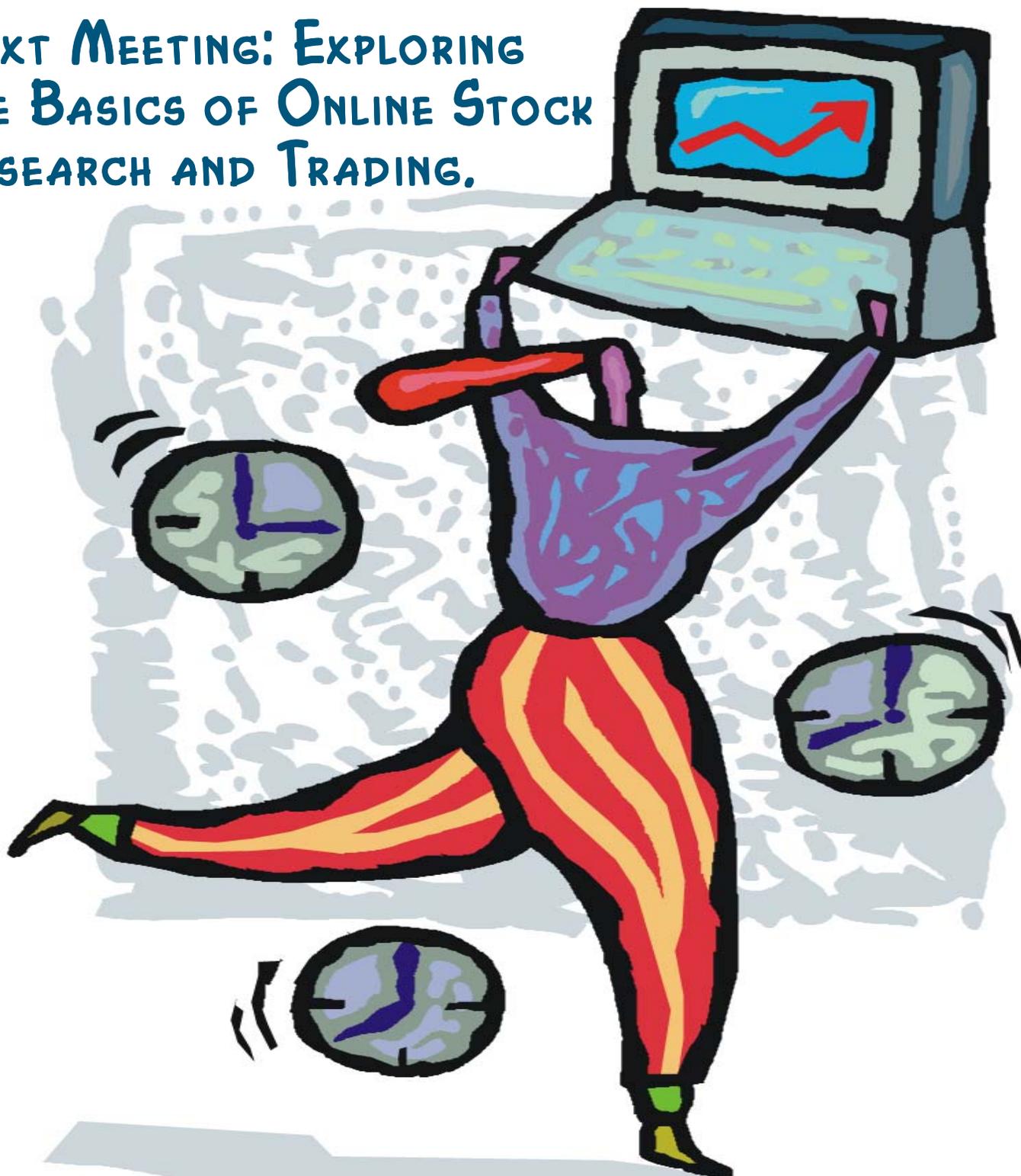


NEXT MEETING: EXPLORING THE BASICS OF ONLINE STOCK RESEARCH AND TRADING.



Directors' Notes

A meeting of your board of directors was held on Wednesday, August 10, 2011. The meeting was called to Order at: 7:15 p.m.

Attending were Richard Corzo (President), Annette van Ommeren, Andrew Woodruff, David Green, Drew Kwashnak, Patrick Libert, Bruce Preston (Secretary), Guest: Charlie Bovaird.

The Minutes of Previous Meeting were accepted.

Treasurer's Report

Balance on hand 7/1/11	\$6,025.92
Income - Dues	\$328.39
Bank Interest	\$0.49
Income Total: \$328.88	
Expenses:	
Newsletter printing (Jul/ Aug)	\$170.00
Newsletter Postage	\$93.44
Renewal Letter Postage	\$1.00
Renewal Letter Cardstock	\$13.81
Resource Center Phone	\$63.93
Total Expenses:	\$342.18
Balance on hand 7/31/11	\$6,012.62

Membership Report

6/7/11	7/5/11	8/2/11	Meeting Date
JUNE	JULY	AUG	
154	146	148	Paying members
151	144	145	With email
2	0	2	New members
100	100	100	NL printed
76	75	76	NL mailed
56	55	57	NL mailed-members
6	6	6	NL mailed-other
14	14	14	NL mailed-free lib.

IN THIS ISSUE

DIRECTORS' NOTES	2
HELPLINE	3
PREVIEW - ONLINE STOCK TRADING	4
REVIEW - IDENTITY PROTECTION	4
MICROSOFT SYSTEM SWEEPER	5
BUCKY MILAM CARTOON	5
SIG NEWS & NOTES	6
AUGUST CALENDAR	7
COMPUTER MAINTENANCE	8
ASK DACS	10
WHAT JUNK FILES?	11
FUTURE EVENTS	12

Old Business

1. General meetings

- August 2: Norbert (Bob) Gostischa-Protecting Yourself and Your Identity Online (avast! Security Seminar), Preview: Dave Green, Review: Patrick Libert
- September 6: Dan O'Connor-Investment Tools, Preview: Jim Scheef, Review: Steve Harkness.
- October 4: Mike Kaltschnee-Online Video and Streaming Devices, Preview: Allan Ostergren, Review: Richard.
- November 1: Andy Woodruff and Sean Henderson-Recording and Editing Live Music, Preview: Drew Kwashnak, Review: Bruce Preston.
- Possible future topics
 - David Pogue-Patrick will follow up on November as suggested by his publicist.
 - Patrick has contacted the Opera browser team to ask for a possible presentation.
 - Patrick is following up on his initial contact with the Walt Mossberg team.
 - Andy has tried contacting Marissa Mayer at Google, no response to date.
 - Richard will try to arrange for presentation on IBM's Watson.
 - Andy would like a Windows presentation of "How To's" for tuning the O/S - Safe Mode, MSCONFIG, turning off unneeded services, Microsoft System Sweeper (Beta) etc.
 - Drew suggests "how is it done with <fill in OS> - we could use Mikogo to demo same operations for Windows, Mac and Linux to flip between environments. Drew will test the newly released Mikogo for Linux with Bruce.

2. Open positions

- The membership chairperson position is still open.

- 3. We'll be putting together a display on DACS at the Danbury Library for September. Various people have contributed ideas. The Marketing & Public Relations forum in the DACS forum will be the place to collect those. Jim, Andy, and Drew have volunteered for the committee.

4. The dacs.org domain registration is temporarily on Jim Scheef's

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Membership Information

dacs.doc, ISSN 1084-6573, is published monthly by the Danbury Area Computer Society, 27 Ole Musket Lane Danbury, CT 06810-8232. Annual subscription rates: \$45 to regular members, \$30 electronic access (included in dues).

Postmaster

Send address changes to Danbury Area Computer Society, Inc., 4 Gregory Street, Danbury, CT 06810-4430.

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Charles Bovaird	Richard Corzo
Richard DiFranco	Drew Kwashnak
John Lansdale	Rob Limbaugh
Bruce Preston	Jim Scheef
Joseph Tobin	Annette van Ommeren

DACS, its officers and directors assume no liability for damages arising out of the publication or non-publication of any article, advertisement, or other item in this newsletter.

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

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dacs.doc is prepared using PageMaker 7.0 and Acrobat 7.0. Software packages used to publish *dacs.doc* include: Microsoft Windows XP, Office 2003, TrueType fonts, Calendar Creator 8.0 for Windows. Internet access provided by *Mags.net*

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



Patrick Libert
APCUG Liaison
plibert@dacs.org



Directors' Notes, Cont. on page 3

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SECRETARY: Bruce Preston • **TREASURER:** Dave Green

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APCUG LIAISON: Patrick Libert (plibert@dacs.org)

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR: CHARLES BOVAIRD: aam@mags.net

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/E-mail
APL	Charles Bovaird	(203) 792-7881 (e)
ASP.Net	Chuck Fizer	
C/Unix/ObjC	Kenneth Lerman	(203) 426-4430 (d e)
C#, VB	Chuck Fizer	cfizer@dacs.org
Electronics	Andrew Woodruff	(203) 798-2000 (d e)
Interface-Instrumentation	Andrew Woodruff	(203) 798-2000 (d e)
Adobe Web & DTP	Annette van Ommeren	(914) 232-0149 (e)
SAS	Lewis Westfall	(203) 790-0229 (e)
Statistics/Data Analysis	Charles Bovaird	(203) 792-7881 (d e)
SQL	Lewis Westfall	(203) 790-0229 (e)
SQL Server, MySQL-5	Chuck Fizer	
Malware	Jeff Setaro	(203) 748-6748 (d)
VB.Net, Visual Basic	Chuck Fizer	

Directors' Notes, Cont. from page 2

DynDNS.com account. If we copy the Windows-hosted site to Linux-based Bluehost we can change the registration back to Bluehost. We'll need to update the calendar from ASP/Access to PHP/MySQL. Bruce recommends using ODBC to transfer data between local copies of the Access and MySQL databases. The feedback form also needs to be updated.

5. Update on 2010 income report and 2011 budget.

New Business

1. The Library Display Committee met and has a plan for the display and are implementing designs and collecting the stuff to go in the cabinet. They would like to spend some money for:

- redesigned trifold, to leave for customer pickup
- business cards, to leave for customer pickup
- printing of posters that we are designing
- Foam and miscellaneous items

Moved and approved that the committee obtain a mix of the above with authorized expense not to exceed \$400.

2. Treasurer Dave Green is asking that DACS submit a Change of Agent form along with the annual filing with the state. Moved that we change the registered address and agent and pay the required fees.
3. Videos of the interviews Jim and I did with the Comcast cable show "Practical Talk Time" are uploaded to an account on Vimeo: <http://vimeo.com/user7448859/videos>. We'll want to post them somewhere on the DACS site.
4. Address in DACS.DOC and the web site must be changed to the legal address. (Treasurer's address.) Charlie pointed out that our volume no longer qualifies for 3rd class mail, so we are using First Class.
5. Chuck Fizer has discontinued his two SIGS. References are to be removed from DACS.DOC.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25.

—Bruce Preston

Meeting Preview

Online Stock Research and Trading

By Jim Scheef

BE SURE TO ATTEND the next DACS general meeting, when Dan O'Connor of Chaikin Power Tools will tell us about the *Basics of Online Stock Research and Trading*. Dan's presentation will cover something we all find mysterious, how to research and select the best stocks in which to invest. Dan will help us understand fundamental and technical analysis as a means of determining when to purchase or sell shares and show us some tools that make this process easier.

The tools come from Chaikin Power Tools, Mr. O'Connor's company. These programs are available at www.chaikin

powertools.com where, you can download free programs for the iPhone and a desktop "widget" for both Windows and Mac.

Dan will help us discover how to trade online as a direct investor without a broker or investment adviser and will demonstrate several online tools that can help you pick stocks. If there is anything we all need right now, it's knowing how to manage our own portfolios for maximum returns. Dan will also review some websites with great videos and educational programs to help us all learn more about

investing.

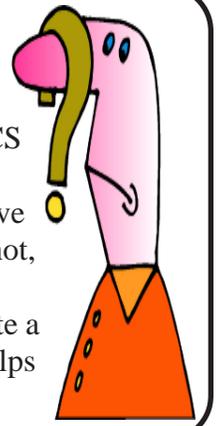
DACS meetings are held at the Danbury Hospital auditorium. Activities begin at 6:30 p.m. with registration and



casual networking. The meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. with a question and answer period (Ask DACS), followed by announcements and a short break. The featured evening presentation begins at 8:00. The meeting is scheduled to adjourn at 9:30 p.m.

DACS General Meetings are free and open to the public. Members and prior attendees are encouraged to extend invitations to anyone interested in this topic.

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



Meeting Review

Security Risks on the Internet

By Patrick Libert

BOB GOSTISCHA'S opening comments at the August meeting were a wakeup call. Here's why:

- Global Internet users are numbered in the area of 2.1 billion, with approximately 272 million in the United States.

- Eighty-five percent of all new virus infections come from the Internet, with 6 out of 10 originating from "legitimate" web pages. Given that percentage, it is very likely that we have all been exposed to potential security breaches on our own computers. Small sites stay infected for the longest time, while large sites clean up quickly; but it is virtually impossible to identify an infected site before one accesses it.

- There were 5 million infected domains reported in the last twelve months—fifty thousand virus signatures detected per day and **one billion** cumulative virus reports per month. Do you still feel safe?

- Whereas past threats were from the like of viruses with colorful names such as the Melissa virus, the I Love U virus, and the My Doom worm, present threats originate from cyber criminal groups and infections from malware with the sole purpose of stealing your personal data and identity.



How can we protect ourselves? Enter Bob's favorite antivirus software: Avast (<http://www.avast.com/index>)!

This antivirus program is available for a free download (http://files.avast.com/iavs5x/setup_av_free.exe) which, and according to Bob, should be more than sufficient to protect the average user from malicious intrusion. It is important to remove any other antivirus program on your computer before installing Avast. Their handy guide (https://support.avast.com/index.php?languageid=1&group=eng&_m=knowledgebase&_a=viewarticle&kbarticleid=574) will walk you through the procedure.

Avast uses a combination of the traditional antivirus programs such as:

- Identifying virus signatures,
- Heuristics – which detects virus-like behavior,
- Behavioral – a more complex heuristics that analyzes the entire computer.

Bob also suggested safety tips for social networking:

- Use strong passwords that are unique for each service
- Keep your antivirus software up-to-date
- Install updates in a timely manner
- Manage your privacy; don't expect the site to do it for you
- Avoid third party applications

In closing, Bob recommended the following four additional antivirus programs that are available as follows:

- Malware Bytes Anti Malware (MBAM): <http://www.malwarebytes.org/mbam.php>
- Ccleaner: <http://www.piriform.com/ccleaner/>
- CcEnhancer: <http://www.techspot.com/downloads/5014-ccleaner-enhancer-ccenhancer.html>
- WinPatrol: <http://www.winpatrol.com/download.html>

Product Review

Microsoft Standalone System Sweeper (Beta)

By Bruce Preston

SUPPOSE FOR A MOMENT that your computer has been hit by some sort of malware, such that it won't even boot. This can happen even if you have a full-time anti-virus product running. That's because of zero-day exposure – the interval between a malware item's release "into the wild" and it being identified and the signature being distributed to anti-virus applications.

If you call your computer manufacturer's support line, in more cases than not, the advice will be the knee-jerk reaction: "Reinstall Windows from your recovery CD", which often results in the machine being reset to factory configuration – with the subsequent loss of products installed after purchase, software updates, and in the worst case scenario – loss of data.

You did create the recovery CD(s) immediately after you bought the computer, didn't you? Having the image on a partition of the hard drive does you no good if the drive fails. And while I'm asking, do you have a complete, current backup of your data?

Let's assume that you did not back-up. What now?

A few years ago Microsoft released a series of free security applications, first as "Windows Defender" – an anti-spyware application, and now a suite of applications including anti-virus under the "Security Essentials" umbrella.

The newest component is Microsoft Standalone System Sweeper, which is available as a beta release. It can find and remove root kits, malware and virus infections. This is most definitely not a replacement for anti-spyware and anti-virus packages, instead it is a tool to be used to clean a computer that has already been compromised. The word Standalone refers to the fact that it must be run from either a bootable CD/DVD or from a bootable USB flash drive. The product is a free download, and comes in either a 32-bit or 64-bit version. When you run the installation program, it asks you for either a bare USB flash drive or blank recordable CD or DVD

media. The machine I used for testing does not support boot from USB, and CD media costs a lot less than dedicating a USB flash drive.



I don't have a machine that won't boot, but decided to do a test run to see how the product works. It is a good idea to be familiar with a recovery tool rather than learn its use when under duress. I used a Windows XP SP3 machine that has

been kept up to date as far as critical updates. I downloaded the 32-bit version from <http://connect.microsoft.com/systemsweeper>. You must go through the usual Windows Genuine Advantage test before you can download it.

Upon launching the installer, it informed me that I also needed Image Mastering API v2 (kb932716-v2) which is used to write a CD image from within an application. The link in the pop-up alert just took me back to the system requirements page at the above link, but IMAPIv2 wasn't referenced. I had to search for it, and finally found it here: <http://tinyurl.com/3h7xqm2>.

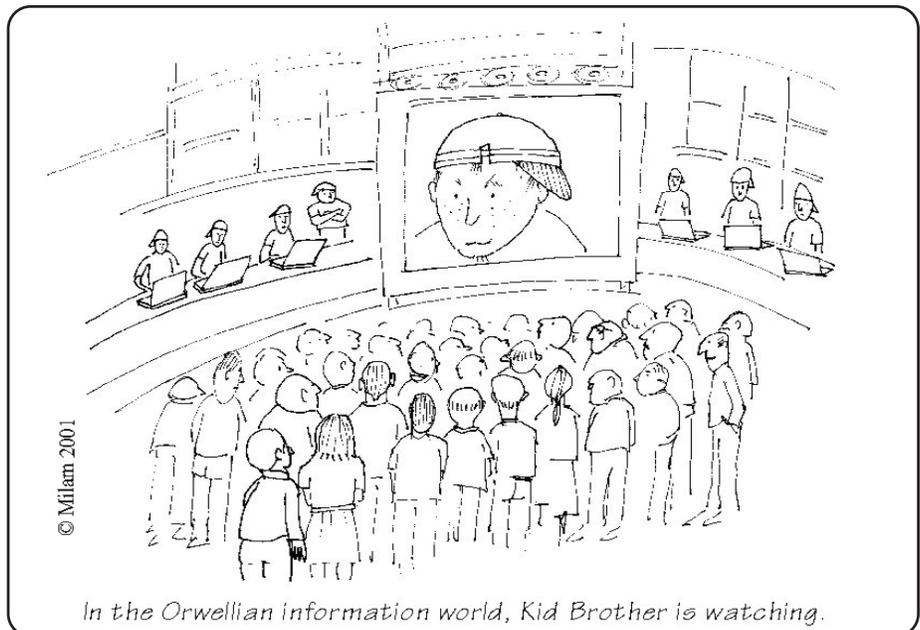
Once IMAPIv2 was installed the instal-

lation proceeded with a further download that it then burned to a CD.

To run the sweeper, put the CD in your drive and then restart the computer. At the "Boot from CD" prompt press any key and your computer will boot a subset of Windows 7 and immediately launch the Standalone System Sweeper. Agree to the terms, let it update the signature database (which implies that you have an internet connection,) and then click the SWEEP item in the top bar menu.

The first thing that I noticed was the notification "This may take a few hours..." That should go in the Guinness Book of World Records as an understatement. On my machine it took 9:53:41 – yes, almost 10 hours! It examined 6,388,935 files (131 GB used.) It found two items – one Trojan at the 'Severe' level in a downloaded utility that purported to unlock files left in a locked state. It was several years old and I had uninstalled it but never blew away the installation package. It identified a component that appears to have targeted eBay activity. I let the program delete it. (By the way – the Mozilla organization has File Assassin that performs unlock function well). The second was a medium level warning about a left over component of an uninstalled copy of Partition Magic v5. I let System Sweeper delete it as well.

Since my machine was never in a won't boot state, I can't report that Standalone System Sweeper would fix that condition. But I recommend that you create the appropriate 32-bit or 64-bit CD against the possibility that some day you may need it. I was very impressed that it found two things that other products had missed. I've created the 64-bit CD as well – just in case.



Special Interest Groups

SIG NOTES: September 2011

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

Contact: Bruce Preston, 203 431-2920 (bpreston@dacs.org).

Meets on 2nd Tuesday, 7p.m., by virtual connection.

Next meeting: Sep 13 (check Website for technical details)

Apple. Focuses on all aspects of the Mac and iPhone operating systems.

Contact: Richard Corzo (macsig@dacs.org).

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

Next Meeting: Sep 1

Drupal. Covers all things on Drupal, the open source content management system (CMS).

Contact: Jim Scheef (jscheef@dacs.org).

Meets on the second Thursday at 7:00 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center, or go to the DACS Community Forum (<http://www.dacs.org/forum/>) within the Members-only area.

Next meeting: Sep 8

Digital Imaging. All about digital cameras, retouching, and printing using various programs.

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

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

Next Meeting: Sep 28

Jobs. Networking and jobs search

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

Meets by e-mail.

Next meeting: TBA

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

Contact: Jim Ritterbush, linuxsig@dacs.org

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

Next Meeting: Sep 21

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

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

Meets irregularly, announced by e-mail.

Server. Explores Back Office server and client applications, including Win NT Servers and MS Outlook. SIG is on hiatus and presently merged into the Drupal SIG.

Contact: Jim Scheef (jscheef@telemarksys.com), or go to the DACS Community Forum: <http://www.dacs.org/forum/>, within the Members-only area

Web Design and DTP. Learn about Adobe software for web, graphics and desktop publishing.

Contact: Annette van Ommeren (avo@annagraphics.com).

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

Next Meeting: Oct 20

SIG News & Events

Apple. The plan for the August meeting was to take our first look at OS X Lion. Since I didn't know how well the upgrade from Snow Leopard might go, I had installed it on an external drive rather than directly on my laptop. I brought in my external drive, but unfortunately brought the wrong power cord, so I couldn't show my Lion installation.

I did however explain the approach I took. I first looked for updates to my applications to have the best chance of being Lion-ready.

I used iPartition (<http://www.coriolis-systems.com/iPartition.php>) to create a third empty partition on my external drive which already had a Leopard and Snow Leopard partition that I wanted to preserve. People asked why not just use Disk Utility, but I think that creating the third partition would not be possible without erasing the data in the first two partitions.

Next I had used Carbon Copy Cloner (<http://www.bombich.com/>) to create a bootable copy of my Snow Leopard partition in the empty third partition on

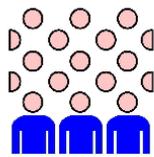
the external drive. SuperDuper! (<http://www.shirt-pocket.com/>) is another program that could accomplish this. By upgrading the copy of my Snow Leopard partition to Lion, with all my applications installed, I would be able to tell if or how well the applications ran under Lion.

Lion no longer has Rosetta, the application layer which would allow Intel-based Macs to run PowerPC-based programs. One of the most well-known programs in this category is Quicken 2007, which is the last full-featured version available on the Mac. The newer Quicken Essentials programs which would be Lion-compatible, have a reduced feature set which don't satisfy everyone's requirements. One member mentioned that he is now using iBank (<http://www.iggsoftware.com/ibank/>), which is able to read Quicken file formats.

We also had time for a question on Adobe Digital Editions (<http://www.adobe.com/products/digitaleditions/>), which is Adobe's take on an e-book format that supports copy protection.

September 2011

Danbury Area Computer Society

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																											
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Aug 2011</p> <table border="1" style="font-size: small;"> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td></tr> <tr><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td></tr> <tr><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td></tr> <tr><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Oct 2011</p> <table border="1" style="font-size: small;"> <tr><th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td></tr> <tr><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td></tr> <tr><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td></tr> <tr><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td></tr> <tr><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td></tr> <tr><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> </div>				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				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						<p style="font-size: 2em; color: red;">1</p>  <p>Apple 7:00 PM Richard Corzo macsig@dacs.org</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: red;">2</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: red;">3</p>
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<p style="font-size: 2em; color: red;">11</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: red;">12</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: red;">13</p>  <p>MS ACCESS 7:00 - 9:00 P.M. Bruce Preston bpreston@dacs.org</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: red;">14</p>  <p>7:00 PM Board of Directors</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: red;">15</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: red;">16</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; color: red;">17</p>  <p>DACS.DOC Deadline</p>																																																																																											
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Comprehensive Computer Maintenance

By Greg Skalka

PEOPLE NEED computers. Computers need maintenance. Unless you want to gamble with your email, continued access to the Internet, your finances and the other things we have come to depend on from our personal computers, you should consider some preventative maintenance. Even if you are unconcerned about a temporary loss of computer use, if you use it to access your financial accounts, you could be risking those assets and your financial reputation by failing to maintain your computer's resistance to viruses and malware.

Just as a car requires maintenance to provide reliable transportation, a computer needs regular care to insure it can safely and reliably negotiate the Information Superhighway. The concern is not only for making sure the computer works when you need it to and does not lose valuable information, but it also must protect you from attacks by information thieves. Neglecting basic computer maintenance can increase the risk of problems resulting from hardware and software failures, and can leave you open to theft of your identity and finances.

Since I must provide the maintenance and IT support for all the computers and users in my household, I've developed a basic process for computer care that provides a lot of protection for minimal cost and effort. It has evolved over the years, as computers and the threats to their well-being have changed, and has allowed me to prevent any serious computer problems from occurring. There is nothing you can do to completely prevent problems like hard drive failures, but you can take steps that will insure against the loss of data and allow you to be computing again soon.

My computer maintenance philosophy involves three basic computer maintenance principles I call the three up's: setup, backup and cleanup. Setup requires that each computer be configured as much as possible to make maintenance easier and operations safer. This can involve not only your computer's hardware and software, but your home network's hardware and configuration as well. Backup provides a reliable way to safeguard your computer's data and configuration, allowing you to recover easily from most any problem with minimal data loss. It can not

only prevent information loss resulting from hardware failures, but can also protect your computer's configuration from alteration during the installation of questionable software. Cleanup involves regular maintenance activities performed to prevent hardware problems, keep your software running smoothly and repel cyber attacks. Implemented appropriately, these three aspects of computer maintenance can keep bad things from happening to your computers and the information they contain.

Setup

A thoughtfully conceived computer setup is the foundation on which the other two maintenance activities are based. For best effect, it should be implemented on your computers when they are first put into service. To make the backup and cleanup operations easier, I always

- Partition the main physical hard drive into separate partitions for each "Function"
- Provide a second physical hard drive for each computer for backup storage

I typically create 7 to 8 partitions on the primary hard drive, each allocated to a particular function. One will contain only the operating system, another only data and other programs of different types. For best results, this must be done before any applications are installed, so that the OS can remain separate in its own partition.

These partitions can be created by Windows in most cases, but I prefer the versatility of a partition management program such as Acronis Disk Director. The OS partition is the only primary partition, with the remaining partitions consisting of logical drives in a secondary partition. A typical partition set for a Windows 7 computer with a 1 TB hard drive might be:

- 120 GB - OS (operating system and drivers only; no programs installed here, if possible)
- 50 GB - APPS1 (utility and system programs, like firewalls, anti-virus, anti-malware and browsers)
- 22 GB - GAMES (games)
- 50 GB - APPS2 (office and productivity applications, including email clients and financial apps)

100 GB - DATA (user data, such as documents, email, photos, source audio / video files and config files)

50 GB - APPS3 (mapping and misc. applications)

50 GB - APPS4 (multimedia applications, like photo / audio / video editors, scanning and VoIP software)

477 GB - LOCAL (scratch or working partition, for work in progress or temporary backup storage)

I never store anything in the My Documents folder created by Windows, as it is on the OS partition. I instead create folders in each partition to help organize files and programs, so I can avoid having to resort to using search to find things. If a desktop computer can accommodate it, I always install a second physical hard drive in the case for low-cost backup storage. For laptops and small desktops, I provide a dedicated external hard drive (eSATA or USB 3.0 preferred) for backup files. To protect my most sensitive personal and financial files, I never store them on a computer, but instead keep them on a hardware-encrypted external USB hard drive.

I also configure my computer and home network for maximum security. All security functions available in your router should be enabled. I configure my network's router for strong wireless security, and prefer to use a wired connection when possible. I don't allow sharing of drives or resources on my computers, but instead use stand-alone network drives to share files and network printers to share printing capabilities. Each computer runs a software firewall (I like ZoneAlarm), an antivirus and several anti-malware programs. I try to keep the cabling between my computer and network devices neat and labeled. It is often good to add an additional fan to some computers for improved cooling. I've found placing a laptop on a laptop cooler allows better airflow to the bottom and keeps it cooler (even without running the extra fans). I run my primary desktop computer on a low-cost UPS (uninterruptible power supply), so if the power goes out while computing, I have extra time to shut down properly and avoid data loss.

Backup

If you use computers long enough, you will have a hardware failure, the most common and devastating of which is a hard drive failure. To avoid the loss of my data, I make reliable backups of my computers as often as is reasonable.

Only you can decide how often your backups should be made, based on how much

data you want to gamble with. Backing up more often puts less of your recent data at risk, but is less convenient and takes time. It is easier to strike a reasonable balance between risk and time with your hard drive partitioned and segregated.

You can back up the more critical user data partition more often than the others, and with only user data in it, the backup file is created much faster. All partitions should be backed up periodically, and it often helps to label the backup files you make with source and date in the file name, and to maintain a backup log (text file).

If a computer hard drive fails, I want to be able to put in a new drive and be running again as soon as possible, with minimal data loss. To do that, I make image backups of each hard drive partition, rather than simply copy the files. There are several backup applications that can do this; the one I prefer is Acronis True Image. I make my partition image backups on the second internal hard drive or the external hard drive, so a hard drive failure does not result in the loss of my backups along with the primary data. I only make my backups while running the bootable CD version of True Image, so that I am familiar with the program when tragedy strikes. If a primary hard drive fails, I can replace the drive in my computer, boot from the Acronis True Image CD and restore all primary drive partitions from the backup files on the secondary or external drive to the new drive. I might have lost a few of my most recent files (created since the last backup was made), but I can be running again the same day.

I also like to make backups of the OS and application partitions right before installing new programs. If I don't like a program soon after installing, I'll simply restore the OS and application partition with the last backup files made, sending my computer back in time to a point before the installation. I like this better than using any of the uninstall methods, which often leave behind files and registry entries to clutter my drives and slow performance.

It is a good idea to periodically transfer backup files to external drives or other removable media, in case a computer power supply failure takes out both internal physical drives. Transferring these backups to another physical location (perhaps at least once a year) provides cheap protection for your data should your computer be stolen or you lose your home from fire or other disaster.

For protection of my most sensitive financial files stored on a small external hard drive, I maintain another two identical

drives as backups. I copy the new files to these backup drives weekly, and store them in a fire safe or off site. To insure adequate backups, it is best to develop a schedule for making each of your backup types and stick with it.

Cleanup

The final piece of the computer maintenance puzzle is cleanup. This involves the periodic maintenance required to insure your computer continues to run safely and efficiently. Just as with backups, you should establish a schedule to follow to insure the proper maintenance is performed. Most of the required maintenance is done to the computer software, but there are also a few hardware maintenance items that should not be neglected.

To protect your computer from the external threats of viruses, spyware and other malware, the installation of good antivirus and anti-malware software is required. Although it seems the risk from viruses has diminished, running antivirus software and keeping its virus signatures updated is still important. Only one antivirus program should be installed on a PC, as conflicts can result from multiple programs. There are many good programs to choose from, some of which are free. I presently use the one that comes with ZoneAlarm Internet Security Suite.

There are also plenty of choices available for anti-malware software, with many excellent ones available for free non-commercial use. More is better with anti-malware software. Since they typically don't run in the background, many different programs can be installed and used separately without conflicts. Since some work better on different threats than others, having a variety of anti-malware programs in your arsenal will provide the best detection and elimination of these threats. It is best to update your threat definitions and run your antivirus and anti-malware software at least once a week, preferably on a set schedule. I presently run Webroot Spybot - Search & Destroy, Lavasoft Ad-Aware, Malwarebytes Anti-Malware and Microsoft Windows Defender.

Your computer is like a living organism that starts out quick and vibrant, but becomes slow and develops ailments with age and use. The OS, applications and hard drive storage combine to form something like a nervous system. To detect and prevent the equivalent of computer headaches, nervous breakdowns and Alzheimer's, some basic system mainte-

nance should be performed regularly. Your hard drives should be scanned for bad sectors and other drive errors and defragmented periodically. Operating system updates should be applied as they become available, to improve operation and close security holes. As your computer gets older and slower, running a registry cleaner or PC tune-up suite can clean out your OS and improve performance.

Ultimately, however, your computer may reach the point after a few years where "the body is willing but the mind is weak." If your hardware is too good to replace but performance has been greatly diminished, a computer reincarnation may be appropriate. If you partitioned your hard drive as I described and have kept your early backup files, you can restore your computer's performance to its early days with no more effort than would be required to set up a new computer.

To give your computer a second life, simply restore your OS and all application (non-data) partitions, using backup files created soon after you got the PC. Having a backup log to refer to will help you pick a point in time that will minimize the reinstallation of applications. Your data should remain on its partition unaltered.

After restoring, you will need to apply all OS updates since that backup time and reinstall applications added since, but you will soon be running again with a computer that feels much younger. You can also use this opportunity to upgrade to a larger hard drive with little extra effort.

The final cleanup item to remember is your computer hardware. All computers should be opened up periodically so that dust can be vacuumed out or blown out with canned air. This also applies to laptops, though you may want to avoid disassembly, and only blow air into ventilation inlets and outlets. This will help your computer keep its cool and last much longer.

By following the three "ups" of computer maintenance, setup, backup and cleanup, you can keep your computer's performance at maximum with a minimum of effort, while protecting your data, finances and identity. By using a regular schedule of maintenance, little bits of time over its useful life spent taking care of your computer can keep it out of intensive care. Better Ups than OOPS.

GREG SKALKA is president, UCHUG (Under the Computer Hood UG), CA. This article appeared in the May 2011 issue, The Drive Light, and is distributed for reprint by other user groups. Greg can be reached at www.uchug.org; president @uchug.org.

Ask DACS

August, 2011

Moderated and reported by Jim Scheef

WE WELCOME QUESTIONS FROM the floor at the start of our General Meetings. The role of moderator is to try to guide the discussion to a likely solution to the problem. In addition, members who are not able to attend the General meeting may submit questions to askdacs@dacs.org. We will ask the question for you and post the reply in *dacs.doc* and on *dacs.org*. Please provide as much information as possible, since we can't probe during the session.

Prior to the session this month, we had a short presentation on IPv6 in recognition of World IPv6 Day which was held the day after the meeting. As a result, AskDACS was shortened. We will learn more about IPv6 in coming months.

Q - *I have two iMacs, one here and one in Florida. When I travel, I back up one onto a USB hard drive. When I get to the other location, I restore that iMac from the USB drive and continue right where I left off. The problem is that the new 10.7 "Lion" version of MacOS does not include the Rosetta application. When I buy a new iMac that will have "Lion" preinstalled, will I be able to restore my backup and in the process downgrade to MacOS 10.6 (Snow Leopard)? I need Rosetta to run many of my applications.*

A - There was much discussion that quickly focused on hardware compatibility. Mac hardware released after the release of Lion will probably not be supported by Snow Leopard as the device drivers would not be included. The member came up with his own test which is to take his backup drive to the Apple Store and try to boot a new iMac from the backup hard drive.

D - I asked if it would be possible to run Snow Leopard in a virtual machine. Richard pointed out that the MacOS license prohibits running MacOS in a VM (this policy may change under Lion).

Q - *Would like migrating several machines from Win XP to Windows 7. What is the consensus on Win7? Is the "ready for prime time"? Or should I still delay migrating?*

A - The immediate response from the floor was that Win7 is now the preferred version of Windows and is as stable as XP. While XP support will continue for some time, there is no reason to delay moving to Win7 provided your

hardware and software is compatible. Hardware includes your peripherals like printers and scanners. Older peripherals will not have device drivers for Vista or Win7, particularly if you move to the 64-bit version of Win7. Download and run the System Update Readiness Tool for Windows 7 (search in the Microsoft Download Center) to find some - but not all - upgrade problems. There were reminders of third-party tools like Laplink PC-Mover (laplink.com/pcmover) that can ease the migration process both on a single machine and between two machines.

Several people mentioned software incompatibility problems. These will not go away as Microsoft is removing more support for legacy APIs (application programming interfaces) from each new version of Windows. For example, there is no support at all for 16-bit applications from Windows 3.x or Win95. Your old 16-bit command-line utilities that worked in a CMD window on XP will not run on Win7. Older 32-bit programs may or may not run. Right-click on the application or it's shortcut to try the various compatibility settings in Win7 (held over from XP and Vista). For some applications, the only way to run them on a Win7 machine is to download and install "XP Mode" which is a virtual machine that runs a full installation of XP (available only with Win7 Professional and Ultimate). Software that runs on your current installation of XP will likely run on XP Mode, however, all this requires a machine with an extra gigabyte of RAM and plenty of processor speed. If your old machine is at all marginal, XP Mode is not really an option.

Q - *Does anyone recommend a support forum for migration issues like this?*

A - No one had any suggestions and

amazingly no one mentioned the DACS Community Forums.

Q - *What versions of Office for Macintosh will run on MacOS Lion?*

A - The current version of Office is 2011. Office 2008 also runs fine. The version prior to that was Office 2004, which may be problematical. No one knew for sure but any PowerPC version would not run because there is no Rosetta in Lion.

Q - *I've been having trouble with Verizon DSL. Their support said to install "Verizon Home Agent". Is that a good idea?*

A - This software appears to be a wizard to set up a DSL connection the "Verizon way". As such I look at it as a shortcut for incompetent support people and do not recommend installing. How you should configure your DSL depends on the other equipment on your network, most importantly, your router. The ISP support people cannot provide support for every router on the market, so they have these programs. Generally speaking, DSL connections authenticate using PPPoE. This authentication should be managed in your router rather than the DSL modem and that means the modem must be configured for "bridge mode". These topics are beyond the scope of the discussion.

Since the member indicated that the modem was dropping out and giving slow performance and his modem is three to four years old and is likely due for replacement. We had a similar problem in the DACS Resource Center. Installing a somewhat newer DSL modem improved performance but did not solve the problem. When we installed a brand new modem supporting the latest DSL standards, everything started to work and work well. If you have poor DSL performance, ask your provider for a free replacement modem. It is their modem and they should make sure you have one that provides the level of service for which you are paying.

[Disclaimer: Ask DACS questions come from members by email or from the audience attending the general meeting. Answers are suggestions offered by meeting attendees and represent a consensus of those responding. DACS offers no warranty as to the correctness of the answers and anyone following these suggestions or answers does so at their own risk. In other words, we could be totally wrong!

Back to Basics

Your Computer's Health - Part 3 What Junk Files?

By Bob Woods

I HAVE A COMPAQ laptop that is around 7 months old that I use for reading e-mail, surfing the web, publishing the changes to the UCHUG web site and occasionally playing games. Since I have any important files backed up on external devices I have not been too concerned with making a full backup image of the hard drive on this PC. I also have not run any cleanup utilities. After all, if it ain't broke, why fix it? But, after having the PC for 7 months I thought it might be



time to take on these tasks. In the January 2011 edition of Drive Light, Art Gresham started a series of articles on PC maintenance. Part 1 of the series was tips for basic hard drive and OS data cleaning. I figured that there is no better time to do a cleanup than before imaging the hard drive.

Following Art's advice I first loaded CCleaner. I am a volunteer in the IT department at the USS Midway Museum. We use CCleaner to start data cleanup on the computers in use by the staff so I am familiar with its use. When run, CCleaner gives you a nice interface with a number of options for cleaning temporary files left behind by Internet browsers (IE, Firefox, etc.), Windows Explorer, Windows itself and other applications that use temp files. To check on what it finds you can click on "Analyze" vice "Run Cleaner". That way you have a chance to determine what the application will be doing. I expected it to list a number of IE and Firefox temp files, but was surprised at how many system and application temp files it found. In all over 350 MB would be cleaned off the drive. After running the cleaning function I clicked to scan the registry for problems. During this scan CCleaner looks for unused items, missing shared DLL's and application paths, obsolete software references, leftover installation references, fragments and a few other items. CCleaner lists all that it finds for you to review. Again, given that the PC was only 7 months old I

was surprised by the number of leftovers from updates and software removals. Cleaning these items will result in a cleaner registry which will speed bootup and shutdown times and increase system stability. When you click to "Fix selected issues," you will be given the option to save the registry prior to the cleanup or cancel the operation. It took about 10 minutes to do the all of the cleanup.

The next application to install and run is Advanced System Care. This application will allow you to further clean up the registry, remove Spyware, clean up more junk files and past browser history.

You may ask why do this as CCleaner did some of the same functions? Each of the applications will take a slightly different approach to scanning your system and find different items the other did not find. Sure enough, there were a few more registry issues and temp files missed by CCleaner. Advanced System Care also has a system diagnosis section not in CCleaner that will analyze and fix system performance, system configuration and security problems. Another few issues were cleaned up.

Advanced System Care also took about 10 minutes for the cleanup. I could have also used it for disk defragment, but wanted to use a separate defrag program, so I loaded IObit Smart Defrag.

Smart Defrag is another application that has a nice clean interface that is easy to use and understand. When run I found fragmentation after 7 months was less than 1 % (only .71%). Back in the earlier versions of Windows I would have expected at least 10-15% fragmentation. It seems that the OS may be getting better at not fragmenting files. Still, any fragmentation will use extra space and take extra time for the hard drive heads to move to pick up bits and pieces. So even at less than 1% fragmentation I was willing to take the time to perform the defragmentation. Total time was about 15 minutes to defrag the 50 GB of data stored on a 220 GB drive.

At the end of the whole process I saved hard drive space, cleaned up the registry, and eased the burden on the hard drive. So, did I see a performance improvement? Without running a benchmark it would be hard to tell, but the system does seem a bit quicker. But the overall benefits to the health of the system should result in better performance and longer hard drive life. As for the backup, it went smoothly and is much cleaner as I did not back up unnecessary temp files and junk in the registry.

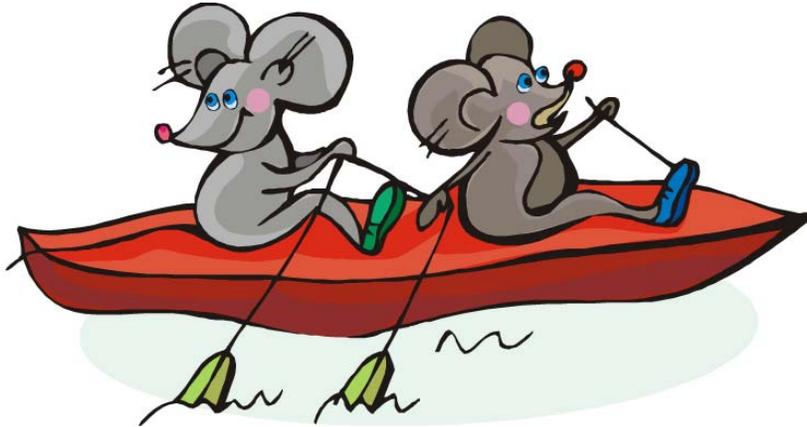
BOB WOODS is Webmaster at *Under-the-Computer-Hood User Group, CA*. This article appeared in the *UCHUG Drive Light*, and has been distributed for reprint by other user groups. Bob can be reached at webmasters@uchug.org.



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September

Investment Tools
Dan O'Connor

October

Mike Kaltschnee
Online Video
and Streaming

November

Andy Woodruff and
Sean Henderson
Recording and
Editing Live Music

December

TBA