



WHEN YOUR PC GOES DOWN, DO YOU LOOK FOR A WRENCH, OR JUST LOOK WRENCHED?



AT OUR NEXT MEETING, ANDY McVEY OF STAPLES WILL SHOW HOW HIS COMPANY'S EASYTECH SUPPORT TEAM IS AT YOUR SERVICE, IN-STORE OR AT YOUR HOME OR OFFICE.

President's File



President's Message Aug 2007 (v1.5)

Wow... I'm writing this in mid July, and there's still a lot I have yet to do! This month has been pretty busy. We've got a couple of teenagers

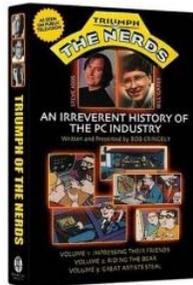
who are developing new interests and responsibilities. Work always has some new 'learning experience' around each corner. With our own hobbies and interests, it sometimes seems as if we're always doing something.

All that is about to change—Shortly after this reaches you, our home schedule will be following that of an all-inclusive resort in Aruba. This will be the first time I've been out of the North American land mass since being a toddler. Of course, our trip will only last a finite amount of time, and sitting on a beach isn't really my thing—I have trouble equating the action of lying out in the sun on the beach being any different than lying out on a sand dune in the middle of a desert. So, in between our 'family activities', I've started working on a list of things I want to do. This trip was a long time in the making and I look forward to it. It will certainly be an experience!

Recent Events

Our July General Meeting was outstanding! Bruce Preston and his son, Scott, did a fabulous job showing how to digitize audio that resides on only tape or vinyl! They explained mechanical recording principles in a very 'user friendly' manner. The best part, in my opinion, was how they showed the results one can obtain without needing a full blown recording studio.

The new "DACS Event Calendar" was also announced. This is to be considered the "Official Event Calendar" for DACS going forward. Since events could change from the time our newsletter goes to press to the time an event occurs, please check the online calendar regularly. If you wish to see details, click on an event. We also added a simple link to reach it: <http://www.dacs.org/calendar>.



Video Review "Triumph of the Nerds"

This documentary hosted by Robert Cringely (author of 'Accidental Empires') explains what events took place to create 'personal computing'. The DVD is comprised of three documentaries that were originally aired on PBS in 1996. It is very informative and has interviews (albeit from the mid-90's) with some of the key players. Mr. Cringely keeps a very balanced viewpoint and does a great job telling the stories behind the events. He even goes into his garage and pulls out some of the first hardware available in the 'Personal Computing' era. For more information, check out the Internet Movie Database (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0115398/>) or Netflix (<http://www.netflix.com/Movie/70014652>). A link at Blockbuster's website could not be located for this video.

Book Review Hackers and Painters, by Paul Graham

This interesting prose is a conglomeration of many ideas, observations, and experiences. The beginning of the book sheds light on the mindset of people who become successful, compares that to himself and others in the technol-
PRESIDENT'S FILE Continued on page 4



Membership Information

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The editors welcome submissions from DACS members. Contact Patrick Libert at 860-567-9586 (dacseditor@dacs.org). Advertisers, contact Charles Bovaird at (203) 792-7881 (aam@mags.net)

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Patrick Libert
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Directors' Notes

A regular meeting of your Board of Directors was held on Monday, July 9, 2007. Present were Howard Berger, Charles Bovaird, Richard Corzo, John Gallichotte, Sean Henderson, John Lansdale, Lisa Leifels, Patrick Libert, Rob Limbaugh, Christine Novell, Jim Scheef and Jamie Yates. President Rob Limbaugh presided and secretary Lisa Leifels kept the record. Minutes of the last meeting held June 11, 2007 were approved.

Treasurer Charles Bovaird reported current cash assets of \$8,784.67, consisting of total bank and postal accounts in the amount of \$8,745.70 plus postage on hand of \$38.97. Subtracting a liability of prepaid dues in the amount of \$5,300.00 left a net equity of \$3,484.67. He also reported that the current membership increased to 242, 65 of which are electronic.

Rob proposed that we switch the dates for the January through June 2008 general meetings to the first Monday of the month, since the Danbury Hospital is not available on the first Tuesday for those months. The general meetings for July through December 2008 will be on the first Tuesday of the month.

Howie reported that he met with the director and the volunteer coordinator of the Greater Danbury non-profit resource center and discovered that they connect with ninety-three non-profits in Danbury alone. Howie said that he will set up another meeting that we will be invited to so that we can explore ways that DACS can extend its reach to the community by working with the non-profit companies.

Christine has scheduled Andrew McVey from EasyTech, a company that offers technical support at Staples for the August general meeting. She has gotten in touch with the electronic editor of consumer reports in Yonkers to see if they will do an HDTV presentation. Christine is also looking into getting a speaker from Cisco to do a presentation on network security. Sean Henderson has volunteered to talk about using a computer for music production.

Howie recommended that the base DACS membership should be increased to \$30 a year and \$45 a year for members who receive the newsletter beginning on October 1, 2007. This is to help offset rising operating expenses such as the recent postal increase. The board approved this recommendation along with eliminating the discounted three-year membership, since very few members have taken advantage of this offer.

Directors' Notes, Continued on page 4

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HelpLine

Volunteers have offered to field member questions by phone. Please limit calls to the hours indicated below. Days means 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; evening means 6 to 9:30 p.m. Please be considerate of the volunteer you are calling. HelpLine is a free service. If you are asked to pay for help or are solicited for sales, please contact the dacs.doc editor; the person requesting payment will be deleted from the listing. Can we add your name to the volunteer listing?

Program	Name	Phone #	
Alpha Four	Dick Gingras	(203) 775-1102	(d e)
APL	Charles Bovaird	(203) 792-7881	(e)
ASP.Net	Chuck Fizer	(203) 798-9996	(d)
C/UNIX/ObjC	Kenneth Lerman	(203) 426-4430	(d e)
C#, VB	Chuck Fizer	(203) 798-9996	(d)
Clipper	Dick Gingras	(203) 426-0484	(e)
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DOS	John Gallichotte	(203) 426-0394	(d e)
Electronics	Andrew Woodruff	(203) 798-2000	(d e)
Focus	Jim Scheef	(860) 355-0034	(e)
Hardware	John Gallichotte	(203) 426-0394	(d e)
Interface-Instrumentation	Andrew Woodruff	(203) 798-2000	(d e)
Microsoft Access	Dick Gingras	(203) 426-0484	(e)
Newdeal/Ensemble	Marc Cohen	(203) 775-1102	(d e)
Paradox	Alan Boba	(203) 264-1753	(e)
PhotoShop/Dreamweaver	Anna Collens	(914) 232-0149	(e)
SAS	Lewis Westfall	(203) 790-0229	(e)
Statistics/Data Analysis	Charles Bovaird	(203) 792-7881	(d e)
SQL	Lewis Westfall	(203) 790-0229	(e)
SQL Server, MySQL-5	Chuck Fizer	(203) 798-9996	(d)
Viruses	Jeff Setaro	(203) 748-6748	(d)
VB.Net, Visual Basic	Chuck Fizer	(203) 798-9996	(d)

Meeting Preview

Staples technical support goes where you are

by Chris Novell

ARE YOU IN CONTROL of your computer— or is your computer in control of you?

Chances are – most of us have spent at least some time in the latter category.

Hey, where did that pop-up come from? And that widget, it's more of a nuisance than a help. Hmm, looks like this PC could use more memory. A cinch to install, supposedly.

But, what if, like so many do-it-yourself projects, it grows into a career? This computer needs to be working NOW.

If any of this sounds familiar, you will be interested to hear the presentation about Staples Technical Support Services – EasyTech. Andy McVey, along with a Staples “mobile technician,” will explain all about the range of the company's services. General span of service includes both in-store servicing as well as visits to home or office.

Ready to take your PC to the next level? Time to go wireless or add a peripheral?



Finally address system backup in a way that really gets the job done? Come find out what resources EasyTech has to get these tasks done. Andy is looking forward to making the presentation and will be bringing some items for the post presentation raffle. This meeting will be free and open to the public.

Invite a friend or neighbor for a fun and informative evening.

DACS meetings are held at the Danbury Hospital auditorium. Activities begin at 6:30 p.m. with registration and casual networking. The meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. with a discussion of what's new in technology (What's News) followed by a general question and answer period (Ask DACS), announcements and a short break. The featured evening presentation begins at 8:00.

Invite a friend or neighbor for a fun and informative evening.

PRESIDENT'S FILE, *Continued from page 2*
ogy arena (in particular, the dotcom era and programming). The overall premise of the book is to explain that much like the Arts, when a new technology or medium appears everything that stems from that is largely in the shadow of the original work. Humor is mixed in, along with a very practical viewpoint of where technology has brought us and where it is taking us. The only complaint I have is that Mr. Graham portrays Lisp as being the endpoint of all programming languages, yet he has created his own dialect of it. That very action, in my opinion, negates his assertions in this book that Lisp is the pinnacle of programming language evolution.

Until next time...

—ROB LIMBAUGH
relimbaugh@dacs.org

Directors' Notes, *Continued from page 3*

A discussion ensued on improving the design of the DACS newsletter. Patrick said he will create an outline of all the recommended changes and distribute it to the board.

Rob let everyone know that the new calendar program VCalendar is up and running on the DACS website.

—LISA LEIFELS

What's News

July 10, 2007

by Jamie Yates

Description:

Microsoft has done it again
Office 2007 default output not readable by prior versions
New format is XML (xlsx, pptx, docx plus others)

You can download a compatibility pack for Office 2000, 2002, and 2003
Not available for Office 97

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads/details.aspx?FamilyId=941b3470-3ae9-4aee-8f43-c6bb74cd1466&displaylang=en>

Description:

Want a single phone number and voicemail box

Try GrandCentral – Beta – bought by Google
One phone number for life

Select which phones should ring
Hear voice messages online or by phone

Forward messages
Different ring and message per person

Switch to different phones during a call
<http://grandcentral.com/>

Description:

Want a simple tool to compare different screen types

Can compare three at a time
Will also generate CSS for the one screen selected

Very easy to use and Free
<http://typetester.maratz.com/>

Description:

Try a Yoggie Pico Personal
The size of a USB thumb drive
Contains 12 built in security programs
Anti-virus, anti SPAM, Anti phishing, firewall and more

Automatically updates
Kind of expensive - \$179 plus \$30 per year
Eliminates all security software on your system

<http://www.yoggie.com/node/40>

Description:

Points to State sex offender registries
List all states

Also shows picture, locations and crime conviction

Quality varies

<http://www.prevent-abuse-now.com/register.htm>

Description:

The iPhone is now available

What can it do? Glad you asked:

`watch?v=1xXNoB3t8vM&eurl=http%3A%2F%`

`2Fwww%2Elockergnome%2Ecom%`

`2Fnexus%2Fwebwahala%`

`2F2007%2F07%2F05%2F3%`

`2Dplaces%2Dyou%2Dcan%`

`2Dstick%2Dyer%2Diphone%`

`2Di%2Dmean%2Dmy%`

`2Diphone%2F`

JAMIE YATES is former director of programs, and member of the board.

Meeting Review

Moving and improving your recordings from analog to CD or MP3

By Chris Novell along with Bruce Preston

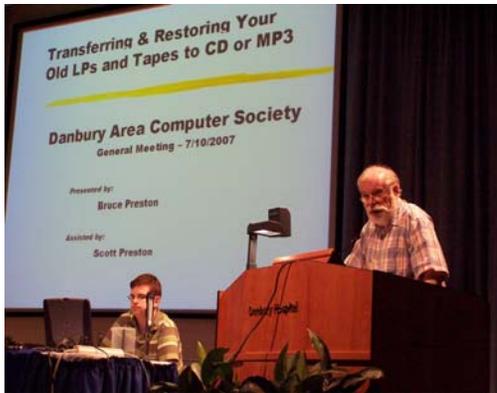
HISS! POP! CRACKLE! SNAP! may be fine – for a cereal - but those are not desirable sounds when it comes to listening to your favorite music. That's why it is terrific that Bruce Preston, long time member and officer of DACS, stepped forward, volunteering to give a presentation on how to eliminate these objectionable aliens so that you could instead look forward to a pleasurable listening experience.

A major benefit of converting analog music to digital is that these hazards to harmony can be removed. You don't need expensive hardware or software. If you already have a music source (turntable, tape player, etc.) and a computer, all you need is the appropriate and inexpensive cable available from RadioShack. The process consists of selecting the right target device format (CDA WAV, or MP3, which are all close equivalents, depending upon how you will listen to your music), adjusting the recording level, and playing the sound source into the computer, recording as you go – the last a process also known as “ripping.” The next three steps include checking the audio cut. - making sure the maximum recording level has not been exceeded,

- editing the audio cut, which may include using noise-reduction tools, often available as “wizards,”
- saving the audio cut.

The last activities consist of assembling the target CD from cuts and placing them in the selection window of your CD burner software, burning the CD, and test playing the CD.

During his presentation Bruce established that it is perfectly fine to make a copy of copyrighted material as long as the copy is for your own use. However, Fair Use does not permit you to make copies for distribution to others.



Bruce outlined some of the basics for the audience: “74 minutes of sound can go on a standard CD. Compressing via MP3, (it varies with the complexity of the music) usually does an average of 10:1 compression, so you could get something on the order of 740 minutes of stereo on a CD, but you can play it only with an MP3 compatible player or computer.”

There are several digital audio editors available: Bruce demonstrated two programs, Audio Surgeon from Voyetra available via download for under \$30, and the free Audacity published via the open software movement. He used these to clean up surface noise from a recording of a 1938 jazz concert.

The burning software he used was RecordNow Max, although he pointed out that any CD burning software will handle it.

While adding text to a data CD is something that can be done at intervals over time until it is full, it is not the same way for music stored as CDA (Compact Disk Audio, the audio format understood by CD players). “Putting music on a CD is a one time event,” Bruce explained. After that, the CD closes up like a clam.

Bruce offered some other tips that an unseasoned person might not remember to consider. For example, mute any other sound making device during your conversion session. “You’ve got mail” would be questionable lyrics for most any song.

Assisting in the demonstration of this fine-tuned sound management program was Bruce’s son, Scott.

CHRIS NOVELL is DACS Program Director.

BRUCE PRESTON is president of West Mountain Systems, a consultancy in Ridgefield, CT specializing in database applications, and a long-time DACS member and officer.

Post Your Biz on *dacs.org*

We would like to post a directory of our members’ business services on the DACS web site.

These would preferably be computer related, hardware and software solutions, Web design, etc., but can include Accounting, Travel, Advertising, Public Relations, or any other business service that you might be able to provide to all our members.

At some future date we may include the directory in our newsletter.

To get your listing, post your name, business, phone, e-mail and Web address to *dacsprez@dacs.org*.

New Members

6/20/ to 7/17/2007

Don Arsenault

This is your last newsletter

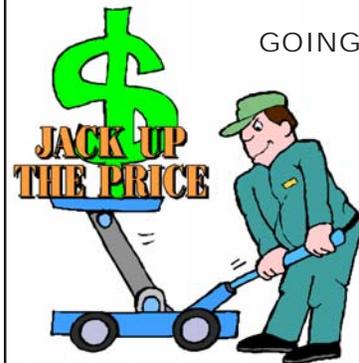
If the membership date on your mailing label reads

EXP 04/2007 or earlier

You need to renew your DACS membership

NOW

Mailing rates for *dacs.doc* are GOING UP!



Special Announcement

Changes in membership dues

by Rob Limbaugh

AS WITH ANY ENTITY, whether for- or non-profit in nature, there are basic operating costs to maintain services for its patrons or, in our case, members. For the past several months, the Board of Directors has discussed and analyzed our operating costs, membership benefits and expectations, and ways to close the gap between 'income' and 'outgo'. The two key areas of expense for DACS are in maintaining the Resource Center used for SIGs and the hardcopy distribution of the Newsletter. Our sources of income are membership dues, donations, and ad placements in the newsletter.

To remedy the situation we need to raise dues to cover our basic operating expenses. If we do not, then we would need to begin cutting out things that would directly affect services to the membership. The Board of Directors therefore voted in the July 2007 Board Meeting to close the financial gap without reducing or disrupting services provided to the members. These changes will take effect on October 1 and we have provisioned for a renewal period for existing and past members.

Changes that will take effect on October 1, 2007

- DACS "Electronic Membership" will become "DACS Basic Membership" and will be valued at \$30 per year. Each member will have access to the club tech support volunteers, Newsletter online in PDF form, able to receive club related news via email, attend SIGS, and participate in any club-only related events, promotions, or activities.

- DACS "Regular Membership" will become "DACS Basic Membership plus Newsletter" and will be valued at \$45 per year. Membership entitlement is the same as above and will also receive the monthly newsletter in hard-copy.

- DACS "Corporate Membership" will become "DACS Corporate Membership" and will be valued at \$150 per year. Corporate memberships allow for 10 registered employees access to the same benefits of the rest of DACS Members and the corporation will also receive a monthly newsletter hard copy. Additional employees can be registered for an additional \$15 per year each.

- "Three Year Prepaid" memberships will no longer be offered or renewed after October 1, 2007.

- The newsletter will be offered as a separate subscription independent of membership. This is for the general public who would like to receive a copy of the monthly newsletter, and who attend General Meetings when possible, but do not wish to participate in other club activities or benefits. These subscriptions will be available for \$20 per year per copy for a single mailing address.

- Members may add additional newsletter subscriptions to their existing account at the same mailing address for \$15 per year.

Limited renewal period for current and past members

Those with memberships that expire on or before December 31, 2007 and have not yet been renewed may do so now at our current membership rates. The following restrictions apply:

1. Membership must expire on or before 12/31/2007. Those with memberships expiring after 12/31/2007 are ineligible.

2. Members that currently hold three year memberships expiring on or before 12/31/2007 may renew at the current three-year pre-paid prices. Members that currently have per-year memberships cannot switch to three-year memberships at this time.

3. Non-members may become members at current membership rates, but cannot automatically renew.

4. Renewal deadline is September 30, 2007

5. Renewal can be done online via Paypal, through snail mail, or at the August and September General Meetings. Renewal through USPS needs to be postmarked no later than 9/30/2007.

Example 1: If your membership expires in November of this year, and you are a Three-year pre-paid 'Electronic' member, you can renew yourself as a 'Three-year pre-paid Electronic Member' at the current price of \$56 before 9/30/2007. On October 1, 2007, your membership will become known as "DACS Basic Membership" and will be listed as paid in full until November 2010. This saves you \$34.

Example 2: If your membership expired in June 2007 and was renewed and now expires in June 2008. You cannot take advantage of this renewal offer because you've already renewed. (Ironically, I fit into this category.)

Why these decisions were made

The primary justifications and reasons for these changes are as follows:

1. Establishing a baseline membership level helps to determine shared operating costs that all members' dues pay for. In particular, this is relative to the expenses incurred to keep the Resource Center open, have Internet access, phone, Danbury Chamber of Commerce membership, insurance, the resources for production of a newsletter (not the printing and distribution), and other aspects of group operations. If DACS had 200 members, then \$15.73 from each member's yearly dues helps to cover these costs. Since base membership is currently valued at \$20, which means leftover of \$4.27 to save for the club to afford things like replacement projector bulbs, club non-donated prizes, etc.

2. The difference between the "regular" and "electronic" memberships is that a "regular" member gets a hard copy of the newsletter. Beyond that, they are both entitled to the same benefits. The current cost is \$30 and \$20 respectively for each membership type. This difference therefore values the printed newsletter subscription at \$10 per year. The actual cost to print and distribute 12 issues to one member is \$20.79 (\$1.73 per issue). This is a deficit of \$10.79 per year per subscription. Identifying the newsletter as a separate item from membership permits for addressing financial issues independent of membership dues.

3. Part of the \$10.79 per subscription deficit is offset by the \$4.27 unallocated to operating expenses. That still leaves a steady bleeding of \$6.52 per printed newsletter subscription. Increasing the subscription rate from \$10 per year to \$15 per year for members narrows the gap changes the deficit to \$5.79 and the \$4.27 reduces it further to \$1.52. Ads and increases in total subscriptions to the newsletter close the deficit the rest of the way and will begin returning the \$4.27 back to a nest egg.

4. Increasing the basic membership dues from \$20 to \$30 aids in quickly stabilizing the current financial situation and begins building future security in the organization. As membership increases, so would our ability to save. This in turn has a positive effect by allowing us to consider luxuries for the club we currently cannot afford or can only obtain if donated by a member or third party.

As always, if there are any questions or concerns, please feel free to email me directly (dacsprez@dacs.org) or contact another member of the Board of Directors.

On the Road

Traveling with Computers

by Diane George

MY HUSBAND and I have taken several cruises and both of us do some other traveling for business and pleasure that keeps us in a hotel for several days at a time. Being addicted to using our computers, it's impossible to travel without our notebook computers. We both take our own notebook computers. As a result we need to do a little additional planning to take what we need to connect and use both computers.

First item is a small power strip. We found some lightweight ones with a short power cord and four outlets that are easy to fit into a computer bag. Because we also take digital cameras, it helps to be able to plug in several devices at once, computers and chargers. While most hotels have multiple outlets, cruise ships typically have one outlet so the strip is doubly important.

Did I mention that we use bags on wheels that can be carried on an airplane? The basics need to fit into that bag. Usually there is enough space for some personal items (e.g., toothbrush, underwear, medications).

We take lots of spare batteries—neither one of us can stand to use the touch pads on our notebooks so we use cordless mice. The cameras also use batteries. Plan to bring the used batteries back with you as most places don't provide for disposal of spent batteries.

When we are going to be staying in a hotel, we take a small wireless access point—it's designed for travel and comes with a carrying case that includes the Ethernet cable that is needed. The one we have is made by Linksys and is slightly larger than a deck of cards. For some hotels, this will allow us to simultaneously use an Internet connection. This will usually work where hotels provide free Internet access—it doesn't help when there is a charge because they track the user's IP address for billing purposes.

Expect to pay about \$10.00 a day for Internet access at those hotels that charge—they may have wireless access, but be sure to pack an Ethernet cable in your computer bag in case they don't. There are still some hotels that only offer a modem connection, but in general most hotels now offer some type of Internet access.

On board ship, connections are provided via satellite and the cost is fairly high. On our most recent cruise, the basic charge was 75 cents per minute on a pay as you go basis. You could also purchase longer time periods for a lower rate per minute, e.g., 100 minutes for \$55.00. Connections suffer from some lack of reliability due to weather and satellite positions. The ship offered wireless access in a few locations for people with their own computers. The charges applied

whether you used the ship's computers or your own. We opted not to use the on board access because the cost did not seem reasonable. On other trips, we used on-shore Internet cafes to review email, in Mexico, Costa Rica and the Caribbean. This trip (Hawaii) we did not find any that were near the port.

One of the conveniences of having Internet access on board was the ability to check-in online for our flights while we were still at sea. Southwest Airlines, in particular, allows you to check in 24 hours before your flight time. If you check in online within the first couple of hours, you will usually be assigned to the A group—first in line to board. The ship offered a short (30 minutes) package for \$12.95. I was able to check in four people at Southwest and had a few minutes to spare—nobody said it was fast!

Online check in requires you to print your boarding passes. At many hotels, you can get the concierge to print your boarding pass—you give them the confirmation number and they will do it for you. On the ship, we could have paid for the Internet access and to have the passes printed, but instead we took a printer with us so we were able to print our own. I saved the passes as PDF files and then took them back to our stateroom for printing.

In prior years, we took a small photo printer with us, but found that to be too limiting. We bought an HP 460, an inkjet printer, which prints photos and 8 1/2 x 11 pages as well. It was designed to be mobile, so is fairly compact and lightweight. It can be tucked into a suitcase among your clothes. The printer has an AC adapter and a USB connection. We took a small supply



of paper, both plain and photo paper tucked in the bottom of a suitcase.

Aside from printing boarding passes, we also used the printer to print photos to give to some of the friends we made during the cruise, passengers and staff. The pictures were much appreciated.

This leads to the main reason for taking the computers—we take a lot of pictures with two digital cameras. On cruises, in particular, we have to download the images in order to recover space on the memory cards. Even with multiple cards for the cameras, we would never have enough storage space without off-loading the images. We get pictures from our in-laws who travel with us and spend some time on the trip organizing the images before we get home. On the last cruise we had five days at sea before we got home, so there was plenty of time to work on them.

Another item that has been useful is a small external drive. We have a 40 gigabyte drive that is about 6 inches by 3 inches and 3/4 inch thick. It connects via USB and does not require a power supply if you connect it to your computer directly. This allows us to back up the photos and to share them with each other or our traveling companions. You may also want to take a card reader if your notebook doesn't have a built-in card reader. A USB hub may also be useful.

We take a small scanner (about 1 inch thick) and a folding table. Because there is usually one desk in hotel rooms or in staterooms, the second notebook user has to resort to using the coffee table, a chair or the bed. It's really inconvenient and hard on the back, so we have a small plastic table that comes apart and is easy to reassemble. It folds to less than 2 inches thick and fits in a medium size suitcase. You can work with a notebook and have room for a mouse. It weighs about two pounds so it's not a big burden to include it and it saves fighting over who gets the desk.

Before you leave, double check to make sure you have all the USB cables that you need, as well as the adapters for your devices. If you take a printer, be sure to include extra ink cartridges. Depending on where you travel, you may or may not be able to find what you need.

DIANE GEORGE is Webmaster, PC Community, Hayward, California, <http://www.pcc.org>; digeorge@sbcglobal.net

This article has been provided by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member.

Special Interest Groups SIG NOTES: August 2007

ASP.Net. Focuses on Web site/server application development using Microsoft Visual Studio, C#, VB, Javascript and SQL Server programming tools. Starts with Random Access, followed by a programming discussion with examples.

Contact: Chuck Fizer cfizer@snet.net.

Meets 1st Wednesday, 4-6 p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: Aug 1.

Digital Imaging. All about digital cameras, retouching and printing.

Contact: Ken Graff at 203 775-6667 graffic@bigfoot.com.

Meets last Wednesday, 7 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: Aug 29.

Investment Strategies. Discusses various investment strategies to maximize profits and limit risk.

Contact: Paul Gehrett, 203 426-8436, pgehr4402@aol.com.

Meets 3rd Thursday, 7:30 p.m., Edmond Town Hall, Newtown.

Next Meeting: TBA.

Jobs. Networking and jobs search

Contact: Charles Bovaird, 203-792-7881 aam@mags.net.

Meets by e-mail.

Next meeting: TBA

Linux. Provides Help in installing and maintaining the Linux operating system. Also of interest to Apple owners using OS X.

Contact: John Lansdale 914-533-2002

Meets 3rd Wednesday, 7:30 pm at the DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: Aug 15.

Macintosh. Focuses on all aspects of the Mac operating system.

Contact: Richard Corzo macsig@dacs.org.

Meets 1st Thursday at DACS Resource Center at 7 p.m.

Next Meeting: Aug 2.

Open Source Web Programming. Focuses on open source tools for Windows and Linux.

Contact: John Lansdale, 914-533-2002.

Meets 3rd Monday, 7 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: Aug 20.

PC Maintenance. Review of PC hardware and OpSys maintenance and use.

Contact: Charles Bovaird, 203-792-7881 aam@mags.net.

Meets on 4th Thursday, 7 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center.

Next meeting: Aug 23

Server. Explores Back Office server and client applications, including Win NT Servers and MS Outlook.

Contact: Jim Scheef jscheef@telemarksys.com

Meets 2nd Thursday, 7 p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.

Next meeting: Aug 9.

VB.Net, Visual Basic-6. Focuses on Smart Client Windows application development using Visual Studio, VB, C# and SQL Server programming tools. Starts with a random access session, followed by Object Oriented discussions and programming with examples.

Contact: Chuck Fizer, 203 798-9996 cfizer@snet.net or Greg Austin, 845 494-5095 greg.austin@ryebrookpba.org.

Meets 1st Wednesday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, preceded 1 hour with a shared cost pizza snack.

Next Meeting: Aug 1.

Virtual Computing. This SIG will explore virtual computing technologies and how to leverage them as additional system resources. Our main focus will be on the free VMWare products, but we will also look at other technologies and tools.

Meets 4th Tuesday, 7 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center

Contact: Rob Limbaugh relimbaugh@dacs.org, 203 826-8196.

Next Meeting: Aug 28.

Web Design. Explores Applications for designing and creating Web sites.

Contact: Anna Collens avo555@earthlink.net.

Meets 3rd Tuesday, 7-9 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: Aug 21.

SIG News & Events

Linux This is the second month we tried to set up Ubuntu Server 7.04 with no success. I've tried several times; the md5 checksum was OK and we used different CD burners.

Again we installed version 6 without a problem. It's worth doing because it has Linux thin client support (Linux Terminal Server Project-LTSP-5), built in. I've paid \$5 for a pre-burned copy which hopefully will be here and work for the July SIG.

Open Source Programming Richard Corzo is still teaching us Java. We have written a couple of applets and now want to start creating dynamic Java server pages. For this, we installed the latest Apache Tomcat 6 on a couple of our PC's.

We now want to integrate it with our Eclipse GUI editor so that we can write code and debug easily. We got that started but ran out of time. We will continue in July.

Feel free to drop in, join us and learn some basic Java.

Server and Networking At the July meeting we discussed the merits and demerits of Symantec Antivirus (the corpo-

rate product) versus a similar product from Computer Associates. As part of the discussion we installed SAV on one of the Resource Center servers without ever touching the server or even logging in to the target machine. Our discussion centered on the manageability features of the products – how an administrator can monitor and manage the antivirus protection installed on an entire network of computers from a central console.

I will be away for the August meeting so Server SIG will be on vacation as well.

In September we will dive into networking issues big and small. Topics on deck include: using virtual servers (as in the RC), hacking the Linksys WRT54G home wireless router to do more with less, managing servers in a mixed platform network, good and bad remote access methods, and, of course, your questions and problems.

The next meeting of the Server and Networking SIG will be Thursday, September 13th at 7pm in the DACS Resource Center.

SIG News and events, cont. on page 15

August 2007

Danbury Area Computer Society

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Product Review

Digital Image Suite 2006

Jane Quinn

HOW DO YOU FIND a particular picture on your computer after you've transferred it from your camera to your computer??

With Digital Image Suite 2006 Library software you can easily organize, locate and archive. Use the Import Wizard to copy the pictures from your camera to your computer Pictures folder, and catalogue them in the library. Type a name for the subfolder and this becomes the name for the pictures as well. Use the Label Painter to create a label name as part of the picture stored information. There are assigned default labels for Print. Use this label information to quickly "select" pictures or videos by these tags. Take a minute (which is all it takes) to watch the tutorial video that comes with the Library help portion. In seconds you will discover all these tools that will help you quickly organize your multi-media files. See how you can assign ratings to your pictures. Assign a 5 star rating to your best pictures.

Dazzle your friends by quickly choosing only those 5-star pictures and immediately launch slideshow while still in the library program. This slideshow icon appears next to the PhotoStory tab. Yes, you can also build a Photo Story 3 from your filtered photo choices while still in the library. Amazing stuff. Watch the video and see how simple this tool is to use.

How can I easily archive my pictures and videos using Digital Image Library???

You can use the Archive wizard to save pictures and videos from your computer to a CD or DVD. Then you can remove the files from your computer and regain that storage. This program has several features for archiving, including settings to erase the original pictures and videos after they are safely archived. The reminder settings can prompt you to archive your files every month. There are lots of control settings to activate. For example, you can archive only new files and files that have been modified. Or you can prompt the wizard to stop and remind you later. However, using the library is a simple and easy way to create your inventory of pictures and videos for safe keeping. Can I change the creation date of an image file? My camera's was set to the wrong date when I took my pictures. How can I fix that? Yes you can change the Date Created when you're in the Digital Image Suite library. Select the picture, click the right mouse button and select Properties. Either type over the wrong date or click on the drop down arrow to select from an image calendar. Now you can safely archive your pictures with the proper date affixed to the image.

Jane Quinn Vendor Relations Computer User's Group of Redding (AKA IBM PC User's Group of Redding) jqquinn7427@gmail.com Frontier Computer Club-Instructor & Secretary **Email:** senior2000@charter.net

Tips

Seeing What's Beneath Your Photos

From ICON PC User Group, Brentwood, NY

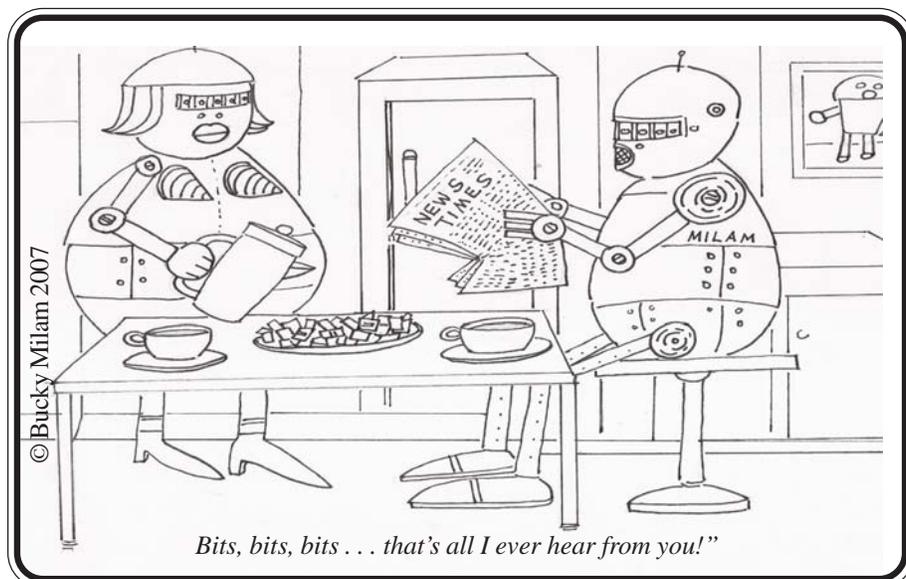
<http://www.iconpcug.org/>

Did you know that whenever you take a photo, an extensive list of data is also preserved with each photo? Embedded in each of your picture files are all sorts of information including the date, the type of camera, and what settings your camera used when taking the photo. When you take your photo and edit it with another program, that program also records information within the file thus leaving a trail of information. This takes place not only in photos but also in Word documents and many other types of files. This is often referred to as Meta-Data.

There are two ways you can access this data. One of them is already embedded into Microsoft's Windows XP. Right click on any photo and go to Properties. You will see at least two tabs under Properties: General and Summary. Click on Summary. Most likely if you have never done this before, Summary will be in "simple" mode. You will see "Title", "Subject" and "Author". There will be a button to go to advanced mode. This is where you can see all of the data. If you are already in advanced mode, the button will then say "simple mode" to allow you to switch back and forth.

Why Dogs Shouldn't Use Computers

1. He's distracted by cats chasing his mouse.
2. SIT and STAY were hard enough; CUT and PASTE are out of the question.
3. Saliva-coated floppy disks refuse to work.
4. Three words: carpal paw syn-drome.
5. Involuntary tail wagging is a dead give-away that he's browsing www.purina.com instead of working.
6. The fire hydrant icon is simply too frustrating.
7. He can't help attacking the screen when he hears, "You've Got Mail."
8. It's too messy to "mark" every Web site he visits.
9. The FETCH command isn't available on all platforms.
10. He can't stick his head out of Windows XP.



Book Review

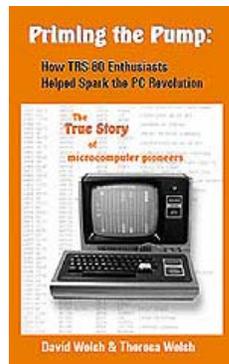
Priming the Pump: How TRS-80 Enthusiasts Helped Spark the PC Revolution

Review by **Jim Scheef**

FOR ONCE I GET TO REVIEW a new book, i.e., one that you can buy tomorrow, on the history of the computer. It's not often that someone writes a book about our hobby/business/passion/nightmare, and does it based on personal experience. David and Theresa Welsh have written a book that is both history and memoir. The computer topic is the Radio Shack TRS-80 series that Tandy Corporation (Radio Shack) introduced on Wednesday, August 3rd, 1977, just about thirty years ago to the day from when you will receive this newsletter. David Welsh wrote a word processor for the TRS-80 series called "Lazy Writer". The features he describes make Lazy Writer an extremely capable word processor. The fact that it ran in 48K on a computer with a 60-character wide screen, makes it amazing. The book chronicles the story of the TRS-80 industry along with the story of the Model 1, Lazy Writer, their company, and how all this fits into the overall saga of the personal computer.

The Welshes assert that the TRS-80 Model 1 was the first "appliance computer", a machine that you can remove from the box, plug in and begin using without first putting it together from parts. I will not get into the argument about whether this is true or historically accurate. The Model 1 came with a keyboard and a screen, something you cannot say about the MITS Altair 8800, and besides, the Altair was a kit! If you want to argue that some other machine was the first appliance computer, the place to do so is the

ccTalk email list. Not to muddy the argument any, but 1977 also saw the introduction of both the Apple II and the Commodore Pet. Indeed, 1977 was a pivotal year for personal computers.



Priming the Pump can be divided into three parts. The first is a history of the development of the TRS-80 Model 1 and the various disk operating systems written for the computer. Since Tandy Corp. is not on either coast, it is largely ignored by historians. Hackers (Steven Levy) and Fire in the Valley (Freiberger and Swaine), the two seminal books on the founding of the personal computer industry both concentrated on the entrepreneurs that you already know, like Ed Roberts, Steve Wozniak, Bill Gates, etc. But Radio Shack? Because Tandy Corp. was the only vertically integrated PC maker, owning the entire process from manufacturing to retail, the story is not as open as with most other early computers. Also, the Model 1 was just another product at Tandy rather than the focus of the company. By my reasoning, this fact alone is as good an argument as any to apply the term "appliance". Back in the 70's, the Shack was known for products that were "OK", not the best by any means, but reasonably priced and competitive in features and quality. Think CB radios, remember?

The middle chapters of the book are memoirs written by both David and Theresa. They each talk about the events from their own viewpoint that led to David writing Lazy Writer. For David, those events begin when he discovered radio

and electronics as a kid. They both talk about how they met in college and the people, events, jobs and businesses that led to their software company. They both also talk about how the industry changed and how they eventually closed down their company as the personal computer industry moved to the IBM PC and DOS compatibles. While I found these chapters to bog down a bit at times, I don't want to imply that this part of the book is uninteresting. To the contrary, their narratives are a peak into life in the late 70's and early 80's. One thing I found interesting is that the largest purchase they made to start up their software company was a Qume letter quality printer for \$3000. The printer was key to giving their company a professional image. Consider the price of a really good printer today!

The last few chapters tell many interesting stories about the early microcomputer industry, such as how the games on cassette tape got things going. One chapter is devoted on how important the magazines were in the early days. Some of these stories have been covered elsewhere, but the Welshes relate many tales that were new to me and lend new insight into the relationships between the people who helped build an early personal computer industry. The final chapter talks about how the introduction of the IBM PC gradually changed everything.

The fact that the Welshes were industry insiders gives them a perspective that few people can match. The fact that both of them can write (or at least that Theresa can edit) makes the book an enjoyable read. If you are interested in the early microcomputer industry as a vintage computer collector or just because you enjoy computer history, then you should not miss this book.

Priming the Pump by David Welsh and Theresa Welsh, 2007, The Seeker Books, Ferndale, MI. ISBN-10:0-9793468-0-0

Jim Scheef is past president of DACS

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Commentary

Significant Bits

By Sean N. Henderson

DACS.ORG NEW CALENDAR
DACS.ORG HAS A new calendar! Previously, the organization used one available at <http://calendar.pikesys.com>. It was completely Javascript based, so that meant it could go on any server. The HTML it generated was nicely marked up so it was easily styled via CSS/HTML. The database for it is a plain-text file that could be edited with any text editor. There is even an MS Excel template complete with macros for importing/exporting database files. Nifty.

The new calendar is even niftier - it is an open-source freeware application Rob Limbaugh found. SIG Leaders: you will now have access to this calendar and be responsible for your own postings and what's on there is what will be used to populate the newsletter calendar going forward.

PDA TIPS, TRICKS, THOUGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Now onto the main topic at hand. Here are some tips for doing a little extra up front for some speed and ease later. For this example, we're going to talk about PalmOS-based PDAs.

Let's say you're conducting (another) job hunt. Try specifically setting up the category in contacts as 'JobSearch' (notice the so-called camel-case without any spaces), and prefix the last name with the date entered as 'YYYYMMDD Doe'. Need to see where you're at with the hunt? Just select the 'JobSearch' category in the address book and scroll to your year and month. Very easy.

When entering a contact, I make sure to put a line in the notes section beginning with 'search: ' and then add any permutations of a name I think I may need, especially where the last name is two parts.

For calendar items, categories help, but that's only available on the later versions of PalmOS. If using an older version, prefix the name of the event with what it is. Good tags are things like 'visit:', 'doctor:', and 'shopping:'. So during a search for 'visit: Hendersons to' will give me a chronological list of all our

travels. Doctor visits go something like 'doctor: Sean to', and so on. The shopping entry I use for large purchases. In the notes section for the shopping entries I put the purchase order number, date, and the other things needed when I inevitably call support. In the notes section for visit entries put the directions and anything you need to remember for the trip.



It's important to note the use of the color as the delimiter. Any delimiter will do, but the point is consistency. Using a delimiter for these things will differentiate your search results from normal sentences and other entries.

Next, I have a software recommendation. A nice piece to store passwords and such is SplashID. Unlike many of my software recommendations, this is not a freeware app. The cost is well worth the time saved. This is a simple database application that will hold every conceivable password or credential you may have. Bicycle locks, web logins, serial numbers, birth dates, etc. It's kind of hard to explain, and probably easy to fabricate something similar using MobileDB or even just a memo entry, but SplashID really makes it pretty easy. Like anything that stores your passwords, where you have a choice of passwords, never list the complete password, just enough to give you a clue.

PDA STORAGE MEDIA

Does your PDA have a SD or other slot? When wiping the media it's a good idea to use the PDA to format the media so that a compatible file system will be put on the media. This matters more with very large files.

Note that built-in SD readers in most laptops has a 1GB maximum read/write capability. What this might mean is you'll want to make sure movie files are chopped up in appropriate chunks for the media's filesystem constraints. It also means if you're moving files a lot between the SD card and your laptop that you'll want to spare yourself compatibility headaches and just stick with 1GB SD cards, and instead go for speed and not capacity. Of course you could use a USB hub to get past the 1GB built-in limit, but the hub is probably bigger than an extra SD card or two.

DEATH OF THE PDA?

I have a couple U3 thumb drives, and I have to say, I could see where it may be possible to pitch the PDA and just go with those. Of course it's dependent on the availability of a PC or Laptop, but most of the time that's not much of a problem. If you're prone to dropping or breaking your PDA, moving to a U3 drive may be the answer and save you some \$\$.

The other thing about the U3 drives is that there's no power supply to lug around. In my backpack, I have my BlueTooth earpiece, my cell phone, my PDA and my laptop, and I have to carry around the wall-warts and line-lumps for each. There is a trick though - it's possible to charge the cell and the PDA off the laptop. It takes longer, but it's two less transformers to lug around. Generally, being a belts-and-suspenders guy, I bring 'em all along, but in a pinch it's possible to charge from the laptop.

MUSIC PRODUCTION ON A PDA

There's really only two solutions that I know of for PalmOS devices. One is Bhajis Loops by Chocopoolp Software (<http://www.chocopoolp.com>) and the other is NotePad (unfortunately named app) by miniMusic (<http://www.minimusic.com>).

I've tried both and lean towards Bhajis. Bhajis comes as a trialware piece, so that should be a no-brainer to check out. Neither one will make you sound like Aerosmith, but if you need a little ditty for your video or website, or say some backing tracks for a small gig, these should be fine. Also great fun on a plane when your laptop batteries die and there's nothing worth watching on the plane's video.

CATCHING A FLICK

TCPMP v0.71 is a freeware media player. It's very convenient how it can view any file if it has a codec. Instructions for using this in combination with other ripping software on your PC/Mac is searchable on the Internet. Check the DACS Link or Download area for more information when available. (FYI, TCPMP version 0.71 is freeware. I cannot vouch for later versions.) This came recommended by my brother who works in the video editing industry and is a major gadget hound.

Sean N. Henderson is a member of the board of directors. On top of that he leads a dual life as a computer-guy and musician. His devices also contribute to his music life as well.

Tips & Tricks

How I Find My "Deleted" Emails

by Tom Thiel

OLDEMAILS ARE ONE of my most frequent retrievals from my backed-up files.

My current rate of email accumulation is about 20-30 a day. I've forced myself to maintain my accumulated emails in my Inbox and Sent Emails folders to a maximum of not more than 1,000 each. So periodically I just arbitrarily "lope off" the oldest one-half to one month or so of emails. I try to manage some of these by placing them into other folders but that isn't very effective for me.

What this procedure means is that frequently I find myself wishing I still had that old "deleted" email. (The latest one was the Acoustica email sending us Spin it Again software.)

How do I retrieve that email after I've "deleted" it from my Inbox or Sent Items? Here is how I do it with Internet Explorer

6. Sometime ago I found out where IE stores my emails. What I did then was to move the place where my emails are stored by default to a folder named "Toms emails" in my "My Documents" folder. (How to do this is briefly outlined in the addendum at the end of this article.)

My basic backup procedure is to frequently, at least once a week but usually more frequently, and usually daily with very active folders, copy the contents of my My Documents folder to an external USB connected 300 GB Maxtor drive and to other similar portable USB drives (a 100 GB SimpleTec, and a 40 GB Pocketec hard drive) that are stored away from my computer.

When I do this of course I am backing up the current contents of all my emails at the moment the My Documents backup is performed. (Actually, any true backup procedure will work.)

So, when I want one of those old emails that had been arbitrarily "loped" off the tail end, I do the following:

1. Open Outlook Express and set it to Work Offline so that new emails are not loaded in with old ones (only needed if you are continuously on-line). You may set IE to Work Offline as follows: With IE open select File, and then check Work Offline. No new emails can come in under this mode.

2. Now close OE.

3. With Windows Explorer I find the folder "Toms emails" in My Documents and rename it to "Toms emails Today"

4. Then I try to guess what backup might have the particular email I'm looking for from among the various backups I

have on the external USB drives.

5. With Windows Explorer I find the folder "Toms emails" on that external backup copy.

6. Then I Copy that folder and Paste it into my current My Documents folder.

7. I now see two email folders in My Documents; "Toms emails" which just was Pasted from the backup copy and the folder "Toms emails Today" which had been renamed earlier.

8. Next I open IE again.

9. It asks me "Do you want to work online?"

10. Be sure to say NO!

11. I then try to locate the desired email; sometimes I use IE's Find capability to do this. Hopefully, I have guessed correctly and I find the desired email the first guess.

12. I open it and then copy it to my Desktop by choosing File and then Save As and Save To Desktop.

13. Now I close IE and with Windows Explorer find the folder "Toms emails", the one I just loaded from the backup, and from which I retrieved the desired email, and I delete it.

14. Next I rename "Toms emails Today" back to "Toms emails"

15. Then I open IE and say Yes I want to Work Online.

16. I find the email that I had copied to my desktop and double-click on it to open in IE. I can then save it back into my cur-



rent emails and do whatever I wanted to do with it.

And that what I do to find that old "deleted" email! Of course it only works for so long as you maintain those backup copies – in my case about six months.

Addendum

How you may change the default location where your e-mails are stored in Outlook Express.

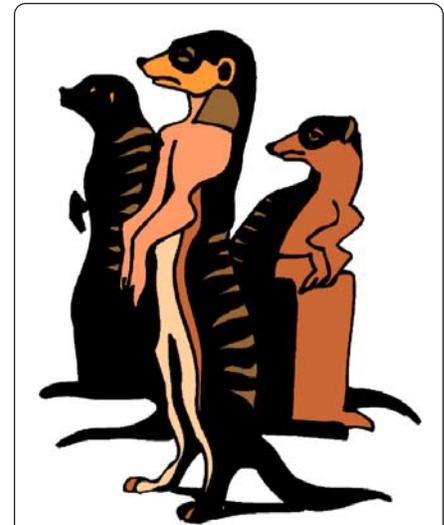
In OE, first select the Tools menu, and then *O*ptions tab. On the pop-up screen, click the *Maintenance* tab, then click the *Store Folder* button.

Outlook Express will show you where it is currently keeping your e-mail files.

You may then select *C*hange and a *Browse* window will appear where you may chose to indicate the new place you wish to store your emails.

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Do you have a burning computer question you'd like to raise at Random Access, but can't make it to the meeting or just never seem to get your hand up in time? Email your inquiry to the answer guy at askdacs@dacs.org, and your question will be taken up at the next meeting.

Commentary

Circuit Rider - Version 5.0

by Jim Scheef

Linux on the Desktop

THERE ARE TWO REASONS Linux has not been successful in the home or business desktop market. The first about which I have complained for years and which is finally getting better – there is no easy, automatic way to keep your Linux machine fully patched and up to date. If I'm wrong, please come to a Server and Networking SIG meeting prepared to show me such an update service.

The second reason is that most of the software we all know and love (to hate) is not available on Linux. Well, a recent news item made me think that might be changing. Last week Intuit released a new version of QuickBooks Enterprise Solutions. The news item made it sound like there is a Linux version. When I dug into the Intuit web site, I found that this is a multi-user version of QuickBooks and the database part is now available to run on a Linux server. Big deal! The client part still requires Windows.

If you know of any **mainstream** software that offers versions for both Windows and Linux, please let me know. Some-day I'd like to be wrong about this.

While on this topic, I noticed that version 2.2 of Open Office has been released. OO continues its broad platform support (Windows, Linux x86 and PowerPC, Solaris x86 and SPARC, Mac OS X and FreeBSD). The article did not mention whether OO runs on 64-bit x86 under Windows or Linux. With the new user interface, Microsoft Office 2007 is no longer the familiar product we all know and love. This might be the chance Open Office needs to make real inroads in the business market. Remember, user friendly is what you know and OO may be closer to "user friendly" than Office 2007. We'll see.

The FCC is at it again

The FCC is trying to measure the degree to which Americans have access to "broadband" Internet in a timely and reasonable fashion as required by the Telecommunications Act of 1996. As you recall, that act was intended to open our telecom-

munications industry to the rigors of competition. Ten years later we are beginning to see competition in some areas, but what the bill was intended to produce (widely available, inexpensive, fast Internet access for all Americans) has not happened. So, the FCC does what it does best and issued "things" – a Request for Information and a Notice of Proposed Rule Making.



The following is from an eWeek.com news story: In a statement, FCC Chairman Kevin Martin said, "While we have made progress recently, as I have said before, there is more we can do," and "For example, the Commission is committed to obtaining the best information possible about the deployment, access and afford-

ability of broadband services nationwide." Meanwhile FCC Commissioner Michael Copps, agreeing with Martin, asked, "Can we finally agree that something drastic needs to be done?" Noting that the United States is 15th in the world in broadband penetration, and said the road was littered with "commercial and regulatory missteps."

"We can start by facing up to our problem and doing our level best to diagnose its causes. We need to know why so many Americans do not have broadband, and why those who do, or think they do, are paying twice as much for connections one-twentieth as fast those enjoyed by customers in some other countries," Copps continued in his statement. "This is not just an exercise in self-flagellation, though we certainly deserve that by now. Rather, it is the first step in coming up with some solutions that can start to reverse our nation's slide into technological and communications mediocrity."

Copps also suggested that the FCC's data gathering left a lot to be desired. In his comments about the NPRM, Copps said, "For several years now, I have been greatly disappointed by the Commission's broadband data-gathering and presentation. As scholars, industry and the [GAO] Government Accountability Office have documented, our semi-annual statistical reports currently fail to measure even basic concepts such as the extent of broad-

band deployment across the country, including in rural and tribal areas, and the degree of competition among broadband providers and modalities," Copps said.

Furthermore, Copps said, "Our statistical methodology seems almost calculated to obscure just how far our country is falling behind many other industrialized nations in broadband availability, adoption, speed and price.... Indeed, the lack of reliable government data on the present state of our broadband market is a fundamental obstacle to developing a national strategy to reverse our inexcusable broadband performance. Until we know where we stand today, how can we possibly build the broadband future that our nation deserves? And if the FCC doesn't gather this data, who will?"

OK. Now, if you read between the lines, you might get the idea that these commissioners do not see eye to eye on a few issues. Can you guess who is the Republican and who is not? If the FCC commissioners can't agree on whether they actually have the information they need, then we get what we get – slow and expensive communications products offered by local monopolies. Certainly it wasn't the FCC who concluded that our Internet access ranks 15th in the world!

FCC and the 2nd Circuit

In other news regarding the FCC, a recent decision from the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals slapped the agency on the wrist for a "capricious and arbitrary" change in its rules (without any notice) regarding indecent speech on television when it fined the Fox network after Cher and Nicole Richie used the words f*** and s*** as casual expletives on live prime time broadcasts. I'm not sure who Nicole Richie is, and Cher is certainly everyone's role model, and the program was on Fox, so why would anyone care? You can read the full story (and get a few chuckles at the irony) at <http://tinyurl.com/25jf3e>. The story includes links to the FCC statements as well as the decision from the 2nd Circuit.

DACS Financial Health

Elsewhere in this issue you will read much about our club's financial future. Your board of directors has discussed this issue for many months with every director involved and participating. I support the decision to raise the dues. As President Rob Limbaugh explains, it is necessary if DACS is to survive. I hope you will understand and continue to support the club with your membership.

Jim Scheef is past president of DACS

Virtual Computing In the 6/26/2007 meeting, we showed how to get VMWare Server loaded on XP with the VMWare Server management web interface running. To do so requires that IIS be installed on the XP machine. VMWare Server will give an error stating IIS on XP isn't supported. XP only allows one website to run at a time, so the VMWare management page is unable to be running at the same time as the "Default Site" in IIS. The fix is to simply "Stop" the "Default Site" and "Start" the VMWare Management site. XP will retain this change when rebooted.

The SIG box was running low on space. Our test box is set up with an 8GB partition that has two parallel installations of Windows XP and the remaining 30GB was set aside for Linux. To solve the problem, we looked at a driver called "EXT2 Installable File System for Windows" (<http://www.fs-driver.org/>). This handy application allows one to mount Linux EXT2 partitions with full access to the file system. By using this driver, we could move the 'VirtualMachines' directory over to one of the Linux partitions. For our purposes, this should give us a single point to house all our VMs we're working with and allow this sandbox to boot in whichever host OS we want.

For our upcoming meeting on 7/24, we'll begin looking at Microsoft's Virtual PC and Virtual Server products. Time permitting, we'll take a look at installing VMWare Server on Linux (specifically CentOS 5).

At the moment, the August 2007 meeting will be cancelled because I will be in VMWare training that week. If anyone is interested, we could schedule a makeup meeting in the afternoon of Sunday 9/2 or Saturday 9/8. Check the DACS website calendar for scheduling updates.

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

DACS members may publish noncommercial, computer-related classified ads in *dacs.doc* at no charge. Ads may be sent by e-mail to Charlie Bovaird at aam@mags.net, or hard-copy may be submitted at our monthly general meeting.

Ask DACS

July 2007

Jim Scheef, Moderator
Lisa Leifels, Reporter

WE WELCOME QUESTIONS FROM the floor at the start of our General Meetings. In addition, members who are not able to attend the General Meeting may submit questions to askdacs@dacs.org. We will ask the question for you and post the reply in *DACS.ORG*. Please provide as much information as possible since we can't probe during the session.

Q. A question was e-mailed from a member who was contacted by e-Trends to do an online market research job and was wondering if this was a legitimate company.

A. e-Trends is an online market research community that you can join and get paid for having your Internet browsing and purchasing activity monitored. They use the information they gather to determine Internet trends. A member of the audience said they used to work for them and found them to be a reliable company.

Q. I bought a 100 watt Microslim power inverter to charge my computer while I am in the car. It has a 100 watt limit. How do I determine how much power my laptop requires?

A. A power converter changes direct current (DC) from a battery to alternating current (AC). You connect the inverter to the battery and plug your AC device into the inverter and you have portable power wherever you need it. The size of the inverter you use should be about 30% higher than the device you are operating. The inverters are rated by their peak output and their continuous operating voltage is about 25% less. You'll need to determine how much power your laptop requires to start up and continuously run.

You can look at what the output says on the power brick of your laptop, and then convert the volts to watts. Say, for example, the output of the power brick on your laptop is 19V at 5 amps, which is 95 watts. Since the adapter may only be between 60% and 85% efficient, you need more than 95 watts. If the adapter is 60% efficient, you would need an output of 160 watts, and if it is 85% efficient you would need 112 watts.

Q. I am trying to dispose of an older 17" CRT computer monitor that is more than five years old but still works.

A. A member mentioned that Staples has a recycle program that allows you to drop off used computers and monitors at their customer service desk at any of their store locations. You need to pay \$10 for each large item and they will dispose of it properly for you. Another suggestion was to check with the transfer station in your town to see if they will accept it.

The Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority, (CRRA) holds several recycling collections each year. You can check on their website at www.CRRA.org/pages/schedule_electronics.htm to find out if there is an upcoming collection in your local area.

Q. I am using a PC with Windows XP Home. I keep seeing the message that windows is trying to do an update, how do I prevent this from happening?

A. It's recommended that you install the software updates from Microsoft, since many of the updates help protect your computer from security threats. If you'd like to change the way the updates are handled on your computer you can do the following steps:

Click on Start and then Control Panel.

Depending on which Control Panel view you use, Classic or Category, do one of the following:

Click **System**, and then click the **Automatic Updates** tab.

Click **Performance and Maintenance**, click **System**, and then click the **Automatic Updates** tab.

Click the option that you want. Make sure Automatic Updates is not turned off.

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