

Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey NEWS

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Selling a Car on Craigs List

Cass Lewart (rlewart@monmouth.com), ACGNJ



A SIG is Born

On Thursday, May 28th, Mike Reagan will hold the first meeting of a new Special Interest Group, dedicated to repairing, refurbishing, and/or recycling older computers.

This Hardware Activity will meet on the fourth Thursday of each month. All you "tinkerers" out there, come on down and give us your support.



<http://www.acgnj.org>

Founded 1975

How It All Started

At the end of 1991 Ruth bought a new Lexus which served us well for many years. Unfortunately in 2005 we had an encounter with a Ford pickup, which scattered many body parts of our Lexus on Kings Highway in Middletown. We gave what was left of the car to our friend, a Polish immigrant, who needed a car and decided to fix it with a friendly mechanic, purchasing missing parts on the Internet. After a month the car was running again. Recently my friend decided to sell the car as it started developing occasional problems. As my friend's English is not up to par, I offered to help by listing the car on the Internet and dealing with potential customers.

Craigs List

The obvious place to list items for sale is Craigs List (www.craigslist.com). You will find the history of the site in Wikipedia articles. Posting classified ads is free for private users and has a fee structure for commercial users. The site is divided in many ways. The first division is into countries and regions. This way you can limit your search to nearby communities. I selected New Jersey Shore region. Next the site is divided into many categories and subcategories. From Cars (posted by owner or by dealer) to Personal (Men seeking men, Men seeking women, Women seeking men and Women seeking women). You will find a category for about everything.

Posting the Ad

Ruth took some nice pictures of the inside and outside of the Lexus, I wrote a short description of the car, opened a free Craigs List account and posted the ad. It consisted of my write up and 3 pictures. The whole process took less than 10 minutes. Now we were waiting for customers. I could be contacted by email forwarded by Craigs List or by phone, which I listed in the ad.

They Are Coming

Within a few days I received 6 emails. One person offered to buy the car, pay 1/2 immediately and the rest in monthly installments, other people had a few questions which I

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

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

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

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

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Thirteen Things?

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

We'll tie in to that title in a few minutes; but first, I've got some explaining to do. Just last month, I told you about my new Kubuntu 8.10 installation, and how I was going to try to use it as my primary (and hopefully eventually **only**) working hard disk. This month, I'll be talking about my new **Ubuntu 8.04** hard disk installation. What happened? Nothing serious. I just re-thought a few things. For one, if I'm going to commit to using a version of Ubuntu for months (or even years); and use it as a source for newsletter articles, then I really should run "pure" Ubuntu, not a variant. For another, the KDE desktop environment (that's what the K in Kubuntu stands for) is currently experiencing a bit of a Civil War, pitting die-hard version 3.x users against new version 4.x advocates. Right now, that's really not such a good place for an "innocent bystander" such as myself to hang around and pontificate. Finally, although Okular (my current favorite PDF reader) was designed for KDE, it can also be installed under Gnome (Ubuntu's default desktop environment). Those three points should cover most questions, except for; "Why 8.04?"

The answer comes down to a combination of really, really, really bad timing and another Ubuntu feature. The first non-beta release of Ubuntu 9.04 is scheduled for just two days before this article's deadline. In a pinch, I might be able to create an acceptable article in two days, but I definitely **wouldn't** have time to get it proof-read. Furthermore, what if the release had to be delayed for another day or two? For Ubuntu itself, that would only be a small embarrassment. For my article, it would be a disaster. As I did with Kubuntu, I could have gone with the six-month-old Ubuntu version 8.10 instead. However, for most releases, Ubuntu has promised to provide security updates for 18 months on both the desktop and server editions. As of now, for 8.10, there's only one year left. On the other hand, twelve-month-old Ubuntu 8.04 is an LTS (Long Term Support) release, guaranteeing support for three years on the desktop and five years on the server. That leaves me with **two** more years. (Although, considering what happened the last few times I created a "permanent" Ubuntu hard disk installation, this newest one will be lucky if it lasts a whole month). While it's true that security isn't currently a major concern for desktop Linux, it's also true that the crooks will go where the most potential victims live. If Linux finally catches on big (as I fervently hope), security issues will be-

come paramount. It certainly can't hurt if I position myself as best I can, now.

I didn't want to erase my Kubuntu drive until I had a working Ubuntu system to replace it. Therefore, the first thing I needed to do was find another empty IDE hard disk. The only available candidates were a 10 GB disk and an 80 GB disk. Even though it was smaller than I would have liked, I decided to try the 10 GB disk first. So I downloaded the ISO CD image for Ubuntu 8.04.2 and burned it to a CD. (That "2" means that this image has been updated twice since 8.04 was originally released). Then, I re-configured my computer so that the empty 10 GB hard disk was the primary master, and booted from that new CD. When prompted, I let Ubuntu automatically create whatever partitions it wanted. The installation took about fifteen minutes, and gave me no problems. Viewing my new disk layout via GParted (the Gnome Partition Editor), I saw an 8.87 GB Linux Ext3 primary partition, and a 447 MB extended partition containing a 447 MB Linux-Swap logical drive. By now, nobody should be surprised that those sizes don't add up to 10 GB. As usual, the hard disk manufacturer **lied** about its total capacity. (I don't know why I even bother mentioning this pervasive dishonesty anymore).

A minute or so after I booted from my new Ubuntu hard disk, I got two pop-up messages (presumably from over the Internet). The first said; "Software updates available". The second said; "Restricted drivers available". I checked out the second one first. It listed a proprietary driver available for my video card. (By default, Ubuntu will **not** install non-open-source drivers). The message also said: "This driver is required to fully utilize the 3D potential of NVIDIA graphics cards, as well as provide 2D acceleration of newer cards. If you wish to enable desktop effects, this driver is required". As a general rule, I really dislike desktop effects, so I probably didn't need this driver; but I downloaded and installed it anyway.

Then I went back to the first message, which listed 92 available updates. That number gave me pause, since my Kubuntu 8.10 installation had listed 279 updates. I figured that some of that mis-match could have been caused by differences between KDE and Gnome, but most probably came about because the Kubuntu 8.10 CD image had never been updated, while the Ubuntu 8.04 image had already been updated twice.

Continued

Selling a Car on Craig's List, *continued*

immediately answered. I did not hear from them again. I also got about 10 phone calls. These resulted in 3 people actually showing up to see the car. Other callers were either not interested or promised to come but never showed up.

After we showed the car to 2 potential customers the car itself balked. It started misfiring. I withdrew the ad and my friend took the car to a local mechanic who replaced the ignition wires.

The car was now running again, I placed the ad again and a few more callers appeared on the scene. One of the callers showed up with cash in hand and bought the car. He negotiated the price down by a few hundred dollars but the deal was finally concluded. The process took about a week. By then we were all tired. Our participation earned Ruth and me a dinner at a local restaurant and a big thank you from our friend. ☐

Thirteen Things, *continued*

Before I downloaded those updates, however, I decided to do some investigating.

Two of my “must have” programs came pre-installed on Ubuntu 8.04: Firefox and OpenOffice.org. I checked the version numbers for each. Firefox was version 3.0.5, copyright dated 2008. Since Ubuntu 8.04 was originally released on April 24, 2008, and the first version of Firefox 3 wasn’t released until June 17, 2008, Firefox obviously **had** been updated in the 8.04.2 CD image. OpenOffice.org was version 2.4.1, specifically dated Nov. 20, 2008 - also obviously updated. Having recorded my initial conditions, I then downloaded and installed all those updates. Afterwards, Firefox was version 3.0.8, copyright dated 2009, while OpenOffice.org was unchanged. Apparently, those software updates only cover minor revisions, since OpenOffice.org stayed at version 2.4.1, even though its version 3 has been out for quite some time now. On reflection, I think that’s a **good** idea.

Now, at long last, we tie in to our title; by referring to an article named *13 Things to do immediately after installing Ubuntu*. It was written by Ambuj Varshney (who I’m just going to call “the author” from now on), and was posted as of February 24, 2007 on the *Linux on Desktop* website. This time, the link below is provided for a lot more than copyright acknowledgment. For the most part, I’m only going to tell you what happened when I followed (or didn’t follow) the author’s instructions, while **not** going into too much detail about exactly what those instructions were. Usually, I find it extremely annoying if I have to follow electronically transmitted instructions telling me how to fix a computer when they’re being displayed on the **exact same** computer that I’m trying to work on. Not this time! I just opened Firefox, found the website, called up the article, and “sang along”. If you want more details about the steps involved, or if you intend to do this yourself, you should read the original article.

<http://linuxondesktop.blogspot.com/2007/02/13-things-to-do-immediately-after.html>

Step 1: Enable Additional Repositories. Before attempting any of the other steps, the author described how to open Synaptic Package Manager and ensure that any repositories which might be needed later were correctly installed and/or enabled now. Apparently, I already had everything.

Step 2: Enable Cool Graphics Effects. Being a cantankerous old has-been (and therefore hopelessly un-cool by definition), I didn’t do anything in this area right now.

Step 3: Install Audio/Video Codecs. Apparently, Ubuntu does not come installed with support for major audio/video multimedia formats because of licensing and other issues. To get a decent selection of audio/video codecs, I did three command-line installations in a terminal window, using *sudo apt-get* commands. (The author seems to be an “old UNIX hand”. Many of these steps were done from a terminal window rather than from the Graphical User Interface. I’m sorry, but going into any further detail about those commands is beyond the scope of this article). Since I have absolutely no intention of doing any p2p (peer-to-peer) file sharing, I didn’t

run the two additional terminal commands that would have installed p2p stuff.

Step 4: Install Adobe Acrobat Reader. Since I no longer trust Adobe, and I intend to install Okular, I didn’t do this one.

Step 5: Install Macromedia Flash support and Sun Java JRE. Two more command-line installs. Even though Flash now comes from Adobe, and I no longer trust Adobe, I followed the instructions and installed both. I had no trouble with Flash, but Java threw me a curve. Part way through, Sun displayed an “accept this license or else” box, containing an OK button. Unfortunately for me, since I was working in a text-only terminal window, I couldn’t find a way to click on that button. Now, maybe there **was** a way, and I just wasn’t clever enough to figure it out; or maybe some genius at Sun stuck a graphics-mode-only pop-up where it didn’t belong. Either way, my installation bombed.

The complete terminal command was “*sudo aptitude install sun-java6-jre sun-java6-plugin sun-java6-fonts*”. Those first three words are commands. Those last three words are the components I was trying to install. The one that confounded me was *sun-java6-jre* (the Java Runtime Environment). Since my problem was of a graphical nature, I sought a graphical solution. I clicked on System > Administration > Synaptic Package Manager, which immediately informed me that *sun-java6-jre* was “broken”. So I marked it for re-installation. This time, when the license box popped up, I was in graphics mode. So I could use my mouse to grovel abjectly and agree to their terms. While I was still in Synaptic Package Manager, I installed *sun-java6-plugin* and *sun-java6-fonts* from there as well.

Step 6: Install Scribus. I’m a big Scribus fan, so I intended to install it anyway; but since it was on the list, I installed it then.

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 (bdegroo@ptd.net). Those who supply missing issues will receive a free copy of the resulting CD as our thanks for your help. ☐

Thirteen Things, *continued*

Step 7: Install Downloader For X. That's a nice download manager that allows downloading files from the Internet, pausing them if necessary. I wasn't sure if I would need it, but I installed it anyway.

Step 8: Install Google Desktop. Not now, maybe later

Step 9: Install Google Picasa. That's an extremely good, professional looking photo management application. Reportedly, it has a number of features that other Linux photo management programs don't have. Google Picasa isn't a native Linux program. It runs on Wine (a translation layer capable of running Windows applications on Linux). As before: Not now, maybe later.

Step 10: Install Google Earth. Again: Not now, maybe later.

Step 11: Install gdesklets. That's a collection of impressive widgets that can be placed on the desktop, similar to features available on Windows Vista and Mac OS X. Not now, probably never.

Step 12: Install MPlayer with all codecs and DVD playing support. Here I got another error. This installation required two consecutive terminal commands: "sudo apt-get install mplayer" and "sudo apt-get install w32codecs libdvdcss2". The first command went OK. The second bombed at w32codecs, reporting it as no longer available. I went to Synaptic Package Manager, and found mplayer listed as installed correctly; but **neither** w32codecs nor libdvdcss2 was on the "All" list. Apparently, they don't exist anymore (at least, not under those names). I opened Applications > Sound & Video > MPlayer Movie Player and was able to play the first few minutes of a DVD with no problems. I guess only time will tell if MPlayer is really "all there". However, instructions for Quod Libet, reportedly an extremely versatile music player, were also provided under Step 12. So I installed that too, apparently successfully.

Step 13: Install RealPlayer. I'm not a big RealPlayer fan, so I didn't install it right now. However, I'll probably wind up installing it eventually.

Now, I have to tell you that as I was working through the above list, I was becoming more and more concerned. Why? Because it was while reading (quite a while ago, just out of curiosity) an article titled *13 Things to do immediately after installing Ubuntu* that I first learned about Stephan Schreiber's Installable File System for Windows (also known as IFS). As I mentioned last month in my article *Moving into the Future*, this software modifies those Microsoft operating systems that include native support for the NTFS file system (Windows NT4, 2000, XP and up, but **not** 95, 98 or ME) so they can also read from and write to drives formatted in the Linux Ext2 file system. (For further information, visit the IFS website at www.fs-driver.org). As I got closer and closer to the end with no sign of IFS, I began to wonder if I was currently reading the **wrong** *13 Things to do immediately after installing Ubuntu* article. Fortunately, when I got past Step 13, I found that the author had appended a complete earlier version to the end; and there, under the previous Step 3, I found IFS, just as I remembered. So I **was** in the right place after all.

I scanned through those former 13 Steps as well. Some were different, while some were more-or-less the same; but only **one** reached out and grabbed me. That was the old Step 5: Install Microsoft True Type Fonts. I didn't feel good about contaminating my pristine Ubuntu installation with Windows stuff; but what can I say? I've got years and years of documents that contain those fonts. I had to have them. So I followed the author's instructions, and I got them. (This would seem to be something that a **whole lot** of people would want. I wonder why the author didn't carry it over into the updated version).

Having thus completed my fourteen "Thirteen Things" (even though I wound up installing only half of them), I proceeded to finish off my own personal "punch list". My next step was to install Okular. I re-opened Synaptic Package Manager, and found okular-kde4, described there as the "document viewer for KDE 4". I marked it for installation, then clicked the Apply button. That caused 39 new packages to be installed in just about four minutes. After that: K3b, described by Synaptic Package Manager as "a sophisticated KDE CD burning application" and "a very user friendly GUI front end interface to the CD recording programs cdrdao and cdrecord". I marked it for installation, then clicked the Apply button once again. This time, 12 new packages were installed in less than two minutes.

At that point, my new Ubuntu system wasn't even **close** to being finished; but the "major players" were in place. GParted reported that I'd used 2.97 GB of my 8.87 GB Ext3 partition (leaving 5.9 GB free). It was time to protect what I had, by making a backup image. I'd been afraid that this move to Linux might be the final nail in Ghost's coffin, but my floppy-booted version of Ghost 2002 recognized the Ext3 and Swap partitions just fine, and produced a 1.6 GB image file named U804BU01.GHO. To be on the safe side, however, I decided to do another backup immediately; and having just finished using a seven-year-old DOS program, I decided to use an up-to-the-minute Linux program to make my second one. I last looked at Linux hard disk imaging software in my article *Hold That Ghost* (in the November 2007 issue of ACGNJ News). Then, I'd tested Clonezilla and PartImage; and I'd found them both to be promising, but "not ready for prime time". This time I only needed one, so I picked Clonezilla, because I like its name better. So I downloaded the latest ISO CD image (clonezilla-live-1.2.1-53.iso), burned it to a CD, booted from that CD, and ran the program.

Clonezilla created a new directory on my data hard disk, giving it a name based on the date and time of the backup. Inside that directory, it created **twelve** files, all having **non-unique** generic filenames that are probably similar (if not identical) to the names used in every other Clonezilla backup directory in the world. Eleven of them were very, very small text-type files, containing information undoubtedly essential to System Administrators planning mass hard disk cloning operations across vast networks; but the only one that mattered to me was a 1.1 GB file named hda1.aa. (Some of the size difference between my two output files can be explained by the fact that I

Continued

Thirteen Things, *continued*

chose FAST rather than HIGH compression when I ran Ghost; but most, no doubt, came about because Clonezilla contains newer and even better compression algorithms).

While I was choosing which of my seven data drives to use as the target for Clonezilla's new backup directory, I finally thought of a solution for a frustrating new "feature" that's been appearing in more and more Linux distributions recently, including Ubuntu. Previously, multiple partitions and logical drives in one or more hard disks were identified by their system device names (/dev/hda1, /dev/hda2, etc.) The rules for creating those names are esoteric; but once learned, they're consistent and **unique**. Lately, multiple "Storage Media" are being identified **only** by their capacities; and, unfortunately for me, my data hard disk has one 41.8 GB Ext2 primary partition, plus a single extended partition containing two 41.8 GB FAT32 logical drives and four 43.2 GB FAT32 logical drives. (Even though the term "logical partition" is being widely used these days, there's really **no such thing**). When I viewed the contents of my data disk, all I'd see would be three drives called "41.8 GB Media", and four drives called "43.2 GB Media". What's worse, they were often **not** displayed in "dev" order. So, even counting down from the top, I couldn't depend on getting the one I wanted except by trial and error. Not exactly a world shattering conflagration, but **really** annoying.

Anyway, something reminded me of an incident from the mid-nineties, when I was administering several NetWare networks. One of my clients had just received a new parts-catalog-on-CD from his main supplier. Rather than handing it around the office as needed (like they did with their printed catalogs and manuals), he wanted me to put it on his network so everyone could view it via computer. I said; "No problem".

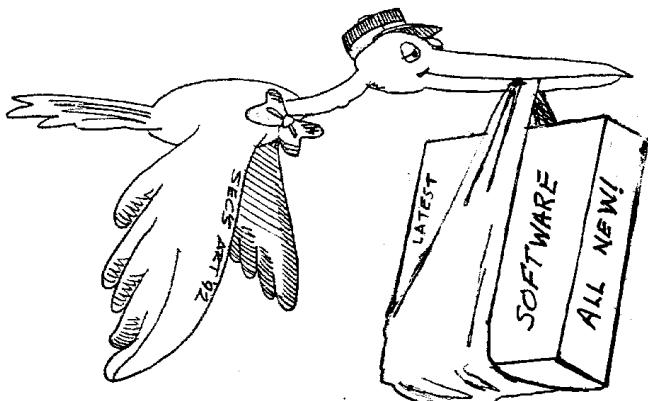
Then, I pulled out my own manuals, to find out just how much of a problem it actually would be. I was surprised to find that while NetWare **could** mount a CD, it didn't do it by mounting the physical CD-reading hardware. Instead, it mounted the CD itself, using its volume label. If a CD didn't have a volume label (such disks are rare, but they **do** exist), then it just flat out **couldn't** be mounted. This arrangement struck me as being extremely wacky, and not only because it excluded a few unusual CDs. It also meant that a new mount command had to be typed in to the server by a Network Administrator **every** time you wanted to change a networked CD. (At that time, at least. Maybe they changed it later). Recalling this story reminded me that volume labels could be tied in with mounting. Might it work with hard disks under a Unix-like operating system, too?

In the good old DOS days, I gave all of my hard disks descriptive volume labels. Nowadays, while I still name most of my boot drives, I hadn't bothered labeling my data drives. So, with fingers crossed (making it a whole lot harder to type), I gave DOS compliant labels to all seven data drives, matching

the drive letters that they had under XP (D_DRIVE for D: through L_DRIVE for L:). This didn't produce a perfect sequence, since G_DRIVE and H_DRIVE were left out because G: and H: are virtual CD drives (**not** hard drives) on my XP system; but **it worked**, so who really cares? Now, when I view my Media from Ubuntu's "Places" menu, I see L_DRIVE, F_DRIVE, D_DRIVE, K_DRIVE, E_DRIVE, J_DRIVE and I_DRIVE. I still don't understand why they're not in order, but at least they're clearly identified. (L_DRIVE is, in fact, number one: the Ext2 primary partition; but for the other six logical FAT32 drives, numerical "dev" order is **exactly** the same as alphabetical order. The layout listed above doesn't correspond to **any** physical or logical arrangement that I can think of).

Finally, we come to an area where I expected to have a lot of trouble – printing. The Local Printing instructions in the Ubuntu Help Center said that most printers, if plugged in and turned on, would be automatically detected and configured. As I expected, mine **wasn't**. So I went to the instructions for a manual installation. I'd like to describe all sorts of trials and tribulations that I experienced after that, but I **can't**. It was, in fact, embarrassingly easy. So simple that I really can't say anything more except; "I followed the instructions, and now my printer works under Linux". What an anti-climax.

My new Ubuntu system still isn't finished. (For one thing, I don't yet have Ubuntu versions of my two virtual CD drives). I'm sure that the more I use it, the more tweaks I'll have to make to it. However, this seems like a good place to stop. So I will. See you next month. ☐



From The DealsGuy

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

*More On Digital Picture Frames

I talked last month about problems reading the internal memory in my digital picture frame. Since then, it's been an education trying to put it into service. The old adage, "you get what you pay for" must apply here. I received no help from "Smartparts" (the company) tech support. At first, the message was that the lines were busy, call back later, but never any luck. Now the message has changed to "No one is available to take your call." I tried their Web site's tech support, but with no response there either.

I used their Optipix™ software to process the pictures and load them into the digital frame's internal memory, but they went into that "eternal bit bin." I eventually got them into the picture frame's memory (no folder) and not on the SD Card I had added. I then copied them from the internal memory into a folder on the SD Card I plugged into the picture frame. So far, so good, but when I tried turning the frame on to display them, it was showing all the pictures I had on the SD Card, even from other folders I had previously put on it, but it retrieved nothing from the internal memory.

I can't seem to select a certain spot for retrieving the pictures. When I remove my SD Card, the frame runs all the pictures it can find in its internal memory, including the samples not in a folder. It seems like I should put each picture set into a separate SD Card by itself. A bit frustrating, but, oh well!

A friend purchased eight digital picture frames on line as gifts to his family, but two came through DOA and the Internet distributor would not replace them. First he deleted the sample pictures in the memory of one of them to set it up, but then could not load pictures. He spotted a small hole and tried a paper clip to see if it was a reset. All the sample pictures came back and he loaded his pictures again, and then deleted the samples. He also purchased more digital frames from another on-line merchant and two had problems, but he got those replaced. He said that with those, he could select the folder to get a slide show from. I checked the book for another friend's frame and it also lets you choose the retrieval source.

I had problems when I tried putting text captions on some of my pictures. At first, I thought it didn't find them; until later when I found it was running them last. Huh! How did that happen? The FAQ on their web site says "Most digital picture frames run the pictures in the order they are copied to the memory." Wow, it's getting complicated, but I guess I can do that. Oh well, hopefully it will eventually do "something" I would like. I'm suggesting that you ask lots of questions if you are buying a digital picture frame.

*Another New Toy!

I saw an ad for a HP color laser jet printer for \$199.99, but I've seen those ads before and was never happy with the price of the cartridges because new printers do not come with "full" cartridges. The sale was at Office Depot and I also shopped at a local computer shop that supports our user group and offered a Ricoh color laser jet for the same price. He printed the spec sheet and it came out on a machine that also featured du-

plex printing (both sides). It impressed me and it was \$379 for club members. I receive several newsletters in PDF format and can't live with reading that much on my screen. I've been printing them out by first printing the odd pages, and then reverse the page sequence to turn them over and print the even sides.

My present HP laser curls the paper a bit and even though I try to straighten them, sometimes that printer runs two pages through at once when printing the opposite side and ruins the page sequence. A duplex printer would sure simplify all that, so my choice was made. I went back to Office Depot and saw a HP printer with duplex capabilities for the same price, but after asking how the warranty worked, I returned to the other shop and purchased a Ricoh duplex printer from them.

Unpacking the machine when I got it home was a bit frustrating because trying to figure out the many protective tapes and metal stops to remove by looking at their pictorial brochure, and in which direction and sequence to do it, was confusing. I later found a PDF manual on the installation disk. I called their tech support number and a guy picked up the phone and proceeded to help me, also offering suggestions. He was based in Atlanta, Ga. and spoke excellent English. What great tech support! I called again later with the same quick response. Oh yes, the store salesman didn't tell me the new machine was an all-in-one multifunction printer. I noticed that when I unpacked it.

I printed some newsletters the other evening and watched that printer run them out while I just sat there, and in COLOR. The new printer is a treat, and so was the Ricoh tech support. I copied a color brochure today and that was simple, and a treat also.

*FACUG Spring Conference

My wife and I attended the FACUG/APCUG Conference and it was a nice weekend. There were about 140 attendees from several Florida user groups, but a few were from other states. There were less sponsoring vendors this year, but that void was filled with other interesting presentations such as "Cloud Computing," "Doterati," "Wikis," "Twittering," "Second Life" and "BarCamp." I had never heard of BarCamp, but it is an intriguing event where you sign up to speak for fifteen minutes about "anything you want" and this "Unconference" concept is gaining popularity all over the world. Doterati is for people locally that work, study, speculate, ask, and answer questions about interactive marketing, media and technology. <http://www.doterati.com>. In just a year, they have 500 members and expanding. Watch the FACUG videos for more information.

A lot was packed into the weekend and it was nice to see friends, especially an attendee there from my hometown area in Michigan. Most of the sessions are available for viewing at <http://www.facug.org/ConferenceSpring/conference-s.asp>. Two presentations were by APCUG President Jay Ferron, one on Security, and another on Windows 7. If you skipped it, you missed an enjoyable conference.

Continued

File Management – Part One of Two

Ron Hirsch ([ronhirsch1439\(at\)comcast.com](mailto:ronhirsch1439(at)comcast.com)), Boca Raton Computer Society, Florida (www.brcs.org)

What exactly do I mean when I say file management? And, I can hear you saying “Who needs to fool around with that stuff. I have too many real things to concern myself with. My computer takes care of all those things anyway, doesn’t it?” Well, the answer is yes and no. If you went into a restaurant to dine, would you rather select your own choices from the menu, or just have the waiter bring you what he feels like bringing? Very few of you will answer with the latter. But, most people don’t bother to establish/customize their file preferences on the computer. It’s easier to just take what the computer has been set to do. And, they don’t have to learn anything (they think) if they just accept all the defaults.

Please note that I’m making the assumption that you know how to use a mouse, and right or left click on things. And, when I say “scroll down” or drag, you know what to do. If you haven’t reached this point yet, I think it’s time to take a very basic beginner’s course before proceeding.

The simplest way to understand the way your computer stores things is to consider the following. Suppose you saw a line of text as follows -

USA\Florida\Boca Raton\123 Broadway\2nd floor\room 24\gray file cabinet\top drawer\3rd folder\2nd document.

I’m sure that everyone would understand exactly where to look for the document in question. **The line above is actually**

a descriptive path to get you there. Well, computer hard drives store things in a very similar way. A path to get to a document in your computer might be -

c:\My Documents\Letters\Personal\Aunt Emma's Birthday.doc

This path states that the filename is “Aunt Emma’s Birthday.doc”, and it is in a folder named “Personal”. That folder is a subfolder of “Letters”, which is a subfolder of “My Documents”, which is a folder on the hard drive C. To define paths in computer language a “\” is used to separate the various elements of the path. Note that this information is not case sensitive. That is, upper or lower case makes no difference. Just having learned this already puts you well on the road to understanding file management.

File management includes things such as establishing certain folders which will be the storage areas for your documents, and other files. You direct where files will be stored in various of your programs by saving your files in folders you establish or define. This makes things easier when you want to do backups also. Many programs allow you to specify what those folders are. So, when you go to save a file, that folder comes up as the default. A common cry from beginners is “I saved the file, but I don’t know where it is.”

Continued

From The DealsGuy, *continued*

*Government Discount

I wouldn’t ordinarily include this, but a few readers work for the government and law enforcement agencies, and perhaps some others might qualify. ElcomSoft Co. Ltd., a leading provider of various password recovery solutions, announces the availability of a special discount.

<http://www.elcomsoft.com/special.html> The new discount program enables government entities, military branches, criminal investigation and law enforcement agencies, and police and emergency services to order selected ElcomSoft password recovery products at a discount. The new 20% discount is in addition to any volume or bundle discounts already offered by ElcomSoft. Check the URL above for products covered and information about ordering.

*Protection For Your Computer

I have not tried this and there’s no discount, but the lifetime membership concept sounded OK for the column. I have edited their announcement to shorten it and we found no reviews on it.

South West eCommerce announced the availability of Spyware & Adware Remover 2009, a new version of the privacy protection software ensuring optimal system performance. Spyware & Adware Remover 2009 delivers

features to protect valuable data from getting corrupted or stolen, stop hackers and hinder ID theft.

Spyware can transmit secret personal information such as name, address, credit card number, social security number, driver’s license number, and passwords. Spyware & Adware Remover provides users with protection from the widest range of threats, and prevents recurrence.

Spyware & Adware Remover helps find what’s eating a computer’s resources by detecting and eliminating malware and adware running in the background. It removes disturbances and blocks annoying pop-up ads. Spyware & Adware Remover 2009 runs under Windows 98, XP, ME, 2000 and Vista. The one-time membership fee is \$29.90. Lifetime Membership includes unlimited downloads and support. Further information on the product, and its free evaluation copy, is available from www.webdefenders.net.

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

File Management, *continued*

Within a folder you can have sub-folders. For example, if you had a folder c:\letters, you could put in subfolders for business, personal, club, etc.. This way, you have an organized filing system. If you have a file drawer that you use for filing things, most people will have separate folders or hangers for different categories. Throwing everything in the same area make it much more difficult to find things, just as putting all your different socks into the same drawer, unpaired, and mixed up, makes life tougher also.

Most people are intimidated by their computers. Remember, it's only a machine, and you should be the boss, not the computer. The more you understand, the more in control you will feel. But, that doesn't just happen. Like all things in this world, you must make it happen. Reading these articles, and doing the practice can help you along the road to that end.

Once you become reasonably proficient in the subjects to be presented, you will be prepared to move files around, copy them to a floppy or ZIP disk to back them up, or delete them. The exercise below should help you in this area.

Please note that the protocols used here are applicable not only to PC's, but also to Mac's. These protocols are very logical once you understand them. The term "Windows" will be used throughout the article. This means that all versions of Windows, 95, 98, ME, or Windows 2000 will follow the same procedures

EXERCISE NUMBER 1

1. Open up Notepad - if you don't know where it is, click on the **START BUTTON** on the bottom left of your screen **START>PROGRAMS>ACCESSORIES**. Double click on Notepad, and the standard Windows text editor will open. Notepad is simply a small program in which you can generate and edit text documents. It offers almost nothing in the way of formatting, but is a bare bones text editor, as opposed to WordPerfect or Word which are capable of elaborate activities.

2. Type "This is a test." in the Notepad window.

3. Save the document by clicking on **FILE>SAVE**. A window will open. At the top of the window is an area with the notation "Save in". It will probably show your C: drive. If not, use the scroll arrow to select the c: drive. Once you have done this and double-clicked on it, there should be a listing below of all the folders on the C: drive. Scroll to the one named "My Documents", and double click on it. (My Documents folder is a standard folder that Windows installs.) The focus is now on that folder. Next, go down to the bottom of that window and in the field at the bottom, select "all files(*.*)" just to see what else is in that folder. There is a field with "File name" alongside of it. In that field, type testfile.txt. Then click on the save button. You have now saved that file in the "My Documents" directory. Now, exit Notepad.

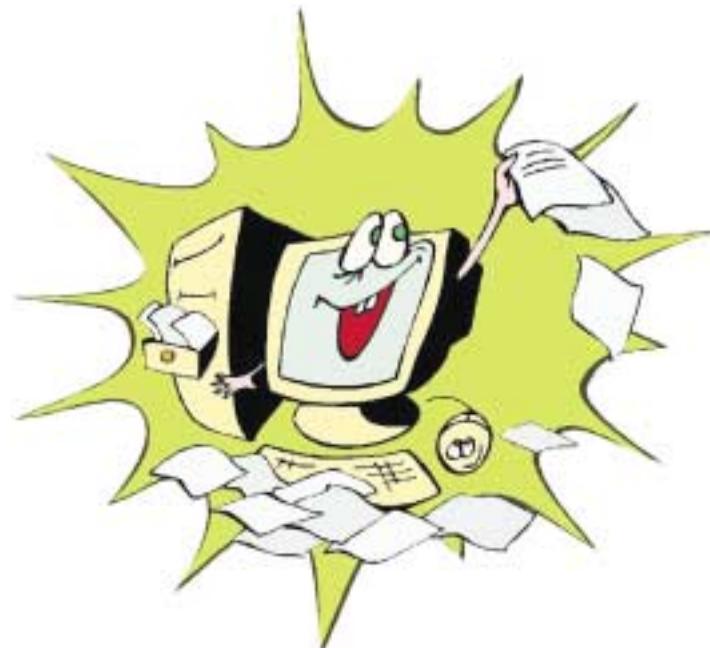
4. Open Windows Explorer. If you don't know how to do this, it's time you learned. Click on **START>PROGRAMS>EXPLORER**. Or, click on the Windows key and

the "e" key on your keyboard at the same time. Navigate around to display the list of folders on the C: drive. If that's not what showing, find C: on the left and double click on it. This should bring up the list of all the folders on the C: drive. Find the My Documents folder, and double click on it. There should be at least one file there, the one we just saved called "testfile.txt".

5. Before continuing, I suggest that you configure Explorer to show all file extensions. This makes working with Explorer easier. At the top of the Explorer Window, click on **VIEW>OPTIONS**, and then uncheck the line which reads "Hide file extensions for the types that are registered."

This is the end of part 1 of Learning Basic Windows skills. Next month, the second part of this will cover moving and copying files, along with setting up new folders. If you find this material useful, you may want to download this article in PDF format, from our web site www.brcs.org. This allows readers to keep the material either as a PDF file, and/or print it out, and place it in a looseleaf notebook for future reference.

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Alternative Internet Browsers - Maybe Better Than IE

Ira Wilsker

Windows users are all too well aware that contemporary versions of Windows come complete with Microsoft's Internet Explorer (IE) installed in such a way as it is almost impossible to remove. Because Microsoft initially makes IE the default browser, many users are unaware that there are some excellent free alternatives out there that are often more feature rich and use fewer resources than IE. Many of the current crop of web based malware target the insecurities (and mass distribution) of IE, a vulnerability often lacking in the alternative browsers. According to some published statistics, the market share of users using IE as their primary browser has recently dropped to 70%, compared to a near monopoly just a few years ago. Perhaps users are smartening up, and learning that there are quality alternatives to IE that may provide a better and more secure browsing and web surfing experience.

My personal favorite browser, that I admittedly use in excess of 95% of the time on all of my computers, is Firefox, recently released as version 3.07. After IE, Firefox is currently the most widely used alternative browser in the world. Available for almost all platforms (operating systems), and published in almost every language in the world, Firefox is produced as "open source" software, where anyone is free to write add-ons, plug-ins, or other enhancements to the software. Because of this open source concept, there may be more ways to customize Firefox than any other browser. While I choose to run several Firefox plug-ins and add-ons, Firefox is just fine as downloaded. Firefox is written in very tight code, which makes it a much smaller download than IE, and typically uses less system resources and is faster to load and open web pages than IE. Of the major browsers, Firefox was a pioneer of tabbed browsing, a feature that was not offered in IE until recently. When people tell me that they are having trouble with IE, my typical initial response is to download and install Firefox. With a few exceptions, Firefox works well when IE seems to choke. One nice feature when Firefox is installed is that it non-destructively imports data from IE, such as cookies, favorites (bookmarks), stored passwords, and other information from IE, making Firefox quick and easy to use. IE and Firefox can mutually co-exist on a computer and not interfere with each other. While each may ask to make it the default browser, my clear choice between IE and Firefox would be for Firefox.

Another alternative browser, which would also be an excellent choice, is Opera, a Norwegian browser that is immensely popular in Europe, and gaining in popularity elsewhere. Opera claims over 20 million registered users. The latest version is 9.64, and is faster, more secure, and more feature rich than IE. Opera is available in many languages (including English), and for most platforms, including computers, cell phones, PDA's, and gaming consoles. Opera utilizes a lot of innovative features unavailable on most other browsers, especially IE. Some of these unusual but beneficial features are "Mouse gestures" where scrolling the mouse may be used to switch between web pages; "Page zoom" where the view of web pages can be modified to meet personal preferences; "Fast

forward" which advances to the next page of many popular sites such as Google and Facebook; "Rewind", the opposite of "fast forward", allows the user to scroll back to previous pages on selected websites; "Trash can" where previously viewed but closed web pages and tabs can be reopened; "Magic wand" which will automatically fill in online forms; and many other helpful and unique features. For those who want a full featured browser that is faster and more secure than IE, Opera would be a good choice.

Apple, which has been producing its own proprietary browser, Safari, for Apple computers, released a PC version last year, now in version Beta 4. Recent published performance comparisons between Safari and other browsers appear to show that Safari is the fastest major browser on the market, capable of loading and displaying web pages several times faster than IE, and faster than its other major competitors. Safari claims to be an elegant browser, much more appealing to the eye than IE, with a much cleaner front end. Safari takes up less desktop space than IE, allowing for more of a webpage to be displayed without Safari crowding out the webpage with borders, toolbars, and other distractions. Safari includes an integral spell checker to improve what the user displays in blogs and other postings, and was the first major browser to integrate an RSS feed directly into the browser. For those who want a feature rich and cutting edge browser, that is currently the fastest on the market, and very pleasing to the eye, Apple's safari would be a good choice. As with the other browsers, Safari can coexist with other browsers on the same computer without interfering with each other.

About a year ago, Google introduced its feature rich browser, Chrome, which was designed from the ground up to be a leading browser that integrates well with Google's other abundant features and services. When it works, it is very impressive, and offers active thumbnail images of recent web pages visited, and interactive searches from the address bar. As with the other alternative browsers, Chrome will import favorites and other information from IE, and is written in very tight code to make it fast to execute and load web pages. While Chrome is a very attractive browser, I will have to reiterate what I said when I first reviewed it last year, when I called it "not ready for prime time". I downloaded a fresh copy of Chrome directly from Google for this column, and installed it. The download and install was fast and efficient, as it also imported my favorites and bookmarks from IE, enabling instant use. When I went to use it, just as I had done about a year ago, several of the web pages I routinely use would not display, instead showing a black screen that says, "Aw Snap! Something went wrong while displaying this webpage. To continue, press reload or go to another page." This error occurred on my Yahoo web mail page, My Yahoo, and even on my weather page which is written in plain HTML. Because of the inability to display these pages, Chrome is the only of the browsers above that I have installed and then uninstalled on my computer. I will try it again when the next major update is released, but will not use it until then.

Continued

Moving to a New Mac

Richard Corzo(rcorzo (at) dacs.org), Director, Danbury Area Computer Society, CT (www.dacs.org)

After work one evening, I tried hopping on to my iMac G5. It was unresponsive, and several attempts to reboot it got it to various stages. Sometimes no further than the familiar Mac boot chime to a black screen, sometimes all the way to a full desktop before the machine froze. It was past the three-year AppleCare period, and I'd long since grown tired of the fan noise it had developed over time. I had figured on keeping the iMac until next fall, by which time I expected Snow Leopard to be out. But, this behavior seemed to press the issue and accelerate my intended schedule. The Apple Store was just a few minutes away, and I'd already thought about what I wanted for my next Mac.

I couldn't resist the temptation for immediate gratification, so I headed over to the Apple Store. Although I didn't really need mobility within my own household, I thought it would be convenient if I could have a laptop this time that I could take with me to the Macintosh SIG. I'd read about the sleek and solid aluminum unibody construction of the new MacBooks and MacBook Pros. The one thing that was holding me back a little was the smaller hard drive size of the laptop compared to my iMac. The 320 GB of the higher model 15.4" MacBook Pro is probably generous for most people, but I had ordered my iMac with a 400 GB drive, and used more than 300 GB in the Leopard partition. After a few questions and some hands-on time, I decided to go ahead with the MacBook Pro and brought it home.

The Apple Specialist had mentioned that when I first booted up, the Setup Assistant would offer me the option of transferring data and settings from a Time Machine backup. Fortunately, I had one on an external drive, since my iMac wouldn't stay up long enough to expect a reliable direct transfer through the network or FireWire. I plugged in the external drive and the Setup Assistant recognized the available Time Machine backups. It took about 2 hours and I had just 8 GB left of my 320 GB. I had chosen to transfer the machine settings as well as the data and settings from my two home folders. (I find it useful to have an additional "admin" user in addition to my own normal logon.)

The next evening I started to settle in to the new machine. One of the first things I tried was starting iPhoto. It asked me if I wanted to automatically start iPhoto the next time I plugged in my digital camera. I said Yes, and continued on to verify that my photos were all showing up. The next time I started iPhoto I got the same question, and it started to become apparent that something was amiss. Talking to our Mac guy at work the next day gave me the idea that I needed to check the permissions on the Preferences folder, which is located inside the Library folder of my home folder.

Indeed, that folder showed a small no access symbol superimposed over the folder icon, as did several other folders within my home folder Library. Doing a Get Info on the folder revealed that there was No Access to Everyone, which explained why preferences were not sticking. In the Get Info window I changed permissions to give myself read/write permission on the folders in question, and requested that the permission change be applied to any enclosed items. If I have-

n't lost you yet, I'll mention one more thing that may have been a factor in the wrong permissions. On my iMac I had recently changed the numeric user ID to 501, which is the default for the first account created, so I could access my own home folder when booted from the Mac installation on my external drive. If you understand UNIX, this might make some sense to you. Otherwise just ignore the last few sentences and enjoy the rest of the article.

That seemed to do the trick. iPhoto now remembered my answer, and I was on to iTunes to verify that my music was all there. Things seemed to go well until I started setting up MobileMe syncing on my new machine, going into the Sync tab of MobileMe preferences to initiate my first sync. It seemed to start but then stopped immediately with the status still saying Never Synchronized. Checking the Console available in the Application:Utilities folder, I found no messages between the sync start and stop that would give me a hint as to what was wrong. I expected to have to visit a Mac Genius at the Apple store, but a conversation with the Mac guy at work made me realize that I was going to have to start with a fresh account and home folder. I canceled my Genius appointment.

When I got home I backed up my home folder to my external drive. (If you don't already have one, have I convinced you yet that you need an external drive for your Mac or PC?) Then logging into my other admin account I deleted my main account and home folder, and recreated a fresh account. I brought back my data one major folder at a time, Music, Pictures, Movies, etc. I did not however copy back my Library folder, except for the Mail and Mail Downloads folders. Folders inside the Library, such as Preferences and Application Support are presumably what were causing my sync problems. So I didn't want to bring back the bad karma. This means that preferences will have to be reestablished for all your applications, although you could try copying back some individual preference files on a case-by-case basis.

My new home folder was a success, because I could now sync with MobileMe. This allowed me to bring down my Mail account definitions, and successfully start Mail.

I'd like to make a small plug here for the Mac OS design over Windows. The Windows equivalent to the individual Mac preference files is the monolithic Windows registry. If you've ever had to pick through the registry to try to eliminate traces of a failed application on Windows, you'll appreciate the ability to just delete a Mac preference file without fearing that you'll mess up some other application or part of the OS.

One issue that you may run into by starting with a clean home folder is that licensed software may require you to reenter the

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Alternative Internet Browsers, *continued*

There are some excellent alternative browsers available that may be superior to the ubiquitous IE in features, speed, and security. All of these browsers are free, and worthy of a try. To quote the old TV commercial, "Try it, you'll like it!" ☐

Dropbox

Ed Richard (edslinusbox@cox.net), Cajun Clickers CC, (www.clickers.org) <http://cccclinuxsig.pbwiki.com>)

So just exactly what is Dropbox, you might ask? Have you ever needed to sync files between two or more machines? Have you wanted to also have an off-site copy of those files? Have you needed to sync files between Windows, Linux and Macintosh machines?

Have you wanted to have a public photo album to share pictures with your friends and family? Have you needed a shared on-line file repository for collaborating with co-workers? Are you tired of carrying around a pocket full of thumb drives? Dropbox is all of these and even more. It is cross platform so it runs on Linux, Windows and Mac computers.

After installing the Dropbox application on one machine, you create an account and link that machine to the account. Then, any file that is placed in the My Dropbox folder (which in Windows lives inside the My Documents folder, and in Linux lives in your user folder, the Linux equivalent of My Documents) gets automatically synced with your Dropbox folder on all other linked machines.

If you only have Dropbox installed on one machine, it becomes an off-site backup service. Dropbox uses Amazon's S3 service behind the scenes to house your data. So files placed in your Dropbox folder are automatically uploaded to the Dropbox servers. Should you delete them on your local ma-

chine or suffer data loss, they can easily be retrieved from the Dropbox servers by installing Dropbox on a replacement machine, or directly from the Dropbox website.

Dropbox also supports shared folders that allow anyone you invite to the folder to have access to the files in that folder. This is a great way to collaborate and share files with coworkers. There's also a folder specifically configured to hold photos. Any images placed there are automatically turned into a photo album with a publicly accessible URL you can give out. Go here to see a photo album of pictures in my pictures folder: <http://tinyurl.com/cafvh>

There is also a Public folder that is accessible to anyone and a web interface that allows you to access files on machines that don't have Dropbox installed.

You can also access previous versions of files from the web interface. So if you foul up that file and need to go back to last week's version, you can. To learn more about Dropbox go to: <https://www.getdropbox.com/screencast#screencast> and watch the video.

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Moving to a New Mac, *continued*

license key. If you installed from physical media, you'll need to go find the sleeve it came in. Much of my software was downloaded and a key was sent in an e-mail. I have a mail folder called Software Licenses to keep those important e-mails. I recommend that you use an IMAP e-mail account such as that which MobileMe offers. IMAP accounts keep mail on a server, so it doesn't matter if your hard drive crashes. You'll still have a copy of that e-mail. If you don't want to pay for MobileMe, then of course go for a free IMAP account such as AOL or AIM Mail (<http://mail.aim.com>), or second best, a Web mail account.

One other thing I wanted to mention is that I migrated from a PowerPC-based Mac to an Intel Mac, and one might wonder if any issues might arise. Many of my applications were already Universal, meaning they were compiled to run on either PowerPC or Intel architecture. On the other hand two

PowerPC-only applications got two different results. Happily my Macromedia Dreamweaver (before they were bought by Adobe) runs without a hitch. Yet Adobe Reader 8, a PowerPC application from my old machine, gets an error message: You can't open the application because it is not supported on this architecture. I'm sure downloading the Intel Mac version of this will easily resolve this.

I'm still working through some issues with Spotlight and getting my first complete Time Machine backup, but so far I really like this new MacBook Pro. It's a beautiful machine. I may have an advantage over those used to a trackpad with a separate button, but this being my first Mac laptop, I'm having little trouble getting used to the trackpad.

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SIG News

C/C++ Programming

Bruce Arnold (barnold@ieee.org)

<http://acgnj.barnold.us/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.

April: There have been so many additions to the code and functionality of the BMailer Application presented earlier this year that I wanted to bring everyone up to date with the new features discussed at last Friday's Window Pains meeting, Click Here for a PDF, as well as the new code that created the improvements.

The main focus is the code which handles the SMTP communication. This includes embedding objects, html, multiple attachments, and error handling, making this the most technically rigorous meeting of the year. There are numerous graphical additions to the program that are included in the new code. Some of these were discussed.

The idea is to create an application that will send out emails in a batch process. It's called "Bmailer" (short for "Bulk e-Mailer"). The program takes as input two previously prepared files. The first is a text file with a list of the recipients email addresses, which could be hundreds of addresses long. The second is a template text file that will be sent to each recipient.

When the "Send Mail" button is clicked, the application starts sending out the emails to the given SMTP provider. Since some providers don't allow high speed batch processing, an optional 30 second delay is provided between outputs.

Our [download site](#) has code and programs from most meetings.

Our next meeting May 19. 

Main Meeting

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

Mike Redlich (mike@redlich.net)

Next meeting: May 1 

Window Pains

John Raff (jraff@comcast.net)

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

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

Our next meeting April 17. 

Web Dev

Evan Williams (tech@evanwilliamsconsulting.com)

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

Our next meeting April 8. 

Java

Mike Redlich (mike@redlich.net)

<http://www.javasig.org>

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

April: This month, Paul Furbacher provided a technical overview of Hudson.

Paul demonstrated how to install Hudson and configure code quality reports, create and build a small project full of bad code and create Ant targets to run code analysis tools, iteratively fix our code and run builds in Hudson to see that we are making progress

Our next meeting May 12.

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: May 14. 

XP SP3 — Access Denied

Bob Elgines, (elginesz (at) rraz.net) Colorado River Computer Club, AZ (www.crcc-az.org)

I tried installing the Windows XP SP3 upgrade several times and, after talking with Microsoft reps, I shut off my antivirus, updated my BIOS, but nothing seemed to work. Then I decided to do a search and found “Access Denied” information and over 340,000 other people had used this same area. For some reason a changeable entry in the Register is locked and will not allow SP3 to change it.

First, do a right click on “My Computer” icon and select “Properties” to see if it has been installed.

Here is what you need to do, if the Error message read “Access Denied” or “Service Pack Installation Did Not Complete”. First read your **Svcpack.log**, located under the Windows folder in case you forgot what the error message said, it should be at the bottom of the log.

Next Backup your Register, then download and install “**Subinac.exe**” from www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyID=e8ba3e56-4a91-93cf-ed698Se3927b&displaylang=en

Start Notepad, then enter the following text:

```
cd /d "%ProgramFiles%\Windows Resource  
Kits\Tools"  
subinacl /subkeyreg HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE
```

```
/grant=administrators=f /grant=system=f  
subinacl /subkeyreg HKEY_CURRENT_USER  
/grant=administrators=f /grant=system=f  
subinacl /subkeyreg HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT  
/grant=administrators=f /grant=system=f  
subinacl /subdirectories %SystemDrive%  
/grant=administrators=f /grant=system=f  
subinacl /subdirectories %windir%\*.*  
/grant=administrators=f /grant=system=f  
secedit /configure /cfg %windir%\re-  
pair\secsetup.inf /db secsetup.sdb  
/verbose
```

Save As “**Reset.cmd**”. Now double click on this file. It will take a while to complete its job.

Reboot your computer, you are now ready to install Win ‘XP SP3. Go to windows update if you need to find SP3 update.

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author’s permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above). ☐

SIG News, continued

Layman's Forum

Matt Skoda (som359@aol.com)

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

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

FireFox Activity

Firefox@acgnj.org

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

Our next meeting May 18. ☐

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. **Our next meeting Apr 6.** ☐

NJ Gamers

Gregg McCarthy (ggreggm@optonline.net)

<http://www.NJGamers.com>

www.lanparty.com

The next Friday Night Frag will be May 8, 6 p.m. to Saturday 12 noon — 18 hours for 5 bucks!

BYOC - Bring your own computer

BYOF - Bring your own food.

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

Guru Corner

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

Software		
HTML	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
ColdFusion	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
CSS	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
Java	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
C++	Bruce Arnold	908-735-7898
	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
ASP	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
Perl	John Raff	973-560-9070
	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
XML	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
Genealogy	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
Home Automation	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
Operating Systems		
Windows 3.1	Ted Martin	732-636-1942

Discount Computer Magazine Price List

As described by the DealsGuy

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

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

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

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

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

ACGNJ MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

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

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

New Member Renewal Address Change

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Phone _____

Mailing Address _____ E-Mail _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ URL _____

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

Other Local Computer Groups		
Princeton Macintosh User Group: 7:15 pm 2nd Tuesday, Jadwin Hall, A-10, Washington Rd, Princeton, (609) 252-1163, www.pmu.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.bcu.org	NJ Macintosh User Group: 8 pm, 3rd Tuesday, Allwood Branch Library, Lyall Rd, Clifton NJ. (201) 893-5274 http://www.njmug.org .
PC User Group of So. Jersey: 2nd Mon., 7 pm, Trinity Presb. Church, 499 Rt 70 E, Cherry Hill, NJ. L. Horn, (856) 983-5360 http://www.pcugsj.org	Hunterdon Computer Club: 8:30 am, 3rd Sat, Hunterdon Medical Center, Rt 31, Flemington NJ. www.hunterdoncomputerclub.org , (908) 995-4042.	NY Amateur Computer Group: 2nd Thurs, 7 pm, Rm 806 Silver Bldg, NYU, 32 Waverly Pl, NYC. http://www.nyacc.org
Morris Micro Computer Club: 7 pm 2nd Thurs., Morris County Library, Hanover Ave, Morristown NJ, (973) 267-0871. http://www.morrismicro.com	Central Jersey Computer Club: 8 pm, 4th Friday, Rm 74, Armstrong Hall, College of NJ. Rich Williams, (609) 466-0909.	NJ PC User Group: 2nd Thurs, Monroe Rm at Wyckoff Public Library, 7 pm. Maureen Shannon, (201) 853-7432, www.njpcug.org
Philadelphia Area Computer Society: 3rd Sat, 12 noon Main Meeting, groups 8 am-3 pm. Upper Moreland Middle School, Hatboro PA. (215) 764-6338. www.pacsnet.org	NJ Computer Club: 6:15 pm, 2nd Wednesday except Jul & Aug, North Branch Reformed Church, 203 Rt 28, Bridgewater NJ. http://www.njcc.org	Princeton PC Users Group: 2nd Monday, Lawrenceville Library, Alt Rt 1 & Darrah Lane, Lawrenceville, Paul Kurivchack (908) 218-0778, http://www.ppcug-nj.org

Classified

FREE TO MEMBERS. Use our classified ads to sell off your surplus computer stuff. Send copy to Classified, ACGNJ NEWS, P.O. Box 135, Scotch Plains NJ 07076 or e-mail to the editor, bdegrout@ptd.net. Classified ads are free to members, one per issue. Non-members pay \$10. Send check payable to ACGNJ Inc. with copy. Reasonable length, please. Deadline: 1st of preceding month. (For example, April 1 for May issue.)

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>.

<http://www.apcug.net>

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

From New York City or Northern New Jersey

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

From Southern New Jersey

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

From I-78 (either direction)

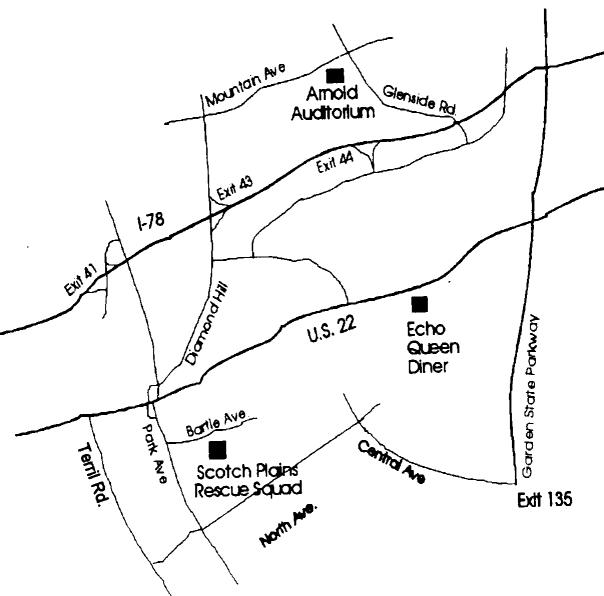
Take exit 41 (Scotch Plains); follow signs to US 22. Turn right at light at bottom of hill and use overpass to cross Rt. 22. Follow US 22 Westbound directions.

From US 22 Westbound

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

From Western New Jersey

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



Things, Thinglets & Thingassos

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

Cleaning Your Computer

During the summer you had your hands full cleaning your yard and patio. In the fall you winterized your home and prepared for the holidays. Now that all that is over, it's time to spring clean your computer. When was the last time you opened up your "box" and looked inside? Don't tell me!

I found a very thorough guide explaining how to clean, what tools you need, why you should clean and yes, how often you should clean, courtesy of Computer Hope at www.computerhope.com/cleaning.htm#00.

Let me know what you found inside your box—I dare you! Is it still alive?

The Tiny Miracle

Have you ever received via e-mail, a URL like this:

<http://search.atomz.com/search/?sp-q=Gang&getit=Go&s-p-a=00062d45-sp00000000&sp-advanced=1&sp-p=all&s-p-w-control=1&sp-w=alike&sp-date-range=-1&sp-xe?>

And when you clicked on it you got an "error 404," or did not get the website you expected?

That's because the URL should have included all four lines. You need to copy the whole thing (all four lines), and paste it into your browser, making sure that you do not introduce any spaces. A few websites are configured so that their URLs don't break, but not very many bother to do this.

I am guilty of sending long URLs via MBUG Listserv. This has caused some of our members to be confused by the split URL. I appreciate the fact that recently someone took the time to remind me about a great solution for this problem. Years ago I knew about this but completely forgot (you can call it my "senior moment").

One solution is Tiny URL or www.tinyurl.com. All you have to do is go to that URL and create a shortcut for future use. The instructions are simple:

1. Copy the giant URL.
2. Paste it in the slot provided by Tiny.
3. Click on the button provided.

And, like magic, the long four line URL becomes tiny, is automatically copied to your clipboard, and looks more like <http://tinyurl.com/52fuz2>. Surprised? Try it, you'll like it, and it's FREE! By the way, some time ago Tiny URL was reported to contain malware, however the manufacturer assures us that the problem has been rectified.

Also, another MBUG member suggests to try adding "<>" brackets to prevent URLs from falling apart.

Another program similar to Tiny URL is at www.webware.com/8301-1_109-9898698-2.html?tag=bl (or I could say: <http://tinyurl.com/57dqyk>)! ☺

ACGNJ MEETINGS

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

Tuesday, April 28

7 P.M. - Board of Directors meeting.

Friday, May 1

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

Monday, May 4

8 P.M. - Lunics, Andreas Meyer (lunics@acgnj.org)

Friday, May 8

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

Monday, May 11

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

Tuesday, May 12

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

Wednesday, May 13

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

Thursday, May 14

8 P.M. - Investing, Jim Cooper (jim@thecoopers.org). ☺

Friday, May 15

8 P.M. - Window Pains, John Raff (john@jruff.com).

Monday, May 18

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

Tuesday, May 19

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

Monday, June 1

8 P.M. - Lunics, Andreas Meyer (lunics@acgnj.org)

Tuesday, June 2

7 P.M. - Board of Directors meeting. ☺

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