

NEXT MEETING, TUESDAY, JULY 1: SPECIAL DOUBLE-FEATURE ON TRICKS AND TECHNIQUES FOR CREATING AND EDITING YOUR DIGITAL PHOTOS

INSIDE:

SHOOT AND EDIT
YOUR PHOTOS
LIKE A PRO

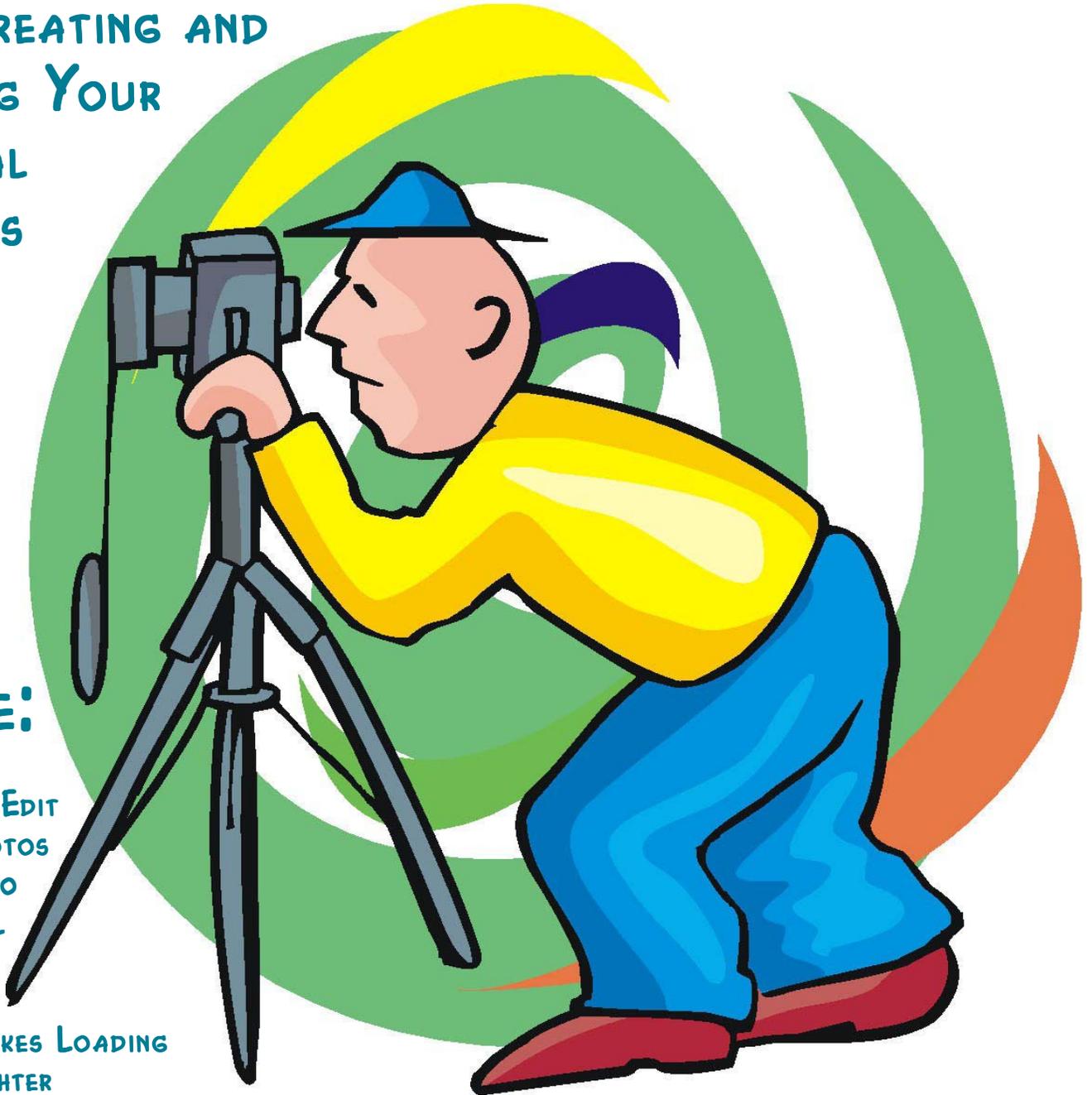
A PERSONAL
VIEW OF
VISTA

UBUNTU MAKES LOADING
LINUX LIGHTER

TURBO-CHARGE YOUR PC WITH COMPUTUNE-UP

ROXIO EASY MEDIA CREATOR SUITE V. 10

PLUS, MORE COMMENTARY AND ANSWERS TO YOUR COMPUTING QUESTIONS



President's File



The first half of the year is already over. Hopefully, the whirlwind from work will settle down, so there can be time to get some R&R! Heck, summer is already here and it seems like I missed spring! The objective

now is to get as much pool time in as possible!

REMINDER: General Meetings resume on 'First Tuesday' starting July 1, 2008!

Point, Shoot, Edit!

July's double-header is going to be FANTASTIC! We have two—count them, TWO!—local gurus coming in to show us how to get the best pictures we can with the camera and software tools available today. This will be a great meeting to invite the rest of the shutterbugs you know. Where else can you find out what camera tech would be right for you and how to edit the digital pictures like a pro? Be sure to check out the meeting preview for more information. Take note that the presentation begins at 7:15 instead of 8 p.m.

Quick "THANKS!"

In spite of all our busy schedules, there have been some great strides made by the various DACS volunteers towards goals

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oriented around youth involved. A big "Thank You" goes out to DACS Members Fran Ryan and John Gallichotte for their recent contributions toward youth-related programs! Fran is spearheading an effort to create a DACS Intern program coordinated with Danbury and local students. John has offered his years of robotics experience to offer a summer RobotBASIC course.

Our Acting VP of Programs, Flo Ferrara, has done a stellar job of lining up some great speakers! Believe it or not, she's already got us booked up through March 2009! Unfortunately, her availability to help out is rapidly coming to a close. Come September she will be focusing on other interests and will no longer be able to fill the VP of Programs position. During this short tenure, she's created some resources that have proven to be greatly effective that can be passed on. She has graciously offered to help pass along the knowledge and tips to someone interested in taking over the position. Please get in touch with Flo directly (vpprograms@dacs.org) or someone on the Board (dacsboard@dacs.org) to find out more.

Gaming Group Wanted

DACS needs a "gamer" willing to form a SIG. For anyone interested who may be reading this, the specific requests have been for a group that would meet to discuss gaming gear and strategies, cover various platforms (Xbox, PlayStation, Wii, PC, etc.), examine game technology advances, how to set up LAN parties and game system networking, building gaming rigs (especially on a budget), and safe gaming habits. Gaming is one activity that doesn't appear to have a skill or age limit, so I think there's great potential in such a group. If this is your thing, please get in touch with us! People are eager to attend!

Windows SIG Status

There have been some offers of assisting with topics and there is a steady following of attendees. But, as of this writing, nobody has shown interest in taking over leadership of this SIG. Keep an eye on the calendar regarding this SIG as it is now subject to my availability while a dedicated leader can be found.

Everyone Matters

It's been said before, but it bears repeating: Be involved by attending meetings. One of the successful things Flo has done is simply invited prospective speakers to our General Meetings. This is im-

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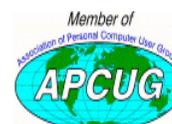
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Applications & Hardware to enhance dacs.doc are welcome.



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Apple User Group

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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?

d = day e = evening

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Directors' Notes

A regular meeting of your Board of Directors was held at the Resource Center on Monday, June 9, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. Present were Charles Bovaird, Richard Corzo, Sean Henderson, John Lansdale, Patrick Libert, Rob Limbaugh, Anna van Ommeren, Jeff Setaro, Jim Scheef. Also present was Fran Ryan. President Rob Limbaugh presided and Secretary Anna van Ommeren kept the record. Minutes of the last meeting held on May 12, 2008, were presented and approved after 2 minor corrections were noted. Treasurer Charles Bovaird reported current cash assets of \$7,538.82, consisting of total bank and postal accounts in the amount of \$7448.80 plus postage on hand of \$90.02. Subtracting a liability of prepaid dues in the amount of \$1,403.00 left a net equity of \$6,135.82. He also reported that the current membership is at 258,112 of which are electronic. He also mentioned we have 208 valid email addresses.

Fran Ryan from Danbury's Commission on Persons with Disabilities attended the meeting to present a possible collaboration between DACS and Danbury's Summer Youth Employment Program. These are intern programs/initiatives for Danbury children (ages 14-18) who meet one or more of the following requirements: they participate in the school district's free or reduced-price lunch program, come from families that meet income requirements, or have a disability. The interns, who successfully completed last year's Summer Youth Employment Program with exceptional employee reviews from their supervisor, are assigned to volunteer agencies by the City of Danbury after comparing agency requests and interns' skills. The program runs for six weeks beginning in July. The interns will earn \$7.65/hr for 20 hours per wk for the 2008 program, paid by the City. Also, they must be supervised by the agency and must participate in six offsite training days. Possible work tasks were discussed, such as helping with the newsletter or marketing. Working in a virtual office environment was also mentioned as well as computer recycling and learning computer repair. However, the discussion also considered the concerns regarding program requirements such as full-time supervision and insurance issues. Nevertheless, it was decided that this effort is worth pursuing, and for DACS to develop a long term plan to be

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portant for many reasons. First, it shows our strength in numbers. Second, they get to meet those attendees and guests. Lastly, it allows the prospective speaker to check out the facility so any concerns can be addressed ahead of time.

Since it's very difficult to guess what everyone wants or expects out of this organization, our dilligent webmasters have launched a feedback page. Just click the "Feedback" link at <http://www.dacs.org> so you may toss your two-bits—positive or negative—into the fray. Emails can also be directed to feedback@dacs.org. To get things rolling, here are a few topics it would be good to hear about:

How do you feel about having the ability to attend General Meetings and/or SIG Meetings using web conferencing? Be sure to explain what value this would or wouldn't have for you.

Did having the meetings on the 'First Monday' have an impact on your ability to attend? If you could pick any day of the week for the General Meetings, which day would you choose, and why?

Do you have any thoughts or concerns regarding our meetings, SIGS, and workshops being held at the Danbury Hospital and our Resource Center?

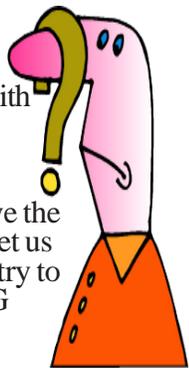
Praise and/or complaints--Is there something we've done good or bad and need to know about?

The Column Never Ends...

Just kidding! I hope this makes up for the abbreviated column last month. With any luck this second half of 2008 will be paced more evenly. Remember, starting Tuesday, July 1, 2008, we resume the 'First Tuesday' General Meeting schedule and it continues through December. See you at the next meeting!

—Rob Limbaugh
relimbaugh@dacs.org

Are you up to your nose with computer questions?. DACS Special Interest Groups may have the answers. If not, let us know, and we'll try to create a new SIG that helps



Meeting Review

The Art of Sharing Your Digital Media

by Flo Ferrara

THE JUNE PRESENTATION on Digital Media given by DAC's own Ken Graff was in one word, inspiring. I could not wait to check out some of the sites Ken showed us using my own digital photos. Actually, I have many on my machine that I have not yet shared. Now I have many more ways to share them than I had previously thought—and it's all free!

Ken organized his presentation very well; taking the audience through a variety of easy to use free services running the gamut from searching for pictures and creating personal online photo albums, to professional looking video creations.

Ken was kind enough to set up a link for us to make it convenient to revisit all he showed us: <http://pix-wizz.blogspot.com>. While we didn't get to all of them during the presentation most were highlighted.

PicLens and Tag Galaxy are two much more visually pleasing and fun ways to search for and display digital images. Picasa is a great way to share your photos with others. It gives the user the ability to send a link to someone or embed the link into a URL. While Picasa is not generally supported in the Mac environment, Ken was able to install it on a Mac using a Mac product called CrossOver. As Ken's BlogSpot site says, with a Gmail account you get a Picasa web album account with 1 gig of space and as well as a blogger account. These are two great ways to share your digital pictures.

I have already created an account for myself in Adobe Photoshop Express. This free version of Photoshop has 2 gig of storage space and a myriad of functions; crop, rotate, change exposure, touchup, etc. It creates a timeline of the picture as it changes which is saved as an instruction set. At any time you can revert to any of the changes made to the file simply by clicking on the spot in the timeline. The program is

a Beta version and has only been online about two and half months. Ken told the audience that this was originally marketed to the social networking crowd.

I believe Drop.io is one of the more robust websites featured. Drop.io enables the user to create simple private sharing points called "drops". Each drop is private, and only as accessible as you choose to deliberately make it. Create multiple drops, add

any type of media, and share or subscribe as you want. To make a drop just click the big red button that says 'drop it'.

Ken demonstrated uploading a picture as well as leaving a voice message. The voice message is converted into a .wav file. Go to <http://drop.io/dacsdotorg> to check out the DACS Drop.io site Ken created. Other services include fax, email, conference calling, and blogging.

Other interesting sites included *FixMyMovie*, *Omnisio*, *Slide.com*, and *Animoto*; but I have to say the two that I love best are *Zazzle.com* and *MagMyPic.com*. At *Zazzle.com* you can create your own postage stamps. On *MagMyPic.com* you can use your own photos to create personalized magazine covers.

Here is an example of one of the stamps I may make for my dad. We are very big John Wayne fans at our house, so this is perfect, and just in time for Father's Day!

I've made a few magazine covers on *MagMyPic.com* as well, and I have to say it's much fun!

Ken's presentation has breathed new life into my tired old folders of digital pictures. He showed me how I can be more creative in sharing them; like this one.

Like I said, inspiring! So take a look at the many links on Ken's BlogSpot site and have fun; I am.

Thanks, Ken!

FLO FERRARA is acting VP of programs.

Meeting Preview

How to Shoot & Edit Like a Pro Camera Techniques & Adobe Elements

By Flo Ferrara

Note: The presentation begins at 7:15 p.m., not 8:00.

THE DACS JULY presentation lineup is an impressive one. Not only will we have Gary Spring, a local camera expert on hand to show and tell us all about the latest in cameras, but we will be further enlightened on how we can use these cameras to shoot and edit like the pros by Lesa King, the graphic reporter.

Gary, a resident camera expert at Ritz Camera in Danbury, will start the presentation at 7:15 p.m., showing us camera types such as zoom, bridge, pocket size and digital SLRs. There will be a variety of these types from intermediate designs to pro. Gary will also share with us the different type of memory cards these cameras can handle. Gary will speak until around 7:45 p.m. where we will take a 15 minute break in the 'action' to ready ourselves for Lesa's presentation.

As her website clearly states, Lesa is on a mission to teach the world to create and use better graphics. Lesa is a stock photographer and chief evangelist for iStockphoto, founder of the creative tutorial site GraphicReporter.com, author of Photoshop: The Missing Manual (O'Reilly, 2008), Graphic Secrets for Business Professionals (Lynda.com, 2007), From Photo to Graphic Art, and Practical Photoshop Elements (KelbyTraining.com, 2008).

Lesa also writes regularly for Macworld Magazine, the National Association of Photoshop Professionals, Elements Techniques, and Layers Magazine. She is a corporate trainer and teaches at many industry conferences including Photoshop World, Macworld Expo, Mac Mania Geek Cruises, and the esteemed Santa Fe Workshops.

It is obvious to me that we are getting the best of both worlds here. Gary will

show us how to select the correct type of camera hardware for our needs; and Lesa will teach us how to use that camera like a professional.

I can't emphasize enough how excited I am about this combo. I still take pictures with an old 35 mm Minolta that I bought when I was a college student working part-time at Macy's; so I would have to say for me, it's about time to upgrade! Okay, maybe past time!

And, how cool is this? While checking out Lesa's website www.graphicreporter.com, I came across a fix for what is termed 'animal red eye'. This

is where the animal's eyes are just yellow glowing orbs. I have a photo of my cat like that and I have always wanted to correct it – well, now I can! Can't wait to see what I can do after Lesa's presentation.

So grab your neighbors, family members and friends and come join us Tuesday, July 1 for a comprehensive look at camera hardware and software.

DACS meetings are held at the Danbury Hospital auditorium. Activities begin at 6:30 p.m. with registration and casual networking. The July meeting is back on the first Tuesday schedule and starts at 7:00 p.m. with AskDACs. The first part of the featured presentation begins at 7:15 p.m. with Gary Spring from Ritz Camera telling us all there is to know about the latest digital cameras.

There will be a 15 minute break from 7:45 to 8:00 p.m. followed by Lesa King's captivating presentation at 8 p.m. on how to use this latest equipment to create professional grade photos. A question and answer period for both presentations will follow at the end of the meeting.

As a reminder, our General Meetings are free and open to the public so invite anyone you know who would be interested in this topic.

FLO FERRARA is acting VP of programs.

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able to work with the organization to explore the possibilities for implementation by next summer.

The subject of the general meeting dates for the February 2009 to June 2009 schedule was brought up. Danbury hospital has informed DACS that due to a conflicting schedule the auditorium will not be available on the first Tuesdays during those months. Rob suggested a survey of the members be conducted to see whether a first Monday of the month, year 'round might be preferable. Suggestions for the best way to conduct the survey were discussed. Other ideas for general meetings, such as synchronizing with other groups in the area to share presenters or taking advantage of web-ex presentations, were mentioned.

Next on the agenda was Microsoft software orders from TechSoup. Patrick explained that DACS is eligible to order up to 6 products over 2 years and that we are still eligible for two products within this time period. Richard requested Office 2008 for MAC. A software order cannot be used in a production environment or to generate revenue, but can be used for evaluation and testing. Patrick offered to check and process any ordering.

Regarding the community site, Rob gave a progress report and mentioned that after some initial software and installation troubleshooting, he will continue working with it. He also mentioned the need to create documentation in case anyone else needs to work within the system.

Rob brought up the subject of finding a new ISP for DACS and mentioned some of the requirements such as supporting linux/php, the ability to run CRON jobs, and enough bandwidth. A virtual private server would also be preferred. Jeff mentioned some benefits of the "Yahoo small business" plan and he and John will submit some alternative hosting suggestions.

Rob suggested DACS create a flyer to promote DACS, the general meetings, and the website address; however this would not be time-sensitive and could be used at any time. There will be a need for someone to take on the task of creating and distributing the flyer.

A brief discussion about the Newsletter ensued. Presently it is mailed to 149 members, and 50 more copies are mailed to libraries. Due to the variation in postage costs, it was discussed

DIRECTORS NOTES, Cont. on page 15



SIGNIFICANT BITS

July 2008

by Sean N. Henderson

SOFTWARE REVIEWS

THIS MONTH'S COLUMN is about some software you may have come across.

Hallmark Card Studio

My wife's fortieth was fast approaching. I wanted to send out those great photo greeting cards as invites. Turnaround time and flexibility were important. Office Max had a kit by Hallmark. Hallmark's kit included 40 long glossy photo cards and two software items. The main app is called "Hallmark Card Studio Photo Card Edition" version 1.0.0.5. A companion calendar app gets installed alongside.

There were some bumps setting my Epson RX-700 AIO to print borderless. Otherwise, the software looked polished, the interface items were obvious and properly labeled, and the workflow was easy.

One positive feature was how quickly it was to swap images in an existing image box. This software is similar to commonly available presentation software, prefigured for producing long photo cards.

The included templates and graphics were usable. I used some of the included background and border graphics. For other graphical items I looked elsewhere. For a short run and quick turnaround, Hallmark's kit worked out really well.

Thunderbird Portable w/Lightning

My U3 drive failed and I needed a new one, quickly. My brother gave me a 16GB (!) USB thumb drive (non-U3). I installed the freeware PortableApp.com suite. Moving my work email over from the U3 drive was easy and merely involved copying and transferring a folder. The newer version of Thunderbird/Lightning used by PortableApps defeated some of my Lightning extensions, namely the SQLite Manager and the extensions managing the button that lets me quickly change outgoing email servers. So far, my opinion of Thunderbird is that

it is better than MS Outlook for portability, and easier to use than Pegasus mail client. Lightning (Sunbird, et al.) is usable, but the tasks need to be improved greatly. If 50% or more of your reason for adding the Lightning calendar extension to your Thunderbird email client is for managing tasks, then expect to be frustrated, regardless of whether you are using the portable versions or the local version.

If needing a non-MAPI POP3 email client, and not needing to view HTML email (but being able to parse the text portions), and needing to download attachments, I would still recommend JMail3.x.

Windows Live Messenger

While I'm down on many things Microsoft, Windows Live Messenger (WLM) is a hit in my book.

Compared with other IM clients, WLM does not support accounts on other networks. Compared with other MSN-enabled IM clients, it is nicer in "feel" than Pidgin (formerly GAIM?) and Trillian Basic. I have not tried meebo.com (yet) or any other web-based IM client. Since I use IM almost exclusively for work, and my employer uses Microsoft servers, desktops and services, I gave up using a multi-network IM client and

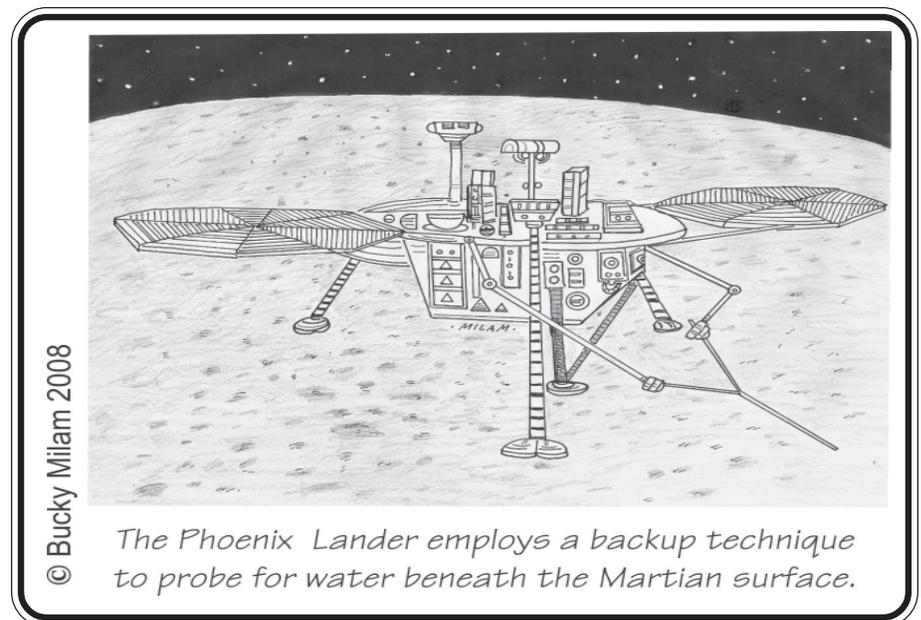
just went with WLM, which installed without any problem on my work machine.

Installing WLM on my Gateway MX-series laptop proved problematic. Having WLM on my laptop would be handy for when working remotely. I was determined. The laptop was in MSN IM no-mans-land. Could it be possible that my laptop had fallen out of tune? Rather, I think it had to do with many attempts at optimizing the laptop for media production. My current version of Messenger was in flux and not working. To boot, I was not happy with any portable version of any other MSN-enabled IM client.

Thanks to Microsoft Live Support for helping me rapidly with this issue by email. It turns out that, sometimes, Windows Messenger 4.7 (WM4) (integrated with XP and not removable) gets in the way of the installation. The web-based installer could not perform the install because of my setup issues with WM4. Email support directed me to the actual WLM download, which installed effortlessly the first time.

Despite the similar name, Windows Messenger and Windows Live Messenger are different products based, in part, on different technologies, with somewhat different purposes. For more on Windows Live technologies, see their website. Wikipedia has it explained a little plainer at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windows_Live.

SEAN N HENDERSON is a DACS Director and Vice President for Marketing and Public Relations.



The Phoenix Lander employs a backup technique to probe for water beneath the Martian surface.

From My Vista

by Rob Limbaugh

JUST ABOUT EVERY year I make some sort of ‘major’ effort to move forward with technology in some way on my primary home workstation. I periodically wipe out the machine and start a fresh OS install from scratch. I reasoned that as laborious a re-install is, I may as well bite the bullet and this time make the move to Vista. What made the timing right was that Microsoft gave Windows Vista Ultimate 32-bit w/SP2 for those who attended the APCUG 2008 LDC. Here is my experience.



Check Compatibility

When loading an OS it is important to make note of your hardware and key software. Vista Update Advisor will highlight any hardware or software compatibility issues of which to be aware. In my case, the only issues to address were applications that would be replaced with new Vista versions—no big deal. In terms of hardware, my machine checked out OK. Last I had heard, my ATI All-In-Wonder 2006 video card was not yet supported in Vista, so I double-checked the AMD (they now own ATI) website and confirmed there are now Vista drivers and software. It’s a Go!

Backup Data

Next, I made backups of all my important data. This time around I used an external USB hard drive and just dragged and dropped the data to a ‘backup’ folder. I wanted to start fresh and clean, so I didn’t bother making a backup of my Windows or Office user settings. There aren’t any new BIOS updates for my motherboard, so I was all set to go.

Time for Install

I started the install process around 8 p.m., electing to wipe all partitions on the hard drive. My first boot to the desktop post install was shortly after 10 p.m. So far, so good. And, considering this is a P4 2.4GHz machine, I was rather impressed. Vista’s graphics worked from the get-go

because the ATI All-In-Wonder 2006 uses an ATI Radeon 9600 compatible chipset for which Vista loaded drivers. Sound worked. Networking worked. I expected SOMETHING to be wrong, due to all the horror stories I had heard! My machine

even received a 3.2 on the “Vista Experience Index”. That means I can use Aero! Now we’re cooking!

Post Install Issues

A notice appeared that Windows detected hardware and needed to install drivers. My system’s motherboard has an integrated Realtek AC’97 sound card. Unfortunately there isn’t a Vista driver for the MIDI interface. If I want to hook up MIDI devices in the future, I will probably need to disable the built-in sound card and install a properly supported one to gain MIDI interface functionality.

Watching TV is one of the things for which I built this machine, and I expected to use Vista Media Center. This is where my second issue came up. While AMD (they bought ATI) has released updated Vista drivers and software for the ATIAIW 2006 video card, they didn’t actually ‘fix’ the issue with how the ATI Hydravision software accesses the TV Tuner. I searched around for a solution and came across a Home Theater application called “Beyond TV” by SnapStream. So far that seems to solve my issue. Beyond TV has a ton of cool features (worth looking at even if you aren’t going to Vista).

Reality Check

In my consumer opinion, lack of proper drivers for an OS is the fault of the hardware integrator and not the OS maker. AMD is blaming Microsoft’s changes in DirectX 10 D3D (which happen to address performance and security) as why the ATI TV Tuner software doesn’t work. Well, AMD, how come SnapStream could figure it out? AOpen has not released any new drivers for their implementation of the

AC’97 chip on my motherboard. I can live with AOpen’s choice because most people don’t use the MIDI interface feature of sound cards. AMD has no excuse for not supporting an expensive video card that is bought for the very feature they aren’t supporting. My buying habits will be adjusted accordingly in the future.

Supporting Apps

Along with Beyond TV, I installed what I consider ‘Base Supporting Apps’. These included Avast! Antivirus, Notepad++, Pidgin, Adobe Reader, Adobe Flash Player, Adobe Shockwave Player, TrueCrypt, PrimoPDF, and WinSCP. Office Ultimate 2007 is going to round out the Office Suite. Everything installed smoothly. No issues, arguments, or contentions between apps.

Where I Stand

My machine has paid its dues many times over and the driver issues didn’t affect my ability to use what I needed, so I was OK with that. Others with more particular needs should be aware that integrated soundcards, atypical hardware, old devices, and fancy graphics capture cards may require special attention. Replacements may need to be considered.

I’m not suggesting everyone run out and install Vista. This is now the fourth time I’ve installed Vista on a machine—first time on one I plan to use regularly. All said and done, the experience has been pleasant and not anything like the horror stories I’ve heard. At the time of this writing it’s been about two weeks and all continues to work well. This article was typed on that system using Word 2007 and sent to the editors with Outlook 2007.

From my vista, Vista works just fine.

Rob is president of DACS

Vista Upgrade Advisor:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/products/windowsvista/buyorupgrade/upgradeadvisor.aspx>

Compare Vista Editions:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/products/windowsvista/editions/choose.aspx>

SnapStream Beyond TV:

<http://www.snapstream.com/products/beyondtv/>

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: July 2

Digital Imaging. 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: July 30

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: July 16

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 7

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: July 21

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: July 24

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: July 10

Tech Projects. This SIG Will work on DACS "Online Community projects as well as other areas from practical application solutions, to brainstorming and to tweeking Commercial products. All skill levels and backgrounds are welcome. The goal is to mix, match and customize technology to fit our needs.

Meets 1st Wednesday, 7p.m. at the DACS resource center.

Contact: Rob Limbaugh at (203)648-9176, relimbaugh@dacs.org

Next meeting: July 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: July 2

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, 203 648-9176

Next Meeting: July 22

Web Design. Applications for designing and creating Web sites.

Contact: Anna van Ommeren avanommeren@dacs.org.

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

Next Meeting: July 15

Windows. This SIG will discuss ways to get the most out of your system and applications, how to do new things, and other options in terms of hardware and software to help make life easier. All skill levels are welcomed and encouraged to attend

Contact: Rob Limbaugh relimbaugh@dacs.org, (203)648-9176

Next Meeting: July 17

SIG News & Events

ASP.Net and C#VB.Net. Our meetings in June were technically packed with general information about handling ISO files and the continuation of the RSSReader application with Ajax extension now implemented in the source code. We began our ASP.Net random question session with a short demo of a virtual DVD drive to read large disk images in ISO files. This discussion was inspired by Claude Prevots who wanted to install Visual Studio to his laptop. He found an ISO file on the Microsoft site which he could not burn to his laptop's incompatible DVD for the installation. Ingenuity, and patient research revealed that a virtual DVD drive is available as a download from Microsoft. He downloaded the ISO file of nearly a gigabyte in size and stored it on a

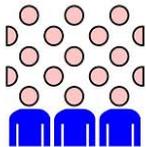
memory stick ready for access. The virtual DVD drive software was then installed and mounted (executed) invoked with the ISO file so that it appears in Windows Explorer as DVD1, a source disk ready for installation of a program. The main advantage of this setup is that it bypasses any need for a hardware disk drive to read the DVD, any one of the several formulations now on the market. This is a very useful technique, but one wonders why Microsoft just didn't supply the file as an executable one.

Subsequently, we launched into an extended discussion of Real Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds with a program including AJAX code. The program, RSSReaderWAjax, which is

SIG News, Continued on page 13

July 2008

Danbury Area Computer Society

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																	
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Different Strokes

For Anybody Who Has Thought About Trying Linux

by Drew Kwashnak

FOR ANYBODY WHO has thought about trying Linux, it has become easier than ever before with Ubuntu 8.04 LTS Hardy Heron. As with most Linux distributions, Ubuntu is available as a free download and is freely distributable. It is even available already installed on Dell computers.

The most common method is downloading the ISO image from Ubuntu's website (<http://www.ubuntu.com>) and burning it onto a CD. From the site, you can download the Desktop version or Server for 32-bit and 64-bit systems. There is even an option to download what is called an alternative version which is just the installer and does not include the LiveCD portion, which also includes an installer.

If you are like me, until a couple months ago, and living on dial-up or you do not have a CD burner handy or just don't want to put in that much effort then you can order a free CD through the corporate sponsor of Ubuntu, Canonical, ShipIt department. I have been very pleased with the speed with which their CDs arrive.

Alternatively, the website contains links to vendors where you can buy the CDs from under \$5 to more, and they can handle large orders as well.

Once you have your CD in your hot little hands, trying Ubuntu is as simple as placing it in your CD-ROM tray and rebooting your system. If system will boot from the CD and after a short moment you'll be greeted with the Ubuntu welcome screen (shown above).

If you want to "try before you buy," then you can choose the default "Try Ubuntu without any changes to your computer" and your hard drive will not be touched during your session unless you choose to. You don't even need a hard drive to select this option; you just will not be able to install it from the session.

If you are more certain or just daring then you can go straight into the installer and in about 60 minutes (45 minutes if you know what

you are doing) you're booting to your new Ubuntu installation.

Ubuntu will scan your hardware and load the modules and drivers necessary for your system. If you have hardware that has

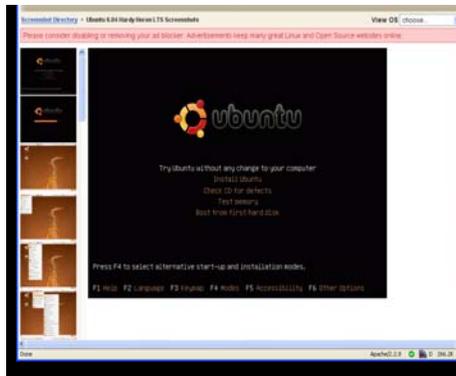
proprietary drivers available, Linux cannot include them in the CD for legal reasons. Ubuntu works around this by providing a Restricted Drivers tool that lists all such hardware found on your system and provides the ability to download and install the necessary

drivers in a click or two, legally.

Now that you have Ubuntu up and running on your system, what can you do? Plenty! Ubuntu brings you a full-featured operating system complete with;

- **Firefox 3.05** beta web browser
- **OpenOffice.org 2.4** full featured office suite compatible with pre-Office 2007 Word, Excel, PowerPoint and some Access files.
- **Evolution personal information manager** for email and calendar goodness a Microsoft Outlook user can feel comfortable with. There is even plug-ins to allow Evolution to access existing Microsoft Exchange servers.
- **Pidgin multi-protocol instant messenger** including Yahoo, MSN, AIM, Jabber, IRC and more.
- **Gimp (GNU Image Manipulation Program)**, a powerful Photoshop-like image editing program that includes filters, layers and a host of goodies.
- **F-Spot image manager** for categorizing and minor editing of all of your pictures as well as easily importing pictures from your digital camera.
- **And much, MUCH more...**

If Ubuntu doesn't come with a particular application, thousands of free applications are available from the Ubuntu online repository which are easily installed and updated from the Synaptic package manager.



When you decide to install Ubuntu onto your hard drive or virtual machine you only need to click the "Install" icon on the desktop to start the process. After seven or so easy questions the installer will copy the files over to the hard disk. Depending on your system's speed this could take about 60 minutes, more or less. It will even detect if you have Windows installed and offer to transfer over your files and compatible settings from your Windows accounts!

Of course, if the limitations of the LiveCD, such as settings are not saved from session to session, and you are hesitant to partition and install the full operating system on your hard drive Ubuntu offers yet another alternative called Wubi.

Wubi is, from the Ubuntu website:

"Wubi is an officially supported Ubuntu installer for Windows users that can bring you to the Linux world with a single click. Wubi allows you to install and uninstall Ubuntu as any other Windows application, in a simple and safe way. Are you curious about Linux and Ubuntu? Trying them out has never been easier!"

Wubi can be downloaded as an .exe file directly.

With Linux the installation is not the end, only the beginning! Whether you try the LiveCD, Wubi or a full installation you will find a wealth of quality applications, refreshing freedom and a community unlike any other! If you have problems, questions or want to find out more then you need look no further than the third Wednesday of every month for the DACS Linux SIG at 7:30 p.m. in the DACS Resource Center!

Drew Kwashnak: Has been losing more nights of sleep with Linux since 2002 and just can't keep from downloading and trying the latest versions! When not working with Linux he works with ASP.NET and Microsoft SQL Server for a small financial company. He is also the DACS Linux SIG leader and a father of 3.

Links:

Ubuntu:

<http://www.ubuntu.com>

Get Ubuntu:

<http://www.ubuntu.com/getubuntu>

ShipIt:

<https://shipit.ubuntu.com/>

Tips & Tricks

"Computune-up"

by Berry F. Phillips

DO YOU WANT YOUR computer to run faster and increase your productivity? Of course; if you have major problems, you will need to contact your manufacturer and/or professional technical support. Many of those costly major problems can be prevented by doing "computune-ups" yourself. Yes, you can do it even without being a computer geek! My thanks to Microsoft for some of the information in this article.



ever freeware programs" thoroughly tested and rated with commentary.

"Computune-up" (Hardware)

1. Make sure your computer is unplugged before cleaning and not plugged in until your system is dry after cleaning!
2. Make sure you have the following tools available: a screwdriver, can of compressed air (available from a computer store), cotton swabs (not balls), rubbing alcohol, paper towels or anti-static cloths (available from a computer store), and water.
3. Clean the inside of your computer case! Using a screwdriver remove the side of the case opposite your motherboard. Touch as little as possible inside the computer, keeping fingers away from cards and cords due to static electricity. Blow air around all the components and along the bottom of the case, keeping the nozzle four inches away from your machine. Blow air into the power supply and into the fan from the back of your computer case. Blow air into the floppy disk and CD drives. Wipe the inside cover with a lightly moistened cloth before replacing it using your screwdriver. Clean every three months if your computer is on the floor or an especially dirty environment. Clean approximately every six to eight months in a normal environment.
4. Clean the outside of the case! Run a cotton swab dipped in rubbing alcohol around all the openings on the back of your case giving them one swipe with a dampened swab and one with a dry swab. Clean the remaining outside of your system. Do this whenever you clean the inside of your system.
5. Clean the mouse by taking out the screws and going inside with an alcohol swab. If there is a rubber ball, clean it with water, and let it dry. Then clean the outside of the mouse. Many mouse problems are simply caused by a dirty mouse.
6. Clean the keyboard! Turn it upside down and gently shake it and most

"Computune-up" (Software)

1. Clean up your desktop! If you have not used a program for a year or one that you never use that came bundled with your system why not delete it. You will get more space on your hard drive in return.

2. Clean up your system tray to the left of time on your Taskbar! When you remove icons from your system tray that you rarely use, it will speed up your system since your computer has to locate those programs whenever you boot up. I love a little freeware program called Code Stuff Starter that shows you what is running and lets you easily turn those programs on or off.

3. Defragment your computer and your registry which will make your system run faster by consolidating fragments on your hard drive and registry. I use freeware programs like SmartDefrag and Aus Logics Registry Defrag and there are others available on the Internet.

4. Check your memory. The more programs you have running the more demand on your system memory (RAM). Adding more memory to your system will increase speed and is very easy to do without paying for expensive technical support. You can do it with minimal instruction or have a technically-oriented friend or club member do it since it only takes a few minutes to replace.

5. Keep your operating system updated and run utilities weekly! I strongly suggest you download needed freeware software for your system from "46 best

of the crumbs and dust will fall out. Blow air in and around the keys. Take an alcohol dampened cotton swab and clean the top and sides of the keys. Do this monthly; your keyboard gets very dirty and can even spread germs. If you have a laptop, follow the same procedure but take extra care with your machine.

7. Clean the monitor with a moistened paper towel or a soft lint-free cloth. (You can purchase monitor cleaning products from a computer store). Don't spray liquid directly on the screen but spray on the cloth. Wipe the screen gently to remove dust and fingerprints. (Never touch the back of the monitor). I suggest you purchase a special cleaning solution from a computer store for laptop computers.

If you have finished your "computune-up," you are on your way to being transformed into a computer geek! Do not be alarmed for the "geeks shall inherit the earth"! Bill Gates, chief geek and founder of Microsoft Corporation, has already made it; he is the role model for the rest of us!

BERRY F. PHILLIPS is a member of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City; www.ccokc.org. He can be reached at bfdata@laccess.net.

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Smart advertisers

can reach over

250

active computer

users and

software buyers

by taking

advantage of

the attractive

advertising rates

in

DACS.DOC

Product Review:

Roxio Easy Media Creator Suite (v.10)

By John Roy

ROXIO, A DIVISION AND brand of Sonic Solutions, has been a leader in burning software for many years. I personally have used the product since it was distributed by Adaptec several years ago. The CD/DVD burning software today far exceeds the basic functions that existed in those early days. Roxio Easy Media Creator (EMC) will accomplish so much more than the basic burning tasks and is now a full featured suite.

Doing this review has allowed me to explore and appreciate the many applications within this suite. Because EMC is so comprehensive I will provide an overview in this article but follow up with more details in future issues of our newsletter.

Before I start boasting about some of these neat applications I must discuss some installation issues. The product would not install on my primary computer! After trying several times to install under various scenarios I checked for possible solutions using Roxio's web product support and also their user forum. None of those sources provided any clues so I connected with technical phone support. I was quite surprised that the wait time was very small and the technician was professional and extremely competent. Unfortunately after almost two hours of phone support the problem was not solved.

The tech support effort involved major system modifications including deletion of all files associated with my original EMC version 9, my Nero burner software, a complete registry purge line by line of anything remotely associated with or influenced by Roxio software, removal of all anti-virus software and firewalls, elimination of all startup files except system essentials and running registry clean utilities. Nothing worked! A trouble report was left open but I never received any further calls. In their users forum I did find one other person with the exact same problem and no solution.

Fortunately I have a couple of other computers at my house so I tried installing the version 10 on both an older desktop and on my primary laptop system. The

install went smoothly on both of those systems. So until I get a chance to rebuild my primary desktop I won't know if I can ever use the latest version on it. On a side note before trying to install EMC version 10 I had version 9 successfully working. After all the system changes I could no longer load my EMC version 9. So now I struggled with that problem for a few days. Once again not finding any online solutions I

contacted a phone support tech who was able to direct me to a download utility that cleared the problem and allowed me once again install version 9.

While the above debacle was frustrating don't let it deter you from considering the purchase of this capable applications suite. So let's look at why you should consider owning this product.

Once you get past the install you will see a super clean interface with applications divided into seven primary areas; Audio, Data and Backup, Copy, Media and Devices, Photo, Video, and Tools. Each application provides another set of choices. Audio has (13), Data and Backup (5), Copy (5) Media and Devices (2), Photo (9), Video (11), and Tools (8). Now that is a huge chest of applications at your disposal. If you were to purchase each primary application separately it would cost you a few hundred dollars. This package sells for about \$100 but if you watch for sales you can buy it for much less.

When you think of Roxio and burning software the primary reason most people purchase the product is for those tools. The Copy and Data and Backup modules take care of those basic requirements along with some other goodies. For anyone familiar with an older version, you will still find the original Creator Classic still there but spruced up. That old standby is quite the workhorse. You select the type and size of disc you want to burn and it will keep you updated on available space as you move files or folders you want to burn into a holding area. Once your files and folders are selected you can burn your CD/DVD directly or make an image for later burning. Of course you have advanced

options to define the type of disc, speed, copies, etc. You can also make a bootable or multimedia disc and go directly to creating disc labels of your burn project.

The backup module provides capability to be selective of the files you want backed up or restored and at what frequency. If you want more powerful options then you will be provided an upgrade link. A range of backup devices and media including Blu-ray discs and HDDVD discs are supported. Large files can be automatically spanned across multiple discs as required.

The Audio module provides thirteen selections that cover just about everything you could possibly want to do with audio. All the expected tools are there to rip CD's into MP3 files or create audio CDs from other formats. You can make custom CD's with fades, effects and mixing. Tools are there to edit song information and to do batch conversions to formats of your choice. One module allows you to instantly capture any audio playing on your computer, including streaming radio. There is one utility "Convert LPs and Tapes" that I was especially enthused about. At our meeting we have had the question of how to convert LPs and Tapes asked many times in the past. While there are several methods to accomplish this, Roxio EMC has made it easy and crystal clear with this application. So for those of you that have a desire to do this you should give Roxio EMC serious consideration.

The Photo application contains a full featured photo suite with powerful editing, effects and touchup tools. It is complete with all the ancillary things you want to do with photos such as creating slideshows, panoramas, albums, greeting cards, calendars and layout templates. You can quickly optimize a group of photos for sending email.

The Video application is another full featured suite for importing, editing, customizing and exporting video into various formats. Included is CinePlayer a full featured video player. The features are similar to those found in Pinnacle Studio or Adobe Premier. While some of Roxio EMC tools are not as robust as the leaders you will find some tools not available in the others. The fact that it may not be as flexible as the stand alone programs it will be easier for the novice. If you are a true video buff then even if you own other video software you would also want to have EMC in your software chest.

The smallest stand alone module is Media Manager that enables users to easily browse, manage, share and protect their media files. The final application

Roxio, Cont.on page 15



SIG NOTES, Cont. from page 8

a work in progress, illustrates acquisition and display of RSS feeds. Initially, the program was named RSSReader and was developed using the web page postback functions of ASP.Net. Each user action performed at the web page invoked a postback to the server for service. With each postback, the page was refreshed causing monitor screen flicker to the user. Based on the current Ajax extension to ASP.Net web pages, this postback type of functionality can now be characterized as the old Web 1.0 technology. Ajax extensions provide a javascript communications interposer that coordinates javascript code execution on the browser with ASPNet.aspx code execution at the server. This refreshes specific elements on the web page rather than refreshing the entire page. This new methodology eliminates page flicker and provides the appearance of seamless updates, the type one receives from a regular Windows program. Ajax technology is now referred to as Web 2.0 technology. The importance of Microsoft's Ajax implementation in ASP.Net is the ability to provide Web 2.0 functionality with an automatic fallback to Web 1.0 functionality should the user's browser not have script execution enabled. Fundamentally, the Microsoft web page development approach is for ASP.Net injection of javascript to handle the client browser program load while the application developer creates server ASP.Net server executable code for the application with no or negligible developer created client javascript. To provide for fallback web page functionality, the application developer must consider this dual requirement in the programming scheme implemented for the web page. The key underlying development technique however, is that ASP.Net provides the framework and template for this development strategy.

We looked at the web page details and discussed the ScriptManager and its subordinate class, the UpdatePanel. The ScriptManager emits a majority of the behind the scenes javascript to the client browser. It is responsible for proxy classes that are called by javascript-lets imbedded in the various controls on the web page. The UpdatePanels are containers of the various controls and specify areas of partially rendered data to the page. It is the UpdatePanel that helps in the decision whether a partial page update will be employed if the browser's client script is enabled or whether an entire page is rendered if the browser's client script is disabled.

Not to be denied our pizza break, we scoffed onions and peppers while enjoying fragments of talk on what we had learned so far. Then we went into a wider discussion of AJAX's details, its nature and more of its merits. A salient advantage is to reduce traffic between the client browser and the server. Of course, page architecture strongly influences the degree of communication traffic between the client and the server. An important aspect of this is the nature of Microsoft's ASP.Net web page postback philosophy. Inherent in philosophy, the ASP.Net page renderer emits a view state. The viewstate, retained in a hidden variable, contains all the data content of all the controls on the page. When a postback occurs, the entire viewstate is returned to the server so that the control can be repopulated to the state they possessed before they were sent to the client. This means that essentially twice as much data is sent to the browser than is required to present the page. With the judicious use of Ajax and innovative program design, the viewstate content may be substantially reduced. And, when Ajax is not used because of browser preferences, the program could

then re-inject viewstate so that a postback page version will still produce the same results.

The 7-9 p.m. session ended a few minutes early so that hockey fanatics could go off and see the third period of the sixth game of the Stanley Cup playoffs. We didn't leave though until copies of the source code was distributed.

Linux. At the July Linux SIG, we will continue the subject of the General Meeting and look at Linux applications for digital photography.

We will look at applications such as F-Spot for Gnome or digiKam for KDE to manage and make minor corrections, as well as Krita and the powerhouse Gimp (GNU Image Manipulation Program). So bring your systems and digital cameras, and say "cheese"!

Macintosh. In June we took a look at Bento (<http://www.filemaker.com/products/bento/overview.html>), a personal database application from FileMaker that requires Leopard. The name comes from a Japanese word for a box lunch where different foods are placed in separate compartments of a rectangular tray.

By default Bento starts with your Mac OS X Address Book and iCal data, but you can import data from other sources as long as it has been stored in a CSV (comma-separated values) file that a spreadsheet or other database program might export. The data is organized and displayed in three columns: the left sidebar showing sources or collections, the large middle section showing a table or form view of records, and the right sidebar showing a checkbox list of fields which can be used to choose fields to be shown in the forms.

We found that editing data in Address Book would show the changes in Bento, and vice versa, although it was possible to add new fields in the Bento view of Address Book, that were only visible in Bento.

In a previous meeting, a member had asked whether it was possible to store dates other than a birthday in Address Book that would show up in iCal. We explored whether Bento might offer a solution to this. We first tried adding a field of type Date to the Address Book form, but this didn't show up in iCal. Next we tried adding a Related Records List field, choosing iCal Events as the related data source. By adding date information to the new "anniversary" field in an Address Book record in Bento, this did indeed show up in iCal in a Bento calendar that showed up as a different color from the Home and Work or other calendars you have set up in iCal.

We really only just started to explore Bento, but if you would like to try it yourself, you can download it and try it for 30 days free.

We will take a break next month and there will be no Macintosh SIG in July.

Server and Networking. The June Server and Networking SIG meeting covered the basics of email - the fundamental standards and how they work when you send or receive an email message.

We talked about SMTP, POP3, MAPI and IMAP. We also looked at Thunderbird as a free email client that supports all the standards (except the Microsoft-only MAPI) and allows one to use many email accounts of various types on any computer.

Join the BackOffice_DACS email list on Yahoo Groups for last minute updates on meeting topics, meeting reminders, questions and answers from SIG members and any weather-related meeting cancellations. The next meeting will be Thursday, July 10th at 7pm in the DACS Resource Center.

Circuit Writer

Version 5.10

by Jim Scheef

Tim Russert

ASIWRITE THIS ON Sunday morning, NBC is paying tribute to Tim Russert, the longtime host of Meet the Press. There is no way to tie this into DACS or computing so I won't try, but Tim has been an important part of my Sunday mornings for many years. In this column, I often try to associate tech issues with the political players who make or influence those decisions. Each week Tim brought those players into our homes in a way that made issues understandable.

He got answers to tough but fair questions while holding his guests accountable for past statements. Two things made Tim a standout: his humility, the show was always about politics – not him, and his loyalty to all things Buffalo. Sunday mornings will never be the same.

The Browser War Returns

The best evidence that Microsoft intended to kill Netscape is how the intervals between versions of Internet Explorer got longer and longer once there was no Netscape Navigator with which to compete. Would there be an IE 7 if there were no Firefox? I think not.

There is some evidence that the next browser war will be over JavaScript, the scripting language (tinyurl.com/6f9uea), however I think the issue of the moment is standards compliance. Microsoft trumpeted IE 7 for better performance against HTML standards. Unfortunately IE 7 retains most of the “quirks” that have driven web developers nuts. The quirks (some would call them bugs) have remained in the product so long as Microsoft thought that developers would code to the quirks rather than the standards. The ever growing market share of Firefox has changed all that. So, again, Microsoft is promising “interoperability and compatibility” in IE 8.

Digital Rights in Canada

While our Congress does whatever it has been doing (nothing productive lately), the Canadian Parliament is address-

ing copyrights in the digital age (tinyurl.com/5ca23k). A new bill introduced by Industry Minister Jim Prentice would allow Canadians to copy legally acquired music to a computer or iPod but they must not circumvent any DRM applied by the copyright owner. The

new bill continues existing protections for ISPs from liability for their customer's transgressions and does not require that an accused violating website be taken down immediately as in the U.S.

An interesting provision allows consumers to time-shift radio and television broadcasts but pro-

hibits retaining the recordings in a permanent personal library. So basically, the proposed law gives consumers a few ‘privileges’ with the copyrighted materials they purchase and then takes everything away if the content happens to be digital. From the eWeek article:

In drafting the new legislation, the government said it faced the delicate task of balancing the rights of content creators with the realities and needs of everyday life in a digital world, and also realizing the difficulty of policing possible personal infringements.

Prentice said of the issue: “It touches each and every one of us, and it is no surprise to find so many different points of view with respect to copyright.”

My reaction is “Ha!” The bill gives everything to any business entity involved and screws the consumer. Another group compares this new bill to the DMCA in the U.S.

Reaction to the bill has come from an online group called Fair Copyright for Canada (www.faircopyrightforcanada.ca – many, many fascinating links) which seems to have most of its activity in a Facebook group (tinyurl.com/2r6z6q – you must have a Facebook account to view this page). The social networking model seems to work quite well for this issue. The Facebook group has over 61,000 members and there are many more Facebook groups for local chapters presumably to concentrate lobbying on a particular MP (Member of Parliament).



Canadians take pride in being different from their neighbors south of the border (that would be us). They are certainly to be commended for the activity they have generated over this issue.

Truly Interesting Department

Did you know that on June 17 and 18 there is (was as you read this) a conference in Seoul, Korea, on the “Future of the Internet”? Well, I didn't either. Several organizations have requested input to this process by way of YouTube. You can begin your YouTube surfing at the video channel (www.youtube.com/futureinternet) created by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD.org), the organization sponsoring the event. No matter what I try to write here, everything seems trite. What is the future of the Internet? I haven't found anything from John Patrick, yet.

The Could This Work Department

This morning at breakfast (where I read eWeek and Information Week), I came across an article on Open Source Hardware – yes, hardware (tinyurl.com/55ejw9). Actually, this idea is not new and I'll tell you why in a moment. The article talks about how the OpenMoko Project (openmoko.org) and VIA Technologies have released CAD files for several products. OpenMoko released CAD files for all of its mobile phones. You really need to go to the OpenMoko websites to understand what it is all about. The VIA Technologies release is easier to grasp as the product involved is a prototype ultra-mobile notebook computer. VIA did not release everything needed to make the entire computer but just the design for the outer shell. The idea is that OEM manufacturers can customize the outside to produce a unique version.

The author, Serdar Yegulalp, speculates that hardware design could increasingly move to the open source model which would lead to whole market segments based on common, open designs. This could really simplify finding a part for your washing machine and it could lower production and repair costs for many products, both electronic and not.

Open source hardware has been around for many years, primarily in sports. My first thought was one-design sailboats. There is a standard basic design. How you implement that design could give you an edge in a race or allow for a lower sales price. Sit for a minute and you'll think of others.

Ask DACS

June 2008

by Jim Scheef

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.

Editor's Note: AskDACS was shortened this month to allow for other activities at the General Meeting.

Q – Web browsing in Firefox is slower on a Mac than on a PC on the exact same connection.

A – While some possibilities were offered at the meeting, like differences in DNS settings or some esoteric networking settings, there was nothing definitive. One possibility is that the Macintosh has an MTU setting that is substantially different from that set in the router. This setting is relatively easy to find on most routers but is hidden in the registry on a Windows PC. Basic information is available in Microsoft Knowledgebase article 314496 (tinyurl.com/6mtmgd). On a Mac, the MTU can be changed temporarily (I am told) via the command "sudo ifconfig en1 mtu 1492". On both computers this is a "per interface" setting so it must be changed for both ethernet and wireless when a machine has both. It is not clear that this is the problem, but it could be.

Q – Updated spyware and then upgraded Norton AV. Now the computer slows to its knees when several programs are open.

A – The consensus was that the Norton update made the spyware program redundant and with two programs checking every file opened or saved, that the computer would quickly bog down. Since the newer Norton products have spyware protection, the suggestion was to disable the spyware program so that it does not run automatically when Windows starts. The spyware program can always be run manually as an additional check for any lurking malware.

Q – Wi-Fi disconnects when I unplug power to move my laptop

A – This is likely caused by a setting in the wireless configuration that disables wireless when on batteries to maximize battery life.

DIRECTORS' NOTES, Cont. from page 5

whether it was worthwhile to continue mailing it to the libraries. It was brought up that libraries are the second best source of new members. Charlie explained the process of labeling and post office delivery, and Rob suggested that there be a back up person in case he is unavailable. Patrick explained the work flow required, and outlined the reasons the July newsletter was delayed.

Sean mentioned that he uses free promotional tools (such as Craig's list, MySpace etc.) to promote DACS and wondered whether DACS should consider allocating a budget for promotion and presenter's gifts. A budget allowing for specific expenditures could be established so that there is a structure regarding available funds for specific items. This would also help with planning for future marketing efforts.

Flo Ferrara has been actively seeking out potential presenters, inviting them to the general meetings to show our membership attendance. This has led to success in securing several speakers.

Ed Hicks has volunteered to speak at a general meeting with a presentation about GPS and cartography. The change in the time schedule for the upcoming July meeting was mentioned, Gary will start the camera presentation first at 7:15, and Lisa will present at 8 p.m., Gary and Lisa will both take questions at the end of the presentation.

—Anna van Ommeren

Roxio, Cont. from page 12

module is Tools. This module is used for creating disc labels, obtaining drive information, erasing discs, creating virtual disc drives and a few other assorted utilities. Roxio EMC is Vista compatible and includes gadgets for doing things directly from the desktop.

I'm certain most computer users will find enough applications on Roxio Easy Media Creator to make the investment worthwhile. If this review has captured your interest pay a visit to Roxio's website at <http://www.roxio.com/>. They have some great videos that will demonstrate these neat features.

JOHN ROY is president, *The PC Users Group of Connecticut*: www.tpcug-ct.org; johnroy1@comcast.net.

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Future Events:

July

Lesa King: *How to Shoot & Edit Like A Pro, Camera Techniques & Adobe Elements* With Gary Spring, of Ritz Camera, Danbury CT

August

Ken Yessin of Sounds Incredible: *HDTV and Home Theatre*

September

Chuck Masi of Ergonomix Associates, LLC: *Ergonomic Solutions*

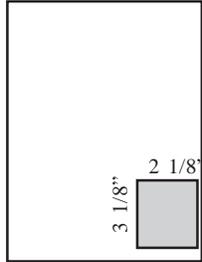
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Raymond Yost of Sybase: *Mobile iAnywhere Technology*

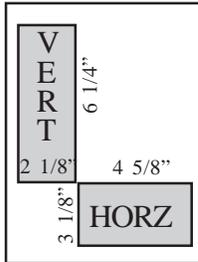
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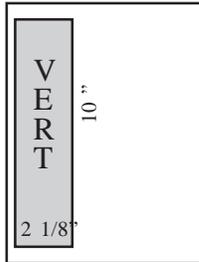
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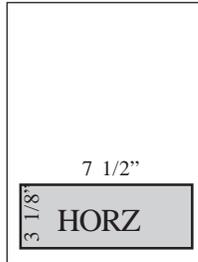
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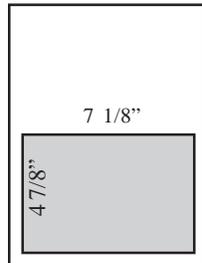


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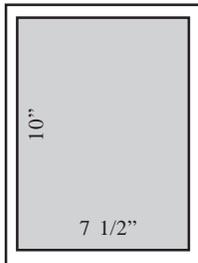


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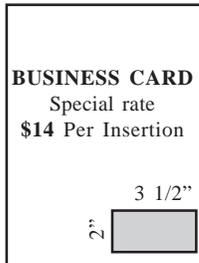
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We sponsor or participate in community support projects by collecting, repairing, and redistributing used computer equipment and software to community service providers such as schools, libraries, and patient/client support groups. DACS members provide pickup, refurbishing, installation, and training assistance as needed. Firms or individuals with equipment to donate should leave a message on the DACS Infoline (203-748-4330). or send an email to recycling@dacs.org.

The Voice for Joanie program was created in 1992 through the initiative of DACS member, Shirley Fredlund. This program provides computer-assisted speech for victims of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis ("Lou Gehrig's Disease"). DACS members have contributed volunteer time and technical assistance since the program began. Voice for Joanie and DACS have earned national computer industry recognition and financial assistance for this vital collaboration.

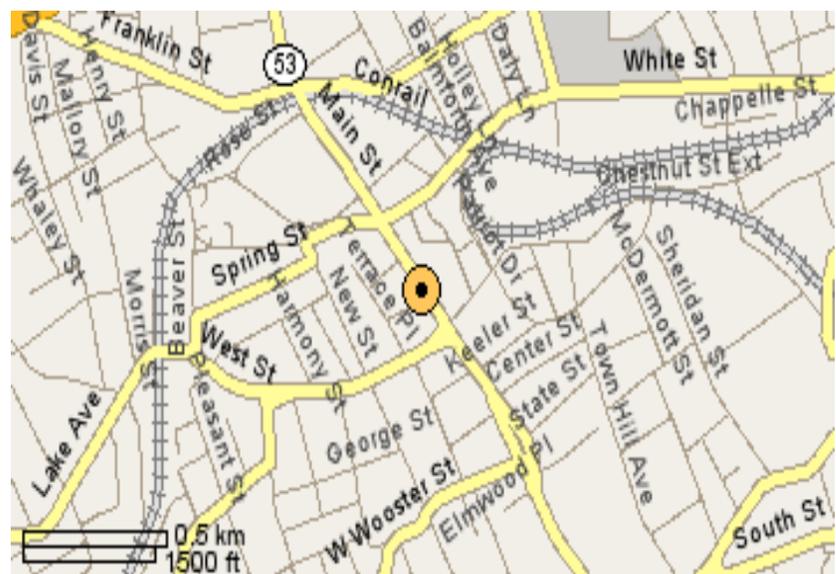
Our general meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month in the Danbury Hospital Auditorium at 7 p.m. These meetings are open to the public. The main presentation is scheduled from 8-9:30, preceded by casual networking, announcements and Random Access, an informal question and answer session. A free product raffle is often held at the conclusion of the main presentation.

In addition to the general meeting, DACS sponsors many special interest groups (SIGs) where members can learn and share information about a specific topic. Each SIG plans its own meeting schedule and program topics.

Our newsletter, *dacs.doc* is published monthly for our members, and mailed to arrive before the general meeting. It features articles written by members and others on timely topics including product and software reviews, issues and trends in personal computing and "how-to" articles on sound, video, digital photography, etc. In addition, each issues includes the calendar of meetings, announcements on SIGs and other DACS events. *dacs.doc* has won numerous prizes over the years for its design and content.

Through its activities, DACS offers numerous opportunities to network both professionals and computer hobbyists. Our Special Interest Groups are an excellent way for members to both learn and share application or hardware knowledge. Any DACS member can form a special interest group on any topic where there is interest. Most SIGs meet in our Resource Center in downtown Danbury.

If you have concerns, requests, or suggestions regarding DACS or its programs, please contact dacsprez@dacs.org. DACS officers and board members' phone numbers are listed on page 3 of *dacs.doc*.



The DACS Resource Center is in Ives Manor, Lower Level, 198 Main Street, Danbury, CT 06810 (203-748-4330).



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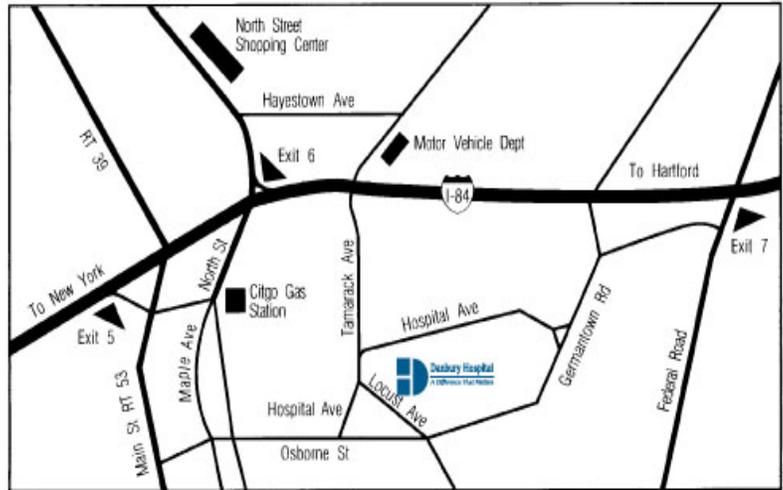
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