

# Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey NEWS

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## Upgrade, Downgrade

*Bob Hawes, ACGNJ*

It's October, so two big events are coming up. One is Halloween. In previous years, I've done wacky "Halloween Episodes". This year, at least so far, I seem to have run out of silly ideas; but maybe some kind of warped inspiration will strike me before I finish this article. The other event is the Ubuntu upgrade, from version 10.04 to version 10.10. However, as I write this, only the first Beta release of 10.10 is available. If Ubuntu follows the same pattern as in previous upgrades, the "final" distribution release won't come out until **after** my deadline for this article has passed. Thus, I can't include that particular upgrade here; but I've taken enough other steps in the past six months, both forward and backward, to justify my title. It's a twist on *Upstairs, Downstairs*, the TV series that ran in Britain on Independent Television (ITV, **not** the BBC) from 1971 to 1975, and was rebroadcast in the US on various PBS stations. I was a fan, but not from the beginning. I didn't start watching until just after the character Lady Marjorie died when the Titanic sank.

We'll start out this past April, with a step backwards. In preparation for my upgrade **to** 10.04, I ran Spinrite (my fabulous hard disk testing program) on my then current main Operating System drive, a 10 GB hard disk booting Ubuntu version 9.10. Unfortunately, Spinrite found a bad sector. Now, in the good old DOS days, a bad sector wasn't a big deal. In fact, most hard disks of that era **came** with bad sectors, carefully mapped out on their labels. You merely blocked them out when you first set up your drive, and subsequently ignored them. Now, though, the nature of

magnetic media has changed. These days, a single bad sector means that the **entire** hard disk is failing. It just can't be trusted anymore, and should be replaced as soon as possible, then discarded. Fortunately, my bad sector was near the end of the drive. That made it more likely to **not** contain data. (Spinrite can read and test all kinds of hard disk formats, but not equally. If this had been a DOS or Windows FAT drive, Spinrite would have **told** me if that sector contained data; but this was a Linux EXT drive, so it didn't). Anyway, I immediately made a backup image using the Linux program Clonezilla; and I didn't get any error messages. This meant that I'd lucked out, and the bad sector was either in the Linux swap partition or in an unused portion of the Linux operating system partition. So I restored that backup image to a **different** 10 GB hard disk (which I'd already tested with Spinrite and found to be perfect) and proceeded to successfully upgrade **that** drive to Ubuntu 10.04.

However, I wasn't quite finished with my old 10 GB hard disk yet. I was curious to see what Spinrite would report after I'd "stressed" it a bit. So I deleted its entire contents, and reformatted it with one single FAT32 partition, using the FORMAT utility that came with FreeDOS 1.0. My theory was that it would be "tougher" on the drive than either of the programs that I'd normally use, Partition Magic (booted from a DOS floppy) or GParted (booted from a Linux live-CD). Afterwards, I ran Spinrite again, and my theory seems to have been correct. I got dozens of bad sectors spread all across the drive. Obviously, that hard disk was

*Continued on page 3*



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### In This Issue

Using Skype, <i>Mike Kearns</i> . . . . .	5	Rubber Boots to the Cell Phone Market, <i>Lou Tarraca</i> . . .	6
DealsGuy for September, <i>Bob Click</i> . . . . .	8	Internet Shopping Part 2, <i>Ron Hirsch</i> . . . . .	9
Download & Convert YouTube Videos, <i>Ira Wilsker</i> . . .	12	SIG News, . . . . .	13
Furu Corner . . . . .	15	Nibbles and Bits, <i>John Pearce</i> . . . . .	17

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# ACGNJ News

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toast. Of course, I discarded it immediately. Thus, on my main computer's 10 GB operating system hard disk, I'd both retreated (encountered a bad hard disk) and advanced (successful upgrade to Ubuntu 10.04). What about my main computer's 320 GB data hard disk? There, I retreated again.

About five years ago (in August of 2005), I put together my current main computer. Now, that's a misleading statement in a number of ways, as I originally built it for a customer, **not** for myself. (It was his emergency off-site backup, permanently stationed at my house, but still owned by his business. It wasn't until March of 2009 that he gave it to me outright). Furthermore, over the years I changed hard disks several times, not to mention CD/DVD drives, power supplies, motherboards, and even cases. At this time, just about the only thing actually left from the original installation would be the video card. Anyway, its first hard disk was 60 GB, split roughly in quarters by creating a 15 GB primary partition for the operating system, plus a "45" GB extended partition containing three "15" GB FAT32 logical drives for data. (As we all know, that extended partition really measured **less** than 45 GB because hard disk manufacturers **always** lie about the sizes of their equipment). At first, the operating system was Windows 98 SE in an FAT32 partition; but in 2006, it was changed to Windows XP SP2 in an NTFS partition. (That wasn't my idea, but the owner insisted). In 2007, the hard disk was upgraded to 160 GB,

also split roughly in quarters: a 40 GB NTFS XP primary partition, plus an extended partition containing three "40" GB logical drives for data, two FAT32 and one NTFS. (Some sources list the maximum file size for FAT32 drives as 2 GB, but that's because of a bug in the 95/98 versions of Windows Explorer that Microsoft never bothered to fix. The real maximum file size for FAT32 drives is 4 GB. That last data drive was formatted NTFS so it could hold files **larger** than 4 GB).

Just over three years ago (in *Your File's Too Big*, my article for our September 2007 issue), I first mentioned Stephan Schreiber's Installable File System for Windows (also known as IFS). 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](http://www.fs-driver.org)). In March 2009, when I finally "inherited" my main computer, I decided to give this a try. At that time, I also converted the computer to use removable drive drawers: two interchangeable drawers for operating systems (Ubuntu and XP), plus a completely separate drawer for data. I'll just be giving quick descriptions below. For further details, see *Moving into the Future*, in our Special TCF Edition 2009 (also known as our April 2009 issue). Plus, see *Thirteen Things?*

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in our May 2009 issue for additional details about my Ubuntu drawer.

I bought a new 320 GB hard disk for my new separate data drawer, and split it into seven roughly equal sections: an EXT2 primary partition and an extended partition containing six FAT32 logical drives. (This time, I won't bother repeating their sizes here). I copied my data files from the 160 GB hard disk to the 320 GB hard disk. (Quite a job, but I won't repeat any of those details here, either). Then, I inserted my new XP operating system drawer and my new 320 GB data drawer into the computer, booted it up, then installed the IFS driver into my XP system; and it worked! XP could read from and write to the EXT2 file system without any problems. I wish I could say the same for Linux. When I booted from the Ubuntu drawer, it **wouldn't** let me access that EXT2 partition at all. I got the message "You are not the owner, so you cannot change these permissions". I couldn't find a way to change ownership using any of the graphical tools. At first, the command line tools seemed more promising; but while there were programs to claim ownership of individual files and/or directories, I couldn't find anything to claim ownership of an entire partition. Indeed, when I searched the help system, I couldn't find anything that even admitted that this situation could ever happen. Fellow Linux/UNIX user group members couldn't help me either. For a year and a quarter, I asked

further questions when I could, and I tried further searches as the spirit moved me; but finally, I gave it up. In June 2010, I deleted the EXT2 partition and replaced it with an NTFS partition. Last year, I bought a One Terabyte external USB drive, and it used the NTFS file system. I figured that since I was permanently stuck with NTFS there, I might as well also be stuck with an NTFS partition on my data hard disk that actually **worked** for both XP and Ubuntu, rather than an EXT2 partition that didn't.

So that's one up and two down so far. Anticipating a successful Ubuntu 10.10 upgrade soon, let's say that my main computer "broke even". Now we proceed to my next oldest computer, where I usually perform experiments. It already had drive drawers installed, because it used to switch between XP and 98 SE as needed. However, the hard disk that lived in the XP drawer was wiped and used for other experiments years ago. So now it had only one drawer, which booted Windows 98 SE, and thus was no longer allowed to connect to the Internet. That 98 SE drawer contained an 80 GB hard disk, with a 10 GB FAT32 primary partition for the operating system, and a "70" GB extended partition containing five FAT32 logical drives for data. This setup, with both operating system and data partitions residing on a single hard disk, had been my preferred arrangement for about fifteen years, both personally and professionally. However, I've now switched my allegiance to the shared

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*Continued on page 4*

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data drawer setup installed on my main computer. So I wanted to employ that design on this computer, too. My first step was purely mechanical, modifying the case by installing another slot for the new data drawer. Then, I had to actually separate the operating system from the data.

Although the operating system partition measured 10 GB, only 4 GB of it was actually in use. While I had two spare 4.3 GB hard disks, that would have been cutting it too close. However, I also had a spare 6 GB hard disk. That'd be just right. Previously, I would have gone right to Ghost for DOS to do this job. Now, though, I decided to give Image for DOS from Terabyte Unlimited (IFD from now on) a shot at it. (For further details about IFD, see *New Blood* in our November 2009 issue, and *Wrap It Up* in our December 2009 issue). Leaving the 80 GB hard disk in the operating system drawer, I put one of those spare 4.3 GB hard disks in the new data drawer, then filled it with a single FAT32 partition (so I could use it as the target drive for the temporary backup file I'd be creating). I made the backup image with no problems; but when I replaced the 80 GB hard disk with my 6 GB disk and tried to restore that image to it, I got the following error message: "The destination is not large enough. 7035 MiBs required". That's equivalent to 6.87 GB, and as you'll see in a minute, it's just flat out **wrong**. So I wound up calling on Ghost after all. It did the job just fine; and as expected, only 4 GB of the 6 GB in my newly created Windows 98 SE operating system drawer were in

use. I guess IFD hasn't got the size changing process down pat yet, even for FAT32 (the simplest of its supposedly supported file systems).

That's another down (IFD failed) and another up (Ghost succeeded). Before I wiped out that temporary 4.3 GB data drawer, I copied its Ghost backup image to DVD. (Two of them, actually: one DVD-R and one DVD+R). Then I erased that 4.3 GB hard disk **and** I deleted the original Windows 98 SE system from the 10 GB primary partition on the 80 GB disk, replacing it with an empty FAT32 partition to hold even more data. So I now had a data only drawer, and a Win 98 SE operating system only drawer. To make my new "auxiliary" setup equivalent to my main computer, I just had to create a completely new Linux operating system drawer. I'd recently lost one of my 10 GB hard disks to that bad sector above, so I only had one left, which still contained my old Ubuntu 9.04 system. I'd kept it in case of emergency, and I **still** wanted to keep it, for the same reason. As far as small to medium spares went, that left me with the two aforementioned 4.3 GB hard disks, neither of which would have been big enough for a full Ubuntu installation. Therefore, I turned to smaller Linux distributions.

First, I tried TinyFlux. I'd downloaded its ISO CD image quite some time ago, but never did anything with it. Now, I burned it to a CD-RW disk, then installed it to a 4.3 GB hard disk. The installation went well, and it certainly lived

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up to the "tiny" part of its name, taking up only 754 MB of that 4.3 GB disk. Here are a couple of quotes from its Internet literature: "TinyFlux 1.0 was released on 2 November 2007. This is the first stable release of the PCFluxboxOS series and a very proud moment"; and "PCFluxboxOS is a beautiful little remaster of PCLinuxOS with Fluxbox as the window manager". Unfortunately, of the three Linux distributions mentioned in those quotes, only PCLinuxOS is still listed by DistroWatch.com as "active" (having been updated in July 2010). In fact, both TinyFlux and PCFluxboxOS have been removed from the DistroWatch database. There's no doubt that TinyFlux is "tiny" and "beautiful"; but not having been updated since 2007, it was simply too outdated for my purposes.

I'd been impressed by the concept of "freedom" as championed by Richard Stallman, so next I tried one of the Linux distributions listed by the FSF (Free Software Foundation) under "Free GNU/Linux distributions". I chose gNewSense, because I liked its name. So I downloaded the ISO CD image for gNewSense version 2.3, burned it to another CD-RW disk, and installed it on my other 4.3 GB hard disk. The installation went well, and it took up only 1.82 GB of the disk. (That's **not** counting the 235 MB swap partition). When I ran it a second time, I got a list of 136 available updates. After I'd installed them, it took up 2.22 GB, leaving 1.56 GB unused. (I know. I know. Even counting the swap partition, it doesn't add up. What can I say?

Hard disk manufacturers **lie!**) At one time, 1.56 GB would have been a huge amount. Nowadays, that's cutting it pretty close; but for now, it's good enough. So I'm keeping that drive. In fact, I wrote this entire article on that "auxiliary" computer, booted from gNewSense.

That's another down (TinyFlux was too old) and another up (gNewSense worked). So on the whole, I'm still "breaking even". Before I close, though, I should explain why I had to redesign my auxiliary computer; but to do that, I need to digress into TV trivia. There's a commercial (for Geico insurance) being broadcast now, purporting to show an old home movie of Abraham Lincoln (with sound, yet) as his wife asks him "Does this dress make my backside look big?" It's funny and well made, from both technical and performance standpoints. The "film" **looks** "old", and the changing expressions on the faces of both actors are marvelous, as he tries to think of something "honest" to say, and as she realizes that his answer is **not** going to be "no". Finally, he gives a wimpy answer, and she storms off in a huff. So how does this explain anything? Simply put, **my** backside hurt.

As I've mentioned in previous articles, I've been watching a lot of Internet TV this past year. For some reason, the chair that felt just fine when I was typing in articles or browsing websites felt really awful when I just sat like a lump and stared at the screen. Maybe it had something to

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do with movement; but whatever the reason, I just couldn't take it anymore. So during the summer, I relocated my main computer to my living room, on a small (but sturdy) table in front of my couch. This solved my backside problem, but it caused a new eye problem. When typing, my eyes were now **too far** from the screen. In order to see what I was typing, I had to crouch forward on the couch. That pretty much negated the whole "comfort" concept. However, there was my older computer, sitting nicely on its own desk, with a comfy swivel chair in front of it. Now, I've successfully

transferred my writing activities to that desk and chair. Yay!

Let's do a final count. So far, we've got four ups and four downs; but even though I got to mention Ghost, I couldn't think of any silly, spooky remarks to make about it. So no "Halloween Episode" this year. That's a down. However, I did get to mention a funny TV commercial, so that's an up. Now we're at five and five. Finally, although I've had to split my computer use between two different machines, my backside feels comfortable in front of both of them. So that's a big up, and we go out on a win! See you next month. ☐

## Using Skype

*Mike Kearns bmkearns1 (at) yahoo.com, Computer Club of Green Valley, AZ (<http://gvcc.apcug.org/>)*

Using free Skype software on your computer allows you to make calls over the internet to others who have the service. It's easy to download and works with most, if not all, computers. Try this great way to keep in contact with your kids, grandchildren, siblings and close friends.

You need three things to make it happen:

1. A high-speed internet connection.
2. A web cam, and I recommend Logitech. You can buy a good camera (with install disk) at Wal-Mart for around \$50. Newer computers have web cams built in. Each camera re-

quires some adjustments for brightness, contrast and sound, but they are usually easy to work with.

3. You need to download the free program by going to Google and typing "free Skype download." The PC version is 4.2, and the latest Mac version is 2.8.

When you download the program you will be asked what Skype name you wish to use. You can choose any name you want. If you pick an unusual name, it is a good idea to let your Skype friends know, because Skype offers a directory to locate their users all over the world.

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When you attempt the first contact with another Skype user, the person receiving the call has the option of accepting or rejecting the call. If you attempt to contact someone who doesn't know you, they can reject your call, similar to a spam blocker.

The web cam gives a nice picture of the person to whom you are talking on the screen. Quick movements can distort the picture for a few seconds while the web cam is adjusting.

Skype includes a small window of each party at the bottom of the screens so you know what the other person is viewing. The quality of the picture is better if both parties have a good high-speed connection. Going from a dial-up connection to a high-speed connection can cause distortion in the video and also slows down the interaction.

It is best to set up a time with the person you will be calling so they have their Skype program open and ready to accept the video call. The person you are calling also has the option to accept the call with or without video. Once you are connected, you can talk as long as you want—there is no charge. You can make adjustments to see the person on full screen or half screen. I find that the image gets a little distorted on full screen, but overall it is still a good picture.

Another neat feature permits you to move a Netbook or laptop with the built-in camera around the room to show the person different items of interest in your home. The new,

small Netbooks are especially useful because they are so portable and lightweight.

Skype can also be used as your telephone service by clicking on their Shop button. You set up a credit-card account with Skype to pay for the calls. Then you can make a phone call to a person's land line and talk to them through your computer.

I have noticed a few people using the new Netbooks as both a phone and video-calling service. They weigh only two pounds, and many women can carry them in their purse. With Skype you can make phone calls anywhere in the world, and the cost per minute will vary depending on where you are calling. I understand that overseas phone calls are very reasonable.

Keep in mind that Skype is not designed to be a replacement for your ordinary home phone since you would not have your computer on all the time. Also, be aware that you cannot use Skype for emergency calling such as 911.

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# From Rubber Boots to 38% of the Cell Phone Market!

Lou Torraca, President of the TUG (Computer User Group of Hawaii MOAA Chapter) [www.the-tug.org](http://www.the-tug.org)

From Rubber boots to 38% of the worldwide cellphone market! Yup, that's true and the name you will immediately know is Nokia which began in the last part of the 19th century as a rubber goods manufacturer.

As you can see, this is all about the Consumer Electronics show. Early numbers coming in on the event, which ran from Jan. 7 to 10 in Las Vegas, show that attendance was up year-over-year. CES attendance was calculated at more than 120,000, which was up from 98,495 for the first two days at the 2009 event.

The event also attracted 330 new exhibitors. My feet are still recuperating from all the walking...the press gaggle begins on Tuesday, 2 days before the opening, with meetings and a couple press conferences and then the official CES press event, CES unveiled where a thousand or so press and bloggers are invited to meet a hundred or so exhibitors showing off their "goodies" in the Venetian Ballroom. Then an all-day marathon of press conferences followed by the evening Digital Experience in the Mirage Ballroom where another hundred or so do a similar thing. On Thursday the rush is on as the Show opens and it's a challenge to not run out of steam before the evening Showstoppers at the Wynn, specially if you were invited to Lunch at Pieros an excellently planned and executed smaller, more exclusive version of the others. So, what follows is mostly a listing of just a few of the many things I was able to see and check-

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attached the computers works as a 3.8 pound Windows 7 laptop running on a CULV Intel Core 2 Duo processor. But when you detach the 11.6 inch HD screen, that portion becomes a 1.6 pound tablet running on Lenovo's Skylight linux operating system and a 1Ghz Snapdragon processor. It also has 3G embedded and 16GB of solid state memory. The two pieces can work independently because they both have battery power enough for five hours. The base can actually work without the screen as long as you connect it to another display. The two piece can also work in coordination.

The base can share power with the tablet. Users can also begin a browsing session on the full laptop and continue it on the tablet. Users will have to get used to **Skylight**, which is more akin to the iPhone's app based operating system. And I'm still curious how sturdy the device will be when you keep attaching and detaching the parts. But this is one cool device that makes a lot of sense and lets you enjoy the perks of a tablet while still having the full keyboard and power of a laptop. The Lenovo IdeaPad U1 hybrid notebook will be available June 1 with an estimated retail price of \$999.

On the other hand, for sheer classy looks and price, the **NX90Jq notebook** sports not one, but two touchpads, one on each side, which should be music to any armchair DJ's ears. This is a home entertainment center-piece both in looks and specifications.

out. Many had not been priced yet and won't be on the market for a month or two, but keep tuned, as I will continue next time with more as well as updates I may receive on these. You can also Google many of them for more info.

Samsung, Panasonic, LG, Sony and others all debuted **3-D-capable TVs** this year, but at prices of \$200 or more above other flat-screen sets, it's not certain whether customers will be buying. Besides, just think about all those glasses you'll need for your Super Bowl bash!

Microsoft Chief Executive Officer Steve Ballmer kicked off this year's keynote sessions with an upbeat take on how his company plans to not only extend its reach in the home entertainment market, but transform the sector as well.

"From the largest screen on the wall to the smallest screens in people's pockets, we are delivering the entertainment people want," Ballmer said.

The space allotted to games at this year's CE event nearly doubled from the previous year, to 13,000 square feet. This year's **game-based innovations** included a motion-control system from Microsoft dubbed Project Natal and a functioning guitar that can be used in "Rock Band" and "Guitar Hero".

IMHO, The **IdeaPad U1 Hybrid from Lenovo** is arguably the coolest gadget at the Consumer Electronics Show. The IdeaPad U1 gives users both a laptop and a tablet in one. Here's how: When the screen and keyboard base are

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The NX90 has an Intel Core i7 CPU (either 7200QM or 8200QM), an 18-inch 1080p display, an Nvidia GeForce GT 335M graphics card, dual hard drives, and a Blu-ray drive. That config will run you \$2,499. The Asus NX90 will start at \$1,999, and be available sometime in the second quarter of 2010.

My favorite software just keeps getting better all the time! The End of Fragmentation: **New Diskeeper 2010** is the only product available today that actually prevents fragmentation before it happens. Utilizing a new revolutionary technology called IntelliWrite™. 2010 benefits:

- Prevents up to 85% of all fragmentation before it can happen
- Operates invisibly without active resource conflicts.
- Boosts read/write speeds above previous limits
- Eliminates slow boot-up/patches/downloads
- Significantly reduces power consumption
- Increases productive life of servers, workstations and laptops
- Eliminates the need for defrag schedules or "wake up" times
- Cuts back "reactive administration" and Help Desk traffic
- Lowers cost of ownership and has fast return on investment.

*Continued on page 7*

## From Rubber Boots to 38% of the Cell Phone Market!, *continued*

The race to be number one in the emerging e-reader device market space is a crowded field as evidenced by product demos and displays during CES. Both tenured vendors, such as Sony, and startups, such as Copia, are developing devices with new features, improved user interfaces and a slew of accessories to meet what they hope will be a robust consumer market.

The PlasticLogic QUE was one of the most anticipated product launches of CES 2010. A lot of information had been revealed or leaked beforehand, but most of us tended to think of the QUE as an ereader oriented toward newspapers and magazines and aimed at business professionals. The reality exceeded those expectations as the **QUE proReader** turned out to be what PlasticLogic CEO Richard Archuleta called a “wireless briefcase.” Not only does the QUE have deals in place with all of the top business periodicals, but it also syncs with Microsoft Exchange, provides “print-to-device” functionality, reads Microsoft Office documents and PDFs, and allows BlackBerry users to transfer data from their smartphones. Unfortunately, there was another way in which the QUE exceeded expectations: the price. The two models cost \$650 and \$800. At that price, it will have to compete with tablet and slate computers.

Amazing what a small projector can do. Compact, lightweight and super mobile, the MPro110 pocket-sized microprojector opens up a whole new world of opportunity

for people wanting to present or share digital content on-the-move. The **MPro110 MicroProjector** is an LED-driven device that offers full VGA resolution connectivity to a range of multimedia devices. Being a ‘pass-through’ device, the projector requires an image source device to be connected.

**Lenovo’s dual screen laptop computer**, W700ds is a large, \$5,000 laptop that looks as if it swallowed a netbook. It has a 17-inch main screen, from which a second, 10-inch, netbook-sized screen slides out. Almost like magic {:-}

Why not recharge electronic gizmos while you carry them? BTW, this is NOT just for the ladies! The **Concord Keystone 4U2ReUSE Solar Sling** tote bag lets you. Made from 100-percent recycled plastic bottles, the Solar Sling features a flexible solar panel and a battery pack with USB connectors. It charges phones, cameras, music players, and other portable gadgets. The solar cell achieves a full charge after soaking up five hours of full sunlight. The company hasn’t announced pricing and availability yet.

D-Link is the first vendor to come out with a dedicated piece of hardware for the **Boxee home media management** software. The box is oddly shaped, but it won’t take up much space when it sits next to a TV. It streams Internet video and connects wirelessly to your computer. As well as a long list of supported file formats, you can play virtually any kind of video on it. The Boxee Box will be available for \$199 in the second quarter of this year.

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**Big-Screen Skype:** LG and Panasonic both announced Skype support for their connected HDTVs (equipped with Webcam accessories). We can look forward to video chat with our loved ones in big-screen 1080p, which could mean the end of calling in underwear and PJs {:-).

Now, here is a relatively small, inexpensive item that really makes sense. **Flexicord™** always the right length the award-winning Flexicord™ Single-cord solution for cables up to ten feet in length.

- Shipped as a compact coiled cable
- Can be extended up to 10 feet
- Holds its shape without recoiling
- Full-size Flexicord™ cables include simple re-coiling tool
- 2009 CES Innovations Award Honoree\*
- Available in HDMI, USB, S-Video, Network, Composite

And on that note, I will leave you to ponder this new electronic stuff. Have fun and be careful as usual on the ‘net. Aloha, Lou (*af06hi (at) gmail.com*)

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### 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Newsletter CD Now On Sale



Beta .09  
Release

\$8.00, includes  
postage

\$7.00 if you  
pick it up at a  
meeting

Get yours  
today!

#### Back Issues Still Needed

Our collection remains incomplete. Below is a list of missing newsletters. Anyone who lends us one of these (or supplies a good clear copy) will receive the next CD as our thanks.

1975: #2 and #3 (dates uncertain)

1976: January

1984: August

1985: June, July, August, September. ☐

# From The DealsGuy

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

I finally posted my article about "Creating a Trade Show" on my Web site, but it is a bit lengthy for newsletters. You can read it there or download it. It's in MS Word format. If you want it in another format, let me know.

## **\*Lets Talk Drive Letters**

Last month I told you about the problem I had with a flash drive that kept coming up as E for its drive-letter, in spite of there being no D-drive at the time, but I finally ended up going to the Control Panel to change its drive-letter to the one I needed. I had simply retrieved a file from it the night before, but since D was in use at the time so, that flash drive was temporarily E while I retrieved the file. Was it just some type of coincidence?

The drive letter assignment procedure I wrote about in my column was mentioned as a show-and-tell at the user group meeting here and I wondered about using that same procedure to get a flash drive to always be a certain drive letter without other drive letters next to it being in use. I'd like that when I'm backing up data. I tried using the drive letter assignment steps in the Control Panel to give a completely different flash drive the letter F to see what it would do. I don't normally have a D-drive because I set up my DVD/CD ROM drive as Z so it doesn't interfere with other

drive letter assignments for whatever I'm doing, such as installing software.

After going through the drive-letter assignment with the new flash drive, I removed the flash drive from its USB plug, waited a minute, then plugged it back in to see. Even with no D, E, or G drive, that flash drive appeared as F, just what I had assigned it. However, the member who mentioned doing the show-and-tell also told me that when that same thing happened to him, the flash drive he was working with somehow adopted a drive letter out of sequence, but only on that certain computer, so I took the one I had just designated as F to another desktop machine and plugged it into the USB slot. It came up as D and not the F I had assigned it on the other computer. There is a thought for being creative with your flash drive. Rebooting the computer I assigned the drive-letter on had no affect and the flash drive still came up as F. Using a different USB plug also made no difference, it still came up as F.

My curiosity was satisfied by my proofreader who proceeded to explain it better. He said that when the computer's user inserts a flash drive, the machine tries to assign it the next available drive-letter. However, in my case, I deliberately assigned that drive a specific drive-letter. In this case, my machine will remember the drive and the assignment. It will try to give it that

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drive-letter and also try to reserve that letter for that drive in the event of other drive-letter assignments; in other words, it would skip that letter. He said many computer users prefer that method of flash drive-letter assignment. He also stated that the same scenario applies for other types of plug-in drives. When you plug a flash drive into the USB port without the drive-letter having been manually assigned, the machine might try to remember that drive letter automatically assigned when you use that flash drive again, thus the incidental drive-letter assignment.

## **\*Still No Information**

I have not heard from the guy about a special offer on learning courses so I think its time to give up on it, even though he sent a message saying he would get back with me. I have some other items you might like so let's get on with it.

## **\*Use Your Smartphone For A Good Cause**

Check around and you'll find there are many apps for your smartphone that can be capable of getting you just about any information you want. A guy mentioned some interesting apps at a user group meeting the other night. I wrote about some of these smartphone apps a year ago, including this most important one, where are the closest restroom facilities? There is an app called Sit or Squat that will obtain that information for you using an intersection, address, or zip code, and perhaps your GPS information. It gives you maps and sometimes even a rating or review, and the app is

free. It's available for iPhone, Android, iPod Touch, or Blackberry. <<http://www.sitorsquat.com/sitorsquat/home/map>>

## **\*Where Can I Find Lots of Smartphone Apps?**

<[libguides.huntingdon.edu/content.php?pid=114069&sid=1110744](http://libguides.huntingdon.edu/content.php?pid=114069&sid=1110744)> has many smartphone apps on it. The apps are listed and the name is the link to get it, and there are plenty of them. I ran across it while looking for an app called Mo's Nose and saw plenty of apps for many categories. Mo's Nose was there, but no link to get it. It is a good app to help a person who travels with a pet. At any rate, that site will keep you busy checking things out.

## **\*Where's The Wi-Fi?**

Many people want to check the Net for E-mail or something, so why not use Wi-Fi Finder's online database to get connected? You can start checking the Web site to find out more information. It tells you whether they are free or paid services. This database by JiWire will include maps with its listings. The app is free and runs on iPhone, iPod Touch, and Android. <<http://www.jiwire.com/iphone>>.

## **\*What If You're Sick?**

MPassport should be good for that. It will help you find the closest medical help in any category you might need. Want a doctor, MPassport will find one. Got a toothache, it knows about dentists too. How about a hospital, or just a pharmacy, MPassport will help. It also gives you medical translations. It's useful in over 20 cities worldwide, not

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exactly an impressive number, but its growing. It's free and runs on the iPhone, iPod Touch, or iPad. Find out more at <http://www.mpassport.com/>.

I know there are tons of other Smartphone Apps for just about anything you need. I can't vouch for any of them because I'm not smart enough to have a Smartphone. How smart is that? However, before I change to another topic, here is one that Mike Ungerman mentioned to the user group members here that might interest you if you like to tinker. If you're creative and tired of playing someone else's creations on your phone, go to <http://makeownringtone.com/> where you can make your own ring-tone free. Thanks Mike, I think many of my readers would love to create their own personalized ring-tone, although I don't recommend any cussing in your creation.

Actually, I personalized my own cell phone with the use of its own voice recognition feature. Now when my wife calls me on my cell, my phone announces "It's Joann." I can't see inside of my flip phone before I open it and take the call. However, I know who it is before I take it off my belt and you know I always answer with a "happy" voice when she calls. Don't tell anybody, but I discovered how to do it accidentally. That item was not in the manual.

#### **\*Archive Computer Drivers —Be Sure You Have Them**

If you find it necessary to reformat your hard drive and re-install everything, you did well if you thought ahead to

have a backup of your drivers. DriverMax is a free program that allows you to archive your currently installed drivers, and if you ever need to reinstall them, you can do the installations all at once. No need trying to find the version you "were" using before you wiped your drive. A friend said this is the program to have if you like to reinstall Windows occasionally, or tweak your installed drivers, however, that's not my bag. <http://www.innovative-sol.com/drivermax/> is where to find it and they also have a pay version.

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



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## **Internet Shopping - A View of One of the Best (Part 2 of 2)**

*Ron Hirsch, Boca Raton Computer Society (<http://www.brccs.org>)*

This is the second and final part of this article on Newegg. In part 1, I listed all the niceties that Newegg offers when you are looking for a product. In part 2 I will cover the numerous great things that occur after you place your order

### **Communication During the Order**

I personally feel that poor communication is one of the very serious problems in this world today, at all levels of society. But Newegg's communications are superb. Here are the emails you will receive after placing an order.

- Immediately after you place your order, you will receive an email confirming your order placement.
- Shortly after that, a second email will arrive, confirming that your credit card has been successfully charged.
- Within the next 48 hours or so, a third email will arrive, stating that your order has shipped, and a tracking number is shown below in a hot link. Click on this link, and window will open on the shipper's site, giving details of your delivery status. You do not have to copy the tracking

number, and then go to the UPS, or FEDEX site, and paste in there. Newegg takes care of all of that automatically.

- The final email that comes is a copy of your invoice, which you can print out, if you have not already done so.

### **How to Communicate with NewEgg**

There are three excellent and practical ways to communicate with Newegg.

- The first is via email. They will generally reply very quickly, usually within 24 hours.
- The second is to call them on their 800 number, where you will get a capable person to talk with, generally with a minimum of "hold" time.
- The third way is to enter into a live chat. This is essentially texting to them. You enter your message to them via the keyboard, and they respond. Often they will text you that they must look up info, and to please be patient.

I have made it a practice to compose my initial message to them prior to starting this process. My typing skills are poor, and if I have a lot to say in my inquiry, I want to pre-

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pare it prior to getting someone on my case, and then having them wait for minutes until I get my message keyed in. So I just type the message into a blank document in a text editor such as Notepad, MS Word, WordPerfect, or whatever. After I have it all typed out, I then select it all, and copy it to the clipboard, and then paste it into the message box on the live chat screen.

### Problems After You Receive Your Order

Here is another area where Newegg really stands head and shoulders above most other suppliers. And I got very extensive experience in this area during my latest computer build.

I had purchased almost two dozen items for my new computer, and its peripheral items. Unfortunately, several of the manufacturers must have been having a bad run of quality control, and a number of these items were nonfunctional right out of the box – not Newegg’s fault of course. Here is where Newegg shines brightly.

I contacted them about the problem, and shortly after, they replied to me via email with an RMA number, and a link to their site where I could download and print out a prepaid UPS label. Then I was instructed to repackage the item with all its accessories in the original packaging, paste on the UPS label, and drop it off at the nearest UPS location. When they receive the item, they will then send out a replacement ASAP.

Alternatively, a second option is offered. If I wanted the replacement faster, or I did not have the original packaging material anymore. I could do the following — place a new order for the same item, and have it charged to my credit card. Then when I received the new order, I could use that packing material along with the prepaid UPS label to them to return the defective item to them. When they received it, they would then credit my credit card for the second purchase.

### Summary — My Overall View of NewEgg

Dealing with Newegg these past months has been such a pleasant and rewarding experience, that I have established a new personal policy for all my future purchases when Newegg is a potential supplier.

If they do indeed offer the product I seek, and even if their pricing is slightly higher than the competition, I will buy from them.

Too often, people lose sight of the fact that a very important part of any purchase of any type, anywhere, is the service one will receive, not only during the purchase, but also after the product is received.

While I have found companies who may be good in some of these areas, I have never found a company who is as good as Newegg in all these areas. And no, I am not writing this because I will get anything special from the company. I just wanted to share my experiences with all of you, and do

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all I can to keep this company prospering, as I hope to continue dealing with them for many years.

One further comment – they have a daily mailing which offers special bargains, often with free shipping, and very special pricing for limited periods. If you’d like to receive their emails, go to their site, and sign up for these daily emails.

If more companies took a lesson from Newegg, online shopping could become a very pleasant experience every time. I know that when I shop with Newegg, my hassles are

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over. If you’ve never shopped with them, consider them in the future, and I’m sure you will agree with my views. Happy Shopping!

If you find this material useful, you may want to download this article in PDF format, from <http://www.brcs.org/hirsch.php>. 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. Remember, the PDF version offers full color, wherever color elements might be involved, and often images which could not be used in the Boca Bits hard

## Music— Capture it, Organize it and Enjoy it

*Phil Sorrentino, Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc.*

It’s time to organize your Music and create a Music Folder to be the repository of all the music you Rip, purchase, or convert from analog sources; basically your Music Library.

There are many ways of organizing the Music folder with sub folders. Before we do that it is probably worth a review of the data that is kept with each music file to see if it can be of any use in determining the organization of these folders. What data? you say. Well along with the actual music, in each music file, there is data that describes the music part of the file, called metadata.

Metadata is data that describes other data (in this case the music). The music metadata is called ID3 Tag Data and is defined by the ID3v2 specification. ID3 Tag Data includes descriptive items such as: title, artist, album, track number, genre, year, copyright, stereo, length, composer, rating, etc., as well as album cover art graphics.

ID3 Tag Data is created when the original MP3 data file is created. The ID3 Tag Data is not easily modified unless you use an ID3 Tag Editor like MP3Tag. (In short, MP3Tag allows the user to modify the ID3 Tag Data that is created along with the MP3 file when a tune is initially created, or

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ripped from a CD.) The reason that ID3 Tag Data is important is because Music players, like Windows Media Player (WMP) and iTunes use the ID3 Tag Data to organize and present your music library.

A music tune will show up according to the ID3 Tag Data, which may not be where you think it should show up if you are only looking at the file name. This will probably not be a problem if all of your tunes come from CDs or are downloaded, but if you convert any from vinyl or tape to MP3, the ID3 Tag Data may not be what you think it should be. Also, if you want to change where particular artists show up, you might have to change the ID3 Tag Data for that artist. Some CD compilations of tunes have the artist as “Various Artists”, which will put that tune under “V”, probably not where you would expect to find it. So, it’s good to have an ID3 Tag Editor so you can make any changes to the ID Tag Data to put the tunes in the places you want them.

Once the tunes that need changes to the ID3 Tag Data are changed, the library will be presented as you expected, typically artists or songs alphabetically arranged, although you can also view the library based on other items such as Genre, Album, Year, or even Rating. Rating is a number that you give to a tune, typically one to five. The Rating can then help you find a tune or present a specific view of your music library. (For example, you could show all the tunes with a rating of 4 or better.)

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library. You could easily create a playlist that would last all day. The original playlist file type is M3U. WMP can be set to use M3U but prefers WPL. M3U has a very simple file structure which is just a text list of files. WPL is a little more complex and probably a little more capable and is written in HTML. Both work fine and it is impossible to tell which is being used without looking at the file types.

If you have no reason to prefer one over the other, use your Music Player’s default type. (Either file can be modified using Notepad, not Wordpad or Word, if necessary. Notepad is a simple text editor that does not include any formatting information.) Modifying a file with a text editor should only be done with great caution, and only by a person who is confident of the file structure. An error in the file structure may make the file non-useable, so do this only if absolutely necessary.

Once you have decided on the Playlist file type, or just accepted to use the default, you can start to create Playlists. Just think of a theme and then find all the tunes that support that theme. Using WMP, playlists are easily created by showing the Library in any view, such as by Artist, and then dragging-and-dropping the tunes for the Playlist over to the Playlist pane on the right side of the screen. After you have all the tunes in the list, give it a name and save it and that’s all there is to it.

While you’re at it you might want to create a Playlist for each Artist so that you can review all of the tunes for that

ID3 Tag Data determines how the music library will be presented, but we still may want to organize the underlying folders for convenience. This is not necessary, but it might allow the music to be viewed easily (using Windows Explorer), without using a Music Player.

When CDs are Ripped, they are put into folders for the Artist, with the Album being a sub-folder. You might continue this and just put all the Artist folders into a Music folder. Then, it would be easy to find any tune with just the Artist and Album names. This is in general a very good way to organize your Music Folder. The only difficulties that might arise are those associated with converted tapes and disks, but you will just have to see how best they can each fit into your overall scheme.

A simpler, but less desirable scheme might be just one Music Folder with every tune included. The tunes would then be alphabetically arranged by the file name. This can lead to one very big file, but for small Music Libraries, this may be acceptable. You could even create separate music Folders for specific music genres, like Music-Big Band, Music-Country, Music-Pop; it’s your choice.

Playlists are next. Now that we have a Folder organization for our Music Folder, we can take advantage of that organization to find tunes to include in Playlists. Playlists are just as you would expect, they are lists of tunes to Play without manual intervention. Playlists can include as many tunes as you would like, only limited by the number of tunes in your

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specific artist. In this case, the artist is the theme for “an evening with a Sinatra, or Elvis, or the Beatles”. Now you’re ready to take advantage of all that music entertainment, laboriously stored in the Music Folders.


One last item to consider is using your music on other machines on your network. If you don’t have a home network now, you probably will in the future. For simplicity and convenience it makes sense to have only one Music Folder, kept on your main computer (acting as a Music Server), and to use it on every other machine on your network. This way there is only one Music Folder to be backed-up. WMP can easily be set up for Sharing Media. Select Tools - Library - Configure Sharing..., and check the Share Media check box. Then choose the devices, on the network, to Allow sharing of music. This will allow other machines to use the media in the Server’s Music Library.

By the way, all of the music in your Music Library can also be used on any of the portable MP3 music players, like Apple’s iPod or SanDisk’s Clip. WMP provides the ability to “Sync” your music to a portable device. Briefly, to share a Playlist, plug your device into a USB port and choose Sync on the Selection Bar, choose the playlist and select Sync. (Obviously, the memory in the portable device must be large enough to hold all the tuned in the playlist.)

Recorded music is only about 133 years old if we consider Edison’s invention in 1877 as its practical beginning. (There were earlier patents on devices that could record but

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not playback the recording.) Recorded music has come a long way from Edison's time to the present when almost any recorded music can be obtained and stored indefinitely on our personal computers, and then played and shared almost effortlessly. The computer, besides all of its other jobs, can be a great music entertainment center. If you haven't started yet, what are you waiting for? Get started creating your own Music Library so you and your family can enjoy the fruits of the past 133 years and your current efforts.

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## Downloading and Converting YouTube Videos

*Ira Wilsker*

### WEBSITES:

<http://www.forinside.com> – Online download and conversion

<http://www.downloadhelper.net> – FireFox Add-on and converter

<http://www.orbitdownloader.com> – Automated downloader

<http://www.download-youtube.com> – Online download

<http://www.videolan.org> – Free universal video player

[http://www.any-video-converter.com/products/for\\_video\\_free/](http://www.any-video-converter.com/products/for_video_free/)

<http://www.dvdvideosoft.com/free-dvd-video-software.htm>

I frequently get emails from readers of this column and listeners of my radio show regarding problems they are

having. While I cannot guarantee an effective answer, I can at least try to help them out, or tell them where they can find a solution. Some of the more interesting, or more common questions I will occasionally post here under the premise that if a few of you are having a similar problem, then many others are having a similar problem.

Last Friday I was forwarded an email that had been bouncing around one of the departments at Lamar University about how to download YouTube videos and convert them to a format that can be used in PowerPoint. Some of the faculty have rightly found that there is some useful content on YouTube that is applicable to academic lectures, and

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they would like to use this information in class. Fortunately, there are several good solutions.

My personal first choice in downloading YouTube videos and converting them into a format that can play in PowerPoint, or on most video players, is a free add-on for the FireFox browser called DownloadHelper ([www.downloadhelper.net](http://www.downloadhelper.net)). DownloadHelper is extremely popular with FireFox users, having been downloaded and installed about 54 million times! DownloadHelper places a small icon on the bottom edge of the browser window consisting of three colored balls; when the balls become animated, the DownloadHelper menu becomes available by clicking on the icon. Left clicking on the icon shows the title of the video, and clicking the title downloads the video in YouTube's native FLV format to your computer. Right clicking on the icon opens the menu which allows the user to convert the video into any of many popular formats. Alternatively, clicking on the three-ball icon that appears to the left of the video title at the top of the screen opens a one-click menu that offers all of the options. The one that I use most often is the "Download and Convert" which can download and convert the video in a single action. For compatibility purposes, especially when embedding the video in PowerPoint, I mostly select the WMV (Windows media format), but sometimes choose the QuickTime MOV, or AVI formats. For those who do not have FireFox installed, it is available free at [getfirefox.com](http://getfirefox.com), and does not interfere with any other browser on the computer.

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For those using any browser, there are several free online services that will download YouTube (and other) videos to your computer, and some will also convert them to popular formats for you. Even though its server is frequently busy and located in Brazil, I like Forinside, at [www.forinside.com](http://www.forinside.com). Forinside is extremely easy to use; all the user needs to do is copy the URL (web address) of the video and paste it into the textbox, and use the pull down menu to select a format. Clicking the download button will start the process.

Forinside can convert online videos into any of the 10 most widely used formats, and can download videos and audio from YouTube, MySpace, Google Video, and Mp3Tube. For those who already have videos on their computers that they would like to convert into other formats, Forinside offers that service for free. Simply click on the orange "File" tab, then "Browse" your hard drive for the file you want converted. Use the pull down menu to select any of the 10 formats available, click on "Convert" and Forinside will upload the original video to its server, convert it to the chosen format, and then download it to your computer in the new format. Your original video remains intact on your computer. As stated above, the Forinside server is often very busy.

Another service that can download YouTube videos directly to your computer is [Download-YouTube.com](http://Download-YouTube.com). This site is very easy to use from any browser. Simply open the desired YouTube page, and in the address bar of your browser insert the phrase "download-" (download hyphen) before

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## Downloading and Converting YouTube Videos, *Continued*

insert the phrase “download-“ (download hyphen) before the word “YouTube “ in the URL, and the user will be directed to the Download-YouTube web page. On the Download-YouTube page either click on the “Click here to download” link, or right click and “Save Link As” or “Save target as” and the file will be downloaded in the native YouTube FLV format.

One of the easiest free YouTube downloaders is Orbit Downloader, available at [www.orbitdownloader.com](http://www.orbitdownloader.com). This download tool has some of the highest editor and user ratings on the popular download sites, and can accelerate downloading of not just YouTube videos, but most general downloads as well. Orbit Downloader integrates seamlessly into Internet Explorer, FireFox, and Opera, and includes a “Get It” button that appears when connecting to YouTube that offers a single click download. YouTube videos will be downloaded in their native FLV format.

There is a free bundle of video software that can download YouTube and other media, convert them to most formats, and even edit video and audio files. The software bundle aptly named “Free Studio” contains 23 video and audio utilities, and is a 30 Meg download available for free download from [www.dvdvideosoftware.com/free-dvd-video-software.htm](http://www.dvdvideosoftware.com/free-dvd-video-software.htm).

According to the publisher of Free Studio, “With this free software you can convert video and audio files between different formats and to iPod, PSP, iPhone, BlackBerry and

other portable devices; burn and rip DVDs and audio CDs; upload and download videos and music to your computer, iPod, PSP, iPhone and BlackBerry; perform basic editing of audio and video files.” This bundle, reviewed and top rated by several of the major download sites, may be a worthwhile bundle to download and install.

If there is a need to convert the YouTube FLV videos, or any other video formats, into a more useful format, such as WMV or MOV, a utility called “Any Video Converter Freeware” may be useful, as it supports dozens of video and audio formats, and can easily convert files between these formats. This software is available for download from [www.any-video-converter.com/products/for\\_video\\_free](http://www.any-video-converter.com/products/for_video_free), and according to its publisher, has been downloaded over 25 million times. The online service CNet gave Any Video Converter Freeware its highest 5-star editors’ rating.

If your only need is to play downloaded YouTube videos, there is an easy and free solution that does not require any conversion utilities. YouTube’s FLV format can be played on the universal video player (free) VideoLAN - VLC Media Player ([www.videolan.org](http://www.videolan.org)). The VLC media player is one of the most widely used video players in the world, with over 110 million downloads, and has earned a very loyal following. VLC media Player can play almost every available video and audio format without the need for any

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plug-ins or add-ons, and is available for free, and will run on almost every operating system.

With these utilities and services, downloading YouTube and other videos and converting them into another useful

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format is simple. I routinely use such downloads in class both as individual videos, and as videos embedded in PowerPoint. There is much that can be done with online videos, and these utilities and services are worth a try. ☐

## SIG News

### C/C++ Programming

Bruce Arnold ([barnold@blast.net](mailto:barnold@blast.net))

<http://www.blast.net/barnold>

This is a forum for discussion of programming in general, beginning and intermediate level C, C++, C-Win programming, hardware, algorithms, and operating systems. We demonstrate real programming in a non-intimidating way, presenting complete code for working programs in 3-5 sheets of paper. Sample code is posted on our Web page after each demonstration.

**September:** Text Processing and An Introduction to the C Language. Text processing is an area that C++ programs shine above all other languages. The code produced is usually quite compact and ultra fast. I wrote a program for doing text replacement in a data file. The user had to convert extra characters from a Mainframe dump into readable text. The source was a 10 Megabyte text file and the processing took about 1 hour of computer time to accomplish replacement using Notepad. The operation was repeated daily. My program, using normal C++ functions, took about 20 seconds! The user was dumbfounded. For details and sample code, visit our Website

*Our next meeting Oct 19.* ☐

### Mobile Devices

Brenda Bell ([mobdevsig@acgnj.org](mailto:mobdevsig@acgnj.org))

The Mobile Devices SIG meets the second Wednesday of alternate months, 7:30PM at SPRS in Scotch Plains, NJ.

The Mobile Devices SIG focuses largely on current-generation cellphones and smartphones (such as Blackberry, Android, iPhone) which bridge the gap between basic cell phones and traditional computers, and how they can help you manage and organize your life.

Our membership ranges from those who have recently acquired their first, basic cellphone to those who develop applications for today’s modern smartphones, iPods, and ultraportable computers. While we expect to spend much of our time investigating the built-in features and specialized applications available to modern smartphones, if you bring your basic (or multimedia) cell phone, iPod, or other mobile device with questions on how to use it, where to find applications, or what features they have, we are always happy to help!

Inaugural meeting, Wednesday, October 13th, 2010 - Meet and greet and plan where this event goes. Bring all your ideas, PDAA, fancy phones, etc. **Next meeting Dec 8.** ☐

## 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

## Firefox Activity

[Firefox@acgnj.org](mailto:Firefox@acgnj.org)

This SIG is intended to be an open forum for **all** Firefox and Mozilla techniques and technologies, to encourage study and development of web sites of all kinds. All 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, October 18.** ☐

## NJ Gamers

Gregg McCarthy ([greggmajestic@gmail.com](mailto:greggmajestic@gmail.com))

<http://www.NJGamers.com>

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

**The next Friday Night Frag will be October 8, 12 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! ☐

## LUNICS (Linux/Unix)

Andreas Meyer ([lunics@acgnj.org](mailto:lunics@acgnj.org))

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

LUNICS is a group for those who share an interest in Unix and similar operating systems. While we do quite a bit with Linux, we've also been known to discuss Solaris and BSD as well. We meet on the first Monday of the month at the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad. See the web page for directions and more information.

**Our next meetings, Oct 4, Nov 1.** ☐

## Window Pains

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

October 15: Intro to C++ Language ☐

## Main Meeting

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

[Mike Redlich \(mike@redlich.net\)](mailto:Mike Redlich (mike@redlich.net))

Oct 1: Firefox, David McRitchie

Nov 5: Cool Websites, Bob Hawes ☐

## Web Dev

Evan Williams ([ewilliams@collaboron.com](mailto:ewilliams@collaboron.com))

This SIG is an open forum for all Website Development techniques and technologies, to encourage study and development of web sites of all kinds. All languages will be considered and examined. 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 other languages and OS need to be investigated, examined and tested; Windows, Linux, UNIX, DEC, Vax, HP etc. Intel-PC, Motorola - MAC etc. **Our next meeting November 10.** ☐

## Java

Mike Redlich ([mike@redlich.net](mailto:mike@redlich.net))

<http://www.javasig.org>

**September:** Technical Overview of Rackspace Cloud Hosting by Bob Lutz.

**October 12:** To be announced. ☐

## Hardware Activity

Mike Reagan ([hardware@acgnj.org](mailto:hardware@acgnj.org))

This group is dedicated to repairing, refurbishing and/or recycling older computers. Ten people attended the first meeting of the ACGNJ Hardware Activity; so there is still a market for this type of event. One guy came all the way from the Bronx! Although we looked at some of the older equipment stored in the back room, most of our time was spent in talking about past experiences and planning for the future. Hopefully, we can establish a viable long-term schedule of projects, and keep the interest of those who attended this inaugural meeting. If you have a hardware problem, bring it in and we can all help fix or demolish it. (no guarantees either way)

**Our next meeting October 28.** ☐

## Investment Software

Jim Cooper ([jim@thecoopers.org](mailto:jim@thecoopers.org))

[http://www.acgnj.org/groups/sig\\_investment.html](http://www.acgnj.org/groups/sig_investment.html)

The Investment SIG continues with presentations on how to use analysis programs TC2000 and TCNet. Large charts are presented on our pull down screen and illustrate the application of computer scans and formulas to find stocks for profitable investments. Technical analysis determines buy points, sell points and projected moves. Technical analysis can also be used on fundamentals such as earnings, sales growth, etc. 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 meetings: Oct14.** ☐

# 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
<b>Operating Systems</b>		
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@prod-igy.net](mailto:hgoodman@prod-igy.net)

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

## ACGNJ MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

	US/CANADA	Dues	STUDENT	SENIOR CITIZEN (Over 65)
1 Year	\$25		\$20	\$20
2 Years	\$40			
3 Years	\$55			\$45

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

New Member  Renewal  Address Change

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

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

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

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

Other Local Computer Groups		
<b>Princeton Macintosh User Group:</b> 7:15 pm 2nd Tuesday, Jadwin Hall, A-10, Washington Rd, Princeton, (609) 252-1163, <a href="http://www.pmug-nj.org">www.pmug-nj.org</a>	<b>Linux Users Group in Princeton:</b> 7 pm, 2nd Wednesday, Lawrence Branch Mercer Library, Rt#1 & Darrah Lane, Lawrence NJ <a href="http://www.lugip.org">http://www.lugip.org</a>	<b>New York PC:</b> 3rd Thurs, 7 pm, PS 41, 116 W 11th St. For info call hotline, (212) 533-NYPC, <a href="http://www.nypc.org">http://www.nypc.org</a>
<b>Computer Education Society of Philadelphia:</b> Meetings & Workshops at Jem Electronics, 6622 Castor Ave, Philadelphia PA. <a href="http://www.cesop.org/">www.cesop.org/</a>	<b>Brookdale Computer Users Group:</b> 7 pm, 3rd Friday, Brookdale Community College, Bldg MAN Rm 103, Lincroft NJ. (732)-739-9633. <a href="http://www.bcug.com">www.bcug.com</a>	<b>NJ Macintosh User Group:</b> 8 pm, 3rd Tuesday, Allwood Branch Library, Lyall Rd, Clifton NJ. (201) 893-5274 <a href="http://www.njmug.org">http://www.njmug.org</a> .
<b>PC User Group of So. Jersey:</b> 2nd Mon., 7 pm, Trinity Presb. Church, 499 Rt 70 E, Cherry Hill, NJ. L. Horn, (856) 983-5360 <a href="http://www.pcugsj.org">http://www.pcugsj.org</a>	<b>Hunterdon Computer Club:</b> 8:30 am, 3rd Sat, Hunterdon Medical Center, Rt 31, Flemington NJ. <a href="http://www.hunterdoncomputerclub.org">www.hunterdoncomputerclub.org</a> , (908) 995-4042.	<b>NY Amateur Computer Group:</b> 2nd Thurs, 7 pm, Rm 806 Silver Bldg, NYU, 32 Waverly Pl, NYC. <a href="http://www.nyacc.org">http://www.nyacc.org</a>
<b>Morris Micro Computer Club:</b> 7 pm 2nd Thurs., Morris County Library, Hanover Ave, Morristown NJ, (973) 267-0871. <a href="http://www.morrismicro.com">http://www.morrismicro.com</a>	<b>Central Jersey Computer Club:</b> 8 pm, 4th Friday, Rm 74, Armstrong Hall, College of NJ. Rich Williams, (609) 466-0909.	<b>NJ PC User Group:</b> 2nd Thurs, Monroe Rm at Wyckoff Public Library, 7 pm. Maureen Shannon, (201) 853-7432, <a href="http://www.njpcug.org">www.njpcug.org</a>
<b>Philadelphia Area Computer Society:</b> 3rd Sat, 12 noon Main Meeting, groups 8 am-3 pm. Upper Moreland Middle School, Hatboro PA. (215) 764-6338. <a href="http://www.pacsnet.org">www.pacsnet.org</a>	<b>NJ Computer Club:</b> 6:15 pm, 2nd Wednesday except Jul & Aug, North Branch Reformed Church, 203 Rt 28, Bridgewater NJ. <a href="http://www.njcc.org">http://www.njcc.org</a>	<b>Princeton PC Users Group:</b> 2nd Monday, Lawrenceville Library, Alt Rt 1 & Darrah Lane, Lawrenceville, Paul Kurivchack (908) 218-0778, <a href="http://www.ppcug-nj.org">http://www.ppcug-nj.org</a>

## Classified

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



<http://www.apcug.net>

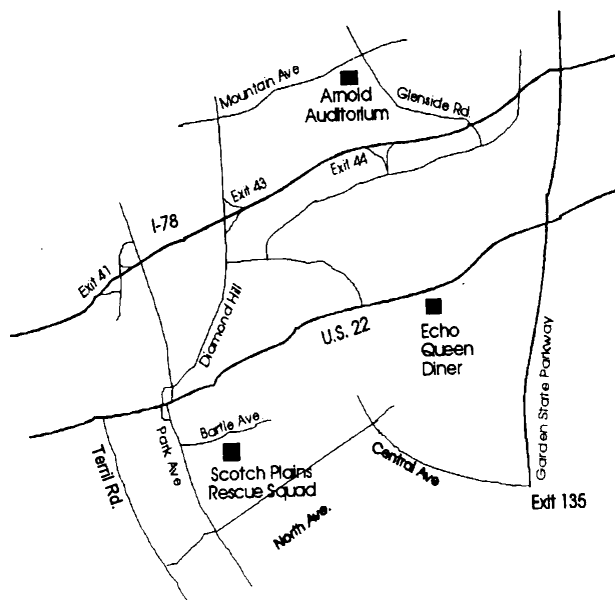
### Radio and TV Programs

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

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

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

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



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

#### From New York City or Northern New Jersey

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

#### From Southern New Jersey

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

#### From I-78 (either direction)

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

#### From US 22 Westbound

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

#### From Western New Jersey

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



# Nybbles and Bits

*John Pearce (Glenihan (at) comcast.net), Pikes Peak Computer Application Society (<http://ppcompas.apcug.org>)*

Last month, I mentioned an article in TechRepublic regarding removing old drivers from your system. Little did I know that issue was going surface in my notebook that I upgraded to Win 7. The touchpad on my notebook computer has a vertical scroll area at the right side of the pad. I had no problems using the vertical scroll until I upgraded to Win 7 at which point, it stopped working.

I ignored the problem until just after the January PPSCompAS meeting. When I started to investigate and tried to access the settings for the touchpad, there was a pop-up dialogue box telling me that IntelliPoint was blocked from running because of known incompatibilities with Win 7. It took me a few minutes to remember that I had bought a USB mouse and installed Microsoft IntelliPoint software shortly after purchasing the notebook. I had used the USB mouse until I bought a Logitech wireless mouse a year or so ago.

My first thought was to just remove the offending software. Good idea except there was nothing shown for IntelliPoint in the Programs and Features list and nothing for the USB mouse in the Mice section of Device Manager. Connecting the USB mouse made it appear in Device Manager and

caused IntelliPoint to appear in the Programs list. I thought I was close to being done. Surprise, surprise! Trying to perform an uninstall of the software produced the pop-up about IntelliPoint being blocked. I wondered how you could uninstall it if it was blocked from running. This time the pop-up dialogue box provided a link to an update and I performed the update. After the IntelliPoint update completed, the vertical scroll on the touchpad worked correctly. However, I decided to remove IntelliPoint because I no longer use the USB mouse and could not think of a good reason to leave the software installed.

This is the first time I can remember where it was necessary to upgrade software just to remove it. I expect the Win 7 upgrade did not upgrade the IntelliPoint software because the USB mouse was not connected at the time the upgrade was performed. Maybe next time I will remember that USB devices should be plugged in during an upgrade and to make the related software and drivers visible. Even better would be to remove old drivers as TechRepublic suggests.

*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).* ☐

## ACGNJ MEETINGS

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

### **Tuesday, September 28**

7 P.M. - Board of Directors meeting.

### **Friday, October 1**

8 P.M. - Main Meeting, Paul Syers ([paul.syers@acgnj.org](mailto:paul.syers@acgnj.org)).

### **Friday, October 8**

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

### **Monday, October 11**

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

### **Tuesday, October 12**

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

### **Wednesday, October 13**

7:30 P.M. -Mobile Devices, Brenda Bell ([mobdevsig@acgnj.org](mailto:mobdevsig@acgnj.org))

### **Thursday, October 14**

8 P.M. - Investing, Jim Cooper ([jim@thecoopers.org](mailto:jim@thecoopers.org)).

### **Friday, October 15**

8 P.M. - Window Pains, John Raff ([john@jraff.com](mailto:john@jraff.com)).

### **Monday, October 18**

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

### **Tuesday, October 19**

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

### **Thursday, October 28**

8 P.M. - Hardware, Mike Reagan ([hardware@acgnj.org](mailto:hardware@acgnj.org))

### **Monday, November 1**

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

### **Tuesday, November 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.**