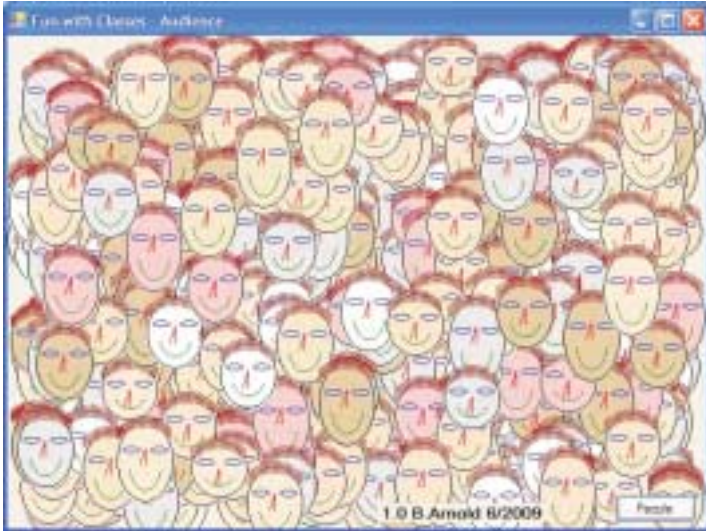
June: "**Inheritance".** Object Oriented Programming (OOP) languages like C++ have special characteristics. Two very important ones are "Inheritance" and "Polymorphism". We concentrated on a program that uses the first of these, Inheritance. A simple example that demonstrates the feature was presented. While the program is simple, the application of the concept cannot be underestimated. As can be seen in the above graphic, the program creates hundreds of images in only a second. These images can be dealt with as high level objects with all of the details hidden, or they can be dissected by the programmer down to the finest detail. Both options are available. The same concept can apply to an automobile database as to a cartoon face.

Our *download site* has code and programs from most meetings.

Our next meeting September 15.

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 September 18.

Web Dev

Evan Willliams (ewilliams@collaboron.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.

Our next meeting September 9.

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.

September 8 : Subject to be announced.

Main Meeting

Mike Redlich (mike@redlich.net)

September 4: No meeting this month due to Labor Day holiday.

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: September 10.

Hardware Activity
Mike Reagan (hardware@acgnj.org)

This group is dedicated to repairing, refurbishing and/or re-cycling older computers.

On *May 28th*, ten people attended the first meeting of the ACGNJ Hardware Activity; showing that there is, in fact, still a market for this type of event. One guy even came all the way from the Bronx! Although we did look at some of the older equipment stored in the back room, most of our time was spent in "random access": talking about past experiences and planning for the future. Hopefully, we can establish a viable long-term schedule of projects, and keep the interest of those who attended this inaugural meeting.

Our next meeting September 24.

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 June 15.▱

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 as well. We meet on the first Monday of the month at the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad. See the web page for directions and more information. *Our next meeting September 7.* ▱

NJ Gamers
Gregg McCarthy (greggmajestic@gmail.com)

http://www.NJGamers.com

www.lanparty.com

The next Friday Night Frag will be September 11, 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!▱

Broadsides (Tips & Tricks)
Ron Broadhurst (shiron (at) cfl.rr.com), Space Coast PC Users Group, FL (www.scpcug.com)

Have Windows Remind You About Updates

Click Remind Me Later in the Automatic Updates dialog box before you download or install the update.

In the Reminder dialog box, you can specify the amount of time Windows should wait before reminding you.

If the reminder is for downloading, Windows reminds you only when you are connected to the Internet.

If the reminder is for installing, Windows reminds you according to the schedule that you specify.

Customize the Start Menu

The Start menu gets more real estate in XP than in previous versions, and it's more customizable. To make the Start menu display only the applications you want, rather than the default determined by Microsoft:

Right-click in an empty section of the Start menu's left column.

Select Properties > Start Menu > Customize. Here you'll find a list of your most frequently used programs. (XP keeps track of what you use and what you don't, then updates this list dynamically).

Don't want your boss to know that Pinball, Solitaire and Quake all make your list?

Go to the General tab, click Clear List, and set the counter to zero.

Add Familiar Icons Back to Your Desktop

It's the case of the missing icons. Many of you may be wondering where all the icons from your desktop are in Windows XP? You can place at least My Computer, My Network Places and My Documents on the desktop.

Right-click on the desktop and then click Properties.

Click the Desktop tab and then click on Customize Desktop.

Put a check mark in the box next to My Document, My Computer, My Network Places or Internet Explorer, to add those familiar icons to your desktop.

How to Find Your IP Address in Windows XP

Start and click Run

Type "cmd" (without quotes) and hit enter

Once the box opens type "ipconfig /all" (without quotes) and hit enter.

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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	STUDENT	SENIOR CITIZEN (Over 65)
1 Year	$25	$10	$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. Deadline: 1st of preceding month. (For example, April

Member of The Association of 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*.
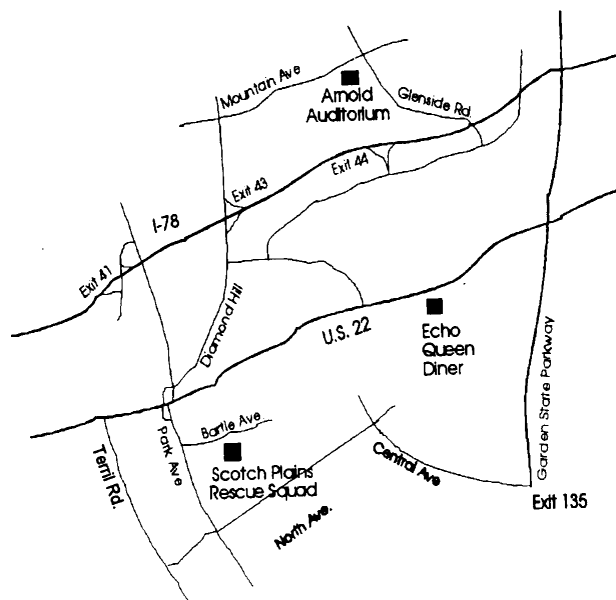
Directions to Meetings at Scotch Plains Rescue Squad, 1916 Bartle Ave., Scotch Plains NJ

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.

XP Utilities

Warner Mach (machw (at) att.net), Southeast Michigan Computer Organization

I have discovered that Windows XP is chock full of various utilities to solve various kinds of problems. Some of the utilities that I have occasion to use in recent months:

Windows Task Manager: You bring up the Windows Task Manager by holding down cntl-alt-delete. Some of the useful features are: (a) Go to the applications tab. This shows the running tasks and is useful for ending a task that refuses to go away. (b) Go to process tab. This shows all the miscellaneous tasks in the system and shows the CPU time that each is using. This can frequently be useful when you are not sure what the system is doing. (c) Go to performance tab. This shows the use of resources. Especially useful is the dynamic graph of CPU usage.

Event Viewer: The Event Viewer has a log of recent events, including events at power up and power down. This was of value to me when I was attempting to learn about certain messages that were appearing at power down time. Under the 'application' and 'system' tabs the logs are listed. To get more detailed information on a particular problem, double-click on the 'type' portion of a particular entry. This will give some keyword search hints that can be typed into Google. You bring up the Event Viewer by going to start=>run and typing 'Eventvwr.msc' into the box => OK.

System Configuration Utility: The tab that was useful to me was the 'startup' tab. These are tasks that automatically come up at startup. By unchecking groups of entries (and saying 'apply' and then rebooting) I was able to zero in on one particular entry that was causing a problem. You bring up the System Configuration Utility by going to start=>run and typing 'msconfig' into the box => OK.

Check Disk: This utility checks the space usage on the disk. It also checks the control block chains to be sure that they are correct. Go to start=>all programs=>accessories=>command prompt and type in 'chkdsk.' If the program detects bad command chains and you want to correct the situation then type in 'chkdsk /F' . This command may require a reboot during which it runs stand-alone.

Useful Resources: There is a useful list of utilities, with examples and explanations at: *http://tinyurl.com/9um8or*. There is also information about the Microsoft '906569' update at: *http://support.microsoft.com/kb/906569*. This update "…adds the tools tab to the System Configuration Utilities in Windows XP Service pack 2." But even if you don't want to do this, there is a list of useful utilities with an explanation of their function.

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ACGNJ MEETINGS

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

Tuesday, September 1
7 P.M. - Board of Directors meeting.

Friday, September 4
8 P.M. - Main Meeting, Mike Redlich (*mike@redlich.net*).
Meeting cancelled due to holiday.

Monday, September 7
8 P.M. - Lunics, Andreas Meyer (*lunics@acgnj.org*)

Tuesday, September 8
7:30 P.M. - Java, Mike Redlich (*mike@redlich.net*)
908-246-0410.

Wednesday, September 9
7 P.M. - WebDev SIG, Evan Williams
(*ewilliams@collaboron.com*)

Thursday, September 10
8 P.M. - Investing, Jim Cooper (*jim@thecoopers.org*).

Friday, September 11
6 P.M. to 5 A.M.- NJ Gamers. Gregg McCarthy
(*greggmc@optonline.net*), 732-721-6507. Break 8 to 10 P.M.

Monday, September 14
8 P.M. - Layman's Forum, Matt Skoda (*som359@aol.com*),
908-359-8842. No meetings in July or August.

Tuesday, September 15
7:30 P.M. - C/C++ Users, Bruce Arnold (*barnold@ieee.org*),
908-735-7898

Friday, September 18
8 P.M. - Window Pains, John Raff (*john@jraff.com*).

Monday, September 21
7 P.M. - Firefox Activity, David McRitchie
(*firefox@acgnj.org*)

Thursday, September 24
8 P.M. - Hardware, Mike Reagan (*hardware@acgnj.org*)

Tuesday, September 29
7 P.M. - Board of Directors meeting.

Monday, October 5
8 P.M. - Lunics, Andreas Meyer (*lunics@acgnj.org*) ⌨

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