Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey NEWS

What Is ACGNJ?

Walter DeGroot

You may be reading this while you walk thru the fleamarket at this year's Trenton Computer Festival, you may be waiting for a seminar to begin, or you may be watching all the volunteers in their TCF hats. Are you wondering─ What is this ACGNJ? Is it a company? Is it like those promoters that put on computer shows and sales? Just what is it?

ACGNJ is people, all kinds of people. Not just computer experts, but people of all levels of expertise who are interested in computers. From somone who just uses a wordprocessor at work to the professional who manages Internet services at At&T to the housewife who uses one to balance her checkbook. We are children, teens, students, and senior citizens, and some of us had to build (not just assemble) our first computer and then write the software to operate it.

ACGNJ has over two hundred meetings a year. We have SIGS (special interest groups) for people involved in all kinds of computer activity. Before ACGNJ was founded, over 22 years ago, the only computer people were the ones who ran the big ones that occupied large rooms and larger air conditioners. Soon a few pioneers built their own computers from scrounged electronic parts. Those pioneers started ACGNJ so they could help each other solve problems (and celebrate together when they found a solution).

Much later, when the Commodore, Apple and then IBM PC were designed and sold, the rest of us could have computers. People needed answers to all the questions that came up, and ACGNJ was there to help. Sub-groups were formed so that those who had similar interests could meet and discuss common interests and common problems.

By pooling information and sharing solutions, by people helping and showing others how things could be done, by taking the beginners by the hand and leading them toward computer literacy, by showing the non-computer professional how a computer could help, we all become more knowledgeable.

Are you frustrated because your computer doesn't do what you want it to do? Don't give up on it --

the ACGNJ and the other computer groups that sponsor TCF, are available to help, and there's no charge!

http://www.acgnj.org

Founded 1975

In This Issue

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President	Evan Williams	(908) 359-8070	Director Emeritus	Sol Libes	(609) 520-9024
Vice President	Frank Warren	(908) 756-1681	Through 2006	Bill Farrell	(732) 572-3481
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C Languages	Bruce Arnold	(908) 735-7898		Norm Wiss	
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Investing	Norman Wiss		APCUG Rep.	Frank Warren	(908) 756-1681
Java	Michael Redlich	(908) 537-4915	Facilities	John Raff	(973) 560-9070
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MCP	Gregg McCarthy		Newsletter	— open —	
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VBA & Excel	James Ditaranto	(201) 986-1104	Vendor Liaison	Bill Farrell	(732) 572-3481
Window Pains	John Raff	(973) 560-9070	Webmaster	John Raff	(973) 560-9070

ACGNJ News

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

Publisher

Associate Editor
Bill Farrell
(732) 572-3481
wfarr18124@aol.com

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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?

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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.

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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.htm*).

Bruce Arnold	barnold@blast.net
Mike Barlow	barlowm@bright-ideas.com
Barbara DeGroot	bdegroot@ptd.net
James Ditaranto	ExcelVBA@hotmail.com
Mark Douches	pcproblems@pobox.com
Rick Elbanna	rick@nobella.com
Bill Farrell	wfarr18124@aol.com
Manuel Goyenechea	goya@servertec.com
Sheldon Koepf	sheldonk@intac.com
Sol Libes	sol@libes.com
Malthi Masurekar	masureka@umdnj.edu
Gregg McCarthy	greggmc@optonline.net
Andreas Meyer	lunics@acgnj.org
Arnold Milstein	mrflark@yahoo.com
Jim O'Keefe	okeefejim@yahoo.com
John Raff	jraff2@optonline.net
Lela Rames	lrames@att.net
Mike Redlich	mike@redlich.net
Matt Skoda	som359@aol.com
Keith Sproul	ksproul@noc.rutgers.edu
Lenny Thomas	lennythomas@technologist.com
Scott Vincent	scottvin@optonline.net
Frank Warren	kb4cyc@webwarren.com
Evan Williams	nhpressgo@blast.net

Paranoid Computing Revisited

Robert Hawes (r_d_hawes@hotmail.com), ACGNJ

Just about a year ago, I made a discovery — a way to surf the Net without ever having to worry about viruses, trojans, spyware, or **anything** else. First, I removed all the hard drives from my computer. Then, I used the SimplyMEPIS 3.3 Live CD to boot Linux from my DVD-ROM drive, and accessed the Web through my DSL router. Later, I successfully downloaded files to a single empty hard drive that I put back in. (For complete details, see "*Paranoid Computing: An Introduction*" in last May's issue). The lesson I learned was that **a properly designed operating system can be completely read-only.** (Of course, that bloated monstrosity Windows XP need not apply).

 Recently, I read (in Jerry Pournelle's column in the February 2006 issue of Dr. Dobb's Journal) about a new product called the "U3 Smart Drive". I went to their Web Site (*www.u3.com*) to get further details, but they said there pretty much the same thing as Jerry said in his article: You load your data, and the programs it takes to use that data (supposedly your usual software, not stuff you have to get from them) onto one of their thumb drives. Then, you plug that drive into another computer's USB port and those programs instantly run there, with **no** installation. Unplug the drive and **all** your stuff vanishes from that computer, leaving **no** trace behind. Just like in the good old DOS days — no complex installers or removers required. So much for the registry. Now, this particular product works on Windows XP and 2000 computers only. They've got a MAC version in the works, but seemingly have no plans for Linux or UNIX. It really doesn't matter. The hard part has always been separating what can be done from what can't be done. They did that (and apparently it took a lot of hard work indeed). If this impressive and useful technology can work with XP, it'll work with anything. If they don't do a Linux version soon, somebody else will. Look at the laser. It took a lot of time and expense to get the first one to work, but these days, you can make a laser out of just about anything.

Considering all the writing-to-disk that Windows does as it runs, it's entirely possible that the U3 software does some writing to the host computer's hard drive as well, but it doesn't **have** to. Since the U3 software only becomes resident after the computer has been turned on, and (in a proper shut-down) has already been removed before the computer is turned off, no non-volatile storage is required. If it's not designed to reside completely in memory now, it **will be** one day. This technology means that any program, no matter how complex, can work with a read-only operating system. Not only that, but it strongly suggests that all programs can be made read-only as well (except maybe for one small INI type file each). So all we really need hard drives for is data. And our data files are getting huge.

I've said this before; given the choice, I'd **never** store **any** data files in the same partition as the operating system. There a lot of things I dislike about Microsoft, but I think one of the worst ideas they ever had was putting that "My Documents" directory on the C: drive. In the Microsoft model, program and data files are hopelessly intermixed. Have you seen where Outlook Express stores E-mail files? **Six** directory levels deep under C:\Windows. They make it impossible to back up the data and operating system separately, as would be the sensible thing to do.

Last May, I imagined a "firmdrive". Externally, it was the same size and had the same connections as an IDE hard disk, so it wouldn't require any change in computer hardware design. Internally, it had no moving parts. Just chips. Once it was set up, it could be made read-only. Maybe with a hardware switch, so that no hacker, no matter how ingenious, could **ever** create a virus that can write to it unless **you** switched it back first. As for our increasingly large data files, they could be stored on our increasingly large hard drives. Or stick memory.

The U3 software brings us a giant step closer to that ideal. ⌐

In addition, we found friends with whom we could share experiences. We could find out what to buy and what not to buy. AND we could enjoy computers as a hobby and leisure time activity if that was our goal.

ACGNJ is people helping people and people sharing computer experience and knowledge. ACGNJ is committed to computer education.

I have only been involved with computers for 14 years. This makes me sort of a "new kid on the block" because I came on board after the IBM PC revolution. I missed the early years but I have enjoyed talking to some of the group's founders who were there in the beginning. In a way, I am glad that I

missed the early years. Things are a lot easier now. Computers are less expensive and they do a lot more.

One thing that is not changed is the number of questions people ask and the hunger for answers.

ACGNJ, and the other computer groups who sponsor TCF, are in existence to answer this need for knowledge and understanding. After you buy a computer, the members, men and women like yourself, are there to support you while you are learning. Their hope is that you will be able to help others in the same way when you have become "the expert". We invite you join or visit some of the 200+ meetings we hold every year. ⌐

Hard Disk Disasters

Dick Maybach (N2nd@att.net), Brookdale Computer User Group, http://www.bcug.com/

Hard disk failure is the most serious PC problem, because it jeopardizes all your data. Even if everything else in your PC dies, if your hard disk is good, you can just move it to a new machine and be back in business as though nothing had happened.

The first problem is to recognize hard disk failure. Look for one or more of the following symptoms.

A squealing or clicking noise – you will have to open your system case to find where the noise is coming from. Diskette and CD-ROM drives and fans can produce similar noises.

A longer than usual time to boot up.

A longer than usual time to open a folder or file.

Spontaneous file or folder name changes.

Frequent error messages.

Missing or corrupted files or folders.

Frequent "blue screens of death".

If these begin to appear, immediately copy your data files (most likely your *My Documents* folder) to another device, preferably one with removable media, such as a CD-ROM or a DVD. Do not turn off your PC and do not spend time trying to diagnose the problem before saving your data. Every second you delay increases the likelihood that more data will be lost.

Clearly, the best defense is to back up your data before you have a problem. However, few people do this, and even if you do, it may have been some time since your last backup.

If your hard disk fails before you can save your data, all is not lost. If your data is very valuable, for example if it's customer data, you can send your disk to a commercial firm that specializes in data recovery. This service will cost from several hundred to several thousand dollars, but usually there is no fee unless they are at least partially successful. If you decide to do this, shut of your PC immediately and contact the firm for instructions. If your data is worth less than this amount, there are two things you can try that may work.

Remove the hard drive from the system unit and give it a light tap by holding a screwdriver by its blade and tapping the unit with the handle. Reinstall the hard drive and reboot.

Remove the drive and place it in a freezer for several minutes, until it is cold to the touch. Reinstall and reboot.

If either of these works, move your data to a safe place immediately.

If you have only a partial disk failure, save as much data as you can; then try the following.

Restart your PC, but before Windows boots get into the BIOS setup utility. If you watch the screen carefully, you should see directions on how to do this. Often you will press F2 or F10. Look for an area called Utilities or something similar and run any drive diagnostics available.

Run CHKDSK. (Click on *Start*, then on *Run…*, and at the prompt type "chkdsk x: /r", where x: is the drive in difficulty. If c: is problem drive, you will probably see a message that chkdsk can't check the drive now, but will offer to check it the next time you restart. Answer "y" and reboot.

Run diagnostics supplied by your drive manufacturer, or if you don't have one, use Western Digital's Data Lifeguard Diagnostics, available free from . Versions are available for both Windows and DOS.

You can take some simple steps to prolong the life of all your PC components.

Keep the system unit clean, especially if it sits on the floor. Once every month or two open the system case and remove any dust and debris with a vacuum. I prefer this to compressed air, which just moves the dirt to a new resting place.

Don't move your PC while it's operating; especially, don't jar it.

Use a power surge protector or preferably an uninterruptible power supply (UPS). The latter are widely available for $100 or so. Besides reducing stress on your components, one of these will save your data if the power fails. I always had a UPS at work, and every so often I would see the lights blink and hear streams of profanity from other offices whose occupants did not have one.

Modern PC components are quite reliable, and the chances are that you will replace your computer before anything fails. However, you should have a plan in case there is a problem. Similarly, the chances are that you will replace your car without ever having an accident yet you still wear a seatbelt, and carry insurance.

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Identity Theft Phishing Scams Abound

Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, TX; Radio & TV Show Host

I have been busy compiling information so I can complete my 1040 for this year. I have also been actively searching for bargains on EBay, typically paying for my purchases utilizing my PayPal account. I frequently use the online bill paying service offered by my credit union. Much to my chagrin, according to a series of emails I received, my EBay account is being suspended, as well as my PayPal account, or somehow I added another email address to my PayPal account that I did not recognize.

I did receive some good news by email from tax-refunds@irs.gov; I have an unclaimed refund at the IRS! Here is what that good news email says: "Subject: Refund notice; You filed your tax return and you're expecting a refund. You have just one question and you want the answer now - Where's My Refund? Access this secure Web site to find out if the IRS received your return and whether your refund was processed and sent to you.**New program enhancements** allow you to begin a refund trace online if you have not received your check within 28 days from the original IRS mailing date. Some of you will also be able to correct or change your mailing address within this application if your check was returned to us as undelivered by the U.S. Postal Service. "Where's My Refund?" will prompt you when these features are available for your situation. To get to your refund status, you'll need to provide the following information as shown on your return: * Your first and last name * Your Social Security Number (or IRS Individual Taxpayer Identification Number) * Your Credit Card Information (for the successful complete <sic> of the process)." It seemed too good to be true; all I needed to do was to connect to the government website listed in the email, GovBenefits.gov, enter my name, social security number, email address, credit card number and expiration date, CVV2 security code on the back of my credit card, and my ATM PIN number, and within 28 days an unexpected $571 tax refund will be deposited to my account. I think that is just wonderful.

I am very concerned that my EBay privileges may be compromised, as there have been some discrepancies in my EBay account, so claimed an email I received from EBay. All I need to do to is verify and reactivate my EBay account by clicking on the link in the email, entering my username and password, and then verifying my identity with either my PayPal address or password, or reentering my credit card number, security code, and expiration date. That is quick and simple, so I will do it to preserve my EBay account.

I buy a lot of "stuff" on EBay, and pay for it from my PayPal account. I was shocked when I received that email from PayPal verifying that I had added another email address to my PayPal account. I did not recognize that email address, so I clicked on the PayPal link in the email, and entered my PayPal email address, password, credit card number, expiration date, and security code. Now that I have verified my identity to PayPal, I can safely remove that unknown email address from my PayPal account.

In another recent email from the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA), I was utterly shocked to learn that my credit union account and ATM card would be suspended within five days due to suspicious activity unless I connected to the website listed and confirmed my identity, and reauthorized my account. In a panic, I immediately did so, entering my account number, ATM card number, PIN number, and the routing number from one of my checks. A reassuring "Thank You" from the website relieved me of the anxiety I had about my credit union account, and now I feel better.

All of the emails above are real, but my responses to those emails are not. These types of emails present a very real and growing threat to our financial privacy and security. They are representative of a rapidly growing and dangerous trend of "phishing", a popular method of identity theft. By simply responding to the emails by clicking on the authentic looking link, the user is directed to an authentic looking but counterfeit website which solicits the victims' personal information. Once that information is entered, it has been documented that credit cards can be illicitly charged within seconds, and bank accounts drained via the use of the ATM and PIN numbers.

The Anti Phishing Work Group (*www.antiphishing.org*) is a trade group with over 2000 members including the major credit card companies, banks, credit unions, EBay, and financial service companies, who tracks phishing attacks. The most recent figures available as I type this indicate that in the month of November 2005, there were 16,882 individual phishing attacks, each possibly consisting of millions of fraudulent emails sent to people like us. The rate of phishing attacks, and the number of phishing emails has doubled since November 2004, and the numbers still appear to be increasing as it has become an easy method to defraud victims out of their money. These attacks connected to 4630 fraudulent websites, triple the number for the same month in the previous year. The scam sites are short lived, being shutdown either forcibly, or voluntarily, within an average of 5.5 days, with some being active for as long as 30 days. Eighty percent of phishing scams illicitly use the name of just six legitimate companies, such as PayPal and EBay, and the other 20 percent of scams misrepresent 87 companies. While the majority of these websites are hosted in the US, they are actually owned and operated predominately by foreign nationals, often in Eastern Europe, and southeast and central Asia. Criminal prosecutions and recovery of lost money are scarce, making it a high gain – low risk crime, which helps account for its rapid and malicious spread.

A comprehensive list of current phishing scams, predominantly directed against the customers of major financial institutions may be found at *www.websensesecuritylabs.com/alerts*. Some of the most recent listed financial institutions targeted are Greater Texas Federal Credit Union, Day Air Credit Union, First Bank, The Farmers Bank, Town North Bank, and many others.

As users start to implement updated software of various types, phishing may become more difficult. Newer versions of

Continued

The New, the Best, and the Worst

Collected by Pim Borman (swipcug@sigecom.net), SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc., *http://swipcug.apcug.org/*

Rants

It is a dark, dreary, drizzly day in mid-January as I write this, perfect for contesting a will (as they say in my native Holland) or protesting the peccability of PC peddlers.

Rant #1 concerns the software Dell installs on new computers, whether you want it or not. James Derk, computer columnist for Scripps Howard News Service, wrote recently about the effort it required to remove all the extraneous junk from someone's new Dell system: "*Dell is on the list this year for adding so much junk to their new PCs that it takes a trained technician to remove most of them. Their "starter" edition of QuickBooks is the most annoying...even popping up reminders to try the program long after you've deleted it. I know Dell sells 80 percent of its PCs to businesses but there's no reason to have such an invasive product and selling tactic. Most large businesses don't use QuickBooks, most small businesses already have it and consumers don't want it. Editing the Windows Registry should not be needed to remove it. (Dell gets an honorable mention for charging $25 for a USB cable to connect their "free" printers to their computers.)*" (*http://snipurl.com/derkcolumn2*). Elsewhere he mentions the desirability of removing the pre-installed temporary version of McAfee anti-virus. He wrote: "*If you have McAfee preinstalled on your new PC, I would uninstall it immediately and install a free product. It's not just a bias...in my computer repair business I have seen dozens of PCs with McAfee installed that are riddled with viri. Something either about McAfee's online-only product or the configuration just lets viruses pass through*" (*http://snipurl.com/derkcolumn*).

As luck would have it, my neighbors asked me soon thereafter for help with the installation of their new Dell computer. The recently retired professional couple had been using a MacIntosh computer for the past eight years and were unfamiliar with MS Windows. Remembering Derk's comment, I suggested we remove the McAfee program and install Norton Internet Security. Tough luck! As I attempted to remove McAfee via the Control Panel's Add/Remove feature, I kept getting error messages that part of the program was running and could not be removed. I did everything I could think of to stop/disable McAfee, but nothing managed to kill it dead. I did a Google search later on and found that usually there is no simple way to get rid of it. A "help" page on the McAfee page provides pages of procedures to "try," all of them obscure and non-intuitive. An unwanted program that can not simply be uninstalled is malware in my opinion. If Dell is unwilling to sell computers without all the junk, the best solution may be to reformat the hard drive and reinstall the desired programs only. Or choose another vendor. It is hardly an attractive option for new Windows users.

Rant #2: Sony BMG recently got caught using rootkits to provide copy protection on CDs they sold. Rootkits are programs that hide on your hard drive, out of sight of Windows. They are an open invitation for virus writers to invade your system and are hard to remove without damaging Windows. Sony was forced to apologize for its error, recalled the CDs involved, and published a patch to remove the rootkits from the customers' computers.

According to an article in *eweek.com*, the rootkit trick is being used by other companies also (*http://snipurl.com/lis7*, thanks to Jim Geiser). Norton SystemWorks is specifically mentioned. Symantec explained that they used the rootkit to prevent users from accidentally removing the file, but offered to relocate it with a program update. According to *eweek.com* there are other instances of rootkits being used, but no specifics were mentioned.

My Norton Internet Security subscription is about to expire. I already had planned to try the ZoneAlarm Security Suite, based on a recommendation in *PC Magazine* (12/27/05) that included it in their list of Best of the Year Products (but that also included McAfee anti-virus!). But then Linda Gonse, editor/webmaster of the Orange County IBM PC Users' Group, wrote that the ZoneAlarm Security Suite interfered with her ftp program and mangled the files she uploaded to her Web site. She had a dickens of a time trying to uninstall the pro-

Identity Theft Phishing Scams, *continued*

email programs, such as Outlook, Mailwasher, Eudora, and others show if a link redirects to another address, other than the one listed. The new version of Internet Explorer offers an anti-phishing option which will check internet addresses against suspicious or known phishing sites. Trend Micro's PC-Cillin Internet Security Suite 2006 offers an anti-phishing toolbar for Internet Explorer that shows if a link is being redirected to a suspicious site.

Recent versions of the Firefox browser offer some protection against phishing by indicating the real, rather than the apparent web address in the address bar, which should notify the user of a potential scam. In order to bypass many of the new protections offered, some phishers are registering close variations of legitimate domain names in an attempt to trick users into accepting their false authenticity. Another trick is "pharming", which illicitly redirects correct internet addresses to bogus websites for the purpose of tricking the victim into entering sensitive data.

Never click on a link in an email warning about some dire financial risk or reward, as reputable agencies will not utilize that tactic in the event of a problem. A quick call to a known 800 number to verify any such problem will quickly indicate that the email is bogus. Better safe than sorry.

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gram. However she never had a problem with the plain, free ZoneAlarm firewall. I concluded that my best bet was to use free ZoneAlarm as the firewall.

I chose a separate anti-virus program, f-prot from Frisk software (*http://www.f-prot.com/products/*). I used that program years ago in the DOS days, and more recently I have been using it on my Linux computers. Their technical support is outstanding, as I mentioned in a previous column (*P-See Urgent,* December 2005). F-prot, based in Iceland, was one of the first to spot the rootkits and to provide an uninstallation patch. They update their database as soon as they add new data, usually several times a week. The Windows version costs $29 per year, but a trial version is available to make sure the product fills your needs.

As expected, replacing Norton Internet Security with ZoneAlarm and f-prot was not without problems. I downloaded the trial version of f-prot without difficulty and stored it, ready for use. Getting the free version of ZoneAlarm was a different story.

Rant #3: If you make a free, limited version of your software available for download, don't play silly games trying to hide the download button hoping that the prospective customer will finally give up, or make an error, and order your paid-for version. It may work sometimes, but you lose every last bit of goodwill you may have worked years to earn. Is that worth it? After struggling with ZoneAlarm for 20 minutes trying to download the free program, I simply copied an older setup version that was still on my other Windows computer and installed that. ZoneAlarm then promptly offered to update that

version and I was in business. Installation of f-prot went without a hitch.

Although I had uninstalled Norton Internet Security with the Control Panel- Add/Remove route, it was evidently not quite dead yet. ZoneAlarm started telling me that Norton was still trying to access various parts of my computer, which I blocked. Soon thereafter everything froze and I got the Blue Screen of Death. It took two cold restarts to get everything back up and running, and my first action was to have ZoneAlarm block everything with the Norton label. That seems to work thus far.

As every successful business, from Wal-Mart to General Electric, knows, your most important asset is customer goodwill. A happy customer is a return customer. Over the years Dell has built up an excellent reputation for product quality, price, and service. They stand to lose all that for a few bucks they make as "partners" with the likes of McAfee and Quicken Books. It isn't worth it. The same goes for Norton, known since DOS days for its reliability and excellence of technology. Avoid exasperating your customers and they'll keep coming back.

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Being Online Brings Coincidences, Lasting Trails

Gabriel Goldberg, APCUG Advisor; Columnist, AARP Computer & Technology Website, www.aarp.org

A song written by Peter Mayer, a great singer I've just discovered, is titled "Earth Town Square." Describing how technology and travel have shrunk the world, Peter lyrically observes "Now it's feeling like a small town, with six billion people downtown, at a little sidewalk fair, in Earth Town Square". Even though all six billion of us aren't (yet!) online, the Internet as a meeting place is certainly one of the engines making the Earth seem smaller. While it was once exotic — or alarming — to have a long distance telephone conversation, chatting electronically with people half a world away doesn't raise my pulse.

A decade ago, early in my use of the Internet, I was astonished by its ability to create coincidences. This is a true story. I was consulting for an online service that gave me an e-mail address used only for their work. I received a note at that address with the intriguing subject, "I am you" from another Gabriel Goldberg. Nowadays, that's the sort of spoofed e-mail I'd likely delete without reading. He had checked his entry in the service's directory and found my entry next to his. We exchanged pleasantries, described ourselves, shared wonder at having found each other, and he mentioned that he was a music student in Boston.

Later that week, I received another note at my regular e-mail address, from a woman who said that she'd known a Gabe Goldberg years earlier, the last she'd heard from him he was going to Boston to study music, and was I that person. I replied to her, copying the other Gabe, that either they were playing a joke on me or we had a mighty powerful coincidence. Truth is stranger than joke — they were former high school sweethearts who had drifted apart. In the same week they both found my name and two different e-mail addresses, and for very different reasons, they contacted me. I later heard from her mother, who thanked me for reuniting them! Remarking on the coincidence of names, the other Gabe wondered "how do guys named Jim Smith handle all the coincidences."

Participating in mailing lists, newsgroups, and Web sites leaves online footprints and makes us visible. The bad news is that's one of the ways spammers find targets, but the good news is that being visible makes it easier for lost friends to track us down. Soon after 9/11 I heard a voice on the phone I hadn't heard for nearly 30 years: my college girlfriend. She'd searched Google (often called "Googling") for me, found me, and called. We've stayed in touch since, have gotten together several times, and shared news of our respective families. And just recently I used Google to contact an elementary school friend after hearing of her taking a new job in San Francisco.

Amidst the fun of unanticipated connections and reestablished friendships, there's a cautionary note: information online has a long memory. Web sites like Google cache (retain) Web pages even after they're deleted from their original Web locations. Postings to mailing lists, Web forums, newsgroups, and other online venues are usually retained indefinitely. It can be unnerving to discover that items posted in the heat of the moment or as youthful indiscretions can be retrieved years later by potential employers or new acquaintances, or just someone snooping for unpleasant reasons.

Just as it's worth checking your credit report periodically, it's a good idea to occasionally check out what online trails you've left. My current favorite surfing tool is Google, so I search for "Gabe Goldberg" and "Gabriel Goldberg." The quote marks bind the first and last names together so that only Web pages having the exact full name are found. I search on Gabe and Gabriel because I've used both names. If your name is closer to Jim Smith's — offering 56,000 hits rather than the more manageable 182 for my name — you can tighten the search by adding terms such as a middle initial, state of residence, hobby, employer, etc. But don't make the search too narrow or you may miss genuine references.

It's tedious to erase tracks from an online history. It requires contacting each site that hosts material you'd like to delete, perhaps following instructions and filling out forms. Some mailing list sites refuse as a matter of policy to delete list postings, reasoning that doing so would distort a list's historical record. The government has made serious efforts to sanitize the Web by removing content deemed dangerous, such as plans for water and power systems. Even when successful, scrubbing data off Web sites often doesn't really make it unavailable, it just slows people from finding it. It's much better to avoid saying anything online that might return to haunt you, than try to clear the record after the fact.

From The DealsGuy

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

As time goes forward, my health gets more complicated. I have been a Type II diabetic for a few years and other than some swelling in the legs, my sugar control is pretty good, but I started the sugar control too late and suffered serious heart damage. Now it seems I have developed a large blood clot in my lower leg, I believe from a fall, and the doctor put me on Coumadin (Warfarin), a.k.a. rat poison. It has a long list of drugs that cause interactions. I am already a walking pharmacy so it gets complicated. This turn for the worse brings other complications. I have started getting temporary spikes in blood pressure for no apparent reason, which sometimes causes a nosebleed. I am afraid to go anyplace these days because I might get a nosebleed, although I can stop it now rather easily. My doctor has prescribed medication for my blood pressure as a solution and I sure hope it works. Getting old gets complicated, but the alternative "really sucks." It looks like I will have five more months on the rat poison, if I survive. I have talked to many people also taking Coumadin who tell me even worse stories about bleeding where you don't want to and a lack of good control by their doctor.

Right now, I need a blood test at least once a week for my INR, (clotting ability of the blood). The doctor says I can purchase a machine to do that test at home, but I checked on the Web and it would cost $2495, so I'll let the clinic do the testing. I'm still doing my best to continue cheating my wife out of the life insurance money. Whenever I start to slow down on exercise etc., I get a vision of my wife sitting on the beach of some south sea island with a stud sitting next to her, and she is writing a check on my insurance money for their next vacation. That little vision gets me right out of the chair to exercise.

*How Secure is Your System?

I read an article in Information Week magazine that was amusing and interesting, concerning a company whose CIO hired security investigators to test how their system stood up to being infiltrated. The director of network operations was sure they couldn't break into systems or facilities, but they very soon proved him wrong. Some weaknesses were so stupid I had to chuckle — many passwords for work stations were on a note taped to the machine or hidden under the keyboard. They gained access to limited access places by calling the receptionist and saying that some agents were coming in to do an audit and needed access, which was easily granted to the people who made the call. Office keys were sometimes in the secretary's desk. See this article at *informationweek.com/management/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=1771 00115* — you'll find it enlightening.

*Great, The Bundle is Back

Executive Software sent a message that their "bundle" is back. For a limited time you can get the award winning Diskeeper 10 Home Edition, and Undelete 5 Home Edition, for $49.95 plus S&H. I have never heard anything but praise about these fine products. Mine is not the latest, but it always works well, and fast. Use this link to order: *http://purchase.diskeeper.com/checkout/addtocart.aspx?Item=1382*.

*ExtraLabs Releases Version 3.4 of Feed Editor

ExtraLabs Software unveils Feed Editor 3.4, a full-fledged RSS editor that offers an easy way to create and maintain RSS feeds and podcasts. Compared to others in its category, Feed Editor combines an unprecedented number of features including support for various RSS formats, podcasting support, WYSIWYG HTML editor, XML editor, RSS Feed preview, FTP upload and publishing, automatic date management and ability to convert CSV or HTML to RSS, and back.

Feed Editor can create and maintain an unlimited number of RSS feeds and podcasts, letting you maintain and distribute multiple content streams simultaneously. A New Feed Creation wizard guides you through the RSS setup process step-by-step. Built-in WYSIWIG HTML editor allows you to edit a feed in much the same way as you would edit a word processing document. You can format the text, apply styling, and insert images and hyperlinks. Also, "Feed Editor" can generate a feed from a CSV and HTML file. Once a feed is ready, preview and publish online using an FTP upload facility. Read more at *http://www.extralabs.net/feed-editor.htm*. Free evaluation at *http://www.extralabs.net/FeedEditorSetup.exe*.

ExtraLabs Software offers "Feed Editor" at 50% off ($19.95), and offers user group members additional 5% discount on purchase during April and May. Follow this link for the extra discount: *regsoft.net/purchase.php3?productid=74108&pc=312aY*. Feed Editor 3.4 runs under Windows 95/98/Me/2000/NT/XP/2003. Registered customers are entitled to free lifetime updates and premium technical support. Discounts for volume buyers are available.

*If You Like Games, Check This Announcement

From the creators of "Zzed" comes a new game, Wonderlines by NevoSoft, a remake of a popular game. Only balls and lines remind you of its predecessor, the rest is covered with the charm of novelty: a new bonus system, new intricate game play structure and fresh interface design. The music and visuals are great. Puzzle, Action, Zen Way modes are different, yet each requires special skills. 70 levels of the game are very different one from another. Wonderlines runs under Windows 98/ME/XP/2000 and costs $19.95 (USD). NevoSoft offers 30% discount to user group members who use this link: *https://www.regnow.com/softsell/nph-softsell.cgi?item=8323-16&ss_co upon=NEVO-GPCU*. Registered customers are entitled to unlocked game play and lifetime technical support. Free download evaluation version offers 60 minutes of play, at *http://www.nevosoft.com/wonderlines/wonderlines_demo.exe*. Vendor has no privacy statement on their site about protecting your information. For more info: *http://www.nevosoft.com*. Product link: *www.nevosoft.com/downloadable-game/en/games/wonderlines.html*

That's it for this month. Be sure to check the new announcement pages on my Web site. 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. Visit my Web site at http://www.dealsguy.com.

The Shadow Knows

Mike Morris (ml_morris@jymis.com), Front Range PC Users Group, Fort Collins, CO (www.frpcug.org)

How many readers remember that phrase? Or remember listening to the show on the radio:

"Who knows what evil lurks in the heart of men? The Shadow knows."

Recent headlines have described the availability of TV shows on the internet — at a price. No headlines, however, for The Shadow or other radio programs from the 1930's and 1940's. The copyrights to a large number of the old radio shows have expired, and you can now download (or order) these programs in a variety of formats and listen to them through your computer or other audio equipment.

Whether your interest is historical research, for the nostalgia value, for a hobby, or for the simple entertainment value, the variety of programs and information about these old radio programs is astonishing. I originally searched the internet using Google and the phrase "old radio programs." That search returned over 20,000 hits over 6 months. The correct phrase should have been "old time radio." That search returned over 1 million hits from the past 6 months.

These websites provide an incredible wealth of information. I have checked a very small number of websites, and offer my comments on them. There are episodes of The Shadow, Sam Spade, The Thin Man—as you can see, I like mysteries. There are comedies, westerns, music, and much more.

By the way, how many readers remember the origin of Sam Spade? Do you recall the movie "The Maltese Falcon" with Humphrey Bogart? The movie was based on the novel of the same name by Dashiell Hammett (originally published in 1929), which introduced the world to Sam Spade. Another novel by the same author, "The Thin Man," (originally published in 1933) was turned into a move starring William Powell and Myrna Loy. Here is a trivia question for you: who really was the Thin Man? — answer at the end of this article.

As you might expect, the audio quality of these old radio shows varies. Some websites allow you to listen to short samples of selected shows using either RealPlayer™ or Media Player, both of which are bundled with the Windows operating system.

"It is Thursday night, July 31,1930. The time is 9:40 PM. Radio listeners tuned to CBS hear the first appearance of "The Shadow" . . . ." Thus begins the history of "The Shadow" as provided by the Old-Time Radio Program Guide, *http://www.old-time.com/toc.html*. This website has links to historical information on a number of old time radio programs and to other websites that include soundbites and stories, and to websites that offer programs on cassettes, CD's, DVD's, or direct downloads to your computer.

More history is available at Radio Days: A Soundbite of History, *http://otr.com/index.shtml*. There are links to history by category (Mystery, Private Eyes, Comedy, SciFi) and to histories of selected programs (Captain Midnight, Terry and the Pirates). This website also provides an historical timeline with important dates in radio broadcasting with descriptions

of relevant programs. Selected downloads (soundbites) are included. There is a link to a schedule of old time radio on the airwaves (and on the internet).

At "It Seems Like Only Yesterday," *http://www.yesterdayradio.com/*, old radio programs are offered for sale on cassettes. Categories include: World War II and Civil War History, Big Band Music, Comedy, Westerns, Science Fiction, and Sherlock Holmes. The Big Band category includes Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey, and other broadcasts from the 1940's.

The "Radio of Yesteryear" website, *http://www.originaloldradio.com/*, claims to have 50,000 old time radio programs available on CD's, in various formats. There is a category called "Radio's Best 1000," and "single subject" CD's such as Abbott and Costello, CBS Radio Mystery Theatre, and many more.

Meanwhile, back at *old-time.com*, there is a link to called "Radio Showcase," *http://www.old-time.com/sponsors/rad_sho.html*. This site offers an excellent searchable database, with "actor credits, recording sources, story categories, and program notes . . . ."

In the interest of objectivity, I call your attention to the RadioLovers.com website, *http://radiolovers.com*. This site claims to offer individual old time radio program downloads. However, I did not pursue the offer. I found the site's use of pop up ads objectionable (the ads appeared despite having the pop up blocker enabled in my Firefox browser). But that is my personal prejudice. Those with greater tolerance to such ads may find this site useful.

As I listened to these old radio programs, and read about their history, I realized that there was one program that I wanted to locate above all others: the original radio broadcast of War of the Worlds. This program, created from the 1898 H. G. Wells novel by Orson Welles and broadcast in 1938, is famous (or infamous) for the real panic it created.

A Google search on "war of the worlds" provided the result EarthStation1.com, *http://www.earthstation1.com/wotw.html*. Success! I listened to the entire program (slightly less than one hour) using RealPlayer™. My brain soaked up certain phrases:

- ". . . these creatures have scientific knowledge far in excess of our own . . . ."
- ". . . a vanguard of an invading army from Mars . . . ."

Okay, so point your finger at me and laugh, while you enjoy the latest movie version with its extraordinary computer generated special effects. I thoroughly enjoyed the hour I spent listening to this classic radio broadcast. Even the 1930's audio quality added to its menace.

While you are watching the movie, I am going to dim the lights, turn off the TV, unplug the phone, and settle into my favorite chair. It is time to listen to The Shadow. Even in the 21st century, it is comforting that there is an answer to the

Continued

Federal Website Provides Safety & Security Information

Ira Wilsker (Iwilsker@apcug.net), APCUG Director; radio & TV show host

http://www.onguardonline.gov/stopthinkclick.html

The media has recently been rife with stories about internet scams, frauds, identity theft, pedophiles, and other malevolent occurrences that have happened on the internet. While there are many online resources providing informational websites to help prevent us from falling prey to internet victimization, a consortium of federal agencies has created "OnGuard Online" at *www.onguardonline.gov*. This consortium consists of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), United States Postal Inspection Service, the Department of Commerce (DOC), and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Materials are provided on this website to inform and educate the computer user about several of the most nefarious threats that commonly assail us as we enjoy the abundance of the internet. Topics currently covered are spyware, identity theft, phishing, spam scams, online shopping, P2P (Peer-to-Peer) file sharing, and VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol – internet telephony). There are also a series of online quizzes (*www.onguardonline.gov/quiz*) where the user can test his knowledge on the security risks associated with these topics. A series of videos and tutorials on related topics, such as "Viruses and Worms", and "Protect Your Privacy, Family, and PC" are also available at this site (*onguardonline.gov/tutorials*). For those who have been victimized by internet miscreants, a resource is available to show the user where and how to file complaints with the appropriate federal and other agencies at *onguardonline.gov/filecomplaint.html*.

Spyware is defined at this site as "… software installed on your computer without your consent to monitor or control your computer use." Spyware can be used to steal your identity or capture your usernames, passwords, and account numbers (keyloggers); compile personal surfing profiles for directed advertising or other purpose (some forms of tracking cookies); display unwanted pop-up ads, which may be pornographic (ad-ware), redirect the browser to other sites (browser hijacking); install unwanted links on the desktop or in the "favorites" or bookmarks; and a variety of other unwanted and possibly dangerous web related items. OnGuard Online provides links and information on removing spyware, and protecting your computer from spyware.

Identity theft is a scourge that may impact as many as 10 million Americans each year, according to some sources. The incidence of identity theft through internet tricks, such as "Phishing" (typically emails directing the user to an authentic looking but counterfeit website soliciting credit card information, PIN numbers, etc.); "Pharming" (changing data files or "hosts" on the computer to redirect intentional visits to financial or commercial sites to counterfeit sites where valuable personal information is illicitly obtained) accounts for an increasingly significant portion of identity theft. OnGuard Online provides information on how to protect yourself from Phishing scams, and how to protect your identity while online, as well as instructions on dealing with identity theft if victimized.

Some internet security companies report that the amount of spam, or unsolicited commercial email, can easily amount to 60 to 80 percent of all emails sent. According to this website, details are provided on the major spam scams currently in circulation. The top 10 spam scams are: The "Nigerian" Email Scam (may also appear to be from Russia, Columbia, England, or other sources); Phishing; Work-at-Home Scams; Weight Loss Claims; Foreign Lotteries (Congratulations, you are a winner in the Spanish / British / Canadian Lottery!); Cure-All Products; Check Overpayment Scams (I have a large cashier's check – cash it, keep some, and wire me the difference); Pay-in-Advance Credit Offers; Debt Relief; and Investment Schemes (buy this penny stock – it will quintuple in a few days). Sadly, many gullible internet users still fall for these scams enriching the crooks, and typically receiving nothing worthwhile in return.

Millions of internet users shopped online during the holiday season, and still continue to do so at online retailers, or popular auction sites such as Ebay. While most online shoppers have been successful, and had few problems, there are also thousands who have been victimized to some degree by internet crooks. This site explains a series of safe shopping tips, including "Know who you're dealing with; Know exactly what you're buying; Know what it will cost (including ship-

The Shadow Knows, *continued*

question "who knows what evil lurks in the heart of men? *The Shadow knows.*"

The trivia question answer: No, it is not the detective Nick Charles. The title of Thin Man belongs to the extremely eccentric inventor Clyde Wynant, who remains missing until the last chapter of the novel, when it is revealed that he is the victim of a gruesome crime.

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.

SIG News

Investing

Norm Wiss (cut.up@verizon.net)

http://www.acgnj.org/groups/sig_investment.htm

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. **Our next meeting: April 13.** ⌨

NJ Gamers

Gregg McCarthy (greggmc@optonline.net)

http://www.angelfire.com/linux/gamers/

www.lanparty.com

The next Friday Night Frag will be April 14, 6 p.m. to Saturday 12 noon — 18 hours for 5 bucks! ⌨

Window Pains

John Raff (jraff@comcast.net)

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

This meeting is a combination of the older PC Symposium, PC User Group and Random Access Session which are now defunct. The intent is to provide the members with Windows oriented application discussions both Microsoft and Linux style. The presentation will be directed toward the more heavy technological level of attendee, although newbies are welcomed. **Next meeting April 21.** ⌨

Main Meeting

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

Evan Williams (nhpressgo@blast.net)

April 7: Subject to be announced. ⌨

Visual Basic

Rick Elbanna (rick@mastersofthecode.com)

http://mastersofthecode.com/html/sig.htm

This is a public Special Interest Group sponsored by Online Marketing Network LLC and Ricardo Capelli Associates LLC. This is a co-operative meeting with the Excel VBA and WebDev group. ***Meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at East Brunswick Public Library in East Brunswick, New Jersey***. Meeting times vary depending on the busy schedule of the Library. Times will be emailed to interested developers — send email to Rick to put your name on the notification list. Because of limited seating, those expecting to attend should email Rick prior to the meeting. Walk-ins are welcome, but are not guaranteed a seat. ⌨

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 8:00 PM at the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad. See the web page for directions and more information. **Next meeting April 3.** ⌨

Web Dev

This SIG is intended to be an open forum for all Website Development techniques and technologies, to encourage the study and development of web sites of all kinds. All languages will be considered and examined. Anyone interested please contact the Chairperson in charge. 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. One can also send projects to the ACGNJ Newsletter editor for inclusion in the next volume.

WebDev should be an all-encompassing 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 April 19**. ⌨

Human Networking

http://www.acgnj.org/groups/hns.htm

Mark Douches (mad-networking@pobox.com)

The purpose of this SIG is to expand the number of professionals that we know so that connections can be made into different markets or industries when a career change or business need is necessary. We are not just a group of people who like computers or technology. Our membership consists of Information Technology professionals from various industries. We will discuss over a time period the tools and skills that are necessary to cross a bridge advance your career. **Meetings are held 2nd Wednesday of the Month at 7:00 P.M.** ⌨

Genealogy

Frank Warren (kb4cyc@webwarren.com)

http://www.webwarren.com/kb4cyc/gensig.html

Genealogy SIG is for genealogists interested in computers and computer users interested in genealogy, and is a forum to assist members in furtherance of both endeavors. Meetings usually focus on genealogy more than on computers. We meet at 8 PM on the fourth Thursday of the month, but we do not meet in November or December. In addition to our Web page, we also have an electronic mailing list. Messages to the list should be addressed to *gensig@webwarren.com*. To subscribe, include the line "subscribe gensig" in the body of the message. **Next meeting April 27.** ⌨

C/C++ Programming

Bruce Arnold (barnold@blast.net)

http://www.blast.net/barnold

This group is devoted to discussing 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.

March: A discussion about the MFC Non-Windows Programming using Microsoft Visual C++ version 6.0. By "Non-Windows or Non-GUI" I mean a program that uses the Command Box (Sometimes called DOS Box) instead of the Windows Graphical Interface. This is the simplist of programming ventures because the Graphical User Interface, GUI, does not have to be programmed. There was also a discussion on C# 2005 Express Edition. Since this compiler is FREE from Microsoft it is quickly becoming a very popular application. I have converted most of tonight's VC6 code into C-Sharp code so that the differences may be compared. The program presented is designed provide a list of installed programs. You may remember that a similar program was presented in 2004. This one uses some of the code from the original but adds a number of features. In particular, it automatically launches a browser to display the results in HTML code. Another major improvement is that is displays detail information about the computer in the title of the page. As shown above, this information includes the Operating System and the version. *Our next meeting April 18.*

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.

Lotus Notes

Mike Barlow (mwb@injersey.com)

http://www.acgnj.org/groups/sig_lotusnotes.htm

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the offices of Bright Ideas Software, 1060 Amboy Avenue, 2nd Floor, Edison NJ at 7 PM (Random Access 6:30). Call (732)417-5778 for last-minute changes, cancellations, information on future meetings, locations, directions, etc. Directions are posted on our Web page.

VBA & Excel

Jim Ditaranto (fryr92a@prodigy.com)

http://www.excelvba.homestead.com

VBA is implemented in Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Project and Microsoft Access, and will be implemented in Word and PowerPoint. Anyone interested in using any Microsoft Office and VBA is invited — *7 PM third Monday*. Currently Jim is improving his skill set, so David McRitchie and John Raff will carry the banner.

Java

Mike Redlich (mike@redlich.net)

http://www.redlich.net/javasig/

The Java Users Group covers beginner, intermediate, and advanced level Java programming. Primary focus is on developing useful/practical applets and applications, but can include related topics such as Java I/O, JavaBeans, Reflection, object-oriented programming and software design issues. Meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month starting promptly at 7:30 PM.

March 14: Using Java for Developing Ajax-Enabled Web Applications.

April 11: Technical Overview of the Xcalia Intermediation Core. A demo of object-to-service mapping (OSM). It's a generalization of the concept of object-to-relational mapping (ORM), that results in essentially the capability of truly dynamic orchestration.

Macintosh Users

Keith Sproul (ksproul@noc.rutgers.edu)

This group is no longer meeting, but Keith is still available to help Mac users via telephone or email (see page 2).

DotNet

This group has disbanded.

MCP

(Microsoft Certified Professional)

Gregg McCarthy (greggmc@optonline.net)

http://www.angelfire.com/linux/gamers/mcse.html

The MCSE SIG is a study group with the goal of preparing for the Microsoft Certification Exams. In February of 2000 "Windows 2000" debuted along with new MCSE tests. It's two years later and we have settled somewhere between W2k Pro/Server and Windows XP in our studies. Windows NT while still viable, is history as far as Microsoft is concerned. Windows .NET server should be out this year and should look like Windows XP-Server.

The books we will be using are "Mastering Windows 2000 Server" by Mark Minasi and the "MCSE Self-Paced Training Kit" from Microsoft Press. These books are important because as a study group we won't have a teacher to explain the concepts. We'll *need* to discuss them in the group. This is a study group, not a class taught by a teacher. Since hands-on training is crucial in acquiring the skills needed for these tests, we try to focus on lab work as well. The Microsoft training kits are good for labs.

We meet on the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 7 pm to 10 pm. Attendees are encouraged to bring a PC properly configured with NT, 10BaseT network card, and Netmeetng 2.1. For more info, reading assignments, course schedule, visit our website.

Guru Corner

Jo-Anne Head (tinarock@aol.com)

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.

Hardware

	Scott Vincent	973-539-8169

Software

HTML	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
CSS	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
ColdFusion	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
e-Commerce	Rick Elbanna	800-323-7575
Genealogy	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
Networking	Scott Vincent	973-539-8169
Home Automation	Charlie Huffsmith	732-549-1734
	Frank Warren	908-756-1681

Operating Systems

WindowsNT	Scott Vincent	973-361-5793
Windows95	Rick Elbanna	800-323-7575
Windows98	Rick Elbanna	800-323-7575
Windows3.1	Ted Martin	732-636-1942
	Charlie Huffsmith	732-549-1734

Macintosh

Mac O/S	Keith Sproul	(732) 821-4828

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:

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ACGNJ MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Sign up online at *http://www.acgnj.org/membership_update.htm* 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.0. BOX 135, SCOTCH PLAINS, NJ 07076

❏ New Member o 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, Princeton U. (609) 252-1163	**NY/NJ/CT Relational Database User Group:** Corporate and independent users. (212) 839-0125	**New York Personal Computer Club:** For information call hotline, (212) 533-NYPC
Computer Education Society of Philadelphia: 7:30 pm, 2nd Wednesday, St. Asaph's Episcopal Church. Lee Le'mon, (717)786-2260	**Brookdale Computer Users Group**: 7 pm,3rd Friday, NAS 100 at Brookdale Community College, Lincroft NJ.(732-739-9633) *www.bcug.com*	**Macintosh User Group**: Third Tuesday, Dickson Hall, Montclair State University, Montclair NJ. (201) 893-5274 *http://www.njmug.org*.
WordPerfect SIG of PCUG of So. Jersey: 2nd Mon., 2101 Chapel Ave., Cherry Hill NJ after 7pm Main Meeting. *http://www.pcugsj.org*	**Hunterdon Computer Club:** 8:30 am to noon 3rd Saturday, Hunterdon Medical Center, Rt 31, Flemington. (908) 995-4042	**PC Club of South Jersey**: 7 pm, 2nd Monday, 2101 Chapel Ave, Cherry Hill NJ. L. Horn, (856) 983-5360. *http://www.pcugsj.org*
Philadelphia Area Computer Society: 3rd Sat., 9 am Main Meeting, groups follow. Drexel Univ., Philadelphia. Pat Murphy, (609) 428-8759	**Central Jersey Computer Club**: 8 pm, 4th Friday, Rm 74, Armstrong Hall, Trenton St. College. Rich Williams, (609) 466-0909.	**NJ PC Users Group:** Bergen County Community College, Paramus NJ. Maureen Shannon, (201) 853-7432
Morris Micro Computer Club: Bill Traywick, (201) 635-5393.	**Fairlawn Computer Club**: Last Monday, Fairlawn Senior Citizen Center. Joe Mathias (*fair.lawn.computer.club@juno.com*)	**Princeton PC Users Group**: 2nd Monday, Lawrence Library, Rt 1 & Darrah Ln, Lawrenceville, Paul Kurivchack (908) 218-0778, *http://www.ppcug-nj.org*
Workshop, Hands-On: 2 P.M. to Midnight on last Saturday of the month. First United Methodist Church, Church and Atlantic Streets (one mile from GSP exit 117A), Aberdeen NJ. Bring your project, computer and extension cord. For information call Burke Mawby, (908) 566-7445.		

Classified

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http://www.apcug.net

Radio and TV Programs

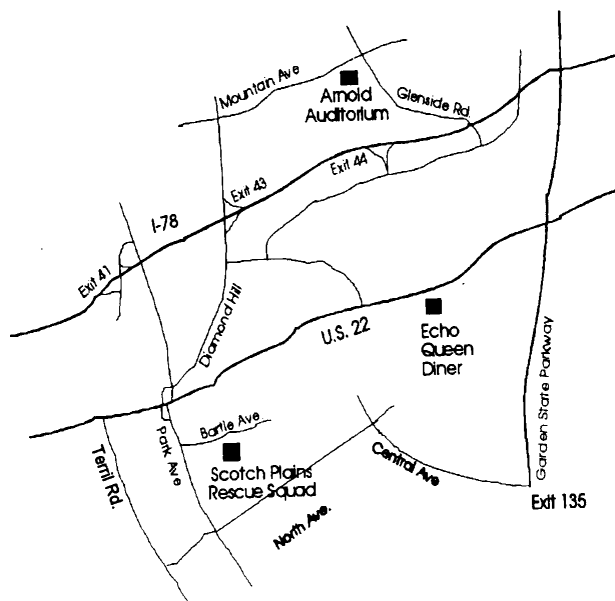**Computer Radio Show**, WBAI 99.5 FM, NY, Wed. 8-9 p.m.

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*.

PC Shows Inc (KGP)

After 26 years, PC SHows/KGP Productions has closed up shop and retired to Florida, cancelling all future computer shows. The Trenton Computer Festival will continue to be held, see *http://www.tcf-nj.org*. Thanks to all our vendors and customers these past 26 years.

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.

ping, taxes, and other charges); Pay by credit or charge card; Check out the terms of the deal; and Print and save records of your online transactions."

"Peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing allows users to share files online through an informal network of computers running the same software." People, especially children and college students, use these P2P networks to exchange software, music, videos, and other files. While there is much material that can legitimately be exchanged, P2P is also often a source of spyware, viruses, and illicit and illegal copies of pirated software, music, and other intellectual property. This site lists many of the risks common with these P2P services, and how to safely utilize such services.

You have likely seen the ads on TV, as well as displays at the electronics and mass merchandising stores for "VoIP", services that allow the broadband internet user to make local and long distance phone calls over the internet for a flat monthly fee. While expanding on popularity, the path has been bumpy, as some subscribers have been dissatisfied with the service. Issues and service such as "911" calls, while addressed in regulations, are still not universally implemented on many VoIP systems. The OnGuard

Online website also explains what many local VoIP users painfully found out during the recent spate of hurricanes and other storms, that if there is no power, or internet service is otherwise inaccessible, the VoIP services generally do not function, leaving the user without phone service.

The OnGuard Online site "Stop – Think – Click: 7 Practices for Safer Computing" (*onguardonline.gov/stopthinkclick.html*) reiterates the oft stated common sense warnings that all computer users should be aware of, and implement:

1. Protect your personal information. It's valuable.

2. Know who you're dealing with.

3. Use anti-virus software and a firewall, and update both regularly.

4. Make sure your operating system and Web browser are set up properly and update them regularly.

5. Protect your passwords.

6. Back up important files.

7. Learn who to contact if something goes wrong online.

If the information on the OnGuard Online websites is utilized, we will all have a safer and more enjoyable internet experience.

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you. 🖳

ACGNJ MEETINGS

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

Monday, April 3, 2006
8 P.M. - Lunics (Linux/Unix). Andreas Meyer (*lunics@acgnj.org*), cancelled.

Wednesday, April 5
7 P.M. - MCSE Study Group, Gregg McCarthy (*greggmc@optonline.net*).

Friday, April 7
8 P.M. - Main Meeting, Evan Williams (*nhpressgo@blast.net*).

Monday, April 10
8 P.M. - Layman's Forum, Matt Skoda (*som359@aol.com*), 908-359-8842.

Tuesday, April 11
7:30 P.M. - Java, Mike Redlich (*mike@redlich.net*) 908-246-0410.

Wednesday, April 12
7 P.M. - Human Networking, Mark Douces (*mad-networking@pobox.com*)

Thursday, April 13
8 P.M. - Investing, Norm Wiss (*cut.up@verizon.net*).

Friday, April 14
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 17
8 P.M. - VBA, Jim Ditaranto (*fryr92a@prodigy.com*), 201-986-1104

Tuesday, April 18
8 P.M. - C/C++ Users, Bruce Arnold (*barnold@blast.net*), 908-735-7898

Wednesday, April 19
7 P.M. - WebDev SIG

Friday, April 21
8 P.M. - Window Pains, John Raff.

Saturday & Sunday, April 22 & 23
Trenton Computer Festival

Thursday, April 27
8 P.M. - Genealogy SIG, Frank Warren 🖳

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