



Try It—You'll Like It!

DACS' Own To Demo Best Pics of Shareware and Freeware

By M. Gaberel

Come and see the freeware/shareware that some DACS members, officers, the president and the ex-president have in store for you at the June meeting. Come and be surprised at the trove of treasures that members use on a daily basis to make their lives more enjoyable, more fun and more productive. Prez Jim Scheef says "A key part of the June program is the fact that each of the following presenter gets only 10 minutes. Can they do it? Can we keep things organized on stage? Will everything collapse in total confusion? Come and see the fun!" So far the line-up is as follows:

From ex-prez Allan who "will demonstrate some of the features of Snagit that help him capturing and editing images for use in dacs.doc." "Most PC users know the keystrokes Alt/Print Scrn, which lets them save the contents of their screen image to the Windows clipboard. But this technique only captures the visible screen, and to edit the image you would have to paste it into a paint program. TechSmith's Snagit is a versatile utility that lets you scroll down to capture the entire page, crop selected portions and save it as graphics file for editing, convert it to other formats, then annotate it and send it to friends. Other TechSmith products let you turn your images into a video presentation and add captions or sound."

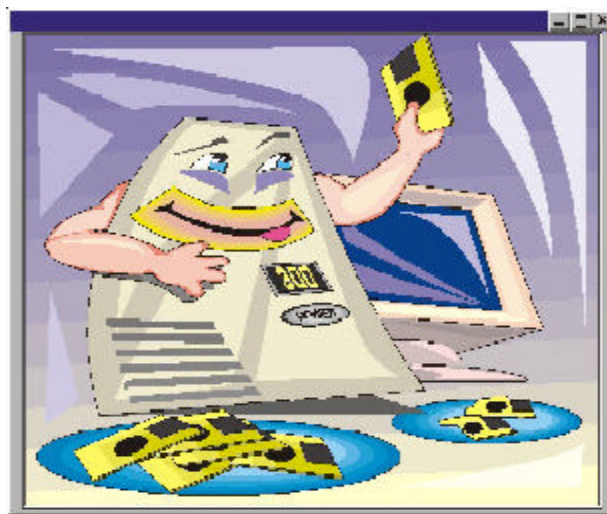
For those interested in investing this site is one of the best as per Don Neary, who finds CBS.MarketWatch.Com practical "for providing in-depth financial news coverage, individualized stock portfolio tracking and extensive charting capabilities. The site is Free, if you want to personalize the site to match your needs you will be asked to become a member which is also Free. The site is easy to navigate and is broken down into 5 main areas; News and Commentary, Personal Finance, My Portfolios, Research Tools and MarketWatch TV and Radio coverage". At the meeting he will attempt to show us how he uses some of these capabilities.

Prez Jim Scheef will talk about WinStock Pro which "is a shareware program for retrieving and displaying stock quotes from the Internet. Automatic stock quote retrieval Free delayed quotes, Real-time quotes with paid subscription from quote vendor Portfolio management provides an instant snapshot of your portfolio value. Know from moment-to-moment how much you've made

or lost. A Ticker Toolbar Familiar scrolling ticker-tape display can be placed at the top or bottom of your desktop". The program "includes color coding for alarms, it integrates with Quicken it supports 18 quote servers including foreign markets and displays graphs and news Multi-threaded operation."

Matthew Greger will demonstrate iPhoto for the Mac. "Digital cameras are revolutionizing the way people take pictures. Now, with iPhoto Apple revolutionizes the way people save, organize,

share and enjoy them. iPhoto lets you import your pictures from your digital camera, organize them, edit and improve them, and share them in a number of different ways. Just plug your camera into Mac's USB port and iPhoto automatically imports your photos, catalogs them, stores them and displays them on your screen. iPhoto lets you create your own custom coffee-table books. This unique feature lets you tell a story about special times in your life < like weddings, social events and vacations < in your own pictures and words. It's easy to create an album and select a theme and a layout you like. iPhoto lets you add titles and text to tell your story or describe your pictures. iPhoto also lets you easily organize your photographs into digital albums < birthday, vacation, wedding, whatever < for easy retrieval. Sharing and enjoying them is a cinch, too: Push one button to watch them in a beautiful full-screen slide show, accompanied by your favorite music. Email them to friends. Print them



President's File



PRESIDENTIAL RAMBLINGS ISSUE 0.1

This month's theme is novice computer users and the role of clubs like DACS. This club began so a group of Osborn owners could learn to use their new computers. Personal computers were still pretty new and there was nowhere else to turn. Training was unheard of. Even books were few and far between. Oddly, by today's standards, software packages back then actually included a manual! Imagine that! Unfortunately, the manual often seemed like it had been written in Sanskrit, translated to Latin before morphing into some unknown but English-like language. In this environment, some of the larger user groups became an important part of the computer industry. We have been fortunate to have the support of so many software companies over the years.

I believe that DACS has two basic types of members, geeks and novices. Oh, many of you are somewhere in between, but everyone fits somewhere on this scale.

Geekdom

Growing up, I was always fascinated by things mechanical. If it rolled (particularly on rails), floated, flew or had lots of knobs and dials, I thought it was cool. I suspect that many DACS members feel that way about computers. The fact that computers can do so many things just increases the fascination factor. Starting back in the 70s I was lucky enough to be allowed to play with big computers at work. I never looked back. In the early 80s when the IBM PC became an acceptable instrument of

business, I was hooked on the little buggers.

Novice users

The novice user is not necessarily someone new to computers. Novices are often people who do not care how a computer works; they just want to know how to make it do what they want it to do. Some are curious about the "inner workings" and others could not care less. Some people are perpetual novices and that's OK. The fact that people all along the geek-novice scale want to learn to use their computers gives DACS its reason to exist.

Intergalactic 15

On Saturday, April 20th, fellow board member Marc Cohen and I attended the 15th annual Intergalactic User Group Officers' Conference. What a mouth full and it was in mid-town Manhattan to boot! This was my first Intergalactic and I had no idea what to expect. I was impressed by the number of people I met who are dedicated to making their user groups serve its members. I was also dismayed by a few people who were there only to collect whatever the vendors would give away for free.

Marc Cohen has attended several of these meetings and has written more about the experience. One of the messages I "heard" was that user groups are no longer perceived by the software industry as a key channel to reach consumers. This is reflected in the number of companies willing to send speakers to our general meetings. Combine this perception of reduced user group importance with greatly reduced marketing budgets and it's almost a miracle that seven vendors sent representatives to the Intergalactic conference. Microsoft does an excellent job of promoting user groups – given that they are Microsoft. Richard Katz, who spoke at our February meeting was there, with his partner in McKatz Brothers Marketing, representing Ulead Systems and Intuit. Borland, Corel, Sandhills Publishing (Smart Computing Magazine), and Casady & Greene also sent representatives.

I came away from IG15 more convinced than ever that if DACS is to succeed, we must do it ourselves. More on this later.

Computing for the non-technical user

One of the give-a-ways at IG15 was a copy of *Smart Computing in Plain English* magazine. I almost didn't pick it up and now I regret not grabbing the other

President's File, continued on page 11

Membership Information

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Don Neary
APCUG Liaison
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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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Alpha Four	Dick Gingras	(203)426-0484	(e)
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PASCAL	Duane Moser	(203)797-2716	(d)
Q&A ver 3/4	Anthony Telesha	(203)748-4478	(de)
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Visual Basic	Chuck Fizer	(203)798-9996	(d)
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Windows	Nick Strother	(203)743-5667	(e)

Directors' Notes

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors was held at the Resource Center on May 13, 2002. Present were Messrs. Bovaird, Buoy, Cohen, Greger, Neary, Ostergren, Pearson and Scheef. Jim Scheef, President, presided – Larry Buoy, Secretary, kept the record of the meeting. The minutes of the meeting held April 8, 2002 were approved.

Treasurer Charlie Bovaird reported total cash and bank accounts of \$21,009.18, less prepaid dues of \$8,983.33, a net of \$12,025.85. Current membership was reported being 470.

President Scheef noted that the latest News-Times ad appeared on the day of the General Meeting instead of its usually scheduled Monday placement, and suggested that future ad placement keep this new schedule. It was further suggested that ads continue to stress the fact that visitors are more than welcome to attend. Also discussed were the effectiveness of the ads at General Meetings and emailings of meeting notices to the membership.

The meeting next addressed the logistical problems of the June 11th "pot luck" General Meeting. There was agreement that the meeting be limited to approximately six "presentations" (time overruns being expected, but controlled); that presenters prepare Power Point graphics where possible; that the stage area be prepared with table(s), projector, etc.; and that any demonstrations be preloaded to a laptop. Known probable presentations included a screen capture program to create a single file of a web page or part thereof, a Windows emulator for Linux, current stock quotations, conversion of proprietary graphic file formats and, possibly, a demo of iMac features. Also considered was properly preparing for publicity on this meeting. This was followed by a discussion regarding the filling of open General Meeting dates with presentations by and on various SIGs.

Next considered were revisions to the format of the newsletter, principally the cover. Several alternative formats were suggested and discussed with the consensus that Allan Ostergren and others directly involved with the production of the newsletter develop alternative styles for consideration.

Directors' Notes, Continued on page 11

Shopping Tips for Internet Shopaholics

By Steve Bass, Pasadena IBM Users Group

Last month I described my experience spending over \$150 to save about \$4 on vitamins I bought on the Internet. This column takes care of the other side of the story: Tips on tackling the problems of Internet buying.

Fighting the Free Syndrome

How much do you make an hour? If you're clocking more than, say, \$5 an hour, don't waste your time hunting for discounts that come and go. The worst ones to try finding are free shipping or \$10 off with your first order. A better strategy? If you bump into an offer from *Half.com*, say, and you're in the market for a bunch of used books, it's a slam-dunk. Otherwise, don't bother tracking them down.

Factor in Shipping

Paying attention to shipping costs may seem obvious, but there are variables to consider. You might think you'll save on shipping by choosing a site that charges a flat fee for shipping no matter how many items you purchase. That's likely true unless the site's products are inflated to cover the shipping costs. With some items—vitamins, for instance—that's not such a big deal as most sites charge a flat \$4.95 for standard shipping. (One exception, though, is *AdvanceRX*; they charge a flat fee of \$3 for the entire order, and the product pricing is lower than other drug sites.)

Listen to Users

The wealth of opinions on the Net is overwhelming and you need to tap into it before making any major purchase. There are two spots I listen in on, are useful in its own way. First try the newsgroups and do it using the *Google.com* search engine. When I was interested in a camcorder, I typed "Panasonic Camcorder" into the Google search field and clicked on Groups. Goggle will provide a list of groups that contain the two words. It's a little daunting from here because you'll face at least 10 groups. Choose the one that's closest to your search. For instance, "Humanities" (Fine art, literature, philosophy) and "Misc" (Employment, health) won't fit while "Comp" (Hardware, software, consumer info) sure will.

You'll then see a dozen or more subgroups belonging to Comp, each with a

green bar showing the likely hits in the groups. Type "Panasonic Camcorder" into the field again and choose "Search only in comp."

The dilemma, as you'll soon find out, is there's a lot to sort through in order to find the recommendations and discussion you're looking to read.

The other spot I really like is *Epinions.com*. It's filled with people like us providing their observations and experiences with products. Don't be put off by thinking these are just willy-nilly opinions. Granted, some are, but most people are careful and thorough in their reports, few seem to have an ulterior motive, and those that do are easy to spot.

Try *Epinions* by typing, "Choosing an Air Conditioner" into the search field. Scroll down to "Member Advice" and you'll get a sense of what *Epinions* offers. Better, search for an item you're very familiar with and see what others have to say.

Make those Comparisons

You're crazy if you shop on the Internet without using a price comparison site. There are many available, and here's a sampling:

- *Mysimon.com*
- *Dealtime.com*
- *Pricingcentral.com*
- *Bizrate.com*
- *Smartshop.com*
- *BuyBuddy.com*

If you're wondering which sites I use regularly, take a gander at some of my favorites:

• *Pricescan.com*: A neat site with an assortment of ways to search for products and spots to purchase the item. The site does an exemplary job at digging up pricing for a myriad of products including for books, computers, office equipment, home and garden, and other categories.

• *DestinationRX.com*: Does a remarkable job at neatly displaying a grid with product, vendor, price, estimated shipping, and total cost. Great: Sorting by column—cost or price—is easy, and getting details about the vendor is a click away. Not so hot: "Total Cost field" doesn't take into account price per unit, so comparing a bottle of 100 60milligram vitamins with

the same bottle of 100mg vitamins isn't accurate.

• *Canada.rx*: A member of another user group told me about *Canada.rx*. She said, "I thought you might be interested in this solution for prescription drugs. A friend is diabetic and has who knows what else. His doctor faxes his prescriptions and he receives a package a few days later with no hassle from the post office. (His only real difficulty lay in convincing his doctor to send the fax and that only had to be done once.) His credit card is charged approximately one-third the price he'd pay locally. I asked him for the URL and this is his response: 'It's *CanadaRx*. No www, no .com, nothing but *CanadaRx*. They keep changing the entry screens, making it sometimes difficult to find the screen one wants. But it's all there. All that's needed in patience. Persistence helps some too.'"

I checked and the prices really are substantial lower than most discount pharmacies.

• *Pricewatch.com*: This site has been around the longest and provides a fast, convenient way to find the best prices on computing hardware.

• *Addall.com*: Think Amazon has the best prices in town? Nope. *Half.com*, *BooksAMillion.com*, and others often beat Amazon. The saving are enough that it makes using *Addall.com* a must every time you shop for books.

• *PCworld.pricegrabber.com*: I'm a little biased here, so pardon my conflict-of-interest for a minute, and try PCWorld's Product Finder. Primarily hardware, software, and electronics, it gives you a way to find products, and check and compare their prices. Three things I like better here than the other sites: I can easily track a product, watching for price changes, just by supplying my e-mail address. Next, if the product's been reviewed by PC World, one click gets me to the article.

Finally, the site gives me access to the full spec sheet of the product, something I find invaluable.

** *Cnet's shopper.cnet.com*: Does a decent job with hardware and software but only so-so for consumer electronics. It's sometimes difficult separating ads from product reviews.

STEVE BASS is a Contributing Editor with PC World and runs the Pasadena IBM Users Group. He's also a founding member of APCUG. Write to him at Steve_bass@pcworld.com. Check PCW's current edition at <http://www.pcworld.com/resource/toc/index.asp> and sign up for the Steve Bass online newsletter at www.pcworld.com/bass_letter.

Intergalatic 15

Some observations of the Interglatic 15th session

by Marc Cohen

This year Jim Scheef and I had the privilege of attending and meeting with the annual gathering of computer user group officers from points as far as Pennsylvania, D.C., Maine and others in the northeast APCUG region. Jim is DACS' new President, and APCUG is the Association of Personal Computer User Groups.

The meeting was hosted by the New York PC Users Group. As usual, they did a magnificent job of organizing the event, the venue, the food, the vendors for the trade show portion, and, most important, the breakout sessions covering topics related to organizing and running active clubs. Topics included obtaining speakers for the meetings, publicity and advertising, retaining and growing membership, organizing and running SIGs (Special Interest Groups) and creating newsletters and websites.

This was the sixth or seventh meeting I've attended. Over the years, meetings have gotten smaller. The last one I attended was in '98.

In the past, with dozens of vendors contributing, meetings were held in a mid-town hotel with meals in the hotel dining room with table service and selection from a broad menu. With thirty or more vendors supporting the event and the awards dinner, the raffle and prizes reached down to almost everyone in attendance.

Now, with the reduced vendor support, the current meeting was held in a private school, the breakfast and lunch buffet was provided and catered by members of the New York club.

The most discussed problems of the groups in attendance were: coping with reduced membership; gaining and keeping members; attracting effective speakers; and publicity.

With groups getting smaller and the economy getting tighter for both software and hardware suppliers, providing speakers for group meetings affords a diminishing return to vendors. It has become imperative that groups in a local re-

gion try to coordinate vendor visits, so that visiting speakers can divide travel expenses among several groups.

You could also say that user groups are a commodity of declining value. I've always contended that user groups provided the handholding that hardware vendors, with low profit margins, couldn't afford. After you bought a machine, they didn't want to see you again. Every return visit cut into profits, which were slim enough.

Today new computer buyers have more early adopters to lean upon. Most of the earlier computer users are now on their third or more computer. They are wiser and no longer need the handholding of previous years. Even software people have outsourced or cut back on follow-up service.

But for turkeys like me, I still need this group to bail me out of my mistakes. Remember, I call myself the perpetual computer novice... I need all the help I can get...

MARC COHEN is a founding member, a DACS director and production editor of *dacs.doc*. A perpetual novice, he started out having problems with C/PM on his Osborne computer, and still has problems with Windows.

Customer Service

Bad news — Good news

By Marc Cohen

Several weeks ago I had the hard drive crash on my year and a half old laptop. Couldn't access the C:\ drive, couldn't run fdisk. It was a Saturday morning. I called the manufacture and guess what? An answering machine.... "Call Monday thru Friday 8am-9pm."

I was leaving the following week for a two-week trip and wanted to take the laptop along. Things weren't looking good. That was the bad news.

Now for the good news. Monday morning, 8:00am. I called WinBook to report my dilemma. Things were getting better. They would send Federal Express to pick up the computer the following morning (to be sent to a repair center on the West Coast) and return it repaired within 4 days. WOW! I asked if I could take the computer to FedEx myself, and save a day. The answer, of course, was yes. They gave me their FedEx charge number, so I

wouldn't have to pay for shipping. The computer was packed and I was at the FedEx office by 10:30 Monday morning.

True to their word, the computer was returned, with the hard drive replaced, on Thursday morning—exactly four days later, as promised. No charge, zippo, nada. Fortunately, the laptop had been synchronized with my desktop machine, so transfer of all the applications and data back to the laptop was relatively easy.

Looking back at the original invoice of a year+ ago, the warrantee was only for one year. Am I satisfied? You bet I am. That's the best customer service I have ever experienced, ever, especially with a computer product. So Thank You, WinBook.

Marc Cohen is a member of the board and production editor of *dacs.doc*. He considers himself a perpetual novice. You can reach Marc at marco10684@aol.com.

New Members

4/21/02 thru 5/21/02

- 1) Pittman Wallace
- 2) Hatem Salem
- 3) Rob Wilkalis
- 4) Alexa Fitchett
- 5) Robert Blake

THIS IS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER

If the membership date on your mailing label reads

EXP 3/2002

or earlier

You need to renew your
DACs membership
NOW

Special Interest Groups

SIG NOTES: June 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: June 18

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: June 19

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: June 26

INTERNET PROGRAMMING. Programs for Web site/server.

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

Next Meeting: June 5

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: June 20

LINUX. Helps in installing and maintaining the Linux operating system. June also be of interest to Apple owners using OS X.

Contact: Bill Keane (bkeane.nai@rcn.com) 203-438-8032 Meets 3rd Wednesday, 7:30 pm at the DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: June 12

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: June 13

SMALL BUSINESS. All aspects of small business management.

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

Meets on last Wednesday, 1-3 p.m.

Next Meeting: June 26

VISUAL BASIC. Develops Windows apps with Visual Basic.

Contact: Chuck Fizer, 203 798-9996 (cfizer@snet.net) or Jim Scheef, 860 355-8001 (JScheef@Telemarksys.com).

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

Next Meeting: June 5

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).

Look for announcements

Next Meeting: Suspended until further notice.

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: June 24

SIG News & Other Events

Internet Programming The IPSIG met at the resource center from 4PM to 6PM. Our random access session was largely focused on programming issues in general. We also discussed the DotNet and the pro's and con's of VB.Net and C#.Net. The demonstrations focused on the DotNet tool bars and locating functionality in the new IDE that we had memorized in the Visual Studio 6 IDE. We then turned our attention to ASP.Net and the use of DotNet validation controls. DotNet provides 5 basic flavors of validation. An issue arose when we used the RegularExpressionValidator to validate an e-mail address. After finally getting the validating expression correct, itself a brain buster, we discovered that the control assumes a null value to be acceptable, a no_no. Interestingly, the answer for validating the user entered data or lack of entry thereof, is nicely satisfied by using two validation controls, the RegularExpressionValidator and the RequiredDataValidator. An inspection of the emitted HTML code revealed that two pieces of JavaScript are executed in sequence, the first validating the expression and the second validating the existence of data. Of course, this fact was absent in the documentation, so we learned a lot trying to figure out how to accomplish these checks which are just rudimentary in old VB 6.

Next month's Internet Programming SIG is cancelled, as the moderator will be away.

Server and Networking. The Server SIG began a series of meetings to look at Linux as a file and print server within a Windows network and as a replacement for a Windows 2000 server. During this process we plan to setup DHCP, DNS, Samba and whatever else seems useful. At this meeting we reinstalled Red Hat Linux 7.2 on a laptop. This will be our test platform.

Next time we'll work on DHCP and DNS. This is the blind leading the blind so if you know anything about Linux, your help will be appreciated! Anyone interested in the SIG is urged to join the SIG email list by sending an empty email to BackOffice_DACS_subscribe@yahoogroups.com.





The next meeting will be Thursday, June 13th at 7pm in the DACS Resource Center. See you then

Visual Basic. The VB SIG follows the Internet Programming SIG in the resource center from 7PM to 9PM. The meeting started with random access. The main topic of discussion related to printing to Adobe's Acrobat Distiller, and printing to non standard devices. We had a demonstration based on Dan Appleman's Guide to Windows API. We discovered how to enumerate all printers on a client or a server and to gather the handle to the printer in question so that it could be made the "default" printer. The idea is to be able to programmatically connect to a printer, the Acrobat Distiller in this case" so that a report could be directed to that printer. As the default printer, data will go to the Distiller as it would in any other case. The next issue is, where is the Acrobat .PDF file saved. Can the file name be entered without user intervention. To solve this, we looked into the System's Registry for Acrobat's default file path. By setting this path, the whole process can be automated away from user intervention. Then we have an issue raised by Jim Scheef. How do you program the DotNet DataSet? His code sample gave errors. Steve Schwab then helped with the DataSet coding, leaving us with a few problem to resolve before we exhausted all of our time.

Watch for June meeting announcements from the Yahoo message distributor.

June 2002

Danbury Area Computer Society

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<div> <div> May 02 S M T W T F S 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 </div> <div> July 02 S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 </div> </div>						1
2	3	4	5 3-5 PM Internet Programming Chuck Fizer 203 798-9996 7:00 PM VISUAL BASIC Chuck Fizer 203 798-9996	6	7	8
9	10  7:30 PM BOARD OF DIRECTORS	11  7:00 PM GENERAL MEETING Shareware & Freeware	12  7:30 PM LINUX OS Bill Keane 203 438-8032	13  7:00 PM SERVER SIG Jim Scheef 860 355-0034	14	15  NEWSLETTER SIG NEWS DEADLINE
16	17	18  7:00 PM ACCESS Bruce Preston 203 431-2920	19 7:30 PM ADVANCED OS Don Pearson 914 669-9622	20  7:30 PM INVESTMENT Paul Gehrett 203 426-8436	21	22
23	24  7:00 PM WALL STREET Phil Dilloway 203 367-1202	25	26 1-3 PM Small Business Matthew Greger 203 748-2919 7:00 PM GRAPHICS Ken Graff 203 775-6667	27	28	29

Troubleshooting

H CODE 052, Where are you? Rejuvenating your old HP

By Charlie Bovaird

You can rejuvenate your HP II and HP III series printers that show error code 052 by replacing the "scanner motor."

The scanner motor can be purchased on line at www.HP.com. In my case the scanner motor for an HP3P cost \$73 + tax, with no shipping or handling charges.

SYMPTOMS

After eight years my HP IIIP started to intermittently display error code 052. Using www.google.com I found on the HP Web site that error code 052 indicated that the scanner motor was not operating



Figure 1

up to par. When error code 052 came on persistently with power on I decided to replace the scanner motor.

The Scanner motor replacement is simple, providing you can keep track of what you are doing. The scanner motor is located near the center of the printer toward



Figure 2

the bottom. However, to get at it you have to remove layers of components from the top down. As you remove each part, keep the screws that held the part in place with

its companion parts. A digital camera or pencil drawing would help.

I would recommend the following repair procedure only to the mechanically inclined. Others should have their printer repaired professionally, or retire their current laser printer.

Using the google search engine, I found a listing of the HP3P error codes. In addition there were other files that indicated replacing the scanner motor had a 98% chance of fixing the code 52 problem. I also found I could order the part from Hewlett-Packard on the Internet. The part cost \$73 plus tax, and arrived in two days with no installation instructions.

Repair process

Move printer to a workbench. The disassembly and reassembly processes are performed without power.

On the workbench, open the front of the printer like you were replacing the cartridge. Remove the two screws located at the top left and top right of the exposed opening. (fig. 1)

At the rear of the printer, remove the two screws holding the back panel. Raise the top cover, unplug the ribbon cable, and put the cover aside. Detach the side panels and put them aside (fig. 2).

Since there will be many screws, remembering where they all go is a challenge. Use of digital camera pictures would be useful.

Remove the three screws holding the parallel and serial ports panel assembly. Remove the panel assembly and set it aside.

Remove the metal circuit board cover assembly (2 screws on top and one on the side). Unplug the cable on the left side of the assembly. Remove the screws for the next exposed metal cover and put the cover aside. Remove the rear cover (4 screws) and set aside.

Unplug the 8 cables from the exposed circuit board cover (fig. 2). The fiber optic cable (single black "wire") need not be un-

plugged but should not be strained when putting the circuit board assembly aside. Remove 2 screws on the right side holding the circuit board base assembly. Release the cables from their retainers. Remove and put aside the circuit board base assembly (fig. 2).

The top plastic cover for the laser assembly is now exposed. Carefully remove the plastic cover (1 screw, 4 plastic latches) and set aside. The scanner motor assembly is now clearly visible (fig. 3). Remove the plastic assembly covering the scanner motor (3 screws) (fig. 4). Unplug the cable to the scanner motor assembly (2 screws). Remove and discard old scanner motor assembly after marking it defective. Care must be taken as to which scanner assembly is functional. They both look the same.

Install the new scanner motor assembly and all the printer parts in reverse order. If you have screws left over, they are likely to be from the side

of some assembly. Have patience, you may have to disassemble and assemble a few times...I did.

Getting the covers back on is a little tricky. The sides catch in place at the bottom and must be held vertical while the top is secured in place. Finally, you can attach

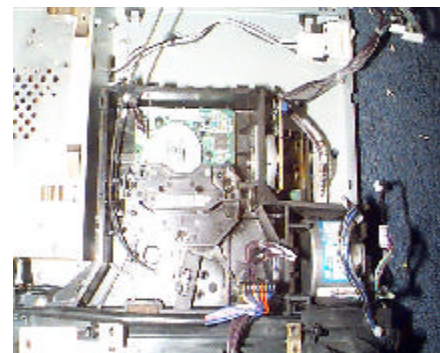


Figure 4

your printer to your computer and test it by printing a test page. My test worked the first time. If it did not work I planned to disassemble and reassemble again, paying more attention to what I was doing.

The complete task should take less than an hour.

Charlie Bovaird is a board member and DACS Treasurer. A former IBMer, he has a penchant for taking things apart and putting them back together.

Meeting Review

Picture It Lets You Park Your Pics at MSN

by Marlène Gaberel

The well-attended May 7th, 2002 general meeting packed a conference room at the Radisson Hotel. It featured Microsoft's Sonal Shah, who was substituting for John Stroiney. John was in Toronto.

The topic that Sonal presented was digital photography. She demonstrated the ease of using Microsoft XP, which lets users organize their digital pictures right from their operating system. Sonal had already mentioned the possibility of using XP for basic photo editing when she demonstrated XP 6 months ago. From XP, users can display, organize, print and send for professional photo development right from the desktop. Check out <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/digitalphotography/>

Staying on the theme of digital photography, Sonal then demonstrated Microsoft Picture-It. A couple of versions are available depending on how elaborate a program it is. See http://photos.msn.com/editorial/EditorialStart.aspx?article=CDProductSubALLAN_Home_Product_Info and http://photos.msn.com/editorial/EditorialStart.aspx?article=CDProductSubHome_Product_Info§ion=CDPRODUCT >§ion=CD_PRODUCT for details on the two programs. The Plati-

num version was the one Sonal showed the audience. Picture-It has many editing possibilities and a user can generate many different types of cards, such as greeting, business, brochures, menus etc. Picture-It has a very large number of templates and numerous clip-arts to be used in conjunction with photos or by themselves. Several photo-editing functions available can remove red-eye, darken or lighten a photo as needed, change background or remove objects (and people). Photos can also be shown as a slide show. When the pictures are edited, hard copies can be ordered from online vendors or printed right from the printer. Photos can also be used on a web page.

Picture-It can be used to create simple web pages which enable you to post on the web a photo album from your latest vacation on the space that comes with your online account. Of course photos can be e-mailed to friends and family right from Picture-It. Photos can be shrunk as necessary when e-mailed, to reduce uploading and downloading time. Sonal took great care in showing all the possibilities of Picture-It. She even shared a picture of a trip to the Bahamas taken after her engagement. Congratulations Sonal!!

Sonal then moved on to show MSN Photo <http://photos.msn.com/> where pho-

tos can be stored and shown in an online album. Before accessing MSN Photo, a user needs to sign up for .NET passport. From the MSN Photo site you can purchase special gifts such as T-shirts, cups, mouse pads, etc. etc. onto which your favorite photos can be applied. Sonal pointed out that the site has special offers updated on a regular basis as well as tips and tricks for photographers. From the MSN photo site, pictures can be edited, such as changing the contrast or removing red-eye.

Sonal closed her presentation by briefly talking about Microsoft TV's PhotoViewer, which is perfect for people who do not have access to a computer or if you prefer to show your photos on a larger screen than a computer. Two web sites that Sonal gave the audience for further details are:

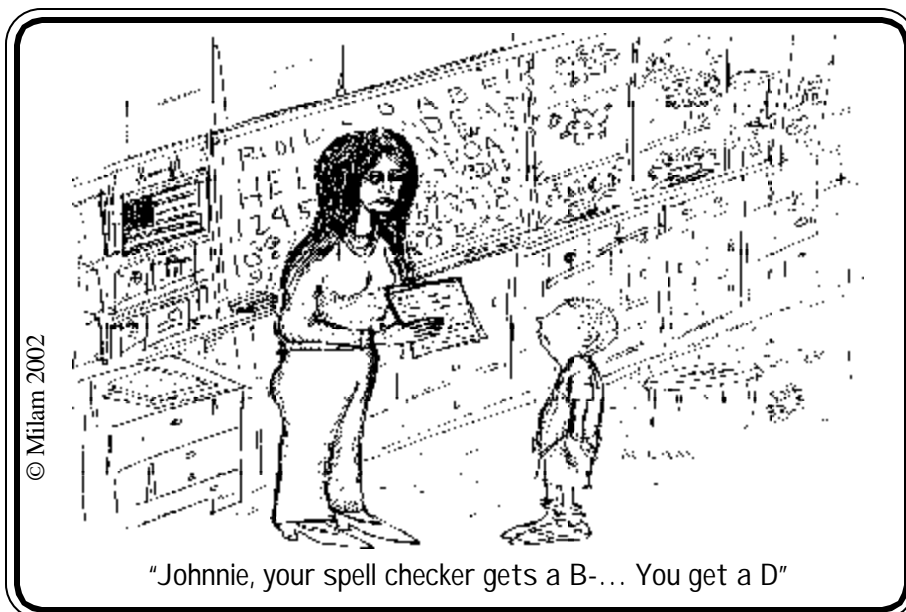
<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/home/evaluation/experiences/photo.asp> and

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/home/evaluation/overviews/digitalphotos.asp>

It is always a pleasure to have Microsoft at DACS general meetings. The presentations are short, on time and to the point. DACS members have the opportunity to see what's new on the Microsoft front and the door prizes are always welcomed by the winners.

Marlène Gaberel is a DACS board member and VP for Public Relations, who learns as much about computers from her sons, Joshua and Zachary as she does from DACS. You can e-mail her at: marlene_gaberel@yahoo.com.

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Random Access

May 2002

Members who are unable to attend the General Meeting may submit questions to “askdacs@aol.com” by the day prior to the meeting. We will attempt to get an answer for you. Please provide enough detail, as we will not be able to ask for additional information.

Q. (AskDacs) - Running Windows 98 with IE 6 - I am having a problem with doing a disk defrag because an application called RNAAPP keeps running. How do I stop it?

A. RNAAPP is a component that supports dial-up networking (among other things) and should not, on its own, cause defrag to stop. However, if we get a little paranoid here, you may have an application that is running invisibly that is making use (or trying to make use) of RNAAPP — such as the ELKERN worm which usually is installed by the W32.Klez virus. It reproduces by sending itself out through your internet connection. Make sure that you have scanned for it with an up-to-date anti-virus tool.

Q. I have loaded Windows XP Home Edition on my machine, but would like to be able to boot Windows 98 as well. Can I do this?

A. When you installed Windows XP, if you had an available partition, it would have asked you which partition to put it onto. If you had put it onto a different partition, then XP would have also loaded the boot manager that would let you do selective booting. This is essentially the same boot loader as used by Windows NT and Windows 2000. However, if you did not have or specify a separate partition, then the installation would have replaced your Windows 98 such that you can not boot it.

Q. I have a laptop that has McAfee anti-virus with some subscription time left on it. I received Symantec Norton System Works with my scanner — can I install it without the anti-virus and then install the anti-virus later so that the subscription doesn't time-out?

A. The installer might let you install without the anti-virus, but the registration process doesn't really

care which components you installed. We are going to guess that the anti-virus subscription will start as soon as you install. By the way, two points to consider: first, the subscription renewal is only about \$7/year, and second, by the time you do get around to it, there will probably be a newer release out there anyway.

Q. I am running Windows 98, and received an e-mail which has two untitled attachments. I don't want the attachments, but I can't seem to delete them either. I am using Eudora 5.

A. The attachments are usually located in C:\Program Files\Qualcomm\Eudora Mail\Attach. They should have created time stamps equivalent to the inbox timestamp. Note that if the attached files have a name the same as a file that you have already received, the filename will be 'bumped' with a numeric sequence number. Also, if the e-mail was authored by certain Microsoft mail agents a native-mode file may have been included. Check by looking at the time stamps.

Q. I have an XP laptop machine and Me on another machine. They arbitrarily grab the dial-up networking adapter and try to dialout. What is going on?

A. Several products, including those by Intuit and Symantec/Norton have components that look for updates. For Intuit's Quicken and QuickBooks products, I believe it is QAAGENT. If you dig into Options you can find where it can be disabled. Alternatively, a utility such as StartStop (or Microsoft's MSCONFIG for later versions of Windows) will let you disable the auto-startup. Another possibility is that there are some programs that

fall into the category known as “Spyware” — which monitor your internet “click” usage and record it and then periodically send this data to the ‘mother ship’ where it supposedly is used (supposedly anonymously) for statistical purposes. If you visit the Gibson website (www.grc.com) or look at this particular page: www.grc.com/optout.htm Another way to identify them is to run a personal firewall product, which if properly configured, will warn you if an application tries to connect to an ‘outside’ system.

Q. I am running IE 6 and getting lots of pop-ups. Can I prevent them?

A. You might start with <http://www.analogx.com/contents/download/network/pow.htm> which has been well-reviewed.

Q. Is there an equivalent to MSCONFIG in Windows XP?

A. Yes, but it is done via mechanism. XP is based upon Windows NT/2000 and is setup for multiple user profiles, etc., where MSCONFIG is system-wide for Windows 98, 98SE and Me. You will probably find what you want if you investigate the Microsoft Management Console, or “MMC”.

Q. I have an old Windows 95 computer with 24MB of 72-pin memory. I

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want to run with a newer web browser and think I need more memory. Is it available and inexpensive?

A. For old machines, your memory SIMMs must be in pairs in size, and all memory must be the same size. Some of it will be expensive. You can run IE 4 on your machine as it is currently, but for the newer features you would need more. Alternatively, if you need a 'light weight' web browser (meaning not all of the bells and whistles and/or Microsoft-specific capabilities) you might look into the Opera web browser. If you are still using the original Windows 95 Dial-up networking, you should get the MS Dial-UP Networking 1.2 patch.

Bruce Preston is president of West Mountain Systems, a consultancy in Ridgefield, CT, specializing in database applications. A DACS director and moderator of the Random Access segment at the monthly general meetings, Bruce also leads the Access SIG.

President's File, continued from page 2

issue that was available. If you were in to computers back in the 80s and early 90s (last century) you remember a magazine called *Creative Computing*. This magazine targeted the "home computer user" and offered many useful articles aimed at people new to computers or who simply used their computers at home. Well, *Smart Computing* fills that same niche. The irony of all this is that the May issue is full of suggestions that are useful to all of us—including me! The cover article "Clean Out Your PC – Scrub Unused Data from Your Hard Drive for Better Performance" is a great example. Another article I read was "How Much Speaker Do You Need?" For some reason, *Windows and .NET Magazine* (the best technical magazine on the planet) never covers PC sound systems. Another article on version 7.0 of AOL gives insight on new features and whether the upgrade is worth the effort (yes, if you already use AOL—otherwise, no). Next time you pass a newsstand, flip thru a copy, you might be pleasantly surprised!

DACS and the geek factor

So where does all this lead? I am the first to admit that I do not know all there is to know about computers, but I do want to

learn! I know quite a bit about some narrow areas and absolutely nothing about others. On the Geek-Novice scale, I hit it from one end to the other. And so do you. All of us have knowledge we can share with others and that's what makes this club fun and valuable for us all. How? Join a Special Interest Group – a SIG. According to the web site, we have eleven SIGs. There are many areas where I think there is interest for new SIGs. For the life of me, I do not understand why we have never had a Games SIG. How about a Robotics SIG? Once upon a time we had a Desktop Publishing SIG, is there interest now?

You do not need to be an expert to start a SIG. Repeat after me—YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE AN EXPERT TO START A SIG! This was amply illustrated last Thursday at the Server SIG meeting when I totally cobolixed (is that a word?) a Linux installation in less than 20 minutes and then spent the rest of the meeting reinstalling it.

Boot straps

The June general meeting will be another home-grown program. We all use software, and this month six DACS members will talk about some piece of software that makes life easier for them. This will be a real challenge, as each of us get only ten minutes to "sell" you on why we think our program is worth your time. Read the meeting preview and then come to see if we can pull this off! There will even be something for Mac and Linux fans!

JIM SCHEEF

JSCHEEF@DACS.ORG OR

JSCHEEF@TELEMARKSYS.COM

Directors' Notes Continued from page 3

The subject of the "Voice for Joanie" program was opened and it was explained that Shirley Fredlund was keeping abreast of the transition thereof to the responsibility of the Connecticut ALS Society, by establishing a local phone number where she could be contacted, which should be referenced in our Web Site.

Addressed next was the need for a projector with the capability of producing the clarity needed for both General Meetings and SIGs with attendance of more than four or five people. Investigation of comparative costs of XGA resolution projectors, including their replacement lamp costs and rent to purchase arrangements, was authorized.

—LARRY BUOY

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

DACS members may publish noncommercial, computer-related classified ads in *dacs.doc* at no charge. Ads may be placed electronically by fax or by modem, or hard-copy may be submitted at our monthly general meeting. Fax your ads to Charlie Bovaird at 203 792-7881.

Leave hard-copy classifieds with Charlie, Marc, or whoever is tending the members' table at the meeting.

G4 tower (450Mghz) and 19 inch monitor for sale. Michael McWilliams, MMcWilliams@FutureBrand.com.

Shareware Continued from page 1

on your ink-jet printer. Or order Kodak prints over the Internet."

Don Pearson of the LINUX SIG / AOS SIG will be contributing a demo of "WINE (Wine Is Not an Emulator), but whatever it is, it allows you to run (many) Windows Apps in LINUX, such as Quicken."

Bruce Preston will contribute the following three utilities:

- "StartStop" - a "freeware program that controls which applications (visible or hidden) start when you boot your computer. It provides more functionality than MSConfig, which is found in only a few versions of Windows. This works in any 32-bit Windows;

- "X-Setup" - another freeware program that fine tunes many—and Bruce really means many—of the preferences on your computer. It also replaces and supplements many of the functions of the old Windows 95/98 "PowerToys" and "Tweak UI;

- "Mail Washer"—a "try-before-you-buy" anti-spam tool that previews your e-mail, identifies SPAM, and 'bounces' it back to the sender. "This is NOT the same as clicking the "Click here to be removed from our mailings" which is a sure way to tell a spammer that he has a valid ID. Bouncing makes it look like an invalid mailbox."

Marlene Gaberel is a DACS board member and VP for Public Relations. You can e-mail her at: marlene_gaberel@yahoo.com.

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Future Events


June 11 • DACS Shareware Night

July 2 • TBA

August 6 • Ed Heere - State of the Industry

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