



January 2002

Volume 13, Issue 1

LINUX Redux

by Marlène Gaberel

At the next General Meeting on January 8th at Danbury Hospital Auditorium, Dan Powers, IBM's VP-Worldwide Linux Sales, will present the Linux operating system.

Linux is the brain child of Linus Torvalds, a Swedish-speaking Finn who now lives in California. He wrote the Linux kernel while a student at Helsinki University www.helsinki.fi/english/.

Dan says that "since its introduction in 1991, Linux continues to grow in popularity and functionality and challenge the paradigm of vendor-developed operating systems." It is a "widely accepted open source operating system" which "offers a wealth of applications to its ever-growing user base" and that "no other operating system in history has grown as quickly, across as broad a range of systems, as Linux".

He adds that "IBM was quick to recognize the value of Linux, forming alliances with Linux Distributors, contributing to the open source community and enabling IBM products and services for Linux. Today, Linux is supported across all IBM eServer platforms."

According to John Patrick, 15% of Chinese use Linux as their operating system. I wonder how the rest of the world stands on Linux?

In the late 1980s, an online programmer offered to send me Linux on about 30 diskettes. This was before Red Hat, IBM and others even talked about Linux. I declined the offer because I would not have known what to do with Linux. In the late 80s, DOS was the operating system I used and I was proficient in making it do what I needed at the time. Now, I admit I don't even remember basic DOS commands.

What I would like to hear from Don Powers is whether Linux is only for power users or what new use I should have for Linux in 2002, both in business and home applications that I did not have in the 1980s. I have to admit that the more I use computers—like, for example, cars—I don't really need to know what makes it work. I just need the computer to do tasks, which are about everything nowadays in my life.

Did you know that DACS has a Linux SIG (Special Interest Group) headed by Don Pearson. The SIG is called Advanced Operating Systems and it explores and develops OS/2, Linux, and Windows NT operating systems. Follow the link on the DACS web page (www.dacs.org).

The meeting begins with Random Access at 7 p.m., with the presentation at 8.



Meeting Review

"Internet Attitude"

By Jack Corcoran

It was our December 2001 DACS meet-ing and once again John Patrick packed the house. It was his ninth presentation to our user group. And, once again, he shared with us his penetrating and comprehensive view into the way the Internet is evolving.

John Patrick is Vice President of Internet Technology at IBM Corporation. His responsibility is to be sure that IBM is at the cutting edge of Net development and going in the right direction. His actual role as he describes it is strategist, Internet evangelist and chief dreamer. In this role John lives and works with Net developments all over the world.

I have had the privilege of writing the DACS.doc reviews for the last four of John's presentations to our user group. Looking over my notes of those reviews, a

remarkable and impressive pattern emerges. His basic theme over those years has not changed and he has been right. The particular emphasis of each meeting has changed, though. This emphasis is John's real gift to us in that it tells us what to look for and how to deal with it.

His basic theme over the years is how a great platform is constantly evolving.

Great hardware devices

- Cheaper and more powerful computers of both the PC and server variety that are the means of building the platform.

- Other computer-based devices such as hand helds, kiosks, imbedded controllers, and dedicated processors can also use the Net

Internet Continued on page 8

President's File



The lesson of history is that even the mightiest of empires can crumble to dust in the face of new ideas and new conditions. The fall of Rome to Christianity and the heathen sword and the break-up of the Soviet Union by democracy and the fax machine show how fleeting political power can be, even when buttressed by powerful armies.

As a technology empire, the International Business Machines Corporation knows what it's like to be humbled by change from below (some would say by coup d'état). So, after a failed effort to launch OS/2 as its own alternative to Microsoft Windows, I.B.M. is seeking to jump-start the next revolution in operating systems by teaming up with populist upstart Linux. At our next General Meeting on January 8th, I.B.M.'s Dan Powers will give a hand's-on demonstration of the OS whose open architecture has become the standard for a growing number of independent programmers and corporate and Internet servers, and is now poised to invade the consumer market.

They say that Linux is so stable, it stays open for months at a time. So, if nothing but blue screens are all you see, come to the DACS Resource Center Tuesday January 22nd at 7:30 p.m. for a follow-up look at some of the many useful applications resident on the Linux platform, presented by alternative OS SIG leader Don Pearson.

New on the board

A hearty welcome to our newest member of the board, Jim Scheef. A long-time DACS member, Jim was responsible for

getting our Web site underway, and has been instrumental in bringing wide band access to the Resource Center and moving our site to an independent server. In recent years, he has been especially active in the Visual Basic and Back Office SIGs. Jim has all the ingredients necessary for an indispensability: a profound understanding of computer technology, a tendency to form strong opinions and hold onto them, and a willingness to back up his initiatives with personal effort.

Presidential candidates wanted

Next April, the board of directors will choose a new president for the coming year. In a short time, we will be selecting a nominating committee, and will be seeking candidates. The current president has served for four years, and has announced he is not seeking another term. There are no requirements that the president be a member of the board.

To be considered for nomination, a candidate should:

- be a DACS member in good standing
- have a record of involvement in DACS activities, or show a willingness to get involved.
- have a vision of where DACS is headed and where it needs to go. If you don't have a vision, you will need to get one.
- be willing to outline your vision in monthly column in *dacs.doc* and defend it before a board that takes nothing at face value.
- have an ability to delegate tasks.

A successful candidate need not:

- be an expert on computers. We have plenty of those to go around.
- be prepared to do it all, we have an energetic board.

Many member volunteers have all the answers. We've got plenty of those, too.

DACS has had a succession of outstanding presidents, and I am proud to have been able to serve.

—ALLAN OSTERGREN
DACSPREZ@AOL.COM

Membership Information

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Postmaster

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Editorial Committee

Managing Editor: Allan Ostergren
Associate Editor: Ted Rowland
Production Editor: Marc Cohen
Technical Editor: Bruce Preston
Public Relations: Marlène Gaberel

Contributors

Charles Bovaird Larry Buoy
 Jacqueline Cohen Richard Corzo
 April Miller Crippliver Marlène Gaberel
 Jack Corcoran Mike Kaltschnee

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The editors welcome submissions from DACS members. Contact Frances Owles (860) 868-0077 (jones@ct1.nai.net) or Allan Ostergren at 860-210-0047 (dacseditor@aol.com). Advertisers, contact Charles Bovaird at (203) 792-7881 (aam@mags.net)

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Don Neary
 APCUG Liaison
 203-746-5538

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Officers

PRESIDENT: Allan Ostergren (860) 210-0047 (*dacsprez@aol.com*).

VPS: Gene Minasi (860) 354-9380 • Marlène Gaberel (203) 426-4846
Jeff Setaro (203) 748-6748

SECRETARY: Larry Buoy (860) 355-0394 • **TREASURER:** Charles Bovaird (203) 792-7881

Directors

Charles Bovaird (203) 792-7881 • Larry Buoy (860) 355-0394
Marc Cohen (203) 775-1102 • Marlène Gaberel (203) 426-4846
Matthew Greger (203) 748-2919 • Donald Pearson (914) 669-9622
Donald Neary (203) 746-5538 • Allan Ostergren (860) 210-0047
Bruce Preston (203) 438-4263 • Jeff Setaro (203) 748-6748
Jim Sheef (860) 355-0034

Committees

EDUCATION: Gene Minasi (860) 354-9380 • **MEMBERSHIP:** Don Ruffell (203) 797-8138

NEWSLETTER: Allan ostergren: (860) 210-0047 (*dacseditor@aol.com*)

PROGRAM: Jeff Setaro (203) 748-6748

WEB MASTER: Jeff Setaro (203) 748-6748

SIG COORDINATOR: Don Neary (203) 746-5538

RESOURCE CENTER: (203) 748-4330

WEB SITE: <http://www.dacs.org>

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

Program	Name	Phone #	
Alpha Four	Dick Gingras	(203) 426-0484	(e)
AOL	Marc Cohen	(203) 775-1102	(d e)
APL	Charles Bovaird	(203) 792-7881	(e)
AutoCAD	Peter Hylenski	(203) 797-1042	(e)
C/UNIX/ObjC	Kenneth Lerman	(203) 426-4430	(d e)
Clipper	Dick Gingras	(203) 426-0484	(e)
COBOL	Charles Godfrey	(203) 775-3543	(e)
Dbase/DOS	Alan Boba	(203) 264-1753	(e)
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)
Macintosh OS	Matthew Greger	(203) 748-2919	(d e)
Microsoft Access	Dick Gingras	(203) 426-0484	(e)
Multimedia	Ed Fitzgerald	(203) 222-9253	(d e)
Newdeal	Marc Cohen	(203) 775-1102	(d e)
OS/2	Rich Chernock	(203) 270-0224	(e)
Paradox	Alan Boba	(203) 264-1753	(e)
PASCAL	Duane Moser	(203) 797-2716	(d)
Q&A ver 3/4	Anthony Telesha	(203) 748-4478	(d e)
QuickBooks	Bill Sears	(203) 743-3367	(e)
Statistics/Data Analysis	Charles Bovaird	(203) 792-7881	(d e)
SQL Server	Chuck Fizer	(203) 798-9998	(d)
Viruses	Jeff Setaro	(203) 748-6748	(d)
HTML/Java	James Costello	(203) 426-0097	(e)
Windows	Nick Strother	(203) 743-5667	(e)

Directors' Notes

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors was held at the RC on December 10, 2001. Present were Messrs. Bovaird, Buoy, Greger, Neary, Ostergren, Pearson, Preston, Scheef and Setaro. Also present was William Keane. President Ostergren presided and Secretary Buoy kept the record. The minutes of the meeting of November 12 were presented and approved with corrections.

Treasurer Charlie Bovaird reported total cash and bank accounts of \$22,210.90, less prepaid dues of \$8,243.00, a net of \$13,967.90. He also reported current membership of 475.

Charlie reviewed attendance records at general meetings for the month of November in each of the years 1999, 2000 and 2001 as reflected by the membership and visitor sign-in sheets as well as total membership at the time of each meeting. Considering the inaccuracies inherent due to family memberships or those not signing in, it was felt that the differences were not statistically significant. Discussed were incentives to improve the sign-in accuracy. Also discussed were alternatives to the current advertising initiatives and improvements to the DACS Web site, specifically sections or links within the site to be open to members only, links to intellectual property of members or networking within the membership.

Also discussed was the availability of current education on computer subjects such as software programs and programming itself, displacing user groups as a primary source thereof. The possibility of renewing an incentive to develop a database of regional computer education sources on our Web site was also explored. It was suggested that the membership be surveyed as to areas of interest and what DACS could offer to make the computer experience easier and more productive. Jeff Setaro requested input for copy to use on the radio spots promoting the January General Meeting presentation by Dan Powers of IBM on Linux.

Considered and agreed upon was the desirability of appointing a nominating committee, prior to the April meeting of this Board and election of officers for the ensuing year, to canvas the membership for individuals interested in becoming an officer of the corporation. Also considered desirable was a formalized description of the duties and responsibilities of the various offices.

—LARRY BUOY

Book Reviews

Free for All & crypto

By Jim Scheef

I'm going to review two books and right up front I'll tell you that I want you to read them both. As you read this review, be aware that I'll switch back and forth between two hats at will. Most of the time I'll be wearing my computer nerd hat as I think these are both interesting books that deserve your attention and tell important parts of computing history that you - fellow computer nerds - should know. The other hat is my literary critic hat; something that takes real nerve for

How the Code Rebels Beat the Government - Saving Privacy in the Digital Age by Steven Levy published by the Penguin Group, 2001, hardcover, 356 pages including index and notes.

If you watch the History Channel, you know all about the code breakers at Bletchley Park, England, and the "Ultra" secret of World War II. American and British cryptanalysts broke both the German and Japanese codes just before WWII. But have you ever wondered about our

source code so that you can fix or change it to meet your needs. Stallman defined four principles for truly free software:

The freedom to run the program, for any purpose (freedom 0).

The freedom to study how the program works, and adapt it to your needs (freedom 1).

The freedom to redistribute copies so you can help your neighbor (freedom 2).

The freedom to improve the program, and to release your improvements to the public so that the whole community benefits (freedom 3).

So, is it free like free beer? Is it free as in free speech? Richard Stallman, the prototypical hacker, found an important difference. Thus was born the GNU General Public License which requires that soft-

Jim Scheef's Partial List of Required Reading

Title	Author	Publisher	Year
Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution	Levy	Doubleday	1984, many reprints
Fire in the Valley: The Making of the Personal Computer	Freiberger, Swaine	McGraw-Hill	1984, plus reprints
Hard Drive: Bill Gates and the Making of the Microsoft Empire	Wallace, Erickson	John Wiley & Sons	1992
Portraits in Silicon	Slater	MIT Press	1987
Programmers at Work	Lammers	Microsoft Press	1986

someone who flunked spelling in seventh grade!

The first book is *Free for All - How Linux and the Free Software Movement Undercut the High-tech Titans* by Peter Wayner published by HarperCollins, 2000, 340 pages hardcover including index and bibliography.

Did you ever wonder why Linus Torvalds started working on his own version of UNIX when several others are available? For that matter why is FreeBSD free? Is OpenBSD really open and what, if any, is the difference between free and open? Why didn't Richard Stallman and his Free Software Foundation write an operating system or did they? Why is Linux protected by the Gnu General Public License (GPL)? [If you didn't know Linux has a license agreement, you are excused, but if you don't know what a license agreement is, you can immediately put down this review and shoot yourself in the foot which should blow out your brains.] All of this and much more is explained, sometimes in excruciating detail, in *Free for All*.

Even if you don't read *Free for All*, I absolutely insist that you read *crypto* -

codes during WWII? Did the enemy ever break any of our codes? You don't hear about this because all information about cryptography - the science of encrypting information you want to keep secure - was classified during the war and has never been unclassified. *crypto* is the story of public cryptography, something you use everyday without even realizing it. Many things we take for granted today, like automatic teller machines, would not be possible without public cryptography.

Free for All

What is "free software"? Well it means different things to different people. In the early days of the personal computer, the term 'freeware' was used to describe programs that could be distributed freely. Most of the time, the authors retained a copyright and/or limited redistribution in some way. This was great, but if there was a problem you had to go back to the author, if you could find him, and ask that he fix the bug. For Richard Stallman, free software meant that you could do anything you wanted with the software including change it in any way you wanted. Naturally this meant that you must have the

ware be distributed with source code (one meaning of the term "open source"). The GPL has another very important restriction: any derivative work that is distributed must also carry the GPL. This means that once something is released under the GPL, no one can take the source code and use it to build a proprietary product. This is why Microsoft has likened the GPL to a virus.

OK, so what is GNU? What does Richard Stallman have to do with Linux? Why is some software "open source" but not GPL? Can you sell "free" software? The answers to these and many other questions are told as part of a very interesting story that includes the Microsoft anti-trust trial and the story of how UNIX came to be "free". The unfortunate side to this book is that it appears to have been rushed to press. There are parts of the book written in different styles. My guess is that Peter Wayner suffered under several editors while writing the book. While reading the book there were times when I wished he would just cut to the chase.

Wayner credits the success of Linux not to Linus Torvald's skill as a programmer but rather to his skill as an organizer

and manager and to his use of the GNU GPL. The story of the UNIX “begets” is worthy of a book in itself. How AT&T UNIX begat 386BSD and somehow morphed into the three forks we have today: FreeBSD, NetBSD, and OpenBSD has all the elements of a soap opera (except sex). All of these UNIX variants are “open source” but have a different license. Read the book to find out why.

crypto

For many years after it was created in 1952 by a secret Presidential order, the words “National Security Agency” were never seen in print. The NSA was so secret the people who worked there could not utter the name of the organization. The agency was charged to maintain the lead our nation enjoyed following WWII in both cryptography and cryptanalysis. Cryptography is the science of creating codes and ciphers, while cryptanalysis is the means to extract the plain text message from a secret code without the original key. For centuries these skills have been the realm of government and the military. For everyone else, if you wanted your message kept secret, you delivered it yourself! Corporate secrets were kept in a vault. Confidential information was kept in locked desk drawer.

Like any good bureaucracy, the spooks at Fort Mead, home of the NSA, used every means they could to keep this their exclusive province. This included a building with no sign, surrounded by three fences. These guys meant to keep the secret of secret codes secret, yet they failed. How did a handful of visionaries pull this off? Their story is fun, and Steven Levy is a truly great writer.

The story of *crypto* begins in 1969 with a visionary named Whit Diffie. Diffie would have been a computer nerd had computers been more available in 1969, yet he understood that encryption would be needed for the computer-based commerce that was coming. So he set out to learn more about a topic that our government classified with missiles, nuclear weapons and similar articles of mass destruction! Of course Diffie was not the only person to figure this out. His contribution - the concept of a split key, led to the birth of public key cryptography. This was and is the key (no pun) to the secure internet transactions today we use today. Somewhere in the middle of this is the story of how five guys created RSA Data Security.

It was no less than IBM that developed the first computer encryption available outside the government. How an IBM

research project became the Data Encryption Standard (DES) is a fascinating story full of irony and, of course, meetings with the spooks from Ft. Mead. If anyone other than IBM had developed this product, we would probably still be waiting in line for the bank teller.

Then there is the story of Phil Zimmermann and Pretty Good Privacy (PGP). The release of PGP in 1991, after five years of solitary work, literally blew the doors off any remaining government control of public cryptography. PGP was written specifically to prevent government control of cryptography and hence to enable personal privacy. After the release of PGP 1.0, Zimmermann realized that he needed help and, like Linus Torvalds, used the fledgling Internet to bring together a geographically diverse group to improve the program.

The next leg of the story is the Clipper Chip. Remember the controversy this caused during the Clinton administration? Clipper is an encryption system created by the NSA that has a “back door” controlled by the government. If Bill had been able to keep his pants on, this might have succeeded. The real reason it failed was also the impetus behind all of the other public crypto efforts - no one trusts the government to run crypto!

Steven Levy tells a story in an easy natural manner that keeps you glued to the book. While *crypto* would probably fail the “Don Imus first page test” if the I-Man were to read it, I was hooked before I finished the first page of the Preface. There is just no comparison between *crypto* and *Free for All* on the basis of the writing (sorry Peter), but the stories are equally compelling.

New Members

11/13/01 thru 12/18/01

- 1) Elliot Lane
- 2) Stephen Polson
- 3) David W Clark
- 4) Anna Collins

THIS IS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER

If the membership date on your mailing label reads

**EXP 10/2001
or earlier**

You need to renew your
DACS membership

— **NOW**

Both of these books will be added to my list of required reading.

Now I'd like to step onto my soap box for a minute. If the people described in *crypto* had lived somewhere outside the United States, they would likely have landed in jail. The NSA was prevented from such tactics by a niggling little detail - the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America. In recent weeks some of our leaders have called for new controls on encryption and other limits to our civil liberties. We must be vigilant and vocal if we are to protect the very freedoms that the terrorists sought to destroy.

JIM SCHEEF is the Mad Scientist at Telemark Systems Inc. where he develops custom software using Visual Basic and SQL Server and provides networking services using Windows NT/2000. He has been a DACS member since the day DOG became WCMUG..



Special Interest Groups

SIG NOTES: January 2002

ACCESS. Designs and implements solutions using Microsoft Access database management software.

Contact: Bruce Preston, 203 431-2920 (*bpreston@mags.net*). Meets on 2nd Tuesday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.

Next meeting: Jan. 15 (Note delayed date)

ADVANCED OPERATING SYSTEMS. Explores and develops OS/2, Linux, and NT operating systems. For meeting notes and notices, follow link to Don's site on *dacs.org*.

Contact: Don Pearson, 914 669-9622 (*pearson@attglobal.net*). Meets on Wednesday of the week following the General Meeting, 7:30 p.m., at Don Pearson's office, North Salem, NY.

Next meeting: Linux special meeting, Jan. 22, 7:30 (See p. 9)

BACK OFFICE. Explores Back Office server and client applications, including Win NT Servers and MS Outlook. The SIG meets 2nd Thursday, 7 p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.

Contact: Jim Scheef (*jscheef@telemarksys.com*)

Next meeting: Jan. 10

GRAPHICS. Create/print high-quality graphics and images.

Contact: Ken Graff at 203 775-6667 (*graffic@ntplx.net*). Meets on last Wednesday, 7p.m., at Best Photo Imaging, Brookfield.

Next Meeting: Jan. 30

INTERNET PROGRAMMING. Programs for Web site/server.

Contact: Chuck Fizer (*cfizer@compuserve.com*). Meets on 1st Wednesday, 3-5 p.m., at the DACS Resource Center. Members' suggestions are welcome.

Next Meeting: January 2 (see notes at right)

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: Jan. 17

MACINTOSH. Discusses Macintosh hardware and software.

Contact: Matthew Greger, 203 748-2919, (*matthewg@thebusinesshelper.com*).

Meets on 3rd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.

Next Meeting: Suspended until further notice

VISUAL BASIC. Develops Windows apps with Visual Basic.

Contact: Chuck Fizer, 203 798-9996 (*CFizer@compuserve.com*) or Jim Scheef, 860 355-8001 (*JScheef@Telemarksys.com*).

Meets on 1st Wednesday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: Jan. 2.

VOICE FOR JOANIE. Provides and supports people with Lou Gehrig's disease with special PC computer equipment.

Contact: Shirley Fredlund, 860 355-2611 ext. 4517 (*voiceforjoanie@juno.com*).

Meets by arrangement at Datahr, Brookfield.

Next Meeting: Contact Shirley

WALL STREET. Examines Windows stock market software.

Contact: Phil Dilloway, 203 367-1202 (*dilloway@ntplx.net*). Meets on last Monday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: Jan. 28

WEB SITE DESIGN. Fundamentals of design for the Internet.

Contact: Matthew Greger, 203 748-2919 (*matthewg@thebusinesshelper.com*)

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

Next Meeting: January 9.

SIG News & Other Events

Advanced Operating Systems (Special meeting, see box, page 9).

Back Office The BO SIG meeting was canceled in December. The next meeting will be Thursday, Jan. 10th at 7pm in the DACS Resource Center. At the January meeting we will configure Windows 2000 DNS for a sub domain located at the Resource Center. This will be RC.DACS.ORG where we will install and run Active Directory. This machine will become the home to new Internet projects for the Back Office SIG as well as other SIGs that want to pursue this. Happy Holidays!

Internet Programming DACS will sponsor and Chuck Fizer will host a new Internet Programming SIG. The IP SIG will meet in the late afternoon at the DACS Resource center from 3pm to 5pm or 4pm to 6pm based on member consensus on the first Wednesday of the month starting in January 2002. The purpose of the SIG is to explore various techniques and methods for developing programs that execute, both on the user's client computer, as well as the web page hosting server.

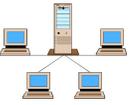
The underlying technology platforms considered initially are Microsoft's IE browser and Internet Information Server. We will discuss and develop test applications using ASP_scripted, ASP with web classes and VB 6, Frontpage for HTML development, methods for effective debugging and eventually graduate into Microsoft's .Net technology as it emerges. The vision is that the meeting will be a dialog among the members about their ideas with an effort expended to implement some of the ideas in executable code.

Visual Basic The December meeting continued Chuck's presentation on DCOM. Using the Resource Center network, we installed the "server" component on the Resource Center computer and then Chuck ran the "client" program on his laptop. When the server component started to run, we were stymied by security. This is both good news and bad news. The good news is that running a program on a remote computer can be used by bad people to do bad things and the security on Windows 2000 should prevent them from doing these bad things. The bad news is that Windows 2000 security makes life just as difficult for a developer trying to run a program on a remote computer. We did not have the time to determine how Windows 2000 security differs from Windows NT. To complete the demonstration, Chuck established a dial-up connection to the NT Server at his office and successfully completed the demonstration. The January meeting will be held Wednesday, Jan. 2nd at 7pm in the DACS Resource Center.

Web Design Our next month's topic for January 9th's meeting will be "Exploring Sites with a Critical Eye." Now that we have DSL service at the Resource Center, we invite everyone to bring in their favorite web site, or the worse one they ever saw. We will pick these sites apart and explain what works and what doesn't. This will also be an opportunity to show any work that you have done and to present it to the group for an honest opinion and helpful suggestions to improve your own site. If you can, please eMail your sites in advance of the meeting to *matthewg@thebusinesshelper.com*. The next meeting is Wednesday, January 9th, 7 to 9PM.

January 2002

Danbury Area Computer Society

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2  3-5PM Internet Programming Chuck Fizer 7:00PM Visual Basic Chuck Fizer 203 798-9996	3	4	5
6	7  7:30PM BOARD OF DIRECTORS	8  7:00PM GENERAL MEETING Linux	9 7:00PM DACS RC WEBDESIGN Matthew Greger 203 748-2919	10  7:00PM BACKOFFICE Jim Scheef 860 355-0034	11	12
13	14	15  7:00PM ACCESS Bruce Preston 203 431-2920	16	17  7:30 PM INVESTMENT Paul Gehrett 203 426-8436	18 7:30PM ADVANCED OS Don Pearson 914 669-9622	19  NEWSLETTER SIG NEWS DEADLINE
20	21	22  Linux Special Meeting Applications for the Desktop Don Pearson	23	24	25	26
27	28  7:00 PM WALL STREET Phil Dilloway 203 367-1202	29	30  7:00PM GRAPHICS Ken Graff 203 775-6667	31		

Internet *Continued from page 1*

• A variety of high speed means for data transmission over wire, fiber and through the air are all capable of doing the job, and the content could care less which path it travels.

Great software vehicles

- Effortless e-mail. Ask any teen-ager.
- Virtual conferencing.
- Language translation conversations
- B to B packages that are now taken for granted.
- Cyber vehicles for doing more, cheaper, faster.

All of this makes for a truly marvelous platform, but John continually emphasizes that it is only a platform. What it really does is make information available - anywhere, any time, and, potentially, to any one. The real value of it all is what people do with that information.

Over the years the base of John's presentation always has been the marvelous capability out there. But the message he delivers each year is based on the current status of development. Let's go back a few years and look at the different emphasis he made at each presentation.

December 1998 - technology has delivered a platform for doing great things. The possibilities are limitless. The Net is evolving to be always ON. Information availability is moving power to the people. E-business is where it is all going. We are moving into a new way of life.

December 1999 - the capabilities are blossoming. Applications are going on line. Bandwidth galore is now available. The next-generation Internet (Ngi) is being contemplated. The people using Web applications are enhancing their lives and fortunes.

December 2000 - euphoria. Web-based systems are approaching real time. The disruptive changes are moving into mainstream. Pockets of cyber activity are all over the globe and flourishing. In many cases the utilization overseas is ahead of that in our own country. Everything is headed up.

Then a funny thing happened on the way to the forum ...

December 2001 - we were all anticipating John's explanation of the .com bubble burst and the implications of the stark realities of 9/11. And once again his insight and perspective came through.

He pointed out that the .com failures are probably good in the long run in that we return to responsible and practical business practices. He also pointed out that the financial impact of the .coms on the overall economy was actually rather small.

Even though our life as a citizen is permanently changed, John did not see Net activity being adversely affected.



Patrick prophesying

The first part of John's December 2001 presentation was what we always look forward to, a view of the cutting edge developments.

On the technology side,

• Video TV is progressing nicely and with the advances in bandwidth, the Net will inevitably deliver TV of the quality we expect to see in our living room.

• The modem is currently the bottle neck.

• It is not crucial which of the currently competing high bandwidth methods or suppliers will prevail. The functional capability is what really matters.

• Servers will soon have to be much more powerful.

• The new IEEE 802.11 standards for wireless connections will have a major impact. Devices integrated into the home and portable devices (notebooks, hand helds, etc.) will easily interact with near by central computers and communication stations.

• Autonomic computing routines for self healing and self managing.

• Digital signatures are being integrated into applications.

• Linux continues to captivate those who would like to be captivated.

So it's all available and functioning. But it was here in the presentation that John Patrick's voice displayed just a touch of impatience and frustration. Not everyone is jumping into the play box. There is reluctance by some to move away from the old way of doing things. There is even rejection (with rationalization, of course) by others. However, John then came through with the characteristic insight and projection that we have come to expect from him.

The emphasis of the December 2001 presentation was not on the hardware platform and the software vehicles. They have matured to where they can provide an e-environment that provides a major enhancement of our way of life. The means are here, but they have not yet been accepted and practiced by the percentage of the population necessary to establish the Net as the structural foundation of our economy and communication system in the way the automobile is the structural foundation of our transportation and residential system.

From his observational vantage point, John sees the elements necessary for the Internet to achieve that level of societal acceptance and integration. He bundles his ideas on this under the catch word phrase "Net attitude." He explained this as the mind set generated by thinking big and using the Net capabilities in new ways to do old things in completely new ways.

This insight is pivotal to anyone seeking fame, fortune, or fulfillment on the Internet. He is telling us that the future now lies in the established ways of getting to the minds of the people. In order for the Net to bring power to the people, we must bring the people to the power. When thinking garage sale, the first thoughts must be of the Internet, not the garage.

"Net Attitude" by John R Patrick, Persens Publishing, is his book, which came out in September 2001. In it he uses 2/3 of the book to set up his premise, then the last 1/3 to describe the mind set that will take us into the Internet way of life that will inevitably transform all that we practice today.

I have previously described a John Patrick presentation as "... taking his audience on a magic carpet ride over the landscape of our emerging e-world." At our December 2001 meeting John again did exactly that. Read his book. It is our future.

JACK CORCORAN is an old retired computer programmer who has enjoyed a magic carpet ride over the ever-changing computer landscape since the vacuum tube days. He can be contacted at Corcoran@snet.net.

Digital Imaging

ACDsee 4.0

by Robert M. Banasik

With all the interest these days in getting photographs digitized, it is little wonder that many companies are introducing or improving software that will make photographers' lives a little easier. This latest product from ACD Systems allows the user to "Enhance, Manage, and Share your images."

Those three words do aptly describe this software package, but I think many of you will delight in the "Manage" part. After all, once you start using a digital camera or start scanning photos into your computer, it can become a nightmare to try and find a certain image later.

Our task is even more difficult these days, since hard drives can hold so much data. In years past, our job was made simpler because we would eventually store only a few selected images onto individual media such as floppies, Syquest Cartridges, Zip disks, or even tape. Nowadays, it's easy to keep a year or more worth of images locally on your hard drive. So when you need to find one image out of hundreds or thousands, it sure is handy to have a little help. That's where ACDsee shines!

This program acts just like an Explorer window, but instead of just seeing file names you see images as well. When you click on a folder from within this program, you see thumbnails of all your images within that folder. You can use this program to print "proof sheets" of your images, along with options of printing captions or filenames with file size and other data.

During installation you have many options from which to choose, such as "which digital cameras do you want to support?," "which accessory programs and utilities do you wish to load?," and you can even load their image manipulation program. There are over 50 media formats that are supported, so this program can even be your "fall back" if you end up with an image for which you don't own the proprietary program.

I first installed this on my laptop, which is a Sony 850Mhz Vaio. I then installed it on one of our other workstations and started browsing away. Both installs went flawlessly. I opened a folder containing about 500MB of images, each one

averaging about 20MB. This really did choke the program and it sat there chunking data for a long long time. That particular folder represented the entire contents of a full CD of images. After that I learned to make sure my folders were not quite as vast, and things went along nicely. I contacted ACD Systems tech support via their website <http://www.acdsystems.com>.

If you've ever tried to contact tech support for a software program, you might have experienced interminable delays or no response at all. This vendor, however, is different. I left an email message via their website and within an hour or so I had a reply. Not just an auto response, but an actual human really typed something to me and it made sense! Refreshing...If I were handing out grades this company would definitely get an A! They have the best tech support I've seen in years.

How useful is this program? Well, I run a photo lab and imaging center. Many of my customers come in with Smart Media or Compact Flash cards, CD's; you name it. They often want to see their images before ordering prints or enlargements from their files. ACDsee really comes into its own in this type of environment! All I do is slip in the media card, open ACDsee, and point to the card reading drive and Voilà. Up come the images in contact sheet format so you can see the entire contents of the card quickly. If you want a closer look, just double click on an image and it fills the screen. If you want to edit the image, just click on the editor button and up it comes in Foto Canvas Lite. That's the image editing program that comes with the package and it allows you to adjust contrast, brightness, rotate the image...all the basics plus unexpected filters like emboss, colorize, gaussian blur, etc.

If you have images on your computer and find yourself clicking through directories, this program is for you. This is a great way to organize and catalog them, and also be able to adjust and print them. You can try ACDsee 4.0 for free by downloading a trial off their website. You can also download the full version for \$49.95.

I think this is a utility that will be handy to have for years to come.

What the company says:

A full-featured image Viewer quickly generates a high-quality display of your image. You can run slide shows, play embedded audio, and display multi-page images. Video and audio files can be played in the Media Window.

Also, ACDSee has a wide variety of image editing tools that you can use to create, edit and touch-up your digital images. Tools, such as Red-eye reduction, crop, sharpen, convert to sepia tones, emboss, are available for you to enhance and correct images. There are several tools such as exposure adjustment, convert, resize, rename, rotate and mirror, that can be performed on multiple files at the same time.

The new user interface is designed for quick access to tools and there are many customization features. Screen layout, the order of images, toolbar display, and many options can be customized to suit your preferences. ACDSee continues to be a fast and easy-to-use image management package that everyone from novices to professionals can use and enjoy.

System Requirements:*

Windows 95/98/Me/NT 4.0/2000/XP
Pentium class processor with 32 MB of RAM; 256-color display adaptor; 30 MB free disk space; Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher for Help files; 800x600 display.

BOB BANASIK is a digital imaging specialist and president of Best Photo Imaging Center in Brookfield, CT. His company provides photographic and digital imaging services to consumer as well as commercial markets worldwide. He can be reached at bob@bestphotolab.com.

Is Linux Ready for the Desktop?

Special Meeting
DACS Resource Center
Tuesday, January 22
7:30 p.m.

Find out all the exciting applications that run on the Linux OS, from games to full-function word processors and office suites—StarOffice (fromSun), KOffice (from KDE), and others. Don Pearson will do a simple install of Linux-Mandrake, one of the more popular distributions of the operating system. If there is enough interest, we may continue with a series of meetings, "Getting to know Linux."

Intellectual Property

Trademarks and Patents

by Francis G. Pennarola

As promised, this column is devoted to Trademarks and Patents. Since most of you are far more likely to have a need to know about trademarks, most of the ink will be devoted to this topic.

TRADEMARKS:

What is a trademark? A trademark is anything that creates "a separate and distinct commercial impression, which identifies the source of merchandise or services to customers." *The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame & Museum, Inc. vs. Gentile Productions*, 134 F.3rd 749 (6th Cir. 1998). A trademark identifies a particular source, not a particular product. We all expect that the Coca Cola soda we buy today is made by the same company as the Coca Cola we bought last week or last year and that, because the source is the same, it will have the same taste, fizz, etc., as the Coke we bought before.

What types of words or symbols can be trademarks? The Lanham Act (15 U.S.C. § 1051 et seq.) defines a "Trademark" as: any word, name, symbol or device, or a combination thereof — (1) used by a person, or (2) which person has a bona fide intention to use in commerce and applies to register on the principal register established by this Act, to identify and distinguish his or her goods, including a unique product, from those manufactured or sold by others and to indicate the source of the goods, even if that source is unknown.

Words are by far the most common trademarks; e.g. (for example), Nike, Nintendo, Harry Potter. They may also be slogans; e.g. Just do it, The King Of Beers.

Symbols can be trademarks; e.g. the Nike Swoosh, the Shell Oil Shell, McDonald's Golden Arches, etc.

Many trademarks are combinations of words and devices. NBC and the peacock design and CBS and the eye design are two familiar examples.

Trademarks can be essential to "branding" a product or service. If you provide

high quality product or services, or offer extra value, and can associate those qualities with a distinctive symbol, it can greatly simplify the marketing of those goods and services.

How do you get a trademark? A trademark is established by actual use in commerce, or the intent to use a particular mark registered with the U. S. Patent & Trade-



mark Office. The website, www.uspto.gov, contains a wealth of information about trademarks and the registration process. There is also a searchable database of federally registered trademarks. A search of only federal records is not enough, because it will not show Common Law trademark uses. A full search includes Federal, State,

Common Law and Internet-Domain names. There are commercial search firms available. Certainly before investing a substantial sum in rolling out a major new product or service, a trademark search is an important step.

Actual use is important to having a protectable trademark. You can't simply create a logo and store it in your safety deposit box and expect it to be protected. If I come up with the same design and actually start using it in commerce, my rights will be superior to yours.

Actions can be brought to stop trademark infringement or dilution. Infringement is a conflicting use. If I use a logo similar to the Nike Swoosh to sell sneakers or any other sporting goods, I can be stopped. Dilution is a less direct misuse, but a potentially serious one. Dilution occurs when a trademark is used in an inappropriate way. For example, Coca Cola has a strong association in the soft drink industry and is heavily marketed to the youth market. If Coors came out with a new beer and used a logo similar to the Coke logo, that would likely have a negative impact on Coke. A more extreme example might be the use of the Nike trademark, Just Do It, to sell condoms.

Valuable trademarks need to be protected. The time, effort and money spent

building a brand is an important business asset.

PATENTS:

A patent for an invention is the grant of a property right to an inventor, issued by the United States Government, to give the inventor exclusive rights to the invention. Historically, patents were issued for tangible things; e.g. drugs and buggy whips. More recently, patents have been issued on business methods; e.g. Amazon.com's "One Click Shopping." These business method patents have created quite a firestorm, especially in the Internet culture, which flourishes on the free exchange and flow of ideas.

Obtaining a patent is a fairly lengthy and involved process. You can obtain a protectable copyright in a software program by filing an application with the Library of Congress and paying \$30.00. A patent application for the software has to be prosecuted in Washington D.C. and can take years and thousands of dollars in legal fees to obtain. Which is better to have? A patent likely has far more value as an asset, but is subject to far greater scrutiny than a copyright filing. People often chose not to pursue either method, but to secure the value of the work through trade secret protection. Given the half life of much software, this is often the best approach.

Intellectual property is an important asset. My next column will focus on methods that businesses and consultants can use to protect themselves.

FRANCIS G. PENNAROLA is a member of the law firm of Chipman, Mazzucco, Land & Pennarola, LLC in Danbury. He regularly represents clients in the IT, website development and advertising fields.

Francis G. Pennarola, Esq.

**Chipman, Mazzucco,
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30 Main Street
Danbury, Connecticut 06810
203-744-1929
fgp@danburylaw.com

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Random Access

December 2001

Jim Scheef - Guest Moderator

Q. I have a PC and my friend has a Mac. He sends me PhotoShop images, and I get a question: Do you want the resource fork or the data fork? Sometimes I can open up the data fork, sometimes I can't open either. What is this all about?

A. Macs keep information about what a PC calls data file in a separate file called the 'resource' fork. The resource information contains the 'intelligence' as to what the file content is — what is usually implied by the 'file extension' in PCs, but much more. Your friend needs to save the image as a file type that is common to the PC — such as a TIFF or GIF or EPS or JPG etc. Because he is using the native PhotoShop save which doesn't necessarily have an 'extension,' the Mac doesn't know that it has to be formatted in a file format and with an extension that a PC will understand. Within PhotoShop or Finder there is a way to "Save as IBM PC format file." Then send ONLY the data fork.

Q. I've had Windows 98 — when I do Start/Shutdown — I get a blank screen, then that Windows is shutting down - but it never completes the shutdown process.

A. The underlying problem is that a device driver is not getting the message to close from Windows. Often this is a background process or a device driver such as a sound card. Another common cause is some anti-virus programs can hang — especially Norton Anti-Virus and McAfee AntiVirus, which often try to check a non-existent floppy diskette. It can be caused by such a simple thing as the sound card trying to play the shutdown wave file but not finding it! A search at Google (www.google.com) on the string 'windows 98 shutdown hang' found 7,000+ entries, but the first one, from Microsoft, looks the most promising — it includes a link

to a Windows 98 patch which might cure the problem. Windows 98 also expects machines with ATX motherboards to respond to a power down command, but non-ATX machines don't know what to do with it.

Q. Have people been having problems getting into SNET's DSL using MS Internet Explorer during the last few days?

A. While no one reported chronic problems, there had been a few bumps. There were a lot of recommendations that you make sure that you have a personal firewall installed and up-to-date anti-virus software running. Once in a while you may find it necessary to re-boot the modem — especially with SNET, since they use PPOE with dynamic IP addressing. Lastly, check at www.cert.org — check that the modem you are using is not 'hackable.'

Q. In Windows 2000, if I change a file's data, close the application, and try to rename the folder, I get a sharing violation. Control/Alt/Delete does not show any running programs.

A. Do you have an automatic data backup applications running? For example, Disk Keeper from PowerQuest, or SafeGuard from McAfee may be making a copy of the file for you.

Q. I am trying to reduce the number of programs that start when the machine boots. I have emptied the Start/Programs/StartUp folder — but I still get a lot of applications in the System Tray.

A. These things are often started from the Windows Registry, or for older applications, from the WIN.INI file. Either way, you must take care in how you stop them as you could prevent the machine from booting. For Windows 98 and newer, there is a utility in Start/Applications/

System Tools called MSCONFIG which you can use to deactivate applications. Alternatively, there is a freeware utility you can download, StartStop, from www.tfi-technology.com/startstop.htm which will work with all 32-bit versions of Windows — 95, 98, 98SE, Me, 2000 and XP. It gives you the option of permanently disabling without uninstalling, or having the system prompt you when you boot, or let it run.

Q. I have a JPEG that has been damaged; is there a viewer that can let me get into the file so I can recover what is left?

A. The structure of a JPEG file is that it stores the dimensions of the image, author information if present, etc., in a header, followed by the color encoding table. The color encoding table says, for example, that color 1 is black, color 2 is a particular shade of blue, color 3 is a slightly different shade of blue, etc. The table will be unique for each file. If that table is damaged or missing, then the entire file will be unreadable and unsalvageable. It sounds like your file was destroyed by one of the viruses, such as Melissa, which infected image files by putting the virus code into the first thousand (or so) bytes of the file — thereby destroying it. The data is gone.

Q. I am going to upgrade a PC. I have picked out a motherboard and am thinking of a 1.4GHz AMD Thunderbird or a fair amount of money to go to a 1.6GHz processor. I will put a lot of RAM in since it is so cheap.

A. A 1.4GHz processor can actually outperform a 1.6GHz processor if the bus speed is faster. So take a good look at the front side bus speed (FSB rating.) On machines of this range, a very fast video card will also give you better perceived performance. Similar can be said of faster hard drives — you want to achieve a good balance.

JIM SCHEEF is the Mad Scientist at Telemark Systems Inc. where he develops custom software using Visual Basic and SQL Server and provides networking services using Windows NT/2000. He has been a DACS member since the day DOG became WC/MUG..

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