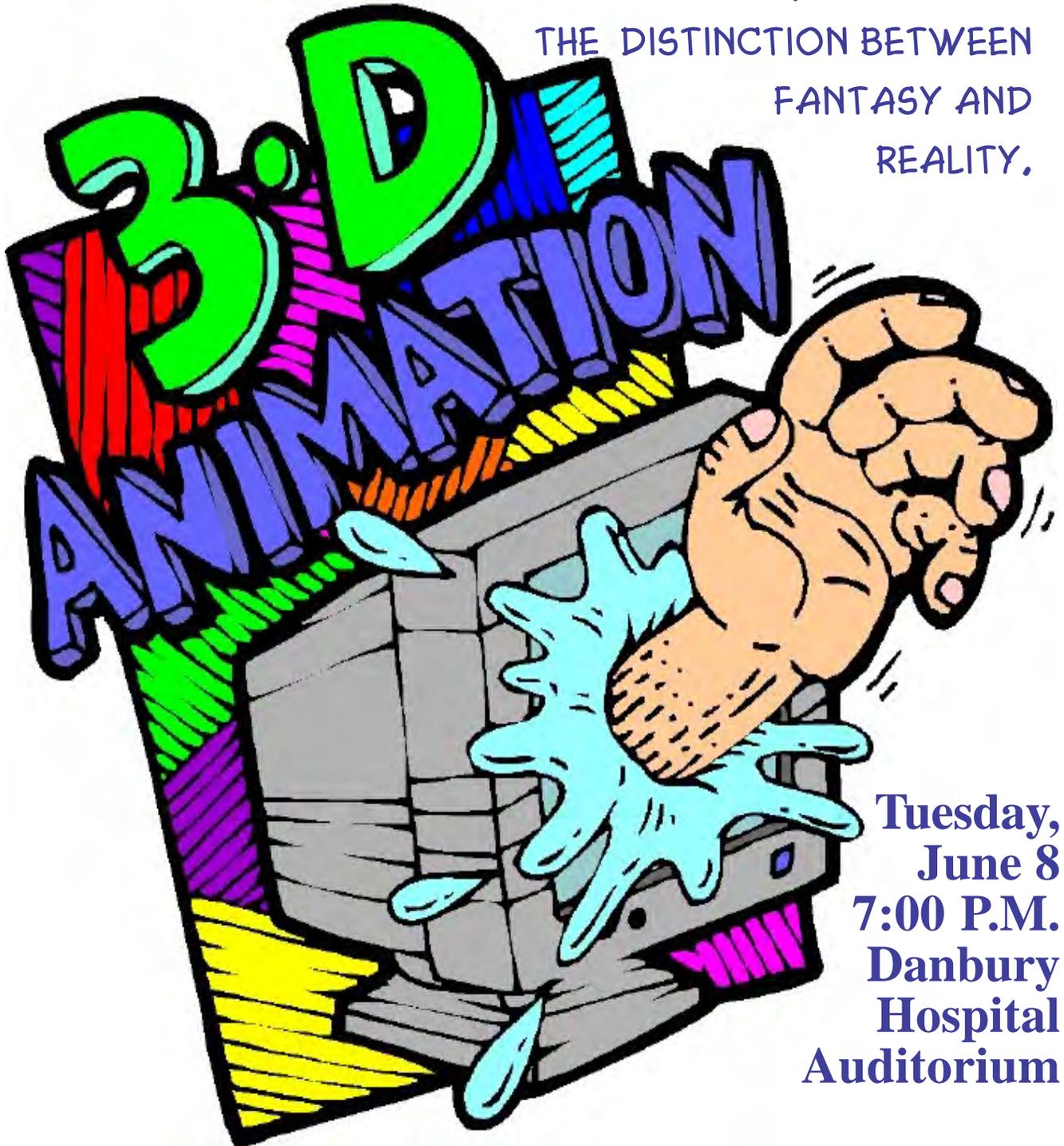


June 2004

Volume 15, Issue 6

AT OUR NEXT MEETING...

FIND OUT HOW 3-D CHARACTER ANIMATION,
SHARPENED BY COMPUTERS, IS BLURRING
THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN
FANTASY AND
REALITY.



**Tuesday,
June 8
7:00 P.M.
Danbury
Hospital
Auditorium**

President's File



PRESIDENTIAL RAMBLINGS VERSION 2.0

This column marks the start of my third year as DACS president. This is one year longer than I intended when I first accepted the job and establishing an order of succession is now a top priority. That doesn't mean I don't enjoy the job, but I think it's important that more people contribute to our club.

Letters Department

Apparently others agree with this as we received a letter a few weeks ago at DACS Central from U. B. Dunn (we'll call him or her Uby for short). Uby went to great lengths to conceal his identity – even using a non-existent address for the return address on the envelope. He signed the letter “A former attendee,” whatever that means. Uby, it seems, had seen a copy of *dacs.doc* at the library and checked it out. Since he mentioned my predictions, we can assume it was the January issue. After reading a little and checking the web site, it is Uby's contention that DACS is 'dunn'.

Uby makes one or two valid points, It is true that our membership has declined since the mid-nineties when membership peaked at just under 900 (as of the last board meeting, it is now just under 400). There is no denying that the computer industry and the role of computer user groups have changed in the last ten years. Yes, we do repeat a meet-

ing topic from time to time, unfortunately computer security remains a hot topic and gets more important each year.

A little over ten years ago, the average person could not get on the Internet. The “World Wide Web” had just been invented. Microsoft had finally shipped a version of Windows worth the effort to install. It was slow (on the computers of the day), cranky and complicated. [In many ways the Windows of ten-twelve years ago reminds me of the Linux of today—compare Linux configuration files to the 'INI' files of Windows 3.x and you see what I mean.] Computers were not yet “mainstream.” Not every house had one—now we have how many in our homes?! So where did people turn to learn about these new-fangled things? Many people, including yours truly, turned to user groups. Some user groups grew so large that people thought of them as real businesses. User groups in Boston and Dallas had thousands of members. Remember when a modem was an exotic add-on? DACS had a special interest group where members could help each other make their modems work. Why, you ask? Because there were jumpers to change, conflicts to resolve, and .INI files that never seemed to stay right. And they wanted to connect to electronic bulletin boards or online services like The Source or CompuServe. Since then Windows has improved and become easier to use. Now you can plug in a modem and simply expect it to work! Wow! What a concept! You don't need a user group to do that any more.

Believe me, your board of directors has spent many hours discussing this very topic. We have come to the conclusion that we cannot compete with “The Screen Savers.” If you want couch-potato computing, then sit at home and watch Tech TV. It's on 24 hours a day. But if you want to be able to shake the hands of the people you meet, laugh at each others stories, and ask questions while you learn, then come to a few DACS meetings.

We offer you the chance to meet other people who are also interested in using their computers. DACS members are not all experts or all beginners. I believe this mixture is the key to our success. Through the general meetings, the special interest groups (SIGs) and this newsletter, each of us has the opportunity to learn and grow. I really want to

Ramblings, *continued on page 4*

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
Editor-at-large: Mike Kaltschne

Contributors

Charles Bovaird Larry Buoy
Richard Corzo Marlène Gaberel
Jim Scheef Frank Powers
Richard Ten Dyke

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Applications & Hardware to enhance *dacs.doc* are welcome.

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Don Neary
APCUG Liaison
203-746-5538

Officers

PRESIDENT: Jim Scheef (860) 355-0034 (dacsprez@dacs.org)

VPs: Gene Minasi • Marlène Gaberel • Jeff Setaro

SECRETARY: Larry Buoy • **TREASURER:** Charles Bovaird

Directors

dacsboard@dacs.org

Charles Bovaird	(203) 792-7881	cbovaird@dacs.org
Howard Berger	(860) 355-9837	hberger@dacs.org
Marc Cohen	(203) 775-1102	mcohen@dacs.org
Anna Collens	(203) 746-5922	acollens@dacs.org
Marlène Gaberel	(203) 426-4846	mgaberel@dacs.org
John Gallichotte	(203) 426-0394	jgallichotte@dacs.org
Bill Keane	(203) 438-8032	bkeane@dacs.org
Frank Powers	(203) 791-1140	fpowers@dacs.org
Bruce Preston	(203) 438-4263	bpreston@dacs.org
Jim Scheef	(860) 355-0034	dacsprez@dacs.org
Jeff Setaro	(203) 748-6748	jasetaro@dacs.org

Committees

NEWSLETTER: Allan Ostergren: (860) 210-0047 (dacseditor@dacs.org)

PROGRAM / WEB MASTER: Jeff Setaro (203) 748-6748

APCUG LIAISON: 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)
Paradox	Alan Boba	(203) 264-1753	(e)
PASCAL	Duane Moser	(203) 797-2716	(d)
PhotoShop/Dreamweaver	Anna Collens	(203) 746-5922	(e)
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) 798-9996	(d)
Viruses	Jeff Setaro	(203) 748-6748	(d)
Visual Basic	Chuck Fizer	(203) 798-9996	(d)
HTML/Java	James Costello	(203) 426-0097	(e)
Windows	Nick Strother	(203) 743-5667	(e)

Directors' Notes

A MEETING OF YOUR Board of Directors was held at the Resource Center on Monday, May 10, 2004. Present were Messrs. Berger, Bovaird, Cohen, Keane, Preston, Scheef and Setaro and Mrs. Collens. Also present was Larry Buoy. President Jim Scheef presided; Secretary Larry Buoy kept the record. Minutes of the Meeting held April 12, 2004 were approved.

Treasurer Charlie Bovaird reported current cash assets of \$16,800.42, consisting of total bank and postal accounts in the amount of \$16,649.11 plus postage on hand of \$151.31. Subtracting liabilities of prepaid dues in the amount of \$7,362.50 left a net of \$9,437.92. He also reported current membership of 390.

Howie Berger announced that he had obtained a commitment from Dr. William Joel of WesConn's Computer Sciences Department to present a program on 3D Animation at the June General Meeting. This was followed by a discussion about rearranging the usual pre-presentation activities for Dr. Joel's convenience and the requirements and limitations of the Hospital's equipment that may affect his presentation.

Bruce Preston confirmed that he and Jeff Setaro would make a presentation at the July meeting on WiFi networking. Jeff advised the meeting that Amber Coffin of Smart Computing Magazine had not as yet confirmed that she would make a presentation in September, followed by a discussion of possible programs for the August meeting, including Linux-oriented subjects, such as IBM's projected release of its Linux version of the Lotus Office Suite, comparisons of software available in either Windows or Linux versions and the setting up of a firewall.

Also briefly discussed was a possible survey of the DACS membership as to individual talents, business connections and education (other than computer-oriented skills) that might be of benefit to DACS itself, or its activities. Methods of accumulating that data was also discussed.

Also broached was the possibility of cooperative effort with Science Horizons or other local organizations in soliciting mutual membership or participation.

Directors' Notes, *Continued on page 4*

Ramblings *continued from page 2*

see DACS not just survive, but grow. I think it's unrealistic to think that DACS or any user group will return to its former glory. But there is tons of fun stuff out there to learn and I think it's more fun when you can share that learning experience with others. If you agree, then renew your membership and get your friends to join. If you don't agree, then you can sit at home secure in the knowledge that somewhere Uby is also at home. I hope he has as much fun there playing all by himself.

New Toys Department

This month my new toy has been a new cell phone. Most carriers offer a one month free return policy, so I decided to try the newly combined AT&T Wireless and Cingular network. So far I have found only one place where the new phone (based on GSM technology) would not work, but the old phone did. The new phone has less 'static' but still 'breaks up' when the signal is weak. The real benefit is that the new phone comes with a far better deal that will let me combine the two phones we have now into one bucket of minutes and have the whole thing cost less in the end. Things should work like this more often. More next month.

The "You can't make this stuff up" Department

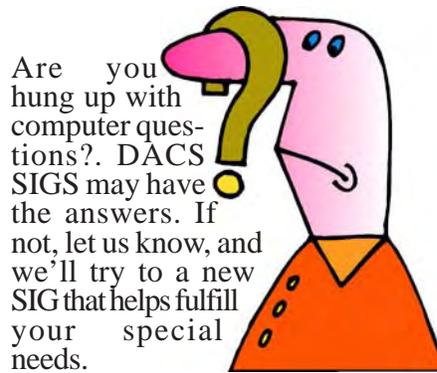
According to Robert X. Cringely's column in the May 17th issue of *InfoWorld*, "wireless phone carriers in Europe are apparently gearing up to deliver adult videos to 3G cell phones. Gartner estimates the mobile fleshpot market will be worth a whopping \$1.5 billion by 2005. No word yet on whether you'll have to pay extra when you set the phone to vibrate."

— JIM SCHEEF
dacsprez@dacs.org

Directors' Notes, *continued from page 3*

Jim Scheef advised the meeting that the Danbury Housing Authority had notified DACS that it required a sign designating its parking area at the Ives Center. After brief discussion, the President was authorized to obtain a quote and, assuming same would be well within discretionary spending limits, obtain such a sign.

—LARRY BUOY



Are you hung up with computer questions?. DACS SIGS may have the answers. If not, let us know, and we'll try to a new SIG that helps fulfill your special needs.

New Members

4/1/4 thru 5/26/2004

- 1) Samuel Ho
- 2) Larry F. Gallo
- 3) Arthud Denyer
- 4) Naresh & Marlin Soares
- 5) Bruce Hill
- 6) Peter T. Rhin

THIS IS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER

If the membership date on your mailing label reads
EXP 03/2004
or earlier
You need to renew your DACS membership
NOW

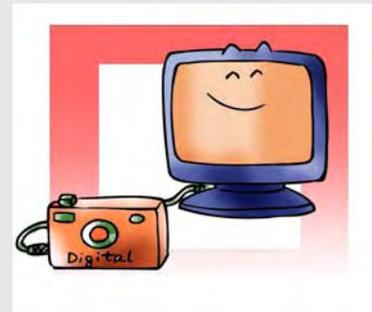


Do the DACS General Meetings leave you thirsting for more? Find all that plus food for thought at the meeting after the meeting—the DACS PIG SIG.

Graphics SIG Changes Image

The Graphics SIG will be changing its name and focus to the "digital imaging SIG" we will be discussing digital cameras, retouching and printing using various programs. Anyone who has a new digital camera can bring it down to the next meeting to find out the best settings to use for printing or e-mail. All questions relating to imaging is fair game. Our meeting time and place will be the same. The resource center on the last Wednesday of the month.

For additional information contact Ken Graff at 775-6667 or graffic@bigfoot.com.



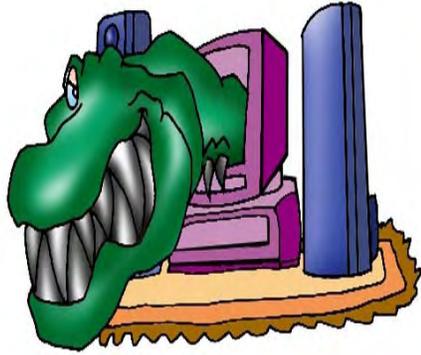
Next Meeting

Hi-Tech Film-Frame Man

By Marlène Gaberel

AT THE JUNE 8TH DACS general meeting, Dr. William J. Joel, director of the Center for Graphics Research at Western Connecticut State University will present on the topic of 3-D Character Animation.

After a brief introduction to character animation, Dr. Joel will address the impact of movies such as *Toy Story 2*, *Ice Age* and *Shrek*, which launched the age of 3-D character animation. Dr. Joel will discuss the impact of synthetic actors in film and television.



Will Dr. Joel also elaborate on computer generated imaginary (CGI)? With movies like *Lord of the Rings*, where

Gollum makes for the first legitimate CGI character, and the CGI enhancements of *Master and Commander*, is CGI the way to the future? Should we expect movies to head into that direction?

Dr. Joel poses the question: "will there be a time when the expert, as well as the average movie watcher, will no longer be able to tell whether an actor is real or

merely the result of trillions of computations?" He will discuss these issues and attempt to predict where 3-D character animation might lay.

With the movie *Shrek 2* just out, the June 8th 2004 presentation is very timely. Let's gear up for a different perspective on using computers. The meeting will take place at Danbury Hospital Auditorium starting at 7.00 p.m. with computer related questions and answers, followed by brief club announcements. The main presentation by Dr. Joel is scheduled to start at 8.00 p.m. For directions and additional information, please check <http://www.dacs.org>. The meeting is free and open to the public.

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

Notice

Because of a scheduling conflict the DACS General Meeting for the month of June will be on Tuesday, June 8th, the Access SIG will meet on Tuesday, June 1st.

Meeting Review

Modern Medicine Improves its Image

By Gail F. Bowen

AT THE MAY General Meeting, Ed Heere, former DACS board member, talked about the EXAM-PACS system and services that his company, CoActiv, offers to radiologists and the rest of the medical community.

Imaging modalities such as X rays, angiograms, CT scans, ultrasounds, bone scans, MRIs, PET scans, radionuclide scans help physicians diagnose and determine treatments for illness and injuries.

From 1895 to 2003, film radiology was used for X rays (and subsequently for the other imaging modalities as they were developed). Physical movement of records are required at times, not just within a hospital, but (via mail, courier, patient, etc.) from



the radiologist in a hospital or large imaging center to the treating physicians in a hospital or at a referring physician's office.

Huge physical storage requirements were needed (multiple buildings!) not only because film sheets are very large, but records are required to be stored for long periods of time (e.g. children's records must be kept until age 21). Many of those large sleeves to store and transport the films were also needed. A lot of time and money was spent to create copies or assure those original films were returned to the radiologist and not lost or misplaced.

Digital imaging has been available for several years with the imaging modalities. Instead of creating film, the digital image is sent electronically to a computer, stored and

distributed electronically. The radiologist does not have to be at the hospital or imaging center. This means the radiology groups can support many hospitals and doctors. During evening hours, hospitals can have one radiologist in-house, and when volume requires it, use another radiologist locally, or use "nighthawks" from halfway (12 hours) around the world (e.g. Australia or India). The images can also be stored on CDs for the patient and doctors.

Obviously, all of these digital imaging advantages need a software system with a diagnostic workstation and archive server to support storing images and diagnosis, viewing (adjusting brightness, rotating, scanning in/out, and annotating) images, and distributing images securely. Privacy and security is important. Only doctors authorized to view the patient's images and medical records should have access. All of this is what EXAM-PACS (Picture, Archiving, and Communications System) does. Apparently, Ed Heere's system does this for a lot less dollars than the large companies like GE do, and with a few extra features. A physician needs internet access, Email, a "regular" desktop/laptop with a "regular" monitor plus 2 or 3 of the very large digital flat panel displays to view the images. An archive server fee is charged based on a fee per image price. Image storage is duplicated in five different locations.

Special Interest Groups

SIG NOTES: June 2004

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 1

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

Contact: Bill Keane (wbk@mags.net) 203-438-8032. Meets 2nd Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.
Next meeting: JUNE 9

dotNET. Programs for Web site/server.

Contact: Chuck Fizer (cfizer@snet.net). Meets 1st Wednesday, 4-6 p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.
Next Meeting: JUNE 2

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

Contact: Ken Graff at 203 775-6667 (graffic@bigfoot.com). Meets last Wednesday, 7 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center.
Next Meeting: JUNE 30

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 17

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

Contact: Bill Keane (wbk@mags.net) 203-438-8032. Meets 3rd Wednesday, 7:30 pm at the DACS Resource Center.
Next Meeting: JUNE 16

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

Contact: Richard Corzo (maccsig@dacs.org) Meets 1st Thursday at DACS Resource Center at 7 p.m.
Next Meeting: JUNE 3

MICROCONTROLLER. Investigates microcontroller applications from theory to hands-on implementation and member projects.

Contact: John Gallichotte, 203 426-0394, (tlclotus@ieee.org). Meets on 4th Tuesday, 7:00 p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.
Next Meeting: JUNE 22

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

Contact: Jim Scheef (jscheef@teleJUNEksys.com) Meets 2nd Thursday, 7 p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.
Next meeting: JUNE 10

VISUAL BASIC. Develops Windows apps with Visual Basic.

Contact: Chuck Fizer, 203 798-9996 (cfizer@snet.net) or Jim Scheef, 860 355-8001 (JScheef@TeleJUNEksys.com). Meets 1st Wednesday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.
Next Meeting: JUNE 2

WALL STREET. Examines Windows stock JUNEket software.

Contact: Phil Dilloway, 203 367-1202 (dilloway@ntplx.net). Meets on last Monday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center.
Next Meeting: JUNE 28

WEB DESIGN. Explores popular applications for designing and creating Web sites.

Contact: Anna Collens, 203-746-5922 (acvo@annagraphics.com). Meets 3rd Tuesday, 7-9 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center.
Next Meeting: JUNE 15.

SIG News & Other Events

dotNET. We left the gate with a discussion on how not to eschew obfuscation, and proceeded to hear a talk from Greg Austin on an application on which he is currently working. He is building a Web site for police unions to get comparative data to use in contract negotiations. Its content will represent police unions in New York State. His primary programming strategy is inspired by a book which he recommends.

Farhan Muhammad and Matt Milner
Real World ASP.NET Best Practices
ISBN 1-58059-100-3

Greg illustrated his work with a projected view of the application and explained how he had created objects including 'Advertiser' and 'Banner'. To each object a collection is attached.

We made clear progress through Greg's exposition, and he added some important remarks on his use of tools including Microsoft Data Application Blocks. He indicated that these could be obtained at the following Web site.

<http://asp.net/Forums/>

His display of the Web site revealed a large assortment of tools available for download at no charge to the user.

Graphics. The Graphics SIG will be changing its name and focus to the "digital imaging SIG" we will be discussing digital cameras, retouching and printing using various programs. Anyone that has a new digital camera can bring it down to the next meeting to find out the best settings to use for printing or e-mail. All questions relating to imaging is fair game. Our meeting time and place will be the same. The resource center on the last Wednesday of the month.

For additional information contact Ken Graff at 775-6667 or graffic@bigfoot.com.

Macintosh. In the May 6 meeting I discussed digital photography on the Mac. I brought in my digital camera, intending to load some pictures through the USB connection, but instead copied some photos I had previously loaded onto my .Mac account's iDisk. Then I demonstrated some of the features of iPhoto, including how pictures are imported as rolls, and how to create albums. We tried the basic red eye removal and cropping tools and learned there is only one level of undo, so if you make a change you're not happy with, be sure to undo it immediately. For sharing photos you can print them on your own printer, or order prints directly in iPhoto. I also demonstrated how to publish an iPhoto album to a .Mac home page.

As one cheaper alternative to ordering prints in iPhoto, I mentioned PhotoAccess (<http://www.photoaccess.com>), a Web site I use. It has both a Mac and PC application that makes uploading your digital pictures much easier than using a Web interface. They also offer digital sizes that don't require cropping of pictures due to the different aspect ratios of digital photos vs. those from film.

VB. We had an ample attendance of nine persons, and we heard from Chuck on the comparative merits of VB .NET in contrast to C# .NET. Jim Scheef offered a compelling advantage to programming with C#: programmers with skills in C# typically received higher salaries than do those programming with other languages.

SIG NOTES, [Continued on page 11](#)

June 2004

Danbury Area Computer Society

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																									
		<p><i>1</i></p>  <p>7:00 PM Access Bruce Preston 203 431-2920</p>	<p><i>2</i></p>  <p>4 PM Internet Prog. 7 PM Visual Basic Chuck Fizer 203 798-9996</p>	<p><i>3</i></p>  <p>Macintosh 7:00 PM Richard Corzo macsig@dacs.org</p>																																																																																																											
<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<p><i>8</i></p>  <p>7:00 P.M. GENERAL MTG</p>	<p><i>9</i></p>  <p>7:30 PM Advanced OS Bill Keane 203 438-8032</p>	<p><i>10</i></p>  <p>7:00 PM SERVER Jim Scheef 860 355-0034</p>	<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>																																																																																																									
<i>13</i>	<p><i>14</i></p>  <p>7:00 PM Board of Directors</p> <p>Flag Day</p>	<p><i>15</i></p>  <p>Web Design Anna Collens 203 746-5922</p>	<p><i>16</i></p>  <p>7:30 PM LINUX Bill Keane 203 438-8032</p>	<p><i>17</i></p>  <p>7:30 PM INVESTMENT Paul Gehrett 203 426-8436</p>	<i>18</i>	<p><i>19</i></p>  <p>DACS.DOC DEADLINE</p>																																																																																																									
<p><i>20</i></p> <p>Father's Day</p>	<i>21</i>	<p><i>22</i></p>  <p>7:00 PM Microcontroller J. Gallichotte 203 367-1202</p>	<i>23</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>26</i>																																																																																																									
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Book Review

Stan Veit's History of the Personal Computer

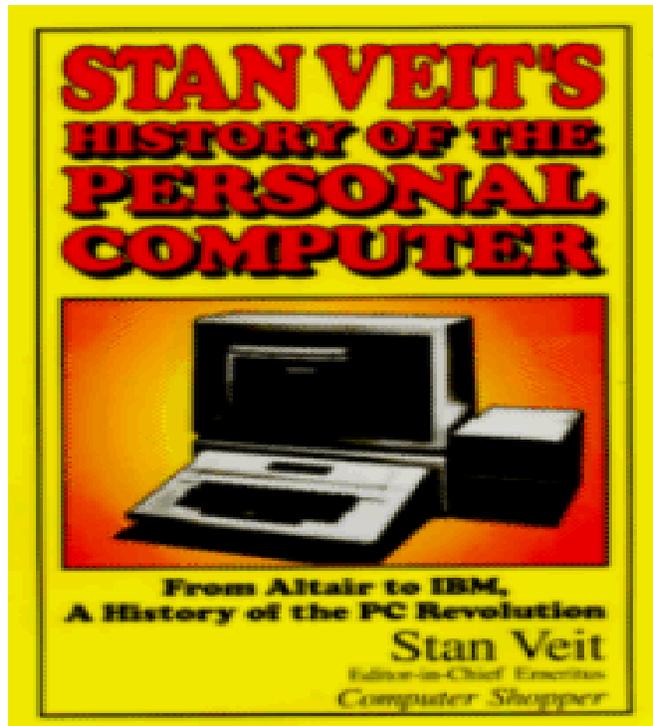
By Jim Scheef

HERE I GO AGAIN writing a review of a book you can't buy—at least not in a book store. I think I ordered my copy from *Computer Shopper* magazine when it was first published. Since then I've seen it offered on eBay. There are several used book stores on the web that might have it as well. Now you know that I don't review books I don't like (I don't read them myself, so why should you?) so you want to start searching for this book now.

The book is subtitled "From Altair to IBM, A History of the Personal Computer" Most of the chapters in this book originally appeared as Stan's monthly column in *Computer Shopper* magazine back when *Computer Shopper* was tabloid sized and over an inch thick. Stan had retired from his position as Editor-in-Chief and wrote a monthly column of his own experiences in the early computer industry. Each chapter is a first hand account told in Stan's own inimitable, matter of fact style.

One of the things I find so interesting about these stories is that Stan's recollections of events do not always agree with the 'well researched' accounts published in many of the books I've read over the years. Regardless of who remembers what, the stories cover the early days of the personal computer industry from the perspective of someone who helped build the industry one customer at a time. Stan Veit opened and ran the first computer store, The Computer Mart, in New York City way back in 1976. From this vantage point—the retail end—Stan met both the enthusiasts and the big-wigs who built the foundation of today's personal computer industry.

In Chapter 1 Stan tells about the various people who worked in the store. All were computer enthusiasts who began



hanging out in the store except his secretary, the purple-haired punk rock-singer girl friend of a programmer. Chapter 2 is all the versions of how the Altair came to be all rolled into one—with credits! The Altair 8800, produced by MITS, Inc., of Albuquerque, New Mexico, was the first "ready to build" personal computer ever. For \$397 you got a box of parts that included a power supply, a bunch of lights and switches, an 8080 microprocessor, and 256 bytes of RAM—yes, 256 bytes, not kilobytes! Even if you were successful in assembling the computer and didn't bridge any of the hundreds of solder points, the computer did nothing. The input was the row of switches on the front panel and the output was the row of lights just above the switches. Programming was accomplished by entering the program into memory in machine code, one byte at a time. If you wanted something that we might recognize as a computer, you were

going to spend more money. You would need a memory board, a serial interface, and a Teletype terminal. If you had 4K of RAM you could run the BASIC that Bill Gates and Paul Allen wrote at Harvard after seeing the Altair on the cover of Popular Electronics.

In page after page, Stan tells of products that just plain didn't work and others that were years ahead of their time. Many of Stan's stories speak fondly of people he calls friends and how these people cooperated even though they were really competitors. This attitude carried through much of the early industry. Of course there were also the shady deals and a few stabs in the back. It's all there in the book.

The book has 28 chapters plus a remembrance of George Tate, the founder of Ashton-Tate. Like almost everyone in the early PC industry, George Tate started as an enthusiast and a founding member of the Southern California Computer Society. After several ventures of varying success, George met Wayne Ratliff who had written a database he called Vulcan. George, in a streak of marketing genius, renamed it dBASE II, so it would appear to be a more refined version (dBASE I never existed). He wanted a quality image for his company so he called it Ashton-Tate because he thought Tate alone was too short. There was no one in the company named Ashton. George simply liked that sound of the name. All this is the kind of detail that Stan Veit brings to all of the stories in every chapter of this book.

In chapter 25 Stan talks about how magazines like *Creative Computing*, *BYTE* and *Personal Computing* created the marketing channels that allowed the industry to prosper.

Stan Veit is also known as the Editor-In-Chief Emeritus of *Computer Shopper*, the "worlds largest" magazine. He participated in several online ventures for *Computer Shopper* and Ziff-Davis. According to several other reviews I found online, Stan still maintains www.pc-history.org, but the site appears to be inactive.

A quick search (is there any other kind?) of Google found several possible sources for the book so you have no excuse. This is a fun read. Take it to the beach and become a nerd with a tan!

[Stan Veit's History of the Personal Computer](#) by Stan Veit, published by WorldComm, 1993, 304 pages including index.

Jim Scheef is president of DACS

The Music Wars

By Wayne Steen

THE MUSIC INDUSTRY is at war with itself and its fans. Who ever thought that a rock and roll band would sue its own fans? Talk about the ultimate in corporate greed. The music industry is full of corporate greed.

However, fear not my loyal readers help is on the way. Steve Jobs of Apple, Bill Gates of Microsoft, and Wal-Mart are coming to our rescue. I feel better already.

Apple has already introduced iTunes and the iPod. Soon, Microsoft and Wal-Mart will come out with their own online music services.

Roxio has brought Napster back from the dead. Napster was once the largest illegal file-sharing service on the Internet. Roxio has now brought it back as a good file-sharing service that pays the record companies and artists for their music.

Real Networks has their own online music service and Music Match has their own service. My head is spinning round, round, round.

Apple

Steve Jobs and Apple are the first ones out of the gate in the online music services race. However, remember back in the 1980s when Apple was the top dog in the computer box wars? They eventually lost out to Bill Gates. Will history repeat itself or has Steve learned from his past mistakes?

iTunes is currently the world's largest online music services company. They have recently added the muscle of over 25,000,000 AOL customers to their arsenal. iTunes works on both Apple and Windows computers. You must have Windows 2000 or Windows XP on your PC in order to use iTunes.

The download is simple and without a hassle. All you have to do is go to <http://www.apple.com> and click on the iTunes link. All you have to do is enter your e-mail address and then download the iTunes software.

iTunes does not charge a monthly fee that all the other online music services charge. However, you can only listen to a 30-second clip from the song that you are interested in. To listen to the whole song you must buy the song for 99 cents.

You can buy as many songs as you want through the Apple Music store. You will have to enter your credit card with Apple music store in order to download music from iTunes.

You can burn songs onto an unlimited number of CDs for your personal use. You can listen to your songs on an unlimited number of iPods. (I will talk about iPods in a minute.) You can

play your songs on up to three Macintosh computers or Windows PCs.

You can also set up an account for your children. Kids now have a legal way to download their favorite songs with music allowance accounts. You set up the account using your credit card and then set up a monthly allotment of how many songs your kids can buy. Once they reach the monthly limit (and they will reach that monthly limit), they cannot download any more songs.

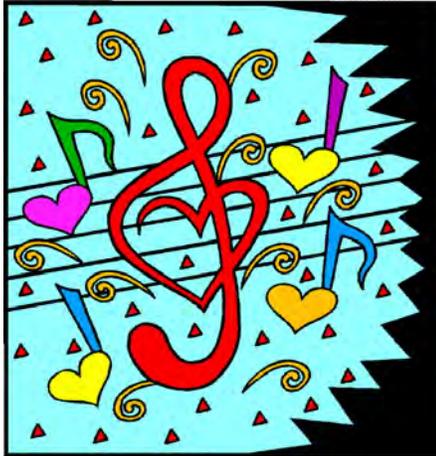
Another nice new feature from iTunes is you can now purchase audio books. At the time of this writing, Harry Potter books were not available from iTunes.

Napster

Napster is a monthly service that you pay \$9.95 a month for downloading songs. You can download as many songs as you want to your computer. However, if you want to burn the songs to a CD or digital device such as the Dell Music Jukebox then you must pay 99 cents a song.

Real Networks and Music Match also use the Napster model. I like having the ability to download as many songs as I like (or how many songs my hard drive will handle) without having to pay 99 cents a song.

If you want to burn the songs to a CD or a portable digital device then the Apple model may be more to your liking.



Problems

iTunes will only burn to CDs and Apple's own iPod. The iPod is a 15 GB device that sells for \$299.00 and will carry almost 7,000 songs. Let me see, 7,000 times 99 cents equals about \$7,000.00. This is a very good moneymaker for Apple.

The Dell Digital Jukebox Music Player is very similar to the Apple iPod and costs \$249.00. The math is the same, about \$7,000.00 for 7,000 songs.

The problem is that iPod and Dell do not play nice with each other. If you use iTunes, then you are going to want to buy the iPod. If you use Real Network, Music Match or Napster then you are going to want to use the Dell Digital Jukebox Music Player.

The biggest problem is that not all famous artists are available for download with one of the online service providers. Therefore, you may only be able to listen to a favorite artist of yours on iTunes and another favorite artist of yours may only be available on Napster.

Once again, the consumer is on the short end of the stick with all of the big boys wanting to use their own standards. They are telling us, it is their ball, and you are going to play the game by their rules. We have danced to this song before!

Conclusion

Who will win the music wars? Let us do some calculations.

I remember being able to buy KISS records on sale at Music Land for \$3.99. Let us do some math. Twelve songs on a typical album divided into \$3.99 equals 33 cents. Today we pay 99 cents for a song or \$9.95 for the whole album.

However, that is far better than the \$18.99 suggested retail price of CDs that are currently on sale in stores. Let me see, \$18.99 divided by 12 equals \$1.58 a song. Ouch! I do not know who will win the music wars, but I do know who has lost. The music store retailers and the consumers have lost. I am against illegal file sharing, but I am also against record companies suing 12-year-old girls.

WAYNE STERN is Q BITS contributing editor, Quad-Cities Computer Society, Bettendorf, Iowa

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

Random Access

May 2004

Bruce Preston, Moderator

MEMBERS WHO ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE GENERAL MEETING may submit questions to “askdacs@dacs.org” 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. I have several identical machines, they are running Office XP with the multi-language supplement. As soon as I open a new Word document and type a single character, the background of the entire line that the character is on goes to a black background for the full width of the page. If I change the background of the page to gray it is readable, but I really don't want to do this. Does anyone have any idea as to what is causing this, and what can be done to fix it?

A. There were several suggestions – the first of which is that there was a problem with the default template file (NORMAL.DOT). That it is happening on all of the machine makes it unlikely that it is a corrupted file or template. It sounds more likely to be a problem with a video driver. Check to make sure that you have the most recent driver for the video card. Alternatively, before you go searching for a new driver, you might try ‘dumbing down’ the driver by going to the display properties and lowering the acceleration settings.

Follow-up: An e-mail from the questioner was received two days after the general meeting – he used Belarc Advisor to identify the AGP video card as being by Matrox, and found a newer driver. That resolved the problem.

Q. Does anyone have any recommendations for a greeting card software package?

A. Create-a-Card was the only one mentioned. Many people in the audience mentioned that there are several web sites that create cards.

Q. If I need to create a new SQL ODBC connection on a client machine when I get to the list of servers, I often see the same SQL Server several times. This is inconsistent as I get different server lists depending

upon which client machine I use. Does anyone know where these come from as I am seeing duplicates or ‘ghosts’ of servers that no longer exist.

A. The server lists are found in the system registry. They are found at the key

```
HKCU\Software\Microsoft\Microsoft SQL Server\80\Tools\SOLEW\Registered Servers X\SQL Server Group
```

```
HKLM\Software\Microsoft\MSSQLServer\Client\TDS
```

It shouldn't hurt to delete entries that are obsolete, at worst you may have to ‘re-register’ them. However this does not explain why you would be seeing duplicate entries.

Q. When I get an e-mail message, I get an attachment with an .EML file extension. I can't read it. What is it? If I try to read it, it appears to consist only of ‘wingding’ characters.

A. That is the “E-Mail” extension and is used by some mail ‘agent’ programs when a ‘rich-text’ message is sent. Rich-text is text that is formatted with fonts, color, background, images, etc. It appears that you have a combination of sender/receiver mail agent programs that won't talk to each other. Ask the sender to resend the message in plain text.

Q. My church would like to send a newsletter to its members. I've seen e-mails that have embedded graphics, pictures, etc. How do I do that?

A. Many e-mail programs are capable of creating messages that have backgrounds, images, etc. However, once you create the e-mail, you probably have a different problem—sending a message to a large distribution list will probably trigger anti-SPAM filters at several locations, starting with your local ISP. Many ISPs have restrictions as to

how many addresses may appear on a distribution list for an outbound e-mail. Additionally, many delivering ISPs have restrictions as to how many ‘undisclosed recipients’ at their site may appear on a distribution list. A major example is AOL—if you have too many addressees with AOL in the distribution list they will decide that you are SPAM and block delivery. It was suggested that you would be better off generating the newsletter as a set of web pages and then publish the address of the newsletter via other channels, such as the church bulletin.

BRUCE PRESTON is president of West Mountain Systems, a consultancy in Ridgefield, CT specializing in database applications. A DACS director, Bruce also leads the Access SIG. Members may send tech queries to Bruce at askdacs@dacs.org.

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Thanks!
The
management

SIG NOTES, *Continued from page 6*

Chuck gave an interesting demo of an application he had recently delivered to a building contractor. This contractor uses an Excel spreadsheet application for cost estimation, and Chuck has added to the spreadsheet usage an important feature to enhance ease of use. A double-click on a line under a cost category invokes an appearance of a dialog panel to let the user select a cost factor such as senior designer. When a selection is made by highlighting, it is applied with a button and the factor and its associated cost elements are placed into the spreadsheet. These cost elements are stored in a database.

This building contractor and his employees are relieved of a memory load taken off their minds, and are spared the risk of typographical errors and misplaced entries. The cost estimation process is made speedier and smoother.

Chuck stepped through the VBA code he used in the application, and explained how he had asserted control of details in the user interface. He explained that the customer works with MS Access and runs programs on his MS Windows 2000 Server.

The attendees at the SIG were much engaged by Chuck's clear

exposition of the use of VBA in this application. A lively discussion ensued on the uses of VB in the several products in MS Office in recent years, and in current offerings.

Web Design. The May 18th Web Design SIG focused on the advantages of using templates. Maintaining consistency of a "look" throughout a site can easily be achieved using templates. One Master design may be applied to as many pages as necessary, and updates or changes to the template will take effect on any pages that are based on that layout. Editable areas within the template allow each page to have its own content, and locked areas assure that elements that are to remain constant are not inadvertently changed. The process of creating a template was shown using Dreamweaver, although many web design software programs have their own versions of templates, library items, and other "re-usable" elements.

The June web design SIG will take an introductory look into DHTML scripts and show how using layers can add extra dimensions to web pages. Visit www.annagraphics.com/sigsite for more information, links and notes of previous meetings.

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.

For Sale. Palm M505 PDA w/ 16MB SD Memory card & case \$75.00
Netgear DS104 4 Port 10/100 Mbps Dual Speed Hub \$15.00

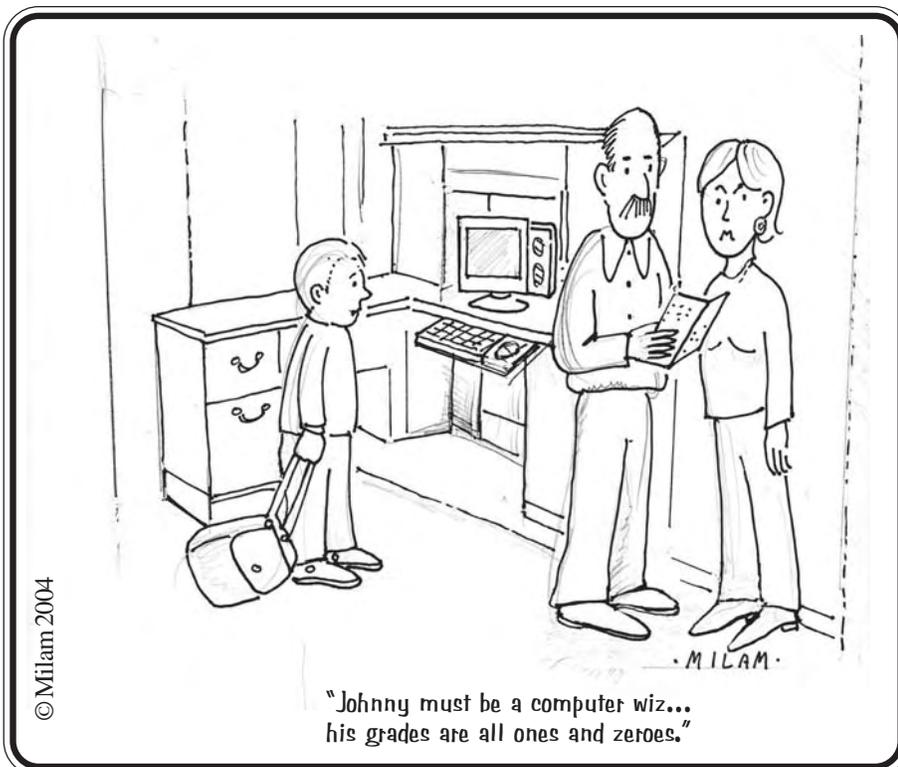
Contact: Jeff Setaro @ 203-748-6748 or jasetaro@mags.net

Let DACS Promote your Business

DACS is offering members free space to advertise their small businesses in the business card section of the colored insert in *dacs.doc*. This offer is being made subject to space available, and cards will be rotated each month to guarantee equal access.

Please send your cards to DACS at 4 Gregory Street, Danbury, CT 06810-4430, give to any board member, or e-mail dacseditor@dacs.org.

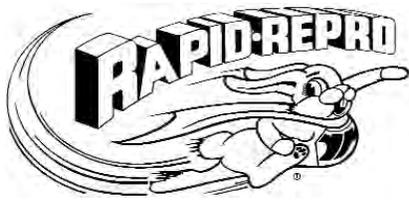
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Future Events

June 8 • 3-D Animation

July 6 • Bruce Preston & Jim Scheef - Setting up a Home Network

August 3 • TBA

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