

# Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey NEWS

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Elections are coming up next month, and nobody so far has volunteered to take an office. What about you — are you waiting for Someone Else to do it?



<http://www.acgnj.org>

Founded 1975

## Obituary

We are saddened to report the passing of our most faithful member, Someone Else. Else's passing has created a vacancy that will be difficult to fill.

Else has been with us for many years, and did far more than a normal person's share of work.

Whenever there was a job to do or a meeting to attend, one name was on everybody's list -- let Someone Else do it. It was common knowledge that Someone Else was among the largest givers in our group. Whenever there was a need, everyone just assumed that Someone Else would do it.

Someone Else was a wonderful person, sometimes appearing super-human, but a person can only do so much. Were the truth known, everybody expected too much is Someone Else.

Now Else is gone. We wonder what we are going to do. But Someone Else left a wonderful example to follow, but who is going to do the things that Someone Else did?

When you are asked to help or volunteer, please remember, we cannot depend on Someone Else any more.

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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](mailto:m.rosenblum@ieee.org)) and/or to his attention at ACGNJ at the address below.

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**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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# From The DealsGuy

by Bob (The Cheapskate) Click (BobClick@mindspring.com), Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

## \*Here Is Some Fast Food Technology

Technology is fast catching up with vending machines according to this article I read in Information Week. Soft drink machines are everywhere you go, also vending machines for candy, coffee and many other types of products, even machines that dispense ice cream bars and ice cream sandwiches. A technique has now been developed for an ice cream vending machine that does not need to be refrigerated full time. To quote from the article, "we pump the base mix, aerate it, flavor it, flash freeze it, scrape it up off a freezing surface, form it into a scoop and into the consumer's cup in 45 seconds." Also, no refrigeration is required for warehousing. You can read the article at

<http://www.informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=193004764> and it also mentions their use of Linux for the machine.

## \*Have Your Medical Data With You!

Be medically prepared with all your medical records hanging around your neck (or in your possession) when you are away. Medistick makes a USB flash drive that is designed to hold up to five medical histories. It appears to be a self-extracting file that can also offer password protection. Medistick has medical emergency logo on the sides. Capacities are available from 128 MB to 4 gigs and costing \$57 for the 128 mb size. <http://www.medistick.ch>. Information is collected and entered by you, or your doctor, if his staff will help in that regard, and the document automatically converts to a pdf file.

I doubt I would use the password protection because what if you are incoherent and can't give medics the password to open the file for your medical information? On the other hand, since some folks write their password on the side of their computer, you could do that with the Medistick. I am cramped for space here so be sure to check their Web site to get the best description of the product. It sure sounds great to me, and so is the deal. All your records are carried with you including all your doctors' names and phones. If you see a new doctor, just give them your Medistick to get all your medical info. With my health, I will probably need the 4 gig model. Just a thought, but this might make a great Christmas gift for the person who already has everything, and for that person who has a serious medical history.

Medistick has offered the DealsGuy readers this deal: "1 128MB Medistick and software for 1 person for only \$49 with shipping included. (MSRP is normally \$57 plus \$3.50 shipping) This deal is good until Jan. 31, 2007. Readers should click on <http://www.medistick.ch/en/contact/> and mention the DealsGuy column in the "comments" area. They will then get an online invoice from Medistick through PayPal for \$49 as payment by credit card in advance."

## \*Reminder — Laptop Discount

Don't forget about Dave Whittle's discount offer on the Lenova Thinkpad laptops that is still good. Simply call Lenova's user group inside sales rep, Isaac Williams, directly

for help in configuring your system, or to get answers to your questions. Call 1-877-338-4465, Option 1, Extension 6322.

Below are some new products that I received announcements for. I have edited the announcements so check their URL for better info.

## \*How About A Backup With Security!

SoftOptima LLC announces the release of Backup Premium 2.5 backup software. The specially designed protocols SFTP and FTP SSL/TLS provide a high degree of security for data transferred via the Internet. Backup Premium offers the capability to backup user data using SFTP and FTP SSL/TLS and allows substantial safety of the backup process.

You can backup all important files from a Windows profile, Microsoft Outlook, Outlook Express and ICQ; running certain programs before or after backup sessions; and the possibility to work with network drives under different accounts. It's easy to configure the backup process and adjust it to the particular needs of a single user, or a whole company. Backup Premium has an ergonomically correct user interface and a high-quality graphic solution that makes the work with the program simple and yet pleasant.

A fully functional Backup Premium 2.5 trial version is available for a 30-day evaluation period. Registration costs \$39 for a single user license. Users group members receive a special 25% discount until February 2007 at <http://www.backup-premium.com/special-order.shtml>.

Product Page: <http://www.backup-premium.com>

Screenshots / graphics:

<http://www.backup-premium.com/screenshots.shtml>

Download: <http://www.backup-premium.com/backuppremium25.exe>

## \*This Product Helps You Work With Your Pictures

Almalence Incorporated announces PhotoAcute Studio 2.0. PhotoAcute Studio processes sets of images taken in continuous mode. It utilizes super resolution algorithms to convert a sequence of photos into a single high-resolution and low-noise picture that could only be taken with a much better camera. PhotoAcute Studio operates with various camera and image types from mobile cameras to DSLR cameras supporting RAW format and 16-bit color.

Spatial resolution is limited by a camera's matrix and lens, but this limit can be exceeded by means of super resolution that can be done by either acquiring more graphic information (e.g. taking and merging several images of the same object) or by reconstructing the details lost due to the faultiness of the optical system. Noise is the most undesirable factor that degrades image quality. PhotoAcute Studio combines several photos of the same scene, separating the useful signal and the noise, thus providing strong noise reduction without losing the image details. By merging several images taken at different exposures, PhotoAcute Studio expands the dynamic range of the resultant image revealing the details usually clipped in the highlights and the shadows.

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# The Good, The Bad, and the Incompatible

Robert Hawes, ACGNJ

Due to circumstances beyond our control, the September newsletter didn't get posted on the Web until just before the next newsletter deadline. As a result, I didn't see it until my article for the October issue had already been "put to bed". So I didn't have the opportunity to comment on the surprise honor that Barbara (the editor) awarded me. **She gave me the September cover.** Not only page one, but above-the-fold as well! (It doesn't matter that our particular publication doesn't have a fold. If we had one, my by-line would have been above it). Thank you, Barbara. Thank you, members of the Academy. I couldn't have done it without you.

That was the good. Now for a quick visit to TV land. I was channel-surfing the other day, and I dropped into the middle of a PBS interview with a playwright. (Unfortunately, I didn't get her name **or** the name of the program). She was saying that, in some ways, none of her plays were ever finished. She was always aware of things that didn't go quite as well as she had hoped, places where maybe she could still do better. But at some point, just like children, she had to let each of them go out on its own, flaws and all. I can't claim to be anywhere even close to her as an author. (Can I even claim to be an author at all? I just write articles for a club newsletter). However, I found myself identifying with her concept, and I wish I knew her name so I could give her proper credit for it. Take my award-winning column from September. Believe it or not, it had a flaw. (That's the bad).

In previous articles, I've commented about the truly amazing number of times that a writer has to read through his or her work as it progresses, even amateur stuff like this. I have, literally, spent **hours** working on a single paragraph, trying to get the information that's in my notes (or in my head) on to the word processor screen in a form that even a complete stranger should be able to easily follow and understand. The problem is, after you've read through the same material a few dozen times, you aren't really seeing what's actually there any more – you're seeing what you think **should** be there. That's when you can miss the same typo over and over again. (Spelling and grammar checkers are great, and I highly recommend them, but they often miss singular/plural or prefix/suffix errors; and they're not much help when the word is spelled correctly but it's the **wrong** word, not what you intended to type there at all).

I guess I'm a primitive. I like to hold what I'm reading in my hands and flip through the pages, rather than scroll through them on screen. So I always do my "final" reading from printed text. (Maybe someday, electronic displays will be as easy to carry around and read as paperback books, but **definitely** not yet). Before I print out a test copy, I always reduce the size of all four page margins, from the default to the smallest margins that my printer can handle. This puts more text on each page, so sometimes it will save me a sheet of paper; but the **real** reason for doing this is because it changes the shape of the paragraphs, so they don't look the same as they used to.

*continued*

## DealsGuy, *continued*

PhotoAcute Studio is a Windows based application. The Macintosh version will be released in 2007Q1. A detailed description of PhotoAcute Studio features, online help and an examples gallery are available at <http://www.photoacute.com>. You can download a free trial version. The price of the full version varies depending on supported camera types, ranging from \$19 for mobile phone cameras to \$119 for DSLR cameras with the support of RAW format and 16-bit color. Users group members get a 35% discount by going to the order page [http://www.regnow.com/softsell/nph-softsell.cgi?items=13404-1&ss\\_coupon=DGY-8JQU](http://www.regnow.com/softsell/nph-softsell.cgi?items=13404-1&ss_coupon=DGY-8JQU) which contains the discount code in the URL. The discount will be applied on the second page of the ordering procedure. This discount is good until January 31, 2007. PhotoAcute Studio 2.0 can be downloaded at: <http://www.photoacute.com/studio/download.html>

Product page URL: <http://www.photoacute.com/studio>

Direct download link:

[http://www.photoacute.com/files/PhotoAcuteStudio\\_setup.exe](http://www.photoacute.com/files/PhotoAcuteStudio_setup.exe)

### \*Got A Pocket PC? You Can Translate Languages!

LingvoSoft has released LingvoSoft Translator 2007 for Pocket PC featuring the ability to translate between English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish. It provides full-text translation of business correspondence, e-mails, letters, documentation and even the words to your favorite song! If you choose the talking version, not only will you have the

fastest translator available for Pocket PC but you'll also be able to use it to speak. With super fast and super smart search functions, a customizable interface and three different ways to enter text, it will even translate the contents of your device's clipboard automatically upon launching the dictionary application.

<http://www.lingvosoft.com/info/software/Translators/?refid=16179>

<http://www.lingvosoft.com>

Users Group members get a 25% discount on any LingvoSoft software title at

<http://www.lingvosoft.com/info/software/Translators/>. Simply enter your personal gift certificate code "MY8UZPF7M4" in the 'Add Gift' field of the shopping cart and click the "Add Gift" button. You should then see the discount deducted from your order's total in the shopping cart. This offer is good until December 31, 2006.

*That's it for this month. I hope to post more new announcements without discounts on my Web site before long. 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. Visit my Web site at <http://www.dealsguy.com>*

That messes with my memory and makes it easier for me to read what's **really** printed on each page.

Ideally, of course, I should have someone else proof read my articles before I submit them. If I have time, I e-mail a copy to my brother. He's an engineer but **not** a computer geek, so his advice has often been extremely useful, especially when I haven't quite managed to get my point across (except in my own mind). Unfortunately, procrastination is one of my hobbies, so I sometimes finish too close to deadline for that to be feasible. In point of fact, my brother **did** read an advance copy of my September article, and made some insightful comments, which I incorporated into the finished product as usual. However, since he can't read my mind, he didn't realize that I'd accidentally left out something I meant to include at the end. I should have seen it, but I didn't notice the omission until I read the newsletter PDF file. (The paragraphs had changed their shapes again, you see). So my elation at getting the front page was tempered a bit by self-recrimination for my mistake.

If you read that article, you may have thought that I took up too much space describing what I did on the job in 1997. If so, you should have seen the scads of material that I **didn't** use. There were content descriptions for each of the three data transfer text files exported by the commercial wholesale program, function descriptions for each of five custom database programs I ultimately created to process that data, and a list of reasons why it wasn't possible to convert those five programs into procedures and make them all part of a single master program. Fortunately for you, I decided it wasn't really necessary to go into that much detail. Unfortunately, when I cut all that stuff, I inadvertently also wiped out the tag line that was supposed to segue into a future article – the climax to which the whole thing had been building. If I'd left that part in, it might have taken me about a hundred words to get us to this point. Instead, it's taken over **nine** hundred. Talk about bloat.

Finally, here's the incompatible: The Windows 95 database program that I used at work to run (interpret) those programs I wrote in 1997, and that I recently used to compile the comparison program I wrote just now, is over ten years old. It still works just fine, and the new executable file it compiled for me works just fine, too. However, I have to jump through a hoop before I can use it. The file I download each day is a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. It carries the same XLS filename extension that Excel spreadsheets have always used. But Microsoft has changed the internal format of XLS files **at least** seven times. My new Windows program can't read the spreadsheet as it exists on download. I have to load the file into a current version of Excel, and re-save it in an earlier XLS format first. **Then** my new program can import the information from the spreadsheet into its input database and process the data.

You might ask; "Why don't I just upgrade my Windows 95 database program to the latest version"? My answer is; "Why the bleepity-bleep-bleep should I? I've got a program that I own free and clear that does everything I want it to do. Why should I have to **pay** for a new version that doesn't actually do anything more except read a file format that's only different due to the rapacious greed of Microsoft"? Good old Microsoft doesn't change the formats of their default output file types

with each new release of their products because of any real need for improvement. They do it because they know that most users will take the easy way and save their work in the default file types. Once enough files get sent out in the new formats, recipients will **have** to pay them for the probably otherwise unnecessary "upgrade" in order to read those files. Soon, whatever Microsoft set as the default will become the new standard. When challenged, they cover their greed by pointing to the "Save As" option in each program, but they know full well that many users will never even bother to find out what "Save As" means.

Note that I'm **not** talking about creating **new** file formats. We've come up with a lot of spectacular new stuff in the last decade, and we've needed to develop new file formats to save that new information. I'm talking about spurious changes made to already existing file formats controlled by Microsoft. We are **long** past the point where those existing file formats could safely preserve **all** the features that just about every user in the world (individual **or** corporate) will ever need in those particular areas. My own personal opinion is that we hit that point during the last of the DOS days, maybe even **before** the first GUI-centric formats developed for programs that only ran under Windows 3.1. The few super-power-users out there who actually **needed** more features from each Office "upgrade" probably weren't satisfied with the file format changes made by Microsoft, anyway. It's been my experience that the more knowledgeable a person is about the internal workings of computers and programs, the more likely it is that he or she hates Microsoft. Unless they actually work for Microsoft; then, of course, they line up to kiss Bill's feet.

I try to take a "plain vanilla" approach for the data files that I create. I save a lot of my data in text files. Every computer ever made, no matter what the operating system, can read text files at least well enough to get the data out. Even IBM mainframes, once the file is converted from ASCII to EBCDIC. (ASCII is descended from the code created to run electromechanical teletype machines, and is used by the IBM PC and just about every other computer in the world **except** for IBM mainframes. EBCDIC is descended from the code created for IBM's now-obsolete punch card systems). When a potential recipient (such as this publication) requires submissions to be in Microsoft Word's DOC format, I save my files as "Word 6.0/95" documents. It's not the oldest DOC format on the list, but I find it to be a good compromise between backward and forward compatibility.

I'd **like** to call my ideas for data-saving "The LCD Philosophy". Unfortunately for me, the electronics industry already uses those initials to mean **Liquid Crystal Display**. I would have used them to mean **Least** (or lowest) **Common Denominator**, a mathematical term for the smallest number that can be used as a common divisor for a given set of fractions. I've always considered this name to be slightly misleading, because most often it's actually a **larger** number than any of the original denominators. As an example, for the set of 1/2 and 1/3, the lowest common denominator turns out to be 6. Outside of mathematics, however, the term has come to be used in a way that fits the words perfectly, denoting the

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# How Do I Get My Home Videos into the Computer?

*Elise Edgell (eliseedgell@aol.com), North Orange County Computer Club (<http://www.noccc.org>)*

I have stacks of VHS and 8mm tapes that I want to convert to digital format before they are no longer accessible. I know that once I get the analog videos converted to digital format I can preserve them, edit them, back them up, etc. But, what technology is available to me?

First of all, let me explain that I have never been good at reading about a technology, learning all it's terms and features before I have had a chance to use the technology. When I am making a decision about software, frequently the feature, which sounded so good on the box and enticed me to purchase it, is not the feature which I really use. It often is something that I was unaware of when I initially got the program but which I use the most and like the best. An example of this is the "Reveal Codes" feature in WordPerfect.

When VCRs first came on the market, I wanted one. I heard about the pros and cons of VHS and BETA formats. I had a hard time remembering which was which. I had never used a VCR before I purchased a VHS model. I rapidly learned the different recording speeds and how they affected the quality of the image. The next VCR I purchased was a BETA format. The image quality was much better and I couldn't understand why it was not the format of choice for everyone.

Since that time, I have had a VHS camcorder, an 8mm and a Hi8. Again, the quality difference between the three formats is noticeable. I have not purchased a digital camcorder yet so I have not learned the difference between the different types of digital camcorders. When I was looking for the technology necessary to convert my precious memories to digital format I was focused on analog conversion devices.

The first analog capture device connected to the computer with a USB1 cable. That did not work well and I put the project aside for a while. I then received a ADS Instant DVD USB 2 capture device as a gift. By this time I had acquired a couple of video editing programs. I had installed them, read the documentation (much of it was incomprehensible to me without actually using the program), and attempted to capture some video from a Hi8 tape. This did not work well. I found that software programs are very touchy about which video capture device they will talk with. Fortunately, the video capture device came with capture software so I am able to transfer

my analog video to digital. But, not in the way I wanted and I am still learning the terminology.

I wanted to write this because some of my confusion may be the same as yours. The software programs say that they can "capture" both analog and digital video. They also talk about "capture card" for the digital video. It is necessary to have a "capture card" or "capture device" to take the analog information from your VHS (or other analog input) and convert it to digital information. This is usually accomplished by connecting the video-out and audio-out from your analog device (VHS player, camcorder, etc) to the input section of your capture card (this may be your video card) or external device. When you are in the process of capturing the video, the analog information is converted in the capture device to a digital format (there are several such as MPEG1 and MPEG2) and then stored on your computer. Once stored, they can be used by video editing programs or can be burned to a disk.

Please note, if you have a digital camcorder, you do not need a conversion device. The information that is on your camcorder is already in digital format. Depending on the type of camcorder the digital information may be stored on a tape, memory card, hard disk, or even on a DVD. If you cannot remove the storage device and put it into a reader on your computer then the way to transfer data is through a FireWire or USB2 connection to your computer. If you are using a video editing program to enable the transfer, there are some nice things that the program may be able to do with the data as it is received. It may automatically create chapters and provide other information that is handy when you want to edit the information (rare is the tape which cannot be improved with cutting out the unintentional video of the pavement).

There are programs which let you transfer your converted VHS tape directly to a DVD.

The reason to do this is to get the analog tapes preserved. I know that I will never have the time to edit all the old tapes I have, but I do want to preserve them. The CapWiz program which came with my ADS Instant DVD USB2 capture box has this feature. If you purchase a program that is not bundled with the capture box (or card) be sure that specific version of that program will work with your model of capture device.

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## The Good, The Bad ..., *continued*

most basic and unsophisticated level of content for whatever subject is being discussed. In other words, I try to save my files in such a way that the largest possible audience will have the greatest possible chance of reading them, now or in the foreseeable future.

Although they've chosen a different approach, the Massachusetts state government seems to agree with me, at least in principle. We'll explore that subject further in my next article.

Finally, from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia ([www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org)), here's a wake-up call for those who don't

think Linux is all that important: Linux has become increasingly common as an operating system for supercomputers. In the November 2005 TOP 500 list of supercomputers, the two fastest supercomputers in the world ran Linux. Of 500 systems listed, 371 (74.2%) ran some version of Linux, including seven of the top ten.

Speaking of Linux, here's a trivia question: There are literally hundreds of Linux releases out there right now, but every single one is the personal project of some individual, group, or company. Why has there **never** been an "official" Linux distribution? See you soon! ☐

# U3 Drives

Diane George ([digeorge@sbcglobal.net](mailto:digeorge@sbcglobal.net)), Webmaster, PC Community (<http://www.pcc.org>)

This month's column is half tips and half product review. I recently got interested in U3 drives, partly as a result of some software I saw at the Southwest PC User Group conference in San Diego in July.

What is U3 and why do I want to know? It's **not** the successor to the rock band U2. U3 is an open-standard platform that allows you to take applications and store and launch them on a flash drive. Several flash drives are offered with U3 with pre-loaded U3 applications on them. Verbatim, Memorex, Ativa and SanDisk all offer U3 smart drives. Go to <http://www.u3.com/smartdrives/default.aspx> for a list of U3 drives and more information.

The drives come with software preloaded, such as an application that will allow you to take Office documents created on your desktop computer, and work on them on another computer (also with Office installed), without a trace of the files being left on the second computer. This means that you can take your work with you without a laptop, use a computer elsewhere, like in an Internet cafe, without having to copy the files to the new computer, including your e-mail.

Other applications that come preloaded include antivirus software for the flash drive, password storage and management, SKYPE, Zinio Reader for digital magazines, ACDSsee for photo management, and Migo (more about that later). In addition, there are other free and commercial applications available at the U3 Central site that are accessed from the drive, including games.

How does this work? The flash drive has a small partition that pretends to be a CD-ROM so that your computer will autorun a launch pad that makes the rest of the drive storage accessible — did I mention that it is password protected and can be encrypted? When you start up, a launchpad for the drive is opened. You can password protect the flash drive itself so the first thing you see is a login screen. The launch pad is part of the U3 system and is the same on different brands of drive. The launchpad gives you access to the applications on the drive and is required to remove the drive — you must use the launchpad to eject the disk or you risk damaging the drive.

When you plug in the drive, your system recognizes it as a USB drive and you can see it in My Computer, as a very small 3.78 MB CD-ROM drive, that will autoplay. It also appears as a 2 GB removable drive that you can copy files on like any other flash drive. In general the device works, but I have a couple of quibbles. I have had difficulty with installation on one of my two computers and I have not yet been able to determine what the problem is. The first time I put the drive in, it caused my computer to slow to a crawl and it never did recognize the drive. Only when I had the drive inserted at startup did it allow me to use it. I have tried it on two other systems and it worked fine.

One of the software applications allows you to save selected files, Outlook email, contacts, tasks and calendar information, and creates a desktop that represents the desktop on a particular computer. You can create two of these desktops. When you take the device to another computer and launch the software, you have the choice of using either desktop. A tab is added to the top of your screen and when you click on it, you see thumbnails. (See Figure 3.) Each picture is the desktop of the other computers. When you click on one of the names or images, your desktop changes — the My Documents folder contains only the items that you brought from the other computer and your e-mail client will show the contents of your inbox and the other shortcuts are different.

I haven't figured out yet why some are the icons from the desktop of the computer I am on and some are from the computer on the flash drive. I need more time with the applications and will write a follow-up. In the meantime, these drives present some interesting possibilities and should be fun to explore.

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## How Do I Get Home Videos into My Computer?, *continued*

Expect to put in some time learning the terminology. Read carefully what the program will do and what it will not do so that you are realistic in your expectations. Keep in mind that what you are working with, once you have your video in digital format, is a file. The file can be in several different formats with different characteristics. What I mean is that, just like with digital photos, a file format which is really compressed will not look as good as a larger file with more information. When dealing with video information, you must remember that you need a lot of storage on your disk and it really helps to have a disk with fast response time.

A fast computer with lots of RAM is also important. It is only recently that video editing has become practical for the home user. Before really large, fast hard disk storage was affordable, the home user was very limited in the size of file that could be edited. With today's fast computers, inexpensive

RAM, large storage disks, and inexpensive DVD writers it should be within the reach of many home users to be able to preserve valuable analog tapes. Plus, be able to make home movies from them that friends and family are willing to watch.

If you are planning to buy a new computer in the near future, keep in mind the requirements for video editing as well as the requirements for VISTA. Fortunately, the requirements for the Ultimate version of VISTA are also good for video editing purposes.

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# How Many Songs Will My MP3 Player Hold?

Cass Lewart (rlewart@monmouth.com)

Another crazy marketing scheme in the fight for dominance of the MP3 player market is the “My player will hold that many thousands of songs” blurb. And if a maker of an MP3 player claims it can hold more songs than that of a competitor, then that MP3 player is better. Well, it is not always true. An MP3 player has a certain capacity given in Megabytes (Mb) or in Gigabytes (Gb), where 1 Gb = 1,024 Mb. A “song”, or any kind of audio material requires a certain storage space, which depends on audio quality and duration of the recording. Audio material is stored in compressed form using special formats, most popular being MP3 and WMA. The original audio is typically compressed by a factor of 10. The quality of the compressed audio file depends on the bit rate at which it is played measured in kilobits/second (kb/sec). A good spoken word recording requires at least 24 kb/sec, a good music recording requires at least 96 kb/sec. This of course assumes that the original, non compressed material is of good quality. A simple formula which I derived relates the recording/play bit rate in kb/sec, play time in minutes and the approximate resulting file size in Mb. The formula is shown below:

$$\text{Play time} * \text{bit rate} / 140 = \text{File size}$$

For example, the file size of a 30 minute good quality MP3 spoken word recording with bit rate of 24 kb/sec will be approximately  $30 * 24 / 140 = 5.1$  Mb.

Counting storage capacity of an MP3 player in terms of “songs” of 4 Mb each (a 4 Gb iPod claims to hold 1,000 songs) is thus meaningless. It all depends on play quality and duration of the “song”.

When selecting an MP3 player do not just consider its capacity in terms of “songs” or Gigabytes. Moving audio material back and forth between the MP3 player and your computer is

very easy on generic players. It is more difficult on proprietary players such as iPod. If you can move your material easily, then the player capacity is immaterial as you just transfer to the player a limited number of recordings in which you are currently interested.

Also consider other important features when selecting an MP3 player:

A drop-in alkaline or rechargeable inexpensive AAA battery will never let you down as long as you carry a spare or two in your pocket. It will last about 10 hours and cost 25c to \$1.50 for a rechargeable, which will be good for at least a year. A built-in battery requires about 3 hours of recharging after 12 hours of use. It will last for about a year and is expensive and inconvenient to replace — Apple asks that you send in your iPod and then charges \$60 + shipping.

Also consider other nice features available in many MP3 players such as a built-in mike for voice recording, FM radio capability, ease of use and last but not least — price. ☹



## 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 (pamphlet-size booklets)

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

## Advertising Rates

	Rates		Specifications
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# A Surprising New Search Engine

Sandy Berger ([sandy@compukiss.com](mailto:sandy@compukiss.com)), Compu-KISS ([www.compukiss.com](http://www.compukiss.com))

Google has been my search engine of choice for several years, but recent developments have made me change my allegiance to a new search engine.

Perhaps you read about it. A few weeks ago, 20 million of AOL's customers Web search queries appeared on the Web. These included the user's ID, the query they typed into the search engine, and other information.

Newsmakers picked up on the story because of some of the dramatic Web searches performed. For instance, AOL user 2708 searched for "I hate my ex boyfriend," "how to humiliate someone," "free angry stuff to send to an ex lover," and "makehimpay.net". User 17556639 looked for even more vicious information with searches on "how to kill a wife", "photo of dead people," "decapitated photos," "wife killer," and "steak and cheese." (Guess they got hungry.)

After the sensationalism died down, many people realized that the true story was that search engines are keeping a collection of information that can lead to a personal dossier of an individual. AOL's information included user numbers that were identified by cookies, but users can also be identified by Internet addresses, bringing them closer to our true identities.

All of the big search engines keep such information. Recently Google, AOL, Microsoft, and Yahoo were subpoenaed to turn over information of this type to the Justice Department. Of the big four, only Google refused to release the information.

In response to this story, one search engine, Ixquick, immediately issued a press release stating that they are taking steps to provide privacy protection for their users. Ixquick stated that after a search, they will immediately and permanently delete all personal search details.

I was impressed by a company who thought that protecting our privacy was more important than gleaning information from our searches and selling data for marketing purposes. I had never heard of Ixquick, but I immediately surfed over to [www.ixquick.com](http://www.ixquick.com). I was impressed with what I found.

Ixquick, which is owned by a Dutch company, is a metasearch engine. That means that it searches several databases to get its search results. Ixquick uses Yahoo/Alta vista, Gigablast, Ask

Jeeves/Teoma, Open Directory and 7 other search engines. It is available in 18 languages.

Ixquick marks the search results with stars, one star for every search engine that chooses that particular Web site as one of the ten best results for your search. This effectively gives you the relevancy of the search results. Also, the Ixquick interface is clean and easy to use. It allows you to quickly choose if you want your search to find only one of the words of your search phrase, all of the words, or the exact phrase. There is also a place where you can easily enter words that you may want to eliminate from your search. You don't need to fool around with pluses, minuses, or quotation marks as you do with some popular search engines.

I was extremely impressed with the Ixquick's International Phone Directory.

Just type in a name and city or state and you can actually find people. Ixquick's Reverse Directory can tell you who's calling when you enter a telephone number. With Bigfoot and most other people directories now charging for people searches, this is an extremely useful free search tool.

Ixquick also has a comparison shopping service and an image search feature. Like Google and others, Ixquick offers a search toolbar.

After using Ixquick for a few weeks, I can honestly say that I have been very happy with the results. Using it in conjunction with Google gives you a wonderfully wide selection of search results. If, however, you want to really keep your searches private, then you will want to use Ixquick exclusively. After the recent AOL debacle, I feel that Ixquick is providing a great service not only as a search engine, but also as a leader on privacy issues.

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## Tech News

Sue Crane ([scrane5@socal.rr.com](mailto:scrane5@socal.rr.com)), Editor, Big Bear Computer Club (<http://www.bigbearcc.org>)

### Amazon Reveals Windows Vista Pricing

<http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1895,2010150,00.asp> Preorder prices posted on the Amazon.com Website, Windows Vista Home Basic will retail for \$199, while an upgrade to this version will cost \$99.95, with \$89.95 for an additional upgrade license. Vista Home Premium is priced on Amazon.com at \$239, with an upgrade costing \$159 and an additional upgrade license for \$143.00, while Vista Business costs \$299 retail, \$199 for an upgrade and \$179 for an extra upgrade license.

### New Skype Phone Doesn't Need PC

<http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1895,2010681,00.asp> Skype announced a new cordless phone on Thursday that sends and receives Skype calls just like a landline, but without the need for a computer. The new Philips VOIP841 plugs into a standard RJ-11 home phone jack, as well as into an RJ-45 broadband connection jack. It can send and receive Skype calls as well as calls from a regular home phone number, but you do have to have a broadband connection.

*Continued on page 17*

# Enter the Dragon: Comodo Free Desktop Security Tools

Rob Rice ([articles@isp.com](mailto:articles@isp.com)), Computer Club of Oklahoma City (<http://www.ccokc.org>)

Every once in a while a company manages to push my button. Symantec is the latest after having bought my beloved Sygate Personal Firewall and then immediately yanked it from the market. Having paid for the Pro version, I can no longer install it; since it requires authorization - I am dead in the water.

Still, a nice thing about capitalism is that where there is a void, it will get filled. Enter the Comodo Group, with not only a worthy alternative to Sygate's Personal Firewall, but a whole suite of security products for free!

The Comodo Group gets its name from the Komodo dragon, a metaphor for the Internet, with a "C" instead of a "K" to acknowledge a commitment to commerce, communications, and dot com. Comodo is the "2nd largest Certification Authority for ensuring Identity Trust & Assurance" on the Internet. In other words, they are the folks that make that little yellow padlock on your web browser work. The Comodo Group is the real deal with headquarters in Jersey City, USA (Yes, they have a real mailing address unlike some so-called security products offered on the web) with global offices in UK, Norway and India.

So why is Comodo giving away product? While the company does more than just issue SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) certificates, but apparently they feel the need to build brand identity. According to Melih Abdulhayoglu, the President and CEO - Comodo Group:

"If we are able to write good software and give such valuable software for free, our name will be known in the market place, we will build our Comodo brand and this brand will be associated with security. And this will help us sell more Digital Certificates and other services we have as we will have a big brand!"

Simple enough! So what are they offering? Again from the Comodo website:

- Comodo Firewall
- Comodo Verification Engine
- Comodo AntiVirus
- Comodo AntiSpam
- Comodo BackUp
- Comodo iVault
- Comodo Personal Firewall 2.0
- FREE lifetime license

Sleek design gives an at-a-glance overview of your security status:

- **Highlights** - displays the latest Comodo news and information about updates
- **Traffic** - high visual overview of the last minute of traffic history in terms Applications and Network protocols
- **System info** - information about your system in terms of the Hardware and details of all network Adapters in your computer.
- **View Alerts** - Get in-depth details on the high severity risks that the firewall has detected.

- **Update License** - One click activation of your free-for-a-lifetime Comodo license.
- **Computer Security level** - customize firewall security by using the slider to quickly move between preset security levels
- **Check the security** of your firewall's configuration with Comodo's online vulnerability scanner, HackerGuardian.
- **Security Monitoring** - get an immediate heads up on the status of the firewall's major components.
- **Protection strength** - your overall security level determined by the settings you have chosen

## Comodo Firewall

Rated by PC Magazine Online as an Editor's Choice, constantly monitors and defends your PC from internet attacks. It's easy to install and use and passes the industry's most stringent firewall "leak" tests. Unlike some other 'free' firewalls, this is not a stripped down version but is the full, completely functional product. This free solution comes complete with continual updates that are free forever!

System Requirements:

- Windows 2000 (ALL)
- Windows XP (ALL)
- Windows 2003 (ALL)
- 64 MB available RAM
- 32 MB of available free hard disk space

## Comodo Verification Engine

FREE for life. VerificationEngine anti-phishing and identity assurance tool for Microsoft Windows offers an extremely simple way to differentiate legitimate web sites from fraudulent ones. Place your mouse cursor over a site logo. If it is authentic, a green border will appear around your browser. So if you really wish to be sure you are looking at the real [www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com) site rather than a clever imitation created to steal your identity, install VerificationEngine now!

## Comodo AntiVirus

FREE lifetime license.

- **On Access Scanning** - Always on, real-time protection against threats more...
- **On Demand scanning** - Take control by running instant scans on any file, folder or drive more...
- **Automatic Daily Updates** - Up-to-the second protection against the latest threats more...
- **Email Scanning** - Automatic checking and disinfection of incoming and outgoing mail more...
- **Process Monitoring** - Continuously scans your PC's memory for viruses more...
- **Worm Blocker** - Monitors and intercepts suspicious mass mailing attempts more...
- **In-depth Reporting** - Comprehensive logs of all scans performed more...

*Continued*

- **Pro-active virus defense** - Submit suspicious files for analysis by the Comodo AntiVirus team more...
- **Easy, User Friendly interface** - Sleek design provides fingertip access to all major settings more...
- **Scan Scheduling** - Timetable scans to run when you choose more...
- **Dedicated Quarantine Facility** - Isolate suspected files where they can do no harm more...
- **Advanced Heuristic Detection Engine** - Protection against unknown viruses more...
- **Scan Removable Devices** - CD's, DVD's, external drives, USB devices, digital cameras more...
- **Scans Network drives** - protection from any potential threats on your network more...
- **Scans Compressed Files** - there's no hiding place for viruses, even in a .zip file more...
- **Does not hog system resources** - Maximum Protection with no slow down of your PC more...

### System Requirements

Windows XP (SP2) / Windows 2000 (SP4 or later)  
50 MB available space on your hard drive  
128 MB RAM  
Intel Pentium 300 MHz processor (or equivalent)  
**Note** - Not compatible with Windows 9x systems

### Comodo AntiSpam

FREE license

Install Comodo AntiSpam for free and reclaim your inbox. Our powerful challenge-response technology authenticates the sender of every mail – a system that automated spam bots can't get around. This is the full product, not stripped down "cripple ware" and is free forever to the end user.

- Total Spam Elimination
- No hassle set-up
- Sender based authentication
- Thwart the Spam Bots
- Works with your existing setup
- Automatically authenticate your address book
- Instantly migrate custom black and white lists
- One click Bandwidth Optimization
- Pro-active Spam defense
- Maximum Protection – Minimum Drain
- Independent Authentication Database
- Independent Quarantine Database
- Protects all your email accounts
- Stay spam free WHEREVER you access your mail from
- Never miss a message
- Failproof
- E-Commerce friendly
- You're protected – stay protected!!

### System Requirements

Operating Systems: Windows 2000/XP  
Processor: Pentium 100 MHz or higher,  
System RAM: 32 MB RAM  
Hard Drive: 21 MB of HDD free space  
Internet Browser: IE 6.0 or above.

### Comodo Backup

FREE lifetime license

Comodo Backup is the straightforward and powerful utility that allows users to quickly and easily create backup copies of critical files. Free of charge, it includes complete file and folder-duplication to local network drives and FTP servers, intelligent incremental backups, e-mail reporting, extensive report logs, real time back ups with "synchronization" mode, advanced rule-based filtering, flexible scheduling of backups, space-saving archiving capabilities, and more.

- Easily backup files or folders anywhere on your computer, network, CD-RW or FTP server
- Protect yourself against ever losing those critical files that took hours to create
- Quickly recover your data in the event of data loss
- Schedule backups to run automatically at a time that suits you
- Synchronized backup feature - save a file and it gets copied instantly
- Send E-mail notifications to team members about the status of a backup job
- Save Disk space by compressing your backups as ZIP files
- Configure in minutes with our intuitive interface

### System Requirements

Windows XP (Service Pack 1 or later) or  
Windows 2K (Service Pack 3 or later)  
Intel Pentium IV with 133 MHz processor  
64 MB RAM  
12 MB free hard drive space  
Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.01 or above

### Comodo iVault

FREE license

iVault saves time by providing instantaneous logins to any username/password secured web pages such as online banking and email account sites. It also doubles up as a 256 bit secure storage for private and confidential information such as credit card details and social security numbers and protects against the very latest key-logging Trojan Horse viruses.

- Instantly login to your favorite websites and applications
- Speed up surfing - No more forgotten passwords
- Single point of storage for all your confidential information
- 256 bit encryption of credit card and bank account details

*continued on page 16*

# The Part of Backup Nobody Mentions

Vinny La Bash ([vlabash@comcast.net](mailto:vlabash@comcast.net)), Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc (<http://www.spcug.org>)

There are dozens if not hundreds of ways to backup your data, but we're not going to talk about that. We're going to discuss the most important part of doing a backup, the part that is hardly ever mentioned. Do you believe that your backup is a sound copy of your data? Would you be at ease if all your files suddenly disappeared from your computer, and all you had was your backup to restore them? If your confidence fizzled to zero, what's the problem?

You may have developed the most sophisticated and comprehensive backup scheme the computer world has ever seen, but you won't ever know if it's any good unless you test it. Without a valid method of testing, you can have no confidence in your backups. There are many things that can go wrong with a backup, some beyond your control, some not.

- Perhaps one day you were in too much of a hurry, and you made a backup of one folder instead of your entire system as you planned. Hmm, no wonder that backup completed so fast. Your backup disk got exposed to a magnetic field and scrambled all your data.
- The CD containing your data was left in the car, and excessive heat warped the media, making it unreadable.
- You encrypted your backup and lost the password to restore it.
- You upgraded your backup software, and now it can't read your old backups.
- Your new upgraded backup software program becomes corrupted, and you can't make a new backup or restore an old one.
- Your new backup program has a great innovative file compression scheme. However, it turns out that it compresses better than anyone expected.

- You upgrade your Windows Operating System and your backup software no longer works. (Rare, but it happens).

Let's stop here before you get too depressed to make another backup. What's important is to understand that a great many things can go wrong even with the best backup methods.

The only true test of your backup is to do a restore and see if it works. Does this mean you have to erase all your files, and then run a restore from your backup media? No. Fortunately, there are less chancy ways of verifying your backup data.

One thing you can do is install a second hard drive and restore your data files to the second disk. If your original disk has enough capacity, you can partition it into at least two sections, and restore into one of the new partitions. Hard drives have become almost dirt cheap, so this is not particularly expensive.

Another thing you can do is make at least three backups and store them in three different locations for safety. Keep one copy at home, but in a different room than your computer. Store a second copy at your office or a friend's house, and do the same for him or her. The third copy could be in a safe deposit box or similar secure location.

If you feel that such measures are not necessary, ask yourself if you are ready to perform the ultimate test. Would you feel totally at ease erasing your hard disk today and restoring it from your backups? If not, then think again.

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## Comodo, *continued*

- Secure Password Generator instantly creates complex passwords
- Supports multiple users on a single machine
- Anti Keylogging feature- stop hackers monitoring your personal data
- 'Drag 'n' drop' interface -Windows ease of use

Comodo i-Vault can protect and manage:

- Website password details
- Software access passwords
- Credit card numbers and PIN details
- Bank Account Details
- Telephone banking codes
- E-Mail account passwords
- Computer logon passwords
- Personal Contact details
- Cell Phone PIN codes
- And much more..

Phew! That is a lot of stuff! And I must admit I have yet to test all of these free products. Not for a lack of desire but because we are talking about six programs! I will say that I am about half way through my testing of the firewall product and it does seem to perform as advertised. But don't wait around for me, grab these six freebies and let me know what you think of them!

Thanks Comodo!

Comodo - <http://www.comodogroup.com/>

Computer Club of Oklahoma City - <http://www.ccokc.org/>

PC Magazine Article on Comodo Firewall - <http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,1895,1969485,00.asp>

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# SIG News

## PHP?

Anyone interested in a new PHP SIG (Interpreted Script Programming Language), please get in touch with John Raff ([jraff@comcast.net](mailto:jraff@comcast.net)). PHP is a widely-used general-purpose scripting language that is especially suited for Web development and can be embedded into HTML. If you are new to PHP and want to get some idea of how it works, try the introductory tutorial (<http://us2.php.net/tut.php>). ☞

## NJ Gamers

Gregg McCarthy ([greggmc@optonline.net](mailto:greggmc@optonline.net))

<http://www.NJGamers.com>

[www.lanparty.com](http://www.lanparty.com)

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

BYOC - Bring your own computer

BYOF - Bring your own food.

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

## Window Pains

John Raff ([jraff@comcast.net](mailto: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.

**November 17:** How to Backup Your PC, Bill Brown. ☞

## Best Choice Investment Activity

Norm Wiss ([cut.up@verizon.net](mailto:cut.up@verizon.net))

[http://www.acgnj.org/groups/sig\\_bcinvest.html](http://www.acgnj.org/groups/sig_bcinvest.html)

This is a new event to ACGNJ. They will be using the Best Choice software for real-time trading. This new investing group had been previously meeting in South Amboy and has been in existence for almost a year. They are expected to join ACGNJ as members. **The group meets the first and third Tuesday of the month from 10:30 AM to 2:30 PM** at the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad building. ☞

## Genealogy

Frank Warren ([kb4cyc@webwarren.com](mailto:kb4cyc@webwarren.com))

<http://www.webwarren.com/kb4cyc/gensig.shtml>

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](mailto:gensig@webwarren.com). To subscribe, include the line "subscribe gensig" in the body of the message. **Next meeting in January. No meetings in November or December.** ☞

## LUNICS (Linux/Unix)

Andreas Meyer ([lunics@acgnj.org](mailto: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 November 6.** ☞

## 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 languages and OS need to be investigated, examined and tested; Windows, Linux, UNIX, DEC, Vax, HP etc. Intel-PC, Motorola-MAC etc. **Our next meeting November 8.** ☞

## MCSE

(Microsoft Certified Professional Study Group)

Gregg McCarthy ([greggmc@optonline.net](mailto:greggmc@optonline.net))

[http://www.acgnj.org/groups/sig\\_mcp.html](http://www.acgnj.org/groups/sig_mcp.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 Wednesday of each month from 7 pm to 10 pm.** Attendees are encouraged to bring a PC properly configured with NT, 10BaseT network card, and Netmeeting 2.1. For more info, reading assignments, course schedule, visit our website. ☞

**Java***Mike Redlich (mike@redlich.net)*<http://www.javasig.org>

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.

**October 10:** Using Dependency Injection in the Spring Framework.

**November 14:** To be announced ☞

**C/C++ Programming***Bruce Arnold (barnold@blast.net)*<http://www.blast.net/barnold>

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.

**October:** Security Log: a simple text processing program. It uses the latest C++ compiler in Microsoft's Visual Studio 2005 so there are many new things to learn. The program may also be compiled using the free C++ Express compiler.

Here's the background: The my Netgear router provides the option of sending a Security Log to my email address. My Eudora software drops it into a mail file (a simple text file) determined by a simple filter. The data file is about 250,000 lines long and consists of a list of URL's that have been sent messages from my computer over the past year. Here's an example line,

[ALLOW:srx.main.ebayrtm.com] Source: 192.168.0.2 Friday, 22 Sep 2006 23:13:40

It's ridiculous to try to decipher this file because of the huge number of entries. The program reads the text file and creates a list of unique URL's that have been contacted. It also counts the number of times that each URL has been hit. It then presents a display sorted by either URL or count.

The program demonstrates reading text files, parsing lines of data, and creating a listing. It also allows copying the listing to the clipboard for saving or printing.

**Our next meeting November 21.** ☞

**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. ☞

**DotNet***Jim Wong*<http://www.jimw.net/acgnj/>

**Next meeting: November 16** ☞

**Investing***Norm Wiss (cut.up@verizon.net)*[http://www.acgnj.org/groups/sig\\_investment.html](http://www.acgnj.org/groups/sig_investment.html)

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: November 9.** ☞

**Main Meeting**<http://www.acgnj.org/groups/mainmeet.html>*Evan Williams (nhpressgo@blast.net)*

**November 3:** How to Create Photo CDs/DVDs, Manny Goyenechea

**Online Auction***Bill Brown (onlineauction@acgnj.org)*

Due to overwhelming response to a seminar held on April 7, the membership decided to form a permanent group. The group will meet on the first and third Wednesdays of the Month at 7:30 p.m.

There are eight topics for discussion. We will cover all types of online auctions, as members choose. During the meeting, online presence will be established and examples will be given on screen.

1. Getting Started: Different Auctions Registering. Buyer account, sellers account Navigating websites.
2. Buying and selling. An overview of searching, sniping, snuffing.
3. Finding things to sell Gnoming, Clearance, Bargain Bins, Flea Markets, Garage Sales, Solicitation
4. Listing an item. Choosing a category, Setting a Price. Buy it now strategies
5. Maintaining your sales. Revising and re-listing.
6. Collection and payment follow ups.
7. Packaging, shipping, Inventory management.
8. Going further. Ebay express, stores ☞

**Layman's Forum***Matt Skoda (som359@aol.com)*<http://www.acgnj.org/groups/laymans.html>

**We meet on the second Monday** of the month 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. ☞

# Guru Corner

Jo-Anne Head ([tinrock@aol.com](mailto:tinrock@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.

	<b>Hardware</b>	
	Scott Vincent	973-539-8169
	<b>Software</b>	
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
	<b>Operating Systems</b>	
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
	<b>Macintosh</b>	
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:

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

Telephone: 561-488-4465, e-mail: [hgoodman@prodigy.net](mailto: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.

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

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

New Member  Renewal  Address Change

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ URL \_\_\_\_\_

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

Other Local Computer Groups		
<b>Princeton Macintosh User Group:</b> 7:15 pm 2nd Tuesday, Jadwin Hall, A-10, Washington Rd, Princeton, (609) 252-1163, <a href="http://www.pmug-nj.org">www.pmug-nj.org</a>	<b>NY/NJ/CT Relational Database User Group:</b> Corporate and independent users. (212) 839-0125	<b>New York PC:</b> 3rd Thurs, 7 pm, PS 41, 116 W 11th St. For info call hotline, (212) 533-NYPC, <a href="http://www.nyipc.org">http://www.nyipc.org</a>
<b>Computer Education Society of Philadelphia:</b> Meetings & Workshops at Jem Electronics, 6622 Castor Ave, Philadelphia PA. <a href="http://www.cesop.org/">www.cesop.org/</a>	<b>Brookdale Computer Users Group:</b> 7 pm, 3rd Friday, Brookdale Community College, Bldg MAN Rm 103, Lincroft NJ. (732)-739-9633. <a href="http://www.bcug.com">www.bcug.com</a>	<b>NJ Macintosh User Group:</b> 8 pm, 3rd Tuesday, Allwood Branch Library, Lyall Rd, Clifton NJ. (201) 893-5274 <a href="http://www.njmug.org">http://www.njmug.org</a> .
<b>PC User Group of So. Jersey:</b> 2nd Mon., 7 pm, Trinity Presb. Church, 499 Rt 70 E, Cherry Hill, NJ. L. Horn, (856) 983-5360 <a href="http://www.pcugsj.org">http://www.pcugsj.org</a>	<b>Hunterdon Computer Club:</b> 8:30 am, 3rd Sat, Hunterdon Medical Center, Rt 31, Flemington NJ. <a href="http://www.hunterdoncomputerclub.org">www.hunterdoncomputerclub.org</a> , (908) 995-4042.	<b>NY Amateur Computer Group:</b> 2nd Thurs, 7 pm, Rm 806 Silver Bldg, NYU, 32 Waverly Pl, NYC. <a href="http://www.nyacc.org">http://www.nyacc.org</a>
<b>Morris Micro Computer Club:</b> 2nd Thurs., Bill Traywick, (201) 635-5393	<b>Central Jersey Computer Club:</b> 8 pm, 4th Friday, Rm 74, Armstrong Hall, Trenton St. College. Rich Williams, (609) 466-0909.	<b>NJ PC User Group:</b> 2nd Thurs, Monroe Rm at Wyckoff Public Library, 7 pm. Maureen Shannon, (201) 853-7432, <a href="http://www.njpcug.org">www.njpcug.org</a>
<b>Philadelphia Area Computer Society:</b> 3rd Sat, 12 noon Main Meeting, groups 8 am-3 pm. Upper Moreland Middle School, Hatboro PA. (215) 842-9600. <a href="http://www.pacsnet.org">www.pacsnet.org</a>	<b>Fairlawn Computer Club:</b> Last Monday, Fairlawn Senior Citizen Center. Joe Mathias ( <a href="mailto:fair.lawn.computer.club@juno.com">fair.lawn.computer.club@juno.com</a> )	<b>Princeton PC Users Group:</b> 2nd Monday, Lawrenceville Library, Alt Rt 1 & Darrah Lane, Lawrenceville, Paul Kurivchack (908) 218-0778, <a href="http://www.ppcug-nj.org">http://www.ppcug-nj.org</a>
<b>Workshop, Hands-On:</b> 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

**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](mailto: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 1 for May issue.)



<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.

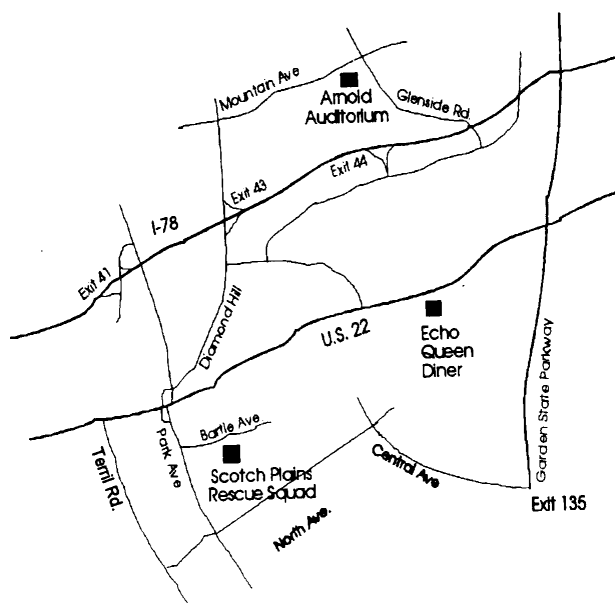
**PC Talk**, Sunday from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., 1210 AM Philadelphia. 1800-876-WPEN, Webcast at <http://www.pctalkweb.net>.

### MarketPro Shows

<http://www.marketpro.com/>

**June 3-4:** NJ Convention Center, Edison

**June 24-25,** Meadowlands Expo Center Secaucus



### 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. ☐



## Light Bulbs Going Organic

[http://articles.techrepublic.com.com/2100-22\\_11-6111872.html?tag=nl.e019](http://articles.techrepublic.com.com/2100-22_11-6111872.html?tag=nl.e019) The Ewing, N.J., company — along with General Electric, Osram Opto Semiconductors and others — is tinkering with the idea of transforming organic light-emitting diodes, thin sheets of plastic that emit light, into a source of room lighting. Pioneer and Samsung Electronics already use OLEDs for screens on consumer electronics products. By increasing the size of the sheets and the brightness, researchers think the material could become an energy-efficient substitute for the incandescent light bulb.

## Cars with Depth Perception

[http://news.com.com/Honda+investing+in+chips+to+help+cars+see/2100-11389\\_3-6117385.html](http://news.com.com/Honda+investing+in+chips+to+help+cars+see/2100-11389_3-6117385.html) Honda believes Canesta's chips could help drivers know how close they are to other parked cars, pedestrians, and get other similar, useful information. Automakers are also examining ultrasonics (sound waves) or stereoscopic technologies to give drivers better information about their surroundings.

## Homemade Car Gets 105 mpg.

[http://news.com.com/2061-11200\\_3-6118875.html?tag=nl.e703](http://news.com.com/2061-11200_3-6118875.html?tag=nl.e703) Inventor Jory Squibb combines environmentally friendly products and do-it-yourself gadgetry with the "Moonbeam," a DIY car that he claims can get up to 105 miles per gallon. The project took about \$2,500—and 1,000 hours—to complete. Check out the step-by-step instructions on his Web site: <http://mysite.verizon.net/vze6omtd/jorysquibb/id1.html>

## Gas from manure.

[http://news.com.com/Gas+from+manure+Big+plant+to+open/2100-1008\\_3-6119213.html](http://news.com.com/Gas+from+manure+Big+plant+to+open/2100-1008_3-6119213.html)

Microgy plans to start operating its first two thermophilic digesters — large, heated vats in which microbes turn large quantities of manure into fuel.

## Canon to recall copiers that can catch fire.

Japan's Canon will recall more than 140,000 personal copiers made in Japan between 1987 and 1997 due to a faulty connection involving the power cord.

## Free PDF Books From Google.

Google Book Search now offers PDF files of scanned books that can be downloaded and printed for free. Readers can find the books by choosing the "Full view books" option on the Google Book Search home page before they activate their search. Once they have chosen a book from the results page, a download button is clearly visible on the top-right corner of the page. Just be sure it doesn't cost you more to print the book than it would to purchase it!

[http://news.com.com/Google+These+books+are+free/2100-1032\\_3-6110950.html?tag=nl.e703](http://news.com.com/Google+These+books+are+free/2100-1032_3-6110950.html?tag=nl.e703)

*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>)

### Wednesday, November 1, 2006

7:30 P.M. - Online Auction, Bill Brown ([onlineauction@acgnj.org](mailto:onlineauction@acgnj.org))

### Friday, November 3

8 P.M. - Main Meeting, Evan Williams ([nhpressgo@blast.net](mailto:nhpressgo@blast.net)).

### Monday, November 6

8 P.M. - Lunics (Linux/Unix). Andreas Meyer ([lunics@acgnj.org](mailto:lunics@acgnj.org)), cancelled.

### Tuesday, November 7

10:30 A.M. - Best Choice Investing, Ed Mass ([edwardamass@hotmail.com](mailto:edwardamass@hotmail.com)) and Joe Kendelski ([jdkendelski@optonline.net](mailto:jdkendelski@optonline.net))

### Wednesday, November 8

7 P.M. - WebDev SIG, Evan Williams

### Thursday, November 9

8 P.M. - Investing, Norm Wiss ([cut.up@verizon.net](mailto:cut.up@verizon.net)).

### Friday, November 10

6 P.M. to 5 A.M.- NJ Gamers. Gregg McCarthy ([greggmc@optonline.net](mailto:greggmc@optonline.net)), 732-721-6507. Break 8 to 10 P.M.

### Monday, November 13

8 P.M. - Layman's Forum, Matt Skoda ([som359@aol.com](mailto:som359@aol.com)), 908-359-8842.

### Tuesday, November 14

7:30 P.M. - Java, Mike Redlich ([mike@redlich.net](mailto:mike@redlich.net)) 908-246-0410.

### Wednesday, November 15

7:30 P.M. - Online Auction, Bill Brown ([onlineauction@acgnj.org](mailto:onlineauction@acgnj.org))

### Thursday, November 16

8 P.M. - Dot Net, Jim Wong

### Friday, November 17

8 P.M. - Window Pains, John Raff.

### Tuesday, November 21

8 P.M. - C/C++ Users, Bruce Arnold ([barnold@blast.net](mailto:barnold@blast.net)), 908-735-7898

### Tuesday, November 21

10:30 A.M. - Best Choice Investing, Ed Mass ([edwardamass@hotmail.com](mailto:edwardamass@hotmail.com)) and Joe Kendelski ([jdkendelski@optonline.net](mailto:jdkendelski@optonline.net))

### Thursday, November 23

8 P.M. - Genealogy SIG, Frank Warren

### Tuesday, November 28

Board of Directors ☐

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