Lest We Forget

by A. P. C. Nerd (ACGNJ)

While the ACGNJ was on summer hiatus, a sad anniversary passed. It's an occasion that should be declared a world holiday, with a momentous name like; "International Cosmic Injustice Day". July 11, 2007 marked the 13th year since the death of Dr. Gary Arlen Kildall. He was the ***real*** "Father of the Personal Computer Revolution"; the true progenitor of all things now credited to the Great God Gates. I'm not going to say anything further here, since I don't want to get the club (or myself) sued. However, if you want to see Gary get a little bit of his own back (from beyond the grave); follow the Groklaw link below (© 2003-2007 by Pamela Jones) to a report about a recently dismissed lawsuit — For History's Sake: Paterson v. Little Brown *www.groklaw.net/article.php?story=20070730170729505*.

In addition to the main text, that report contains a lot of user comments; and many interesting additional links as well. I'm only going to list two of them. The first is by our very own club founder (copyright 1995 by the ACGNJ): The Gary Kildall Legacy, by Sol Libes *http://www.kegel.com/remedy/archive/newsx011.html*

The second is a video from the Internet Archive (*www.archive.org*), released under the Creative Commons License. According to their home page; "The Internet Archive is building a digital library of Internet sites and other cultural artifacts in digital form. Like a paper library, we provide free access to researchers, historians, scholars, and the general public." Computer Chronicles Gary Kildall Special (1995) *http://www.archive.org/details/GaryKild*

This video was done as a memorial by former co-workers. (Gary had been an early co-host on the show). About this TV series, the Internet Archive said (in part); "Hosted by Stewart Cheifet, Computer Chronicles was the world's most popular television program on personal technology during the height of the personal computer revolution. It was broadcast for twenty years (1983-2002), and was seen on more than 300 television stations in the United States and in over 100 countries worldwide, with translations into French, Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic. The series had a weekly television broadcast audience of over two million viewers".

Sir Isaac Newton reportedly said; "If I have seen farther than other men, it is because I was standing on the shoulders of giants". (That's the quote as I remember reading it many years ago - a little different from the quote as it's found on the Internet today).

Let us not forget the giant whose shoulders *we* are all standing on. 💻

Gary Kildall, May 19, 1942 – July 11, 1994

http://www.acgnj.org

Founded 1975

In This Issue

Officers, Directors and Leaders

Officers			Board of Directors		
President	Mike Redlich	(908) 246-0410	Director Emeritus	Sol Libes	(609) 520-9024
Vice President	Mark Douches	(908) 889-2366	Through 2008	Bill Farrell	(732) 572-3481
Treasurer	Lela Rames			David McRichie	
Secretary	Evan Williams	(908) 359-8070		Lenny Thomas	
Past President	Frank Warren	(908) 756-7898		Malthi Masurekar	(732) 560-1534
Special Interest Groups			Through 2007	Gregg McCarthy	
.Net	Jim Wong			Arnold Milstein	(908) 753-8036
Best Choice Investment	Norm Wiss			John Raff	(973) 560-9070
C Languages	Bruce Arnold	(908) 735-7898		Norm Wiss	
Firefox Activity	David McRitchie		**Standing Committees**		
Genealogy	Frank Warren	(908) 756-1681	APCUG Rep.	Frank Warren	(908) 756-1681
Investing	Jim Cooper		Facilities	John Raff	(973) 992-9002
Java	Michael Redlich	(908) 537-4915	Financial	Mark Douches	(908) 889-2366
Layman's Forum	Matthew Skoda	(908) 359-8842	Historian	Lenny Thomas	
LUNICS	Andreas Meyer		Membership	Mark Douches	(908) 889-2366
NJ Gamers	Gregg McCarthy		Newsletter	— open —	
Online Auction	Bill Brown		Trenton ComputerFest	Mike Redlich	(908) 246-0410
VBA & Excel	James Ditaranto	(201) 986-1104		John Raff	(973) 992-9002
Web Dev	Evan Williams	(908) 359-8070	Vendor Liaison	Bill Farrell	(732) 572-3481
Window Pains	John Raff	(973) 560-9070	Webmaster	John Raff	(973) 992-9002

ACGNJ News

Editor

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

Publisher

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

ACGNJ News is published by the Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey, Incorporated (ACGNJ), PO Box 135, Scotch Plains NJ 07076. ACGNJ, a non-profit educational corporation, is an independent computer user group. Opinions expressed herein are solely those of the individual author or editor. This publication is **Copyright © 2007 by the Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey, Inc., all rights reserved. Permission to reprint with appropriate credit is hereby given to non-profit organizations.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

E-Mail Addresses

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

Bruce Arnold	barnold@ieee.org
Bill Brown	onlineauction@acgnj.org
Jim Cooper	jim@thecoopers.org
Barbara DeGroot	bdegroot@ptd.net
Mark Douches	pcproblems@pobox.com
Bill Farrell	wfarr18124@aol.com
Sol Libes	sol@libes.com
Malthi Masurekar	masureka@umdnj.edu
Gregg McCarthy	greggmc@optonline.net
David McRichie	dmcritchie@hotmail.com
Andreas Meyer	lunics@acgnj.org
Arnold Milstein	mrflark@yahoo.com
John Raff	john@jraff.com
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	tech@evanwilliamsconsulting.com
Norm Wiss	cut.up@verizon.net

From The DealsGuy

Bob (The Cheapskate) Click (bobclick at bellsouth dot net) , Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

I've had my fill of Earthlink as an ISP. Talking to techs with bad English is frustrating, not to mention ongoing e-mail problems. The final decision came when my phone became accidentally disconnected by Bell South. After it was reconnected, but no DSL, the tech I spoke to had me unplugging and plugging wires, and finally asked me to unplug the very line I was talking on from the wall plug (I asked if she was sure before I did it), and she never called me back. Also, their price was too high. I finally decided on AT&T who offered the best deal I found, but I still have to rely on techs speaking bad English. My new e-mail address is above. I hope that strange formatting will avoid address spiders. Already I ran into poor tech support. I was three days late getting my DSL up and running because their own network had problems, and their tech support was slow getting someone to the house for further troubleshooting. They do not enter the house without a charge, but will check up to the outside box. She called the office for DSL light and I was finally in business.

*Reminder

Again, the product announcements below are written by the PR people and I edit to shorten them and try to improve on the wording. I have not tried any of these products so check their Web site carefully and do your homework.

*Lightning Fast Trades

Here's an interesting article for investors. It explains how modern technology has progressed to the point where stock trades are now processed almost at the speed of light. I found it very enlightening <*informationweek.com/Richard+Martin*>.

*File Recovery Product, Might Help

Enplase Research Corporation has announced the immediate availability of MultiStage Recovery 2.8 that will recover any file and back it up to a hard disk drive. MultiStage Recovery lets users recover all recoverable files (20 gigabytes in 20 seconds!) The program supports all Windows files systems and comes with a built-in preview for over 60 file formats. Designed as do-it-yourself data recovery software, MultiStage Recovery will restore all file types including audio, images, and documents. It supports all FAT12/VFAT/16/32 and NTFS/NTFS5 file systems used by Microsoft Windows. It helps users restore precious data if files are lost due to a virus, malicious hacker attack or an operating system crash in which a hard disk drive has not experienced physical damage, and restores files from any brand of hard disk drive and type of storage media, including hard disks, floppy disks, flash drives, and digital camera cards.

MultiStage Recovery 2.8 runs under Microsoft® NT 4.0 (with SP4), 2000, XP, 2003, Vista and costs $39.95 (US) for a single-user license. User group members get 20% off by using the coupon code 8192 (making it $31.96) at *enplase.com/pages/BuyProduct/ProductName-MultiStage+Recovery.html*. For other types of licenses, please refer to Enplase's Software Store at <*http://enplase.com/pages/Purchase.html*>. Additional information on the product, as well as a free evalu-

ation copy is available at <*http://enplase.com/*>. Product page: <*http://enplase.com/pages/MultiStage+Recovery+description.html*>.

*Help For The Sight Impaired

I saw an article in ComputerWorld about the efforts of the city of Stockholm to provide voice instructions for guiding the blind, or people with poor vision, to wherever they want to go without other help. It is a serious undertaking and sounds promising. See *computerworld.com/Mobile_and_Wireless story*.

*What About Centralizing Medical Records?

I'm sure you've read about the desire for a centralized database of medical records for every individual so doctors can have quick access to your complete records. This interesting article talks about some of the efforts *informationweek.com/story/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=199702199*. Yet, that has not even come close to fruition so far. Everybody has a different approach including the many companies trying to develop products to accomplish it. Then there's the HIPPA law, along with other concerns about confidentiality, and your medical records. I worked in a UAW retiree office for two years helping retired members with benefit problems. Most were trying to get medical bills paid. Calling insurance companies and medical centers was an exercise in frustration after the HIPPA law took effect. You had to hope for a friendly person who would try to work around that law to solve the problem, even after telephone permission from the subscriber. The office person on the other end couldn't see us both sitting there and often refused to help.

When I ran the Medistick product a few months ago (a USB Flash Drive to contain your personal medical information in PDF format for doctors to access), I thought that was a good idea, but now I'm not so sure because of the different software and office procedures used by doctors, and their efforts to keep office costs down. When I tried a new cardiologist last year I mentioned various doctors I had seen in the last few years. He wanted to contact them all for my records to do his homework. On my next visit, he had done that and most used paper records, but he gave me two CDs with medical information, saying his software was not compatible with their format. Those were extremely important medical records that were useless to him that way. I visited those offices to get my records on paper, although it was difficult to find a helpful secretary.

If I had a USB Medistick, how would a doctor want my medical information organized and formatted to be useful? It's a safe bet that few doctor's offices will put that information on your Medistick since they are concerned about the time to prepare it for you.

So far, even President Bush's intervention has had little effect on the push for centralization of medical records. We are the ones suffering the repercussions of this lack of coordination. If I could simply get a report on the office visit, or procedures performed, from that doctor's office, perhaps I could type it up myself on the Medistick if there was a centralized format. As you know, there are other problems if you want to record

Continued

doctor data for your own reference since they often aren't willing to give it to you. Also, the public is very suspicious about any governmental control of that information, and who would be exceptions to the rules, such as a prospective employer? If you got sick on a distant vacation, seems like that central database could be invaluable to a doctor or ER.

*Another Data Recovery, But Its Free!

Smart Data Recovery is an effective and powerful, easy-to-use software program that enables the recovery of lost data. Restore your important files absolutely free. Smart Data Recovery is compatible with almost all kinds of data storage devices from computer hard drives to digital cameras. It supports flash drives, floppy disks, memory sticks, PC cards, multimedia cards, and secure digital cards. Smart Data Recovery restores all sorts of files, including electronic documents and pictures. It restores files from FAT32 and NTFS hard drives and has a really simple interface with Windows operations systems.

Even if the partition table is lost, the program gives you a chance to retrieve your important files. Smart Data Recovery applies a simple yet powerful algorithm that allows restoration of your lost data quickly and effectively. Smart Data Recovery also recovers any deleted files, including MS Office files, images, MP3 and zip files!

Smart Data Recovery runs on Windows NT/2000/XP/2003/Vista. The current version is downloadable free at <*http://www.smartpctools.com*>. 820 kB. There are other interesting Freeware products listed on their Web site.

*PDF Anyone?

Acrobat is costly and there are cheaper ways to create a PDF. PDF995 can be found at <*http://www.pdf995.com*>. (There are three free downloads that are adware). People who have used the product say it produces a different file size, but works as well as other PDF software. The free versions display a sponsor page in your web browser each time you run the software. If you prefer no sponsor pages, you may upgrade by obtaining individual keys for each product at any time for $9.95 each, and also get e-mail support.

*Help For Road Warriors

I read this interesting article about using a USB flash drive on the road instead of lugging your laptop along (plug the USB flash drive into someone else's computer) <*informationweek/articleID=199906066*>. A few of the applications available are mentioned, and even the possibility of using an operating system on the flash drive, but a USB flash drive won't boot on just any computer. Some user groups have already had demonstrations on this unique technique. Best of all, after you use your special USB flash drive on another computer and remove it, it leaves no tracks because all of the applications you use are on your flash drive as well as your data.

*What's Going On?

When my monitor's on/off switch started acting up, I decided to leave my computer on full time, although I could have used a plug strip to control it. I have friends who leave their computers on 24/7 and say they prefer that method because most failures happen when you boot up. Lately, I started having a problem with the screensaver not working and my monitor seemed to be active all the time. However, I noticed that Zone Alarm was occasionally telling me about blocking an unknown action, so I began to wonder if something was working from time to time internally, therefore not letting the screensaver work.

I decided to run Spybot to see how much stuff it would find, and was surprised to see it find 117 items to remove. I had run it not long ago and it found 5 items, normal in the past. Then I noticed that I had never installed AdAware so I downloaded and installed it and let it scan the same HD. What a surprise when AdAware found 158 more items after Spybot had already scanned the drive and removed 117 items. I spend very little time on the Internet so I still wonder why so much crap is on my HD lately.

I was even more surprised when the screensaver started working normally, but that tells me that even though I have a firewall, and a router, which also has a firewall, somehow the malware has found my HD anyway. Also to my surprise, my browser history was now gone. I try to be careful about Web sites and checking my e-mail. I guess there was more than I realized running in the background. Maybe I should unplug the Internet connection when I'm not on it. By the way, my computer runs better now, although something warned me a new program was trying to install in my startup group, which I declined.

*Consumers Get Financial Help In 2009

I read an article in Twice Magazine about the government program that will help people purchase a new converter for their old TV if they can't afford a new digital TV by February 17 of 2009. I found it interesting and informative. <*http://www.twice.com/article/CA6428026.html?q=Digital+Foci*>.

*More on PDF

I previously wrote a product for creating a PDF file, but the free version used a sponsor page. I received a message from Ira Wilsker (APCUG board member) telling me about this one; "Look at CutePDF Writer which is FREE <*http://www.cutepdf.com/*>." They do offer the Pro version for $49.95. I met Ira at an APCUG event when I first started writing this column, and he gave me some good tips.

That's it for this month. I'll have more new product announcements on my Web site (most not offering a discount). Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click < bobclick at bellsouth dot net >. Visit my Web site at <http://www.dealsguy.com>. 🖳

Computing Pleasure — Free Widgets for Windows and Mac

Ira Wilsker (Iwilsker(at)apcug.net), APCUG Director

Many of us are extremely busy, and often lack the time to search the internet for items of interest. Many of us have dull and boring desktops displayed on our monitors, often using the default images of our computer or software maker. Fortunately for us, there is a free service offered by Yahoo!, called "widgets".

Widgets, also known as "gadgets" by some web services, are small programs that display a wide variety of information on the otherwise wasted space on our desktops. This information is automatically updated on a frequent basis, providing the user with current data without loading another program or browsing to a website, as widgets are displayed on the desktop on a full time basis.

Widgets is the name for the products distributed by Yahoo!, and gadgets are distributed by other web service providers. While similar in appearance and function, widgets and gadgets are generally not interchangeable, and in order to conserve system resources, users should choose gadgets or widgets, but not both.

Yahoo!'s widgets can be found at *widgets.yahoo.com*. Upon opening that page, the user is greeted with a button to download the widget engine, which includes about a dozen popular widgets, including a picture frame (displays digital photos on desktop), weather display, notepad, daily planner, maps, stock ticker, and others. The opacity of widgets can be controlled to make them nearly opaque, hiding the desktop behind the widget, to almost totally transparent, fully displaying the desktop. Widgets can be dragged and dropped anywhere on the screen. I have a lot of icons on my desktop, and my widgets cover several of the icons, but this is not a problem as I drag the widget out of the way whenever I want to access those previously covered icons.

The widget engine works on Windows XP with service pack 2, Windows 2000 with service pack 4, Vista, or Macs with OS X 10.3.9 or higher. An internet connection is necessary in order to update the widgets, and 512 megabytes (minimum) ram is recommended for improved performance.

Among the default widgets included with the widget engine, I personally have the stock ticker and weather widgets loaded and running, and also have a TV widget which displays the shows for the next few hours on the channels of my choice.

The stock ticker widget is very easy to use, and is automatically updated every few minutes. The default listings are for popular quotes, such as the Dow Jones Industrial Averages, NASDAQ, Yahoo!, and similar issues. It is very simple to modify the listing to show any desired quotes and indices, and the number of issues displayed is only limited by the space available on the desktop.

The weather widget is customizable for any city or zip code, and graphically displays the weather for five days, current conditions, temperature, and moon phases. By moving the cursor over the weather widget (sometimes it also requires a mouse click), a balloon opens which displays the humidity, barometric pressure, wind chill or heat index, wind direction and speed, and the time of most recent update.

The widget I seem to refer to the most is the TV widget called "TV Tracker", which can be downloaded from the Widget Gallery. Once downloaded and installed, a city and zip code is selected, which displays the on-air, cable, and satellite options and carriers locally available. Selecting the appropriate carrier displays a two hour grid of what is on television. Different genres, such as sports and movies are highlighted in different colors for easy viewing. Clicking on a highlighted title will "fetch" the description and details of the movie or sports event, displaying it in a sub-widget adjacent to the primary widget. There are several cable channels available to me that I simply never watch, and TV Tracker easily allows for the display of only selected channels, making the display that much easier to follow.

The widget gallery, *widgets.yahoo.com/gallery*, currently lists 4242 Windows widgets available for download, and 3977 widgets for Mac, in a variety of categories. As I type this, Yahoo! is featuring Motor Trend Magazine's "Gas Alert Savings" widget which displays a localized list of the lowest priced gas stations in the area, and is available for both Windows and Mac. Widgets can be searched by name, type, or date. The widget categories listed in the gallery are latest (4242 widgets), updates (2158 widgets), fun & games (575 widgets), date & time (470), news feeds (952), system utilities (354), sight and sound (554), geek stuff (120), cam viewers (273), widget tools (63), app (application) enhancers (109), search tools (352), and various (miscellaneous, 416). Each category may contain hundreds of different widgets, all of which are available for free download.

I have downloaded several other widgets, and selectively load them when I want, and stop them when no longer wanted. In Windows, widgets as a group can be controlled by clicking on the widget icon in the system tray, near the clock. The widget icon is a black background, with two diagonal and interlocked gears. Right clicking on the widget icon displays a comprehensive menu of options which allows the user to control the appearance and function of widgets, load and unload widgets, and otherwise control their behavior.

Some widgets that I selectively use are news feeds which display real time news headlines from hundreds of sources, live weather radar, streaming audio from dozens of radio stations from all over the globe, and many others. Although I have never used it, there is even a pregnancy calculator widget!

Widgets can be a fun adjunct to improve the satisfaction and use of our computers.

This article has been provided to APCUG by the author solely for publication by APCUG member groups. All other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above). 💻

Net Neutrality: It's Time For Us To Speak Out!

Linda Gonse (Editor(at)orcopug.org), Editor, Orange County IBM PC Users' Group(www.orcopug.org)

What is 'Net Neutrality?

Briefly, "Net Neutrality" (short for Network Neutrality) is the guiding principle that preserves the free and open Internet. "It means no discrimination. Net Neutrality prevents Internet providers from speeding up or slowing down Web content based on its source, ownership or destination," according to savetheinternet.com.

"Net Neutrality is the reason why the Internet has driven economic innovation, democratic participation, and free speech online. It protects the consumer's right to use any equipment, content, application or service on a non-discriminatory basis without interference from the network provider. With Net Neutrality, the network's only job is to move data — not choose which data to privilege with higher quality service."

Why is Net Neutrality an issue?

It's an issue because it involves the transmission of data over broadband networks (e.g. DSL or cable internet services). As the number of sites on the Internet continues to grow and the quality of data becomes more sophisticated — encompassing video and audio files and other multimedia applications — broadband service providers (generally cable and phone companies) are seeking to regulate how material flows to users through their increasingly taxed networks. For most large providers, this has come down to one general desire: They could establish a tiered system of content delivery in which companies with data-heavy content can pay a fee to the providers in return for "special treatment" in transmission. *However, advocates project, this also would allow large telecom companies to block or censor things they don't like without consequence.*

Moreover, colleges worry that research and distance education could be left behind if broadband companies are allowed to favor certain content. (The implications go far beyond open access.) The Internet-for-hire has profound implications for education, library and publishing services in general. And, for users, there is either a future of poor service, or additional costs, or some combination of the two. Low and fixed income internet users' would lose their access equality.

What is being done to preserve Net Neutrality?

In a nutshell, nothing permanent has been done to pass a law to ensure freedom of the Internet. It is still a gigantic struggle of ordinary Internet users, educational institutions, online companies—such as Amazon and Google—non-profit companies, and others, against the massive lobbying efforts of the largest telecommunication companies.

Events that have unfolded since Net Neutrality became a significant issue include:

"This past summer (2006), Congress took up the issue. Following a huge lobbying campaign by both sides, including millions spent by the cable and phone corporations, the House voted down an amendment to the Act that would have made the Federal Communications Commission responsible for enforcing neutrality. In the Senate, a similar amendment was defeated in committee, but net neutrality legislators managed to table a vote on the telecommunications bill indefinitely in hopes that they can somehow force the issue back to the forefront," Bill Moyers, a respected news commentator and journalist, said on the PBS site at *http://tinyurl.com/yhx7lz*.

In January of this year, a bill was introduced by Senators Olympia Snowe and Byron Dorgan to amend the Communications Act of 1934, which will ensure all content is treated equally and fairly on the Internet. The law also requires providers to offer consumers broadband Internet access that is not bundled with other services like phone, cable or VoIP. The title of their bill is the Internet Freedom Preservation Act.

In March, the discussion over Internet governance continued on Capitol Hill. All five FCC commissioners testified in front of the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet.

In May, the bill passed the House Judiciary Committee: 20-13.

In a June 2007 report, the Federal Trade Commission urged restraint with respect to the new regulations proposed by network neutrality advocates, noting the "broadband industry is a relatively young and evolving one," and given no "significant market failure or demonstrated consumer harm from conduct by broadband providers," such regulations "may well have adverse effects on consumer welfare, despite the good intentions of their proponents."

We've already had a taste of what can happen if telecommunication companies are handed authority to create tiered service and to have authority over what users can access. Before any decisions have been made, AT&T censored lyrics critical of Bush twice this month during Pearl Jam webcast concerts! *http://tinyurl.com/2gqv4n* This foreshadows what we can expect if Net Neutrality is not made into law permanently.

Pearl Jam appears to feel the same way. "AT&T's actions strike at the heart of the public's concerns over the power that corporations have when it comes to determining what the public sees and hears through communications media," they said.

Bill Moyers provides background and details on the subject at: *http://tinyurl.com/hfyb3*. A video segment from Moyers on America PBS show, titled "The Net at Risk," illustrates the remarkable, but unlikely, cross-section of allies on the issue at *http://tinyurl.com/yuylej*

There are also links to several articles and videos on the main page of our website: *http://www.orcopug.org*

What can you do to support Net Neutrality?

Internet Neutrality advocates are pushing for people to sign an online petition. One of them is at: *http://action.freepress.net/campaign/savethenet*. The petition says: Congress must preserve a free and open Internet. Please vote for enforceable network neutrality and keep tollbooths, gatekeepers, and discrimination off my Internet.

Continued

The Nightmare

Berry F. Phillips (bfpdata(at)1access.net), Computer Club of Oklahoma City (www.ccokc.org)

My computer growled like some prehistoric monster rebelling at being awakened from a deep slumber and then checking my financial data online almost by habit. Terror pulsed through my veins as I no longer existed; all my personal data had been deleted! I then checked to see if my credit cards were in my wallet, which gave me a momentary feeling of security that I still existed. However, the panic returned when I remembered the credit cards while having a physical reality actually have only a cyber reality. What did I do wrong? Do you suppose the last time I kicked my computer out of frustration caused this animosity? On the verge of hysteria, I shouted, "I am too young to be cyber terminated and deleted into nonexistence!"

Looking for something to save me from termination, I am very appreciative of the National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) for their contribution to this article. NCSA is a resource for cyber security awareness and education for the home user, small business, and education audiences. NCSA is a private partnership whose sponsors include the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Trade Commission, and many private-sector corporations and organizations.

"The widespread availability of computers and connections to the Internet provides 24/7 access to information, credit, financial services, and shopping. The Internet is also an incredible tool for educators and students to communicate and learn. Unfortunately, some individuals exploit the Internet through criminal behavior and other harmful acts. Criminals can try to gain unauthorized access to your computer and then use that access to steal your identity, commit fraud, or even launch cyber attacks against others. By following the recommended cyber security practices outlined here you can limit the harm cyber-criminals can do not only to your computer, but to everyone's computer.

However, there is no single cyber security practice or technological solution that will prevent online crime. These recommended cyber security practices can make a difference. The National Cyber Security Alliance's Top Eight Cyber Security Practices are practical steps you can take to stay safe online and avoid becoming a victim of fraud, identity theft, or cyber crime."

Here are the eight NCSA cyber security practices: "1. Protect your personal information. It's valuable. 2. Know who you are dealing with online. 3. Use anti virus software, a firewall, and anti-spyware software to help keep your computer safe and secure. 4. Be sure to set up your operating system and Web browser software properly, and update them regularly. 5. Use strong passwords or strong authentication technology to help protect your personal information. 6. Back up important files. 7. Learn what to do if something goes wrong. 8. Protect your children online."

Upon awakening, having dozed off in front of my computer while online, I saw my personal data that confirmed I really did exist. I am alive! I have not been deleted! It was only a nightmare. I simply must stop watching those late night horror movies, kicking my computer in frustration, and improve my online security practices to avoid cyber fireworks.

This article has been provided to APCUG by the author solely for publication by APCUG member groups. All other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above). 💻

Net Neutrality, *continued*

California Senators Boxer and Feinstein do not accept email from constituents sent through third party sites. So, people should email legislators directly, in addition to adding another name to the online petition so the numbers can be used for clout by Save The Internet.com, FreePress.com, and openinternetcoalition.com, who support the legislation. Boxer and Feinstein are already "believers" but it helps to let them know that the base on this issue is widespread.

The *SavetheInternet.com* Coalition is more than a million everyday people (partial list of members) who have banded together with thousands of non-profit organizations, businesses and bloggers to protect Internet freedom.

The Free Press is a national, nonpartisan organization working to reform the media. Through education, organizing and advocacy, it promotes diverse and independent media ownership, strong public media, and universal access to communications. The OpenInternetCoalition represents consumers, grassroots organizations, and businesses working in pursuit of keeping the Internet fast, open and accessible to all Americans.

You can find contact information for legislators throughout the U.S. at: *http://www.congress.org/congressorg/home/*.

People can read Google's Guide to Net Neutrality for Google Users at: *http://www.google.com/help/netneutrality.html* and, they should also sign up to receive updates about Internet Neutrality from one of the sites supporting this legislation, such as *http://www.savetheinternet.com/*. Once people understand the issue of Internet Neutrality, supporters should inform others about the threat to this essential freedom, and encourage their involvement.

Finally, people who believe in an open Internet need to be aware that organized supporters fighting big telecommunication businesses need money to continue and to win the fight that affects us all. *https://secure.freepress.net/05/net_neutrality* — even small donations will help this cause.

This article has been provided to APCUG by the author solely for publication by APCUG member groups. All other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above). 💻

Dumb Things to Avoid While Using Your Computer

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

To paraphrase a recent TV commercial, we all do dumb things, but doing them with your computer doesn't have to be one of them.

Most of us know that our computers work better when they are plugged into an active electrical outlet, but ask any service technician how many times he or she has encountered that situation, and you may be surprised at the answer. Every one of us, no matter how experienced, has done at least one dumb thing with our computers. Maybe you pressed a wrong combination of keys and changed a setting you didn't mean to disturb. Maybe nothing much happened or you ended up crashing your system.

Whatever does or doesn't happen, paying attention to what you're doing combined with a dash of forethought can prevent most dumb mistakes.

David Letterman has his top ten lists. I offer my top six. My list will do little to entertain you, but it will help you to be smarter about using your system.

Dumb Computer Mistake # 6: Failing to install or keep your anti-virus and anti-spyware programs up-to-date.

Some people think that keeping these programs current is too much trouble. Others quibble because sometimes they have to disable their anti-virus program to install another application.

Don't be misguided. Viruses and spyware can gum up your system to a point where your machine can be rendered useless and inoperable. You could be a victim of fraud or risk turning your machine into a "zombie" where a third party can use your computer for criminal activities. Innocent people have been arrested and charged with downloading child pornography. They had no idea that their machines were compromised for illegal purposes, yet they found themselves in deep trouble.

Dumb Computer Mistake # 5: Indiscriminately installing freeware and shareware you find on the internet.

If you are guilty of this it's only a matter of time before you get infected with a piece of sloppily written software that will cause your system to behave erratically or crash. If you follow dumb with dumber by installing pirated software, don't ask me for help.

Dumb Computer Mistake # 4: Share your files and peripherals with the immediate world.

Turn off file and printer sharing. Unless you do this you could open your computer to access by using a public wireless hotspot with your laptop. Even if you don't use a laptop be aware that Windows, by default, has administrative sharing for the root of each drive. You can turn this feature off in the Systems Administration portion of the Control Panel.

Dumb Computer Mistake # 3: Browse through the internet without a firewall.

People new to computers are most likely to make this mistake. They tend to be entirely unaware that they need a firewall because nobody told them what a firewall is or why they need one. This lack of knowledge exposes them to every virus, worm or malicious hacker in the computer universe. Fortunately, this exposure can be easily corrected. Many modems and routers have built-in firewall protection. Personal fire-

walls can easily be downloaded from the web. Go to *www.avast.com* and download one of the best all around network security programs in existence. The best part is that this excellent program is free to the general public.

Dumb Computer Mistake # 2: Picking weak passwords.

Every hacker in the known universe understands that many people use their children's or grandchildren's name as a password. Cracking that kind of security is as easy as breathing. Don't use a family member's birthday or social security number as a password either. It's the kind of information that is all too easy to obtain. Don't create passwords from a dictionary. Hackers have programs which automatically compare passwords against dictionary entries.

Passwords should be at least 8 characters long, and be a combination of upper and lower case characters and numbers. The common objection is that they are hard to remember. That also makes them hard to crack. Create a phrase that you can easily remember and use the first letter of each word along with logical numbers. For example, "Our vacation in Jamaica begins on the fifth day of August" becomes OviJbot5do8. A password like that is impossible to guess and is not found in any dictionary.

Dumb Computer Mistake # 1: Never backing up your data or system files.

Even if you never do any other dumb thing while computing, failure to back up your data can negate everything else if you lose important information. There are too many things that can go wrong for you not to be backing up your data. Hard disk crashes, fire or water damage, tornados, hurricanes, magnetic interference, and theft are just a few of the many things that can damage or destroy data.

Backing up data can be time consuming and inconvenient, but losing your data could be catastrophic. There are many strategies you can use to protect your data, but any strategy is better than none. Don't think that merely copying your data files to an external disk constitutes backing up. Make copies of your essential data to three CDs or three sets of CDs. Keep one set at home, but in a different room than where the computer is housed. Keep another set at the office if you work for a living. If you're retired ask a friend to keep a set for you. Do the same for your friend. The third set of disks should be kept in a secure place like a safe deposit box.

Data is the only irreplaceable thing on your computer. You can replace hardware, operating systems and application software, but you can't go to a store and buy a replacement copy of your data.

The dumbest thing I can remember doing is backing up my data files to a RAM disk.

This article has been provided to APCUG by the author solely for publication by APCUG member groups. All other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

*Action*tec MegaPlug

Terry Currier (tcurrier(at)aol.com), President, WINNERS(www.windowsusers.org)

I do like the idea of networking through the power lines. Setting up an Ethernet network is not too difficult, but running the wires thought the house can be. Setting up a wireless network is also not too bad (the latest hardware setup makes it easy), and the signal can go through the walls. At least up to a certain degree, governed by how many walls and the distance. Ethernet is also the fastest network connection, but what if you can not just run a cable to where you may want to connect, or you get no wireless signal? Powerline networking is perfect for these situations.

The old maximum powerline speed was 14Mbps, the MegaPlug from Actiontec is now up to 85Mbps. Using the MegaPlug 4-Port Hub with the MegaPlug Ethernet Adapter makes it easy to extend your network wherever you need to connect. A USB hub extends the range of your USB ports and adds more ports. That is kind of what the MegaPlug 4-Port Hub does. You run one Ethernet cable to it from your router to it's WAN plug. This gives you more Ethernet ports, and allows you to use the already hidden electrical wires to connect to your network. This is especially great if you are constantly short one cable slot on your present router.

According to some reviews with a wireless network you can effectively connect up to about 150 feet. I don't have one myself. I always wonder what the neighbor can pickup even with firewalls. With a powerline network I don't have to worry about that. The signal can cross circuit breakers (wall plugs), but not circuit boxes. So no one outside of my home can steal information. If I do need to secured my computer Actiontec includes software for 56-bit DES Data Encryption.

The only software I had to install was for the computer using the wall plug connection. If a computer is hooked up to the MegaPlug Hub then it would have to install some software for it. Using the powerline network, I downloaded a file from the Internet and achieved a speed of 438Kps which is really good. Below is a comparison of copying a file:

Copy a 415Kb file from main computer

• With Ethernet connection to laptop took 56 seconds.

• With Powerline to laptop took 3 minutes 48 seconds.

• With Powerline to laptop through two surge protectors took 5 minutes 10 seconds.

They tell you not to use a surge protector with it, but with their error correcting software I had no problems. In fact, I connected it from one surge protector through another and it worked. However, it did slow it down.

Powerline networking says it is good up to 990 feet. I could not test it for that far, I didn't have enough cord. What I can say is that it worked perfectly in all of my electrical outlets. Plugging it into my garage outlet about 70 feet away, the connection still had no problems. I then plugged in a 100 foot power cord, and two 50 foot power cords. These three cords were good quality power cords. I still had one more 50 foot power cord of which the gauge was not a high quality; it was made for light duty work. It did still worked though. It was fun stringing the cords down the street just to see how for I could get (my neighbor came out asking what I was doing). It took

me four houses down and the connection was still pretty good. I could get email and do things on-line with no problems. However, testing the same file download with the lower quality power cord it would have taken 77 minutes to finish. Taking it off so I would still be 270 feet from the network, the same file took 22 minutes to download.

Conclusion

When you need to connect to a network and your wireless router is not enough, this is the perfect answer. More than that it's secure. Their support is very good, with a toll free number to call. Best price I found was at Newegg.com with the MegaPlug 4-Port Hub at $70, and the wall plug adapter at $47. www.actiontec.com

Minimum System Requirements

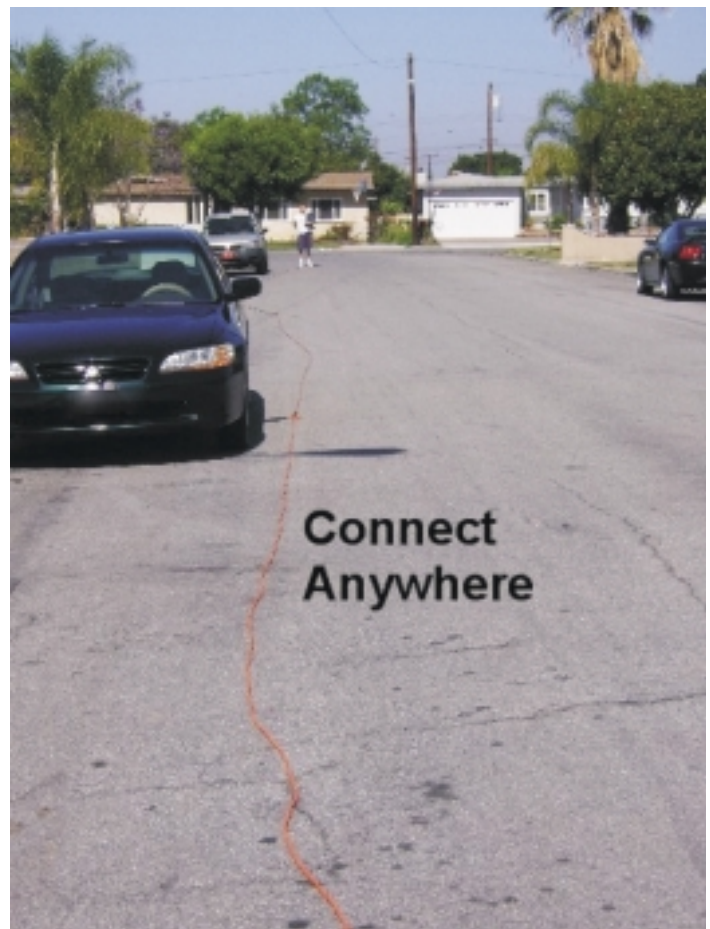Router, Gateway, or other device with HomePlug capability

Microsoft Windows 98SE,Me, 2000 or XP

TCP/IP Network Protocol Installed

Internet Explorer 4.0+ or Netscape 4.0+

This article has been provided to APCUG by the author solely for publication by APCUG member groups. All other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above). 💻

Connect Anywhere

Back-Ups Made Easy
A new solution for an old problem

Carey Holzman (Carey(at)ComputerAmerica.com), Co-host: **www.computeramerica.com**, **www.careyholzman.com**

By now you're probably well aware of the importance of making copies of your valuable data (referred to as 'backing-up'). You've probably read numerous articles about ways to back-up your data and prevent disaster. The problem is, most advice offered on this subject is not truly complete and many of the 'solutions' offered are expensive and time consuming.

There are numerous ways you can *lose* your data in spite of backing-up regularly. How you back-up, what you back-up, when you back-up and where you store your back-up are just a few important variables that come into play on that miserable day that you require it.

Still, that's better than eight out of ten customers that approach me for PC repairs who do not have any kind of back-up. After all, any form of back-up is better than no back-up…but just barely.

First it's important that you understand the existing problems with the back-ups most people create.

External hard drives: There are many problems with backing up your important data to an external hard drive. Since most people keep their external hard drives next to, or in the same building, as their computer, any fire or flood will render both the PC and back-up useless. Also, if you are a victim of theft, the crook now has all of your data, and it's probably not encrypted or protected in any way on your PC or your back-up device. Since your back-up device is also a hard disk drive, there is a good possibility that it will fail and need to be replaced. Ironic since that it what you are protecting your data

from. If you always leave your external hard drive hooked up to your PC for automated back-ups, then it is prone to viruses and other malware that may cause the loss of data that you are attempting to protect yourself from! Then there's the high cost of around $150 for these devices.

Internal hard drives/RAID: Some people have a secondary hard drive or partition in their computer and simply back-up from one disk to the other. Here again, viruses and malware will render both drives useless at the same time. Fires, floods and thefts also leave you with no back-up source. This back-up is only useful if your internal hard drive fails. But as you can already see, hard drive failure is not the sole cause of data loss. Also, a RAID MIRROR (where one drive constantly mirrors what the other drive is doing) will not help if you accidentally delete a file. The RAID MIRROR will simultaneously delete that file at the same time.

Drive images: Some people believe an image or 'clone' of their entire hard drive onto an external drive or DVD is a good back-up, but it's not. If your computer has a serious component failure, such as a motherboard, or if your computer is stolen or lost in a fire or flood, you'll have to replace it. Once you restore your drive image, your new motherboard will most likely require different hardware drivers and Windows will most likely not start. All you'll get is the Blue Screen of Death. Sure, your data is theoretically fine and well, it's just too bad you can't get to it. Because full images copy everything on your hard disk, they tend to be very time consuming and, as a result, are not done often enough to be current.

Continued

Back Issues Needed

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

1985: June, July, August, September

1984: August

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

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

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

Flash Drives: Flash drives are more reliable than CDs, DVDs or external/internal hard drives, but they are very slow and very limited. Flash drives are also prone to theft and being misplaced. Most people do not encrypt their data and, as a result, may have inadvertently given some stranger all of their personal data simply because the flash drive fell out of their pocket somewhere or they can't remember where they left it.

Tape drives: Seriously? Does any consumer still use tape? Next to the floppy drive, it's the most unreliable way to back-up data. Tape drives require a special reader and software to restore the data. In case of data loss, get your back-up tape, reinstall Windows, reinstall your tape back-up device, reinstall your tape back-up software and then you can start to restore your data. That is, the data not damaged on the tape.

What's Left?

Why will you need a back-up? What will happen? Will your hard drive fail? Will your PC be stolen or will your PC just stop working one day? Will you be involved in a theft? An earthquake? A fire? A hurricane? A flood? We can't answer those questions without a time machine, but we do know that even in the best of circumstances, all hard drives eventually fail. It's not a question of "IF" but a question of "WHEN?"

If you only have one hard drive, then you only have one hard drive that can fail. Backing-up your data to another drive doubles your chances of experiencing a hard drive failure in addition to not guaranteeing your data will be there when you need it for the reasons listed above.

We also know that most data is irreplaceable. Whether it's a database of your customers, your personal finance, photos from your vacations or of family and friends, your music collection, your email, favorites and address book, once it's gone, it's gone. Hard drive data extraction services can help recover data from a failed hard drive and hard drives damaged by flood or fire. Expect to spend $800 - $2500 and expect to wait two to four weeks with no guarantee how much data can be recovered.

Say Hello To My Little Friend!

I wear a lot of hats as a computer talk show host, author, instructor, technician and business owner. I like to think being a consumer advocate is a hat that firmly sits upon all the others. If you're familiar with any of my work, then you're well aware of my passion for free and helpful software and services. However, very rarely a product comes along that is not free, but is still such a bargain I am compelled to write about it.

Allow me to introduce you . Carbonite is a small, downloadable application for Windows XP and Vista (Mac version coming soon) that uses your high-speed Internet connection to automatically upload your selected data securely, off-site and in background. For $49.95 a year, Carbonite offers ***unlimited*** storage space. That's right, you can store as much data as you want. Installation is quick and easy. Carbonite's online backup service starts automatically and works quietly and continuously in the background while your computer is on and connected to the Internet.. If you've accidentally erased something, don't worry; you can restore deleted files with just a few clicks. If your PC crashes, visit their website to recover your lost files.

Your data is stored safely — no one can see your data but you because your files are encrypted ***twice*** before they leave your computer using a combination of encryption techniques similar to those used by online banks and financial institutions.

Carbonite online back-up software is always looking for new or recently changed files on your PC. The moment you add or modify files, Carbonite swings into action. Whenever your PC is connected to the Internet (at home, the office, a hotel or airport, etc…) Carbonite automatically and continually backs-up all your files (but not system files or applications by default.). And it will never slow down your PC or Internet connection.

Once you install Carbonite, simply tell it what you want backed-up and you never have to think about it again. Set it and forget it. It's not loaded with tons of bells, whistles and features because it's designed to be simple and do just one very important thing: keep your data safe.

Carbonite offers a free 15-day trial and ***no credit card is required*** to take advantage of the free offer. As if that wasn't enough, I have a secret for you: Use the code word "AMERICA" and your 15-day free trial is extended to 30 days! If you choose to purchase a year of Carbonite service, the code word will also extend your subscription an additional two months at no additional charge!

Is This A Paid Advertisement?

Whenever I get passionate about a product that is free, no one asks me if I am being paid to promote it. I see customers everyday who lose data due to unforeseen circumstances and lack of a proper back-up. I like *Carbonite.com* and I use it myself. In fact, it's running and backing-up my data, securely and off-site, as I type this! I like this product so much, I've asked the folks at Carbonite to sponsor my radio show and to offer our listeners and readers a discount to help encourage proper, secure, automated, off-site back-ups. Skeptical? Try it for yourself, free for 30-days! Read more about how Carbonite works *here*.

Most people with high-speed Internet connections barely use them. Since your Internet Service Provider is charging you the same, regardless of how much or how often you use it, why not take advantage of that and utilize your unused bandwidth for backing-up your valuable data?

I welcome your comments and feedback concerning back-ups and this article.

Carey Holzman, *http://www.careyholzman.com/*, is the co-host of the nation's longest running, nationally syndicated radio talk show on computers, Computer America. Computer America airs Monday through Friday, 7pm to 9pm Pacific time, 10pm to midnight Eastern. To find a station near you or listen online, visit *http://www.computeramerica.com*. Carey is also the author of *The Healthy PC*, published by McGraw-Hill and is a freelance writer for numerous web-sites and computer-related publications.

This article has been provided to APCUG by the author solely for publication by APCUG member groups. All other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

Backing Up

Al Edmister (AeinNapa(at)aol.com), Napa Valley PCUG, www.nvpcug.org

Backing up your computer has always been an important and sometimes confusing subject. As most people know by now backing up on the same HD only helps when the main file gets corrupted which really doesn't happen very often. It is of no help when an HD fails. I've had two fail. The first was soon after I bought the machine; the HD was defective. The manufacturer replaced it and, luckily, files could be copied. But all programs had to be reinstalled. The second time the HD motor quit. That was hard to find; HD motors are really quiet and who would think to put ones head into the box to listen. Anyway all was lost. Well, not all, because I had started keeping all my files backed up on a second internal HD so I had everything but an OS and programs. I bought a new HD and installed an OS and programs again then copied back my files. Very time consuming. There had to be a better way should failure happen again.

At one time I thought CD-RWs & read only disks would be the answer. I'm using this method with another computer which doesn't get much action or have big files — it doesn't have space for a second HD, and the UBS is a 1 which makes for slow transfers of big files. But, with not many transfers, no music or games, a CD-RW system works fine for us as we only need to update them occasionally. We keep photos on a remote computer and read only disks anyway.

I heard about RAID and found out that it requires a card on the mother board and two or more HDs depending on the array. RAID has multiple HDs all running containing the same every thing; if one drive fails then, without shutting down, you remove & replace it with a clean drive and RAID recreates from the remaining drives. No downtime is the key advantage here. It can get expensive.

There are all kinds of RAID arrays. One of them is with 2 HDs and is called "striping" where info is written alternately to the disks. Makes for much faster read - write and is really helpful when doing videos.

I also heard about Zip drives. Never used them but I think they came into use before there was UB 2 and before large HDs. A Zip drive is removable and contains compressed files. It is handy not only for same computer back up and additional storage but as a system to transfer files from one computer to another. But you can't get a "full" back up.

Then I heard about cloning and imaging. Cloning of HD vs Imaging it had not been settled, at least not for me, until recently. The following may not be everybody's take but it works for me. Cloning is making an exact, complete, bootable copy; imaging is making a compressed bootable copy where the files are compressed versions of the original in a dedicated file format. It can then be used to create a working duplicate of the original on a blank HD. The clone or image can be externally USB connected or internal. A clone takes up less space on a disk than the original as does an image but more space is need for an image, at least when using True Image! ver. 10.0 by Acronis (*http://www.acronis.com/*), because each time you do a back up it is what they call an incremental back up or a "slice" and needs it own space. Programs like True Image can

keep you automatically up dated on a scheduled basis or you do an update when you feel it's necessary and you have the time. Working on imaged files might be possible but I have no idea how. They are just there for use in recreating an HD.

But I wanted a duplicate, bootable HD running as a D drive in case my C drive fails. That is, I want a clone of my HD not an image. I already had and keep via "save as" all my files on my D drive. I mean all! But, I did not have the OS or programs on it. Also, I wanted to switch D & C as disk now in D is bigger and better suited to be in the C position where I can put large temporary files. I have no need of partioning, so neither drive is partitioned.

I tried Casper XP by Future Systems Solutions (*http://www.fssdev.com/*), a really good cloning program. Unfortunately for me, there is a conflict — something in my computer prevents it from functioning completely. This very likely is an isolated problem; but even with Casper's built in history and status utilities, their tech could not find it. I was impressed with their tech guy. I got prompt answers and personal help. He even called me the first morning after I had emailed a help request and I have his direct line number. Emailing the self-generated reports was easy and we were able to remove some old W98 fragments, but the conflict remained. We gave up. I gave my copy of Casper away.

I then went to True Image 10.0, which, at first I thought only did imaging. I gave it a try imaging my C drive to an external USB connected H drive. It took seven hours and I have yet to figure out the restore process works because their restore page doesn't use the terms "source" and "destination" but something obscure. Anyway I have an image on a removable drive ready if I should need it.

For the next part, I wanted a cloned back up running as a second HD as I intend to keep using "save as" as I go along rather than wait for a scheduled time. My work is important to me and even losing a few minutes of effort is not acceptable. I also wanted a bootable second HD fully backed up (OS, all programs, settings as well as files) in case my C drive failed. Tucked away in True Image 10.0 is a button to go to clone, any disk to any disk. True Image 10.0 did the job and in less than an hour I had moved over 30 GB of OS, programs and files to a bootable drive.

I opened up my computer case; switched C & D and turned on the power. The cloned drive came up as if it were always there as a C drive. Everything was exactly as I had left it even the partially filled Recycle Bin. Now for checking out the drive in D, which now held my old C drive. No drive could be found. It just wasn't there. I opened the computer & checked the connections & pinning; they were fine. I then went to *www.techguy.com* with the problem. Back came a reply to go to disk manager and send a screen shot. While there I saw that the drive had not been assigned a letter,.which I thought XP did automatically. I entered the letter D and went back to see what had happened. I was in business. All drives function as intended. I was as happy as a mosquito in a blood bank.

Continued

Your File's Too Big

Robert Hawes (r.d.hawes@hotmail.com), ACGNJ

As I type this, the song that inspired the title keeps running around and around inside my head. I've got some remarks about the song itself, but I'll save them for an appendix at the end. As for this month's actual topic, I won't be getting to that for a few more paragraphs, either. Instead, I'll open with a *Heartwarming Reminiscence* from my personal past; concerning an end-of-summer trip I took to a water park, about five years ago. I was at the top of a tower, wearing my bathing suit; sitting in a giant inner-tube at the start of a water ride with another guy about my age. It was more like a life raft, around eight feet in diameter, with a fabric floor. It could hold five or six people, and the attendants didn't want to send it down the chute with just two. So, during the short wait until the previous tube got far enough ahead, they called back down the line for a two or three more riders. We were in favor of that too, since the more weight in the tube, the bigger reaction you got from the ride's twists and turns. Looking at the other people standing in line, we saw my companion's two teenage step-daughters, also waiting alone. So we called to have them join us. **They refused!** What a shock. I'd been on other family-type outings with those girls before. I knew them fairly well, and I liked them. I'd thought that they liked me, and I **knew** they had no problems with their step-dad. So it couldn't have been fear-of-creepy-stranger or fear-of-creepy-relative. It had to have been fear-of-social-leprosy. I suddenly realized that we'd become so ***un-cool*** that young girls didn't even want to be seen on the same water ride with us.

Now, maybe that wasn't exactly heartwarming, but it ***was*** life-altering. I'd made age jokes before, but until that very moment, I hadn't realized that I'm now officially ***out-of-it***; and there's ***nothing*** I can ever do that will get me back in. So, since I no longer have any social standing to worry about, I can be as eccentric as I want. I can become that old guy hud-dled in the corner, drooling into his long gray beard as he mumbles incoherently about "that dad-gum Microsoft". Every year, I do less and less of the things I used to do for fun. Why should I let the "Big Bad Ballmer" force me to do something I ***don't*** want to do? (Not sure who that is? All will be explained later). When XP came out, I didn't like it, but I learned it; if for no other reason than to be able to service my customers. Now, I'm close enough to the end of my career, and Vista is just so ***excruciatingly evil*** that I've decided to take a stand. No computer owned by me will ***ever*** run Vista, not even in a virtual machine; and I'm vehemently advising all of my customers to adopt the same attitude. Here's hoping I can live up to this pledge. (You want specific examples? See my June, 2007 article *Three Strikes and You're Out!*).

This is really the third submission I wrote for our September 2007 newsletter. Although I had the two extra months of our summer hiatus before the August deadline, I started working on what was going to be my next article right away. It was pretty much finished by mid-June. However, as it was being written, it developed a decidedly "Halloweeny" flavor; so I re-scheduled it for October. (Just how does one write a Halloween Episode for a series of factual articles in a technically oriented publication? Tune in next time and find out). Then, the replacement article I started in late June bogged down with a lot of problems; and when I'd finally overcome them, it began taking on the distinct characteristics of a follow-up. Therefore, I had to put it off until November. Even worse, before I suspended work on that particular article, it had grown so big that half of it will probably have to be rolled over into December. So now I've got something in the works for every remaining month of 2007 ***except*** for this one. It's August, and I've essentially started all over again. I can feel my deadline sneaking up on me. All those extra writing days have gone.

Backing Up, *continued*

The future might be in flash drives already available as thumb or flash gizmos. They are getting bigger, over 2GB ones are available, and are great for transferring files. Hang one around your neck on a lanyard or just stick one in your pocket. These drives are smaller than a disposable cigarette lighter, so they travel well. No moving parts is a huge advantage as there's no mechanism to fail. Internal HDs might eventually be made similar to flash type drives. But before this can happen, they will have to be over 200GB to take the market.

There is a new wrinkle to cloning an HD that I just discovered and used. My "new" computer, while a definite upgrade in speed, has space for only one HD which was an 80GB. That is actually big enough for my purposes but I wanted a second bootable HD for back up even though I'll have to run it as an external drive in a USB port. Therefore, recently I bought a 160GB Maxtor drive.

It came with the usual installation disk, but it included a feature I wasn't aware of until opening it. I put the drive into my external drive holder, plugged everything in and began with the configuration, then the disk copy. Forty minutes later, I had a cloned disk which I then put in my computer pinned as master and I am up and running again. This time it is on a 160GB (120GB available) and I have the old 80GB HD as a bootable HD in the external case as back up.

Note: The three products I used were Casper XP, Maxtor and the one by Acronis, but you can find more back up products by doing a Google search for backup programs. Among the 10,000.000+ entries on "backup programs", I was reminded that Windows Backup System (part of XP) and Norton Ghost are both available. Additional programs for backup, security, the Internet and disk organization can be purchased by user group members from (*http://www.ugr.com/*).

This article has been provided to APCUG by the author solely for publication by APCUG member groups. All other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

My current situation is sort of like making a movie, in that I've had to work out-of-sequence. I'm "filming" this "scene" on the *last* day of "shooting", but it's actually the first thing that my audience will see. So we've got continuity gaps. There are lots of things that I've already said, but which you won't hear about for months. There are good, intelligent, well thought out (at the time, at least) reasons that prompted my various actions; but mostly you'll just have to take my word for it now. I promise it'll all make sense eventually.

So, to begin: For years, I've been making ISO backup images of data CDs. (An ISO file contains *one* track, so this process has absolutely *no* use as far as music CDs are concerned. RIAA, please take note). In turn, I would store those images on other CDs. At first, I could fit multiple CD backup files on a single storage CD. Later, of course, as CDs grew to full capacity, the ratio became one-to-one. So why make an image rather than another copy as a backup? Because copies contain multi-generational reproduction errors. No matter how good, they're *never* completely identical. On the other hand, an image file *does* make a perfect duplicate. In fact, my first CD creation program had a "compare track" option, so I could actually verify that an image and a CD matched exactly. Naturally, the next program "upgrade" eliminated it. I've developed workarounds, but they take longer. I still miss that feature. Nowadays, when I create a new data CD, I actually make the image file first, via the "image writer" feature of Nero Burning ROM. Then, I load that image as a virtual CD and test its contents thoroughly. Only when I'm certain that everything is absolutely perfect do I use Nero again, to burn a CD from that image.

When I started making data DVDs, I adopted a different philosophy. Since there are two disk types (DVD+R and DVD-R), I would make one copy of each. Because some CD/DVD readers seemed to prefer one type over the other, I got a better guarantee of compatibility that way, and I also got secondary backup copies. Recently, however, I've had to re-think that concept. For reasons I won't go into right now, the idea of making backup images of DVDs is starting to look better and better. In a couple of months, when you finally read what I already wrote on that subject, I think you'll agree with me. At last, we get to the topic of **this** article. An image file for a full capacity single-layer DVD would measure 4.37 GB. In many ways, that file is just *too big!* (I'm not even going to *think* about double-layer DVDs quite yet). Let's be clear. For the purposes of this article, we don't really care about my data DVDs themselves; either what's on them, or when and why I made them. We're just concerned about manipulating files that are images of them.

So, how do we determine what I can do with a 4.37 GB file; and more importantly, what I *can't* do with it? First, we have to look at the computer equipment that I'm currently using. My main computer is now almost six years old, and has removable drawers. I can (in a fairly short period of time) shut it down, swap drawers; then start it up again with different IDE hard disks. By changing the primary master, I can run multiple operating systems. By changing the secondary master, I

can choose between various data storage drives. As for my **non**-removable IDE equipment, the primary slave is a CD/DVD reader. The secondary slave is a CD/DVD burner. (I look forward to experimenting with virtual operating systems on my long-overdue next computer; but truthfully, this machine does everything I want to do reasonably well. I'm not hurting for a replacement). In actual use, shutting down to switch operating systems hasn't been much of a problem; but having to stop everything and turn off the computer just because the next required data file was stored on a different hard disk (not the one currently installed as the secondary master) quickly became a *huge* pain.

What I needed were hot-swappable auxiliary drives. Unfortunately, buying new equipment wasn't an available option. (Cue the sob-story violin music). Only a few months ago, I devised a workable alternative; using the hard disks that I already own and a piece of hardware I've had for a while, but hardly ever used. When I bought my first DVD burner (in March, 2004), I was a bit leery about how compatible the CDs it produced might be. I can't remember from where, but I got a portable case designed for IDE CD drives; with IEEE 1394 (aka firewire) and USB 2.0 inputs, plus a stereo mini-jack output (analog audio for speakers). I put my old CD-only burner in it and connected it to the firewire port on my computer. It worked just fine; but I hardly ever used it. My new burner, of course, had no difficulty making perfect CDs. So the case/old burner combination just sat unused in a corner of my desk, gathering dust. After only about three *years*, it occurred to me that just because that case was intended for IDE CD drives didn't mean that IDE hard disks wouldn't work in it too. I pulled the old burner and substituted a mounting rack for removable drawers, and it worked fine. I just click on the "Unplug or Eject Hardware" icon in the systray, click on "Stop IEEE 1394 Disk", and finally click the OK button in the "Safe To Remove Hardware" box that pops up. Then, I can turn off the portable case's power switch, remove one drawer, stick in another, and turn the switch back on. The new hard disk becomes instantly available (usually under the same drive letter as the previous one), without disturbing any other running programs.

My Linux-based live CDs have no trouble detecting the portable case, either. For this article, I put in an unused 40 GB hard disk. (That disk now qualifies as "small"; even though it's one thousand times bigger than the 40 **MB** disk that came, only eighteen years ago, with my first PC). Then I booted the computer from the GParted 0.3.4-8 live CD and made two partitions on that disk. The first was a 19.53 GB primary FAT32 partition (/dev/sda1), created by entering 20,000 MB in the "size" box. The second was a 17.73 GB extended partition (/dev/sda2), containing a 17.73 GB Linux Ext2 logical drive (/dev/sda5); created by accepting the remaining 18,159 MB (as already listed by default in the "size" box). Note the identification as "sda", rather than "hda". This means that, functionally, Linux considers this to be a SCSI hard disk. Math purists among you will also note that 19.53 plus 17.73 does *not* equal 40. That shouldn't come as much of a surprise,

Continued

however, because we all know that computer peripheral manufacturers *always* lie about the sizes of their devices.

As far as permanent primary master drawers for my computer go, I currently have only one. That's my DSL98SE drive. It boots Windows 98 SE, and at one time it contained my original DSL software. It's no longer allowed to connect to the Internet; but I haven't changed its name, for the sake of backup filename continuity. Needless to say (but I'd better say it anyway), the DSL98SE drive could **only** access the FAT32 partition on the portable case. I used to have an XP drawer also, but I never used it; and one day I needed that hard disk for something else. I made a backup image before I wiped it out, so in theory I could have restored it for this article; but its XP installation used a pre-existing FAT32 partition (rather than creating a new NTFS one), so it might not have been much help here, anyway.

Fortunately, I have ready access to another XP computer. I don't own it, but I use it fairly exclusively almost every day; and I have a lot of leeway on what I can do with it. It has a 160 GB hard disk split into four partitions. C: is a 27.2 GB NTFS operating system partition, D: and E: are 41.7 GB FAT32 data partitions, and F: is a 41.7 GB NTFS data partition. (F: was created specifically to store files larger than 4 GB). Don't even bother counting — the sums won't add up. (There'll also be another XP computer involved later on, but it's essentially just a duplicate of this one). For this article, I made only one small change to this machine.

There are two postings on *www.linuxondesktop.blogspot.com* that get referenced a lot: "13 Things to do immediately after installing Ubuntu" and "13 Things to do on a New Mandriva Free 2007 Linux Installation". Each contains a link to a download that supposedly lets you access the Ext2 file system from Windows. Unfortunately, both those links have gone bad. You get an Error 404 message, and it's in *German*; "Fehler 404 - Seite nicht gefunden". Somehow, that makes it sinister and alarming, rather than just annoying. However, it's fairly easy to find the correct link (*www.fs-driver.org*), and download the Ext2 IFS (Installable File System) version 1.10c for Windows. Unfortunately for my 98SE preferences, this driver just extends already existing NTFS read/write capabilities to include Ext2 and (somewhat conditionally) Ext3 file systems. So it can only be added to NT 4, 2000, and XP installations. Since this XP computer didn't have a firewire port, I connected my portable case via its USB 2.0 port, and the computer could access both the FAT32 and the Ext2 partitions just fine.

Now we get to some action at last. Using Nero on DSL98SE, I burned as many files as I could fit to a blank DVD+RW. I wound up filling 4,477 of the maximum 4,483 MB capacity on that disk. (**Both** those numbers round out to 4.37 when converted to GB). I took that DVD over to the XP machine, and used an ISO creation program to make an image of it on drive F: (NTFS). As expected, BIGTEST1.ISO took up 4.37 GB. Now, what could I do with it? First, I used that computer's CD/DVD software to make another DVD+RW disk from it;

and its contents compared exactly to the original DVD. Then, I successfully dragged-and-dropped it to C: (also NTFS) and K: (the portable case's Ext2 partition). I got an error message when I tried to drag-and-drop it to D: (FAT32), and the same for E: (also FAT32), but it **wasn't** the error I was expecting. Both times, an "Error Copying File" box popped up, containing the message "Cannot copy BIGTEST1: There is not enough free disk space. Delete one or more files to free disk space, and then try again." Since D: had 21.6 GB free and E: had 5.42 GB free, that message couldn't be taken literally. Off hand, I can think of two possible causes. First, it could be an undiscovered coding bug. Some programmer typed in the wrong identifier. As a result, this box pops up instead of the proper one. Second, it could be an unresolved logic bug. For some reason, when presented with a file larger than 4 GB, the FAT32 file system truly believes that it doesn't have enough room available. Maybe there's another explanation, but it doesn't really matter. We've confirmed what we already knew. As it currently exists, BIGTEST1.ISO *can't* be copied to an FAT32 partition.

However, the purpose of this exercise would still be served if BIGTEST1.ISO could be modified in some way so that it *could* fit on an FAT32 drive (as long as its contents weren't corrupted in the process). What about compression? I used WinZip to store F:\BIGTEST1.ISO in the archive file F:\BIGTEST1.ZIP. At 3.93 GB, it came in just under the limit. Then I dragged-and-dropped it to the E: drive. As a double-check, I dragged-and-dropped it from E: to D: too. Now, since D: was a shared drive, I could go to the other XP computer mentioned above. With the regular user's permission, I temporarily mapped that share to a network drive (Z:). Then, I used that computer's Zip software to restore Z:\BIGTEST1.ZIP across the network to the local C: drive; and that computer's DVD software to burn C:\BIGTEST1.ISO to yet another DVD+RW disk. It compared equally to **both** previous disks. Returning to my regular XP computer, I used another feature of its ISO creation program to mount K:\BIGTEST1.ISO (the image on the Ext2 drive) as a virtual DVD. It compared exactly to **all three** of the real DVD+RW disks.

That's about as much as I could do under XP. Now, we turn to Linux. On my main computer, I removed both drawers (primary master **and** secondary master), reconnected the portable case to the firewire port, and booted from the SimplyMEPIS 3.3 live CD. Although it's over two years old, it's still my favorite Linux CD. The first time I booted it and saw its beautiful desktop, I *knew* that Microsoft was done for. (Would you prefer: …going down; …headed for the last roundup; …not long for this world; …on the ropes; …on the rocks; …walking that last lonely mile? Or you can insert your own favorite metaphor here instead). The thrill and exhilaration of that moment will be with me forever. This time, when the desktop came up, it contained automatically generated icons for /dev/sda1 (the portable case's FAT32 partition, containing files that I haven't told you about yet) and /dev/sda5 (the Ext2 partition containing BIGTEST1.ISO). Using K3B,

Continued

the built-in CD/DVD software, I burned **yet another** DVD+RW from that image (good thing I bought spares). As expected, it compared equally to the three previous disks.

Now we come to some (but not all) of the files I skipped mentioning earlier. Right after I created that first DVD+RW disk three paragraphs ago, I used Nero again to write the exact same collection of files to an ISO DVD image file located on DSL98SE's FAT32 C: drive. I expected to get some kind of error, but Nero fooled me by *succeeding* (sort of). It split the output ISO file into two segments: BIGTEST.ISO (3.99 GB) and BIGTEST.ISO.001 (380 **MB**). I transferred those two files to the portable case's FAT32 partition (more about that operation later). Returning to SimplyMEPIS 3.3: After successfully burning the /dev/sda5 image above, I used K3B again to burn that split BIGTEST image (accessible through /dev/sda1) to a *fifth* DVD+RW disk. This time, something went wrong. The last three files on the new DVD+RW disk did *not* compare correctly to the files on the other four disks. Together, those files measure 404 MB, while the second segment measures 380 MB. That would certainly suggest that the information from the second segment was corrupted; or maybe not even copied at all.

Finally, here are the last of the files I previously skipped over. Immediately after I created that two-segment ISO image, I used Nero one **more** time, writing that same file collection yet again; to another two-segment image in Nero's own proprietary file format: BIGTEST.NRG (3.99 GB) and BIGTEST.NRG.001 (380 **MB**). Those two files were also located on /dev/sda1. So while still booted from the SimplyMEPIS 3.3 CD, I tried to make a DVD+RW disk from them as well. Unfortunately, K3B would only accept ISO files as input, so I couldn't do it. That wasn't the end of Linux in these proceedings, but it *was* as far as I could go under SimplyMEPIS 3.3. So I shut the computer down.

With the DSL98SE drawer inserted and the portable case kept connected, I rebooted my computer (under Windows 98 SE) to investigate what might have gone wrong with that two-segment ISO image. The virtual CD/DVD software I've got installed on DSL98SE claims to work with *nine* different types of images. Up to that point, I'd only used it with ISO files. So I tried to mount the BIGTEST.ISO - BIGTEST.ISO.001pair as a virtual DVD. It seemed to load correctly, but as with that fifth DVD+RW disk above, the last three files were *bad*. The same thing happened when I tried to mount the BIGTEST.NRG - BIGTEST.NRG.001 pair. Then, I abandoned the virtual software and went to Nero; burning a sixth DVD+RW disk from the ISO pair and a seventh DVD+RW disk from the NRG pair. Both those disks tested *good!* Those additional "001" segments must be an extended feature exclusive to Nero itself. Such image splitting can't even be part of the officially published NRG image file specifications. (Otherwise, the virtual CD/DVD software would have mounted that NRG pair properly). It seems that to any virtual CD/DVD program, and to any CD/DVD burning program *except* Nero, those first 3.99 GB segments will be

perceived as the complete image. The extra "001" files will just be ignored.

Now, I'm not a big fan of proprietary file formats, but I'm perfectly willing to use them when they're advantageous to me. Take Ghost's GHO and GHS files (the use of which their latest XP-only version very actively discourages). My DOS floppy-booted Ghost 2002 will produce one 2 GB GHO file. Then it can produce up to 999 more 2 GB GHS (spanned image) files. Theoretically, it could create a two thousand GB output file in a thousand segments; and it could store them across a bunch of FAT32 drives with no problems. If Nero wanted to design a segmented output file format, *why* couldn't they have chosen 2 GB chunks? That's the maximum file size officially acceptable on an ISO 9660 formatted DVD. (Though under Linux, there are ways to get around that limit). 2 GB is also, thanks to a bug that Microsoft never bothered to fix, the largest size file that can be dragged-and-dropped under Windows 98 SE. Try it with any file between 2 and 4 GB, and an "Error Copying File" box pops up, containing the message "Cannot create or replace XXXX**:** The parameter is incorrect" (where XXXX is the name of the file, without its extension). All you can do after that is press that box's "OK" button.

As I mentioned about four paragraphs ago, when I created the BIGTEST.ISO-BIGTEST.ISO.001 segmented image, I targeted it to DSL98SE's FAT32 C: drive. That was a mistake. Since I also wanted to access that file under Linux, it should have gone to the portable case's FAT32 partition; which was the J: drive. So I had to copy it there. Drag-and-drop worked fine for the 380 MB segment, but not for the 3.99 GB one. I had to go to a command line and use the COPY command. (XCOPY wouldn't do it). Sensibly, I targeted the J: drive directly when I created the BIGTEST.NRG -BIGTEST.NRG.001 image.

Next, I took my portable case and made a special trip to an XP PC belonging to a friend. It has a stripped-down SE (Special Edition) version of Nero. On the other hand, its virtual CD/DVD program claims to support *thirty-two* different image types; but (as I pretty much expected) it bombed out with both my segmented image file pairs. Using Nero, another manufacturer's CD/DVD burning program, that virtual CD\DVD program, that PC's NTFS C: drive, and the FAT32 partition on my portable case, I performed several additional experiments; completely confirming my earlier conclusion: Although the resultant DVD (whether real or virtual) will seem to be 4.37 GB in size, and its root directory will display a list of *all* the files it was supposed to contain; whatever data was stored in that 380 MB second segment will *not* actually be there (unless Nero created it). Feeling victorious, I decided to have a little fun.

I can't claim to have used every CD/DVD creation program ever made, but Nero's method for creating an image file is different from any other software I've ever seen. Instead of just selecting some kind of "Create Image" option from a menu, in Nero you actually have to de-select your physical

CD/DVD burner, and then replace it with an imaginary image burner instead. Mostly, this unusual design doesn't cause any problems (although it can be annoying if you're in the middle of a project and suddenly find that you forgot to change to the correct burner). However, because Nero's input and output selection processes are completely independent, it can be set up to burn the contents of an existing image into a brand new image. I noticed this wacky possibility a long time ago, but I never found a practical use for it - until now.

Using the BIGTEST.ISO-BIGTEST.ISO.001 pair as input, I tried to set Nero to create a single 4.37 GB ISO image named BIGTEST2.ISO on the NTFS C: drive. Unfortunately, Nero betrayed me. That SE version could **only** create NRG files. So I had to settle for a single 4.37 GB NRG image named BIGTEST2.NRG instead. While I was at it, I made BIGTEST3.NRG as well, from the BIGTEST.NRG-BIGTEST.NRG.001 pair. The virtual CD/DVD program could be set to create more than one virtual CD or DVD, so I set it to produce two (U: and V:). I mounted my two new new images to those drives and compared their contents. *All* files were equal, *no* files were missing. Now for the fun part. I un-mounted V: but kept U: mounted, then took a look at the files displayed in the U: drive. Most of them were ISO images of CDs. I picked one and mounted it as the V: drive. Next, I created a temporary directory on C: and copied all the files from V: into it. So I've got files flowing to the C: drive from the V: drive, whose contents are actually coming (through a CD emulator) from an ISO file on the U: drive, whose contents are actually coming (through a DVD emulator) from an NRG file back on the C: drive. Talk about wheels within wheels.

Before leaving that XP computer, I unmounted U: and V: and undid my changes to the virtual CD/DVD program. Then, I installed the Ext2 File System download; and copied my two new 4.37 GB image files to the Ext2 partition on my portable case. Finally, I disconnected my portable case, un-installed the Ext2 download, and deleted all the files I'd copied to (or created on) the C: drive; thus leaving that machine just the way I found it. After all, when somebody is nice enough to let you mess around with their PC, that's both the polite and the proper thing to do.

We're almost in the home stretch, so let's recap the contents of the hard disk in my portable case. Since we'll be looking at Linux next, we'll switch back to the "sda" names now. FAT32 partition /dev/sda1 contains the two pairs of split images: BIGTEST.ISO-BIGTEST.ISO.001 (already *un*-successfully written to DVD+RW by K3B under SimplyMEPIS 3.3) and BIGTEST.NRG-BIGTEST.NRG.001. Ext2 partition /dev/sda5 contains three 4.37 GB DVD image files: BIGTEST1.ISO (already successfully written to DVD+RW by K3B), BIGTEST2.NRG and BIGTEST3.NRG.

Since I'd already done all I could do using the SimplyMEPIS 3.3 live CD, I went out on the Internet and got their latest release, version 6.5.02. Numerology-wise, it would have been nicer to get version 6.6 (exactly twice my favorite), but that probably won't be possible. Looking at their beta-testing se-

quence, their next release will likely be 6.9-something, if not 7.0. I'm certainly not claiming that it had anything to do with magic digits; but K3B on the new download would **still** only accept ISO images. So, despite all the improvements that the much higher release numbers would suggest, this newer version didn't do me any good at all. Next, I tried the Ubuntu 7.04 live/install CD. The live CD portion of Ubuntu seems to be echoing XP's worst features; in that they've got extremely stripped-down CD/DVD burning capabilities built into their file browser, but *no* full (or even near-full) featured software (such as K3B) in their selection of pre-loaded applications.

Way back at the start of this article, I renounced Vista and all of its works. To have any chance of keeping that vow, I've got to have at least one ongoing installation of Linux, and use it often. Ideally, every day. As the most popular Linux variant, Ubuntu was certainly a qualified candidate; so I installed it on a spare hard disk. I accepted all the installation defaults, and experienced no problems. As soon as it booted from the hard disk for the first time, I searched its Add/Remove Applications feature. I found two CD/DVD burning programs listed as being actively supported by Ubuntu: K3B and Xfburn. I installed them both over the Internet. As I pretty much expected, the up-to-the-minute edition of K3B **still** didn't recognize NRG images. The situation was even worse with Xfburn. Although it was clearly listed in the Installer as both a CD and DVD burning application, I couldn't find any way to set it to make DVDs. Either it's just too complicated for me, or that program description was a typo and it's really only a CD burner. Fortunately, I had another option in mind all along. My first semi-permanent installation of Linux had been up for less than an hour, and I was already planning to betray everything the Free Software Foundation stands for. Shame on me!

I went to the Nero website and downloaded a trial version of Nero Linux. After that, the gdeb package installer took care of everything. Nero looks a little different under Linux, but it runs the same way. Being a glutton for punishment, I made DVD+RW disks from all three images on /dev/sda5, and from both the split image pairs on /dev/sda1. *All* five came out perfect. So, that about covers everything I can (and can't) do with 4.37 GB DVD image files. What does it all mean? Well, one conclusion is obvious. While I might be able to stumble along under 98SE for a little while longer, if I really want to work with DVD images, I definitely need NTFS or Ext2 partitions. So I either have to join the Merry Microsoft Marching Society and Goose-step along with Gates, or make the move to Linux. I choose Linux.

Appendix I: Your Song's Too Old.

The song I'm referring to is *Your Feets Too Big*, written by Ada Bensen and Fred Fisher. ("Feets" seems to be the way they wanted it spelled, *not* "Feet's"). It was first performed by Thomas "Fats" Waller in the 1929 musical revue *Ain't Misbehavin*, but apparently wasn't recorded by him until 1939. The oldest recording I could find is a 1935 RCA Studios release by The Four Ink Spots. Some slightly more

SIG News

C/C++ Programming

Bruce Arnold (barnold@ieee.org)

http://home.earthlink.net/~barnold2002/Acgnj/index.html

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

June: Balloons 1.2: an advanced version of the Balloons program discussed in September 2006. At that time there was no provision for mouse input. Now there is. The game is suitable for small children ages 1 to 4 years. When the game starts, 35 colored balloons are presented on the screen. The target balloon has an X in the center. Pressing the space bar will explode the indicated balloon with a "pop" sound. When all the balloons are exploded, a smiley face appears with a different sound effect.

This latest version of the program additionally allows the player to use the mouse to "pop" any balloon on the screen. The program must know which balloon has been selected. It also keeps track of the elapsed time and displays it at the end of the game.

Our next meeting September 17. ⌨

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.

June: A first look into developing Rich Internet Applications (RIAs) using Adobe's Flex 2 development kit. In the November 2006 issue of the Java Developers Journal, Yakov Fain developed a small gas station application using Flex 2. We got our feet wet with Flex 2 by reviewing this application.

July: Annual review and planning meeting. We reviewed some of the more interesting topics from this past September through June and brainstorm topics for the 2007–2008 "season."

September: Getting Groovy with Java! Stay tuned for details.

Our next meeting September 11 ⌨

LUNICS (Linux/Unix)

Andreas Meyer (lunics@acgnj.org)

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

LUNICS is a group for those who share an interest in Unix and similar operating systems. While we do quite a bit with Linux, we've also been known to discuss Solaris and BSD too. We generally meet on the first Monday of the month at 8 PM at the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad. See the web page for directions and more information. *No meeting in September. Next meeting October 1.* ⌨

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 September 12.* ⌨

Main Meeting

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

Mike Redlich (mike@redlich.net)

September 7: IT Job Market Presentation, Rebecca Capuano Aerotek.

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.

September 21: PC Security Firewall and Protection from Hacking, Mark Douches ⌨

Investment Software

Jim Cooper (jim@thecoopers.org)

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.

We're no longer focusing on just Telechart -- if you are using (or interested in) Tradestation, eSignal, VectorVest -- or just in learning how to select and use charting and technical analysis, come join us !!

Our next meeting: September 13. ⌨

SpeechTEK 2007 Conference

Cass Lewart (crlewart@comcast.net)

This annual meeting dedicated to speech related issues was held on August 20 - 23 at the New York Marriott Marquis. Talks and exhibits covered voice recognition, voice identification, text to speech conversion, management of call centers and other similar issues. It is interesting to note that while many PC related shows are in decline, SpeechTEK seems to be expanding every year.

One fairly common speech application is when you call to check on your flight status or make a flight reservation and are guided by a voice menu. You can respond by speaking or by pressing a key on your phone. An interesting multimedia approach was presented by Dr. Matula of Avaya Corp. When calling from a modern cell phone instead of having to confirm the flight number you see the flight number on the cellphone display and only have to take action if it is incorrect. This approach may significantly save transaction time.

I saw a demonstration of a text-to-speech program from Cepstral. For visually impaired and for people who would rather listen than read it was a major advancement from pro-

grams I previously tested. The cost of the program for a specific voice was only $29. For more details see: *www.cepstral.com/demos*

Another interesting development from Gyrus Corporation (*www.gyruslogic.com*) was a program which converts a voice file containing spoken word into phonemes, the basic speech components. It then gives search capability to the listener. For example, you have a recording of a one hour speech and would like to find the passage where the speaker talks about "food distribution". You type the words "food distribution", the program converts the two words into phonemes and matches it against the phoneme converted speech. In a fraction of a second you can listen to the passage in which these words were uttered.

There were multiple tracks of lectures, of which I was able to attend a few. The Tuesday meetings ended with a reception on the 9th floor of the hotel with a beautiful view of Manhattan.

Overall I found talks and exhibits very interesting and will come again to SpeechTEK 2008. ▱

SIG News, *continued*

PHP?

Anyone interested in a new PHP SIG (Interpreted Script Programming Language), please get in touch with John Raff (*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.phpv*). ▱

Genealogy

Frank Warren (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*. To subscribe, include the line "subscribe gensig" in the body of the message. *Next meeting ?*

Due to work schedule conflicts, the SIG Leader cannot make the meetings. If anyone else would like to pick up the baton, carry the banner, help the SIG along, please let us know. ▱

Layman's Forum

Matt Skoda (som359@aol.com)

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

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

FireFox Activity

Firefox@acgnj.org

This SIG is intended to be an open forum for **all** FireFox and Mozilla techniques and technologies, to encourage the study and development of web sites of all kinds. All the browsers will be considered and examined. *Meeting third Monday of the month at 7 PM. Next meeting June 18.*

The first meeting of the FireFox Activity was led by David McRitchie to discuss, argue and kick around many concepts and ideas. Web2 is definitely in the mix. All are encouraged to "think out of the box" about new web site design. All members and guests are invited to check out the design concepts and voice their opinion. ▱

NJ Gamers

Gregg McCarthy (greggmc@optonline.net)

http://www.NJGamers.com

www.lanparty.com

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

BYOC - Bring your own computer

BYOF - Bring your own food.

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

Guru Corner

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

Software

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

Operating Systems

Windows 3.1	Ted Martin	732-636-1942

Discount Computer Magazine Price List

As described by the DealsGuy

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

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

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

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

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

ACGNJ MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

Dues

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

Mail this application and your check to:

AMATEUR COMPUTER GROUP OF NEW JERSEY, INC., P.0. BOX 135, SCOTCH PLAINS, NJ 07076

❏ New Member ❏Renewal   ❏ Address Change

First Name _____ Last Name _____Phone_____

Mailing Address _____E-Mail_____

City _____State_____Zip_____URL _____

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

Other Local Computer Groups

Princeton Macintosh User Group: 7:15 pm 2nd Tuesday, Jadwin Hall, A-10, Washington Rd, Princeton, (609) 252-1163, *www.pmug-nj.org*	**Linux Users Group in Princeton:** 7 pm, 2nd Wednesday, Lawrence Branch Mercer Library, Rt#1 & Darrah Lane, Lawrence NJ *http://www.lugip.org*	**New York PC:** 3rd Thurs, 7 pm, PS 41, 116 W 11th St. For info call hotline, (212) 533-NYPC, *http://www.nypc.org*
Computer Education Society of Philadelphia: Meetings & Workshops at Jem Electronics, 6622 Castor Ave, Philadelphia PA. *www.cesop.org/*	**Brookdale Computer Users Group**: 7 pm,3rd Friday, Brookdale Community College, Bldg MAN Rm 103, Lincroft NJ. (732)-739-9633. *www.bcug.com*	**NJ Macintosh User Group**: 8 pm, 3rd Tuesday, Allwood Branch Library, Lyall Rd, Clifton NJ. (201) 893-5274 *http://www.njmug.org*.
PC User Group of So. Jersey: 2nd Mon., 7 pm, Trinity Presb. Church, 499 Rt 70 E, Cherry Hill, NJ. L. Horn, (856) 983-5360 *http://www.pcugsj.org*	**Hunterdon Computer Club:** 8:30 am, 3rd Sat, Hunterdon Medical Center, Rt 31, Flemington NJ. *www.hunterdoncomputerclub.org*, (908) 995-4042.	**NY Amateur Computer Group:** 2nd Thurs, 7 pm, Rm 806 Silver Bldg, NYU, 32 Waverly Pl, NYC. *http://www.nyacc.org*
Morris Micro Computer Club: 7 pm 2nd Thurs., Morris County Library, Hanover Ave, Morristown NJ, (973) 267-0871. *http://www.morrismicro.com*	**Central Jersey Computer Club**: 8 pm, 4th Friday, Rm 74, Armstrong Hall, College of NJ. Rich Williams, (609) 466-0909.	**NJ PC User Group:** 2nd Thurs, Monroe Rm at Wyckoff Public Library, 7 pm. Maureen Shannon, (201) 853-7432, *www.njpcug.org*
Philadelphia Area Computer Society: 3rd Sat, 12 noon Main Meeting, groups 8 am-3 pm. Upper Moreland Middle School, Hatboro PA. (215) 842-9600. *www.pacsnet.org*	**NJ Computer Club:** 6:15 pm, 2nd Wednesday except Jul & Aug, North Branch Reformed Church, 203 Rt 28, Bridgewater NJ. *http://www.njcc.org*	**Princeton PC Users Group**: 2nd Monday, Lawrenceville Library, Alt Rt 1 & Darrah Lane, Lawrenceville, Paul Kurivchack (908) 218-0778, *http://www.ppcug-nj.org*

Classified

apcug — Member of The Association of Personal Computer User Groups

http://www.apcug.net

Radio and TV Programs

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

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

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

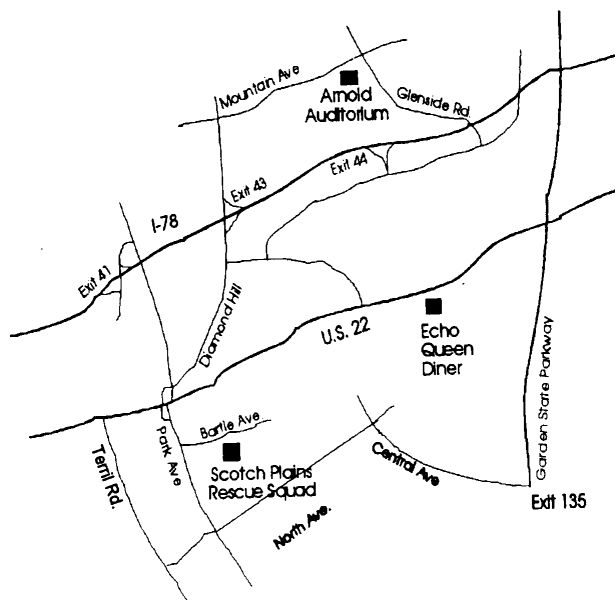**PC Talk**, Sunday from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., 1210 AM Philadelphia. 1800-876-WPEN, Webcast at *http://www.pctalkweb.net*.

MarketPro Shows

http://www.marketpro.com/

Sep 8 - 9: NJ Convention Center (Raritan Center), Edison

Sep 29 - 30: Meadowlands Expo Center, Secaucus

Oct 27 - 28: 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.

contemporary recordings were made by Chubby Checker in 1961 (*For Twisters Only*) and The Beatles in 1962 (*Live at the Star-Club in Hamburg, Germany*). I heard (and saw) the version that continues to live in my memory on TV; in a 1980 episode of *The Muppet Show* (guest starring Carol Channing), which featured giant muppets with **really** giant feet.

By the way, if there's anybody out there who still thinks that Bill Gates ever actually invented anything himself, here's evidence that he didn't even invent the method by which Microsoft usurps the works of others. When Fats Waller performed a song, he'd often alter the lyrics and/or add asides that commented on a lyric, or even the entire song. That's known as authorship through elaboration. At the very end of *Your Feets Too Big*, he added the line; "One never knows, do one?" In their respective recordings, Chubby Checker included Waller's tag line, but The Beatles **didn't**.

Appendix II: Your Derogatory Remark's Too Wimpy.

In this article's second paragraph, I snidely referred to Steve Ballmer (Chief Executive Officer of Microsoft) as the "Big Bad Ballmer". The trouble is: I think he might actually **like** that name. As Fats Waller said; "One never knows, do one?"

Appendix III: Your Geek's Too Unloved.

Did you send flowers and maybe a nice box of chocolates to your System Administrator this past July 27th? I hope so. If not, it could make forgetting Valentine's Day or your Anniversary seem like a picnic. (That's if you're a man. If you're a woman, your guy probably wouldn't react because **he** forgot, too. But a Sysadmin **never** forgets). Since 2000, the last Friday in July has been celebrated as Systems Administrator Appreciation Day (or Sysadmin Day). The first link below is

to the "cartoon" sub-page of the holiday's official Web site. In addition to further links to eight cartoons and seven humorous articles, it contains three ready-to-play videos written and performed by Wes Borg: *The Sysadmin Day Song*, plus two others*.* If you like those videos, there are at least seventeen more on Wes' home page (*www.deadtroll.com*); including one that cracked me up, titled *Keep Your Parents Off The Internet.* Be warned, however, that he'll try very hard to sell you stuff. Sysadmin Day has even gone international, as evidenced by the second link below; from the UKUUG (the UK's Unix & Open Systems User Group). It's a video parody of the song called *I've Got a Little List*, from the 1885 Gilbert and Sullivan comic opera *The Mikado.* Enjoy!

http://www.sysadminday.com/cartoons.html

http://www.ukuug.org/sysadminday/

Appendix IV: Your Distribution's Too Diverse.

Here's a (literally) last minute addition. Distrowatch.com led me to the link below, to a funny (and surprisingly profound) blog entry by Rea Maor; listing ten popular distributions of Linux, and light-heartedly defining user personality traits based on the version chosen.

what-your-linux-distro-says-about-you

There were other interesting subjects listed there as well, so I'll be investigating that site further; but this page was just too good to save for later. Therefore, I thought of an appendix sub-title that somewhat tied it into this article's theme, and I tacked it on here. See you next month. ⌨

ACGNJ MEETINGS

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

Monday, September 3, 2007
8 P.M. - Lunics (Linux/Unix). Andreas Meyer (*lunics@acgnj.org*) No meeting in September. Have a good Labor Day!

Tuesday, September 4
7 P.M. - Board of Directors meeting.

Friday, September 7
8 P.M. - Main Meeting, Mike Redlich (*mike@redlich.net*).

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

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

Wednesday, September 12
7 P.M. - WebDev SIG, Evan Williams (*tech@evanwilliamsconsulting.com*)

Thursday, September 13
8 P.M. - Investing Software, Jim Cooper (jim@thecoopers.org).

Friday, September 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, September 17
7 P.M. - Firefox Activity, David McRitchie (*firefox@acgnj.org*)

Tuesday, September 18
8 P.M. - C/C++ Users, Bruce Arnold (*barnold@ieee.org*), 908-735-7898

Friday, September 21
8 P.M. - Window Pains, John Raff (*john@jraff.com*).

Thursday, September 27
8 P.M. - Genealogy SIG, Frank Warren, **no meeting**.

Monday, October 1
8 P.M. - Lunics (Linux/Unix). Andreas Meyer (*lunics@acgnj.org*) No meeting in September. Have a good Labor Day!

Tuesday, September 4
7 P.M. - Board of Directors meeting. ⌨

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