



Next Meeting, April 2

**How Lynda.Com Became the Fast Track
for Software Training on the Web**

Directors' Notes

A meeting of your board of directors was held on Wednesday, March 13, 2013. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.

Attending: Richard Corzo, Jim Scheef, Lisa Leifels, Richard Teasdale, Bruce Preston, Bill Saturno, Annette van Ommeren, David Green. Andy Woodruff called in from New Orleans via Skype for a few minutes; but as we had a quorum he left the meeting.

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted.

Treasurer's Report

Balance on hand 2/1/13	\$4,267.73
INCOME	
Dues	\$416.49
Bank Interest	\$0.17
Total INCOME	\$416.66
EXPENSES	
Resource Center Phone	\$96.45
Resource Center Security	\$79.60
Newsletter Postage	\$37.62
Newsletter Printing	\$105.00
Newsletter Supplies (Clipart renewal)	\$68.66
Renewal Letter Postage	\$1.05
Total Expenses	\$388.38
Balance on hand 2/28/13	\$4,296.01

Membership Report

General Meetings

JAN 2 - Amateur Astronomy - Marc Polansky
 FEB 5 - Cloud Storage - Drew Kwashnak
 MAR 5 - Genealogy - Toni McKeen

	JAN	FEB	MAR
Paying Members	124	126	127
w/e-mail addresses	109	113	112
New Members	1	1	1
Seat Count	27	34	43
Members Signed-In	17	28	32
Visitors Signed-In	10	5	11
DACS.DOC			
Printed	100	100	100
Mailed	68	67	67
Mailed - Member	48	47	47
Mailed - Other	6	6	6
Mailed - Free Library	14	14	14

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Old Business

1. General meetings

- March 5: Toni McKeen - Genealogy. Preview: Bruce Preston, Review: Richard Teasdale. Bill Saturno moderated Ask DACS, covering for Jim Scheef.

- April 2: Laura Nute of Lynda.com - Online Learning. Preview: Elizabeth Talian, Review: Annette van Ommeren

- May 7: John Patrick - State of the Internet. Preview: Jim Scheef, Review: Chris Crawl, Richard T. (backup) Reviewed publicity plan with John Patrick. He suggested, "You might look at the most recent couple of posts on <http://patrickweb.com> about a speech I made in NY and a sound clip with a radio interview I did in Florida." Drew suggested to include the Voices (<http://www.voicesnews.com/>), which covers 16 town North and Northeast of Danbury. Bill Saturno will provide additional radio station contacts, beyond our usual list of publicity contacts. We can send emails to the usual newspapers and emails (and faxes if known) to radio contacts. We should include photos to the non-radio station contacts.

- June 4: Jennifer M. Scott - Twitter. Preview: Lisa Leifels, Review:

- July 2: Bruce Preston - PagePlus X6 Desktop Publishing. Preview: _____, Review: _____

- Possible future topics:

- Presentation on Facebook. Jim is working on how to best use Facebook as an organization, and might come up with a presentation on how individuals may use Facebook.

- Jeff Robbins - Drupal expert. Jeff is interested in doing a presentation, but is not able to commit to a date at this time. Andy contacted him in January to let him know our calendar is full the first half of this year. Andy will follow up in May and ask that he let us know when he will be near the area. (He resides in Rhode Island.) This is a "long shot" as a presentation.

- Years ago, we did "Surfin' Safari" as a segment about interesting websites. Perhaps now we could do something similar with mobile devices—smartphone and tablets—what apps are

Directors' Notes, Cont. on page 3

Membership Information

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

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



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Apple User Group

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RESOURCE CENTER: (203) 748-4330 • **WEB SITE:** <http://www.dacs.org>

HelpLine

Our former telephone HelpLine has been replaced by our web-based DACS Community Forum at <http://forum.dacs.org>. We have topic-specific forums where DACS members can post questions. Questions may be answered by SIG leaders or other DACS members. If none of the categories fit your question, just post it to the Ask DACS forum.

Topic

Microsoft Access
.NET Programming
Digital cameras/scanners/image processing
Content Management Systems
Linux
Mac and iPhone/iPad/iPod touch
PC maintenance

Forum

Access SIG
ASP.Net and C#VB.Net SIG
Digital Imaging SIG
Drupal SIG
Linux SIG
Apple SIG
PC Maintenance SIG
Mobile Devices SIG
Virtual Computing SIG
Web Site Design SIG
Windows SIG

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found to be interesting, entertaining, etc. This could be a meeting with multiple presenters for a full session, or it could be a small segment after Ask DACS. The iBook (Apple iTunes store), "The Telegraph: 500 Must Have Apps" would be a good resource. Richard Corzo tried to demo the Windows 8 app News Bento, an RSS news reader, but was thwarted by the conference center projector.

◦ Jim has communicated with the Danbury Hospital's CIO's secretary who understands our request and will investigate finding a presenter suitable for our request.

◦ Office 2013 - Microsoft has backed off the one machine only per purchase (no transfer to replacement machine.) Include pricing options – purchase vs. subscription, etc. Microsoft Store representative, perhaps?

◦ Apple TV device, or perhaps the rumored Intel product. Watching TV using a broadband connection but not a cable TV subscription, Hulu Plus, etc. Good seasonal device presentation?

◦ Microsoft Surface Pro (the Intel-based Microsoft tablet that will also run Windows desktop applications). Include with a Windows 8 presentation? Good seasonal device presentation?

◦ Bruce has gotten involved with OTR (Old Time Radio) 100% free and legal downloadable radio programs from the 30s through the 50s. Genres include Detective, Comedy, Mystery, History etc. It was suggested that it be a newsletter article instead of a general meeting topic.

2. Open positions

- Need a new APCUG representative to replace Patrick Libert, primarily to post to the APCUG website, field questions, receive quarterly postings, etc. Bill Saturno volunteered to look into APCUG, but Richard Corzo wasn't able to find credentials yet for logging in.

- We also need a liaison with TechSoup—the fulfillment operation used by many software vendors for distribution to non-profits. The TechSoup function is to receive distributions of product announcements and distribute to the Board. This person would also be responsible for placing orders. Jim was going to review how he set this up.

3. "Beginners" Workshop? Workshop could be held from time to time. Jim volunteered to do a workshop and Charlie

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Meeting Review

Finding Your Roots on the World Wide Web

By Richard Teasdale

THE TOPIC OF the DACS March 2013 general meeting was Genealogy and Computers. Guest speaker Toni McKeen spoke about how to do genealogical research using computers and the internet. In addition to explaining why she does genealogy, Toni offered some practical tips about how to get started.

Toni McKeen has 28 years of experience as a genealogical researcher and she teaches classes in genealogy at the Ridgefield senior center. She explained some of the reasons why people do genealogy: it's fun, it helps one learn about oneself, it's a journey that takes you to places where you've never been before, etc. A major reason is the opportunity to pass on family history to new generations—although young people might not be interested today, some day they will be.

The major sources of information that genealogists employ to do their research remain the same today as they were before the internet age: documents and stories. There are many types of document that provide family history information. Genealogy is never “done” - there are always more documents to find. What has changed radically is the way that documents can be found and accessed.

The Internet is a huge source of information. In the past, researchers had to go to libraries or the places where their ancestors lived to gather information. Today they can go to many different websites to do so. Toni recommends [ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com). It costs \$150/year to be a member, but is user-friendly and well worth the money. Ancestry.com provides online access to many different types of record, including census, immigration, naturalization, and military records, city directories, vital records, obituaries, and cemetery records.

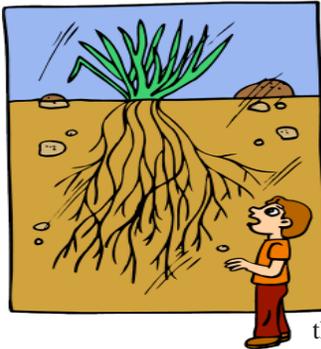
Another good online source of information is familysearch.org. Run by the Mormons, it is free and has millions of online-accessible records, including many from other countries. The Mormons have offices worldwide, but locally, the Newtown office is very helpful to people in our area who are researching their ancestors.

Steve Morse, the designer of the Intel 8086 chip, wrote software for doing genealogical web searches. His software is available to the public at www.stevemorse.org.

Other sites that Toni has found useful include findagrave.com and italiengen.org.

Another major source of genealogical information is stories that are told by word-of-mouth. Stories tend to get lost and need to be documented. The researcher has to keep in mind, however, that word-of-mouth evidence can sometimes be unreliable, so caution is needed. Like a journalist, the genealogist has to check “facts” in every way he or she can.

The basic rules of genealogical research are: (1) start with yourself; (2) start with census records; (3) find every census record for all of your family members; (4) research the **family** not the name; (5) read the **whole** document; (6) research “side-ways” as well as forward and back. (The last of these rules means that more than the researcher's own direct line of descent should be included, e.g. uncles, aunts, cousins, etc. are necessary parts of the complete picture.)



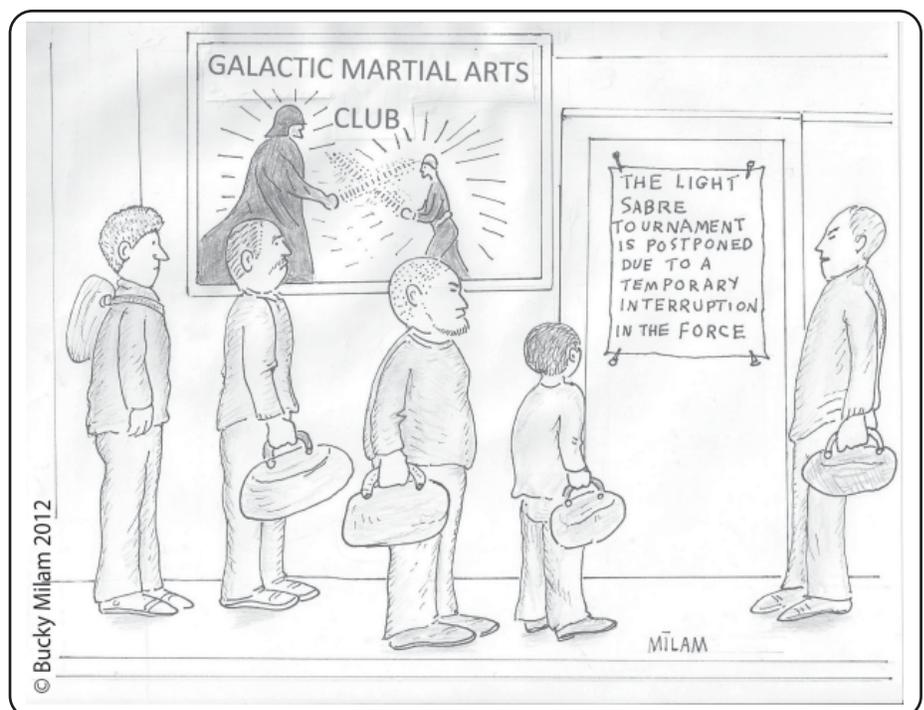
Toni recommends the following genealogical software: Family Tree Maker (for PCs) and Reunion (for Macs). These programs allow the researcher to organize all information found. There are websites where family tree information can be stored, notably ancestry.com, but for privacy reasons you should use your own computer instead.

Toni recommends that family history researchers write a book of family information. They should let all family members know what they are doing, so that everyone has an opportunity to contribute. The Past is the Present that we give to the Future!

Toni McKeen's e-mail address is tonimckeen47@hotmail.com, and she is happy to answer follow-up questions that anyone may have.

Membership has its Privileges!

Become a member and support DACS. Each member has access to the Community Forum, where they can post questions, the newsletter online in PDF form, group related news via email, SIG meetings, online forums, and any group-only related events, promotions, or activities. There is also an option to receive a mailed newsletter. For information on how to join DACS, see <http://www.dacs.org/aboutdacs/joining.htm>.



Meeting Preview

Lynda.com: the Fast Track to Software Training

by Elizabeth Talian

WERE YOU AS frustrated as I was when you upgraded Microsoft Office and suddenly found customary operations were no longer at your fingertips? Are you someone who hasn't had to create a PowerPoint presentation for a couple of years and would benefit from a 15 minute refresher? Ever find yourself wanting to know how to quickly share your music, or create a photomontage, or edit a video — late at night?



Well ... in any of these situations and many more, you could benefit from the online library of 90,000 training videos at *lynda.com*. For audio, video, developer, design, or business applications; for Mac, Windows, Linux, or Drupal; for networks, laptops, tablets or phones; for licensed software or free — there is information and training at *lynda.com*. When you need more information or help than your friends at DACS have time to provide — find help at *lynda.com* — for Acrobat, eBay, Excel, Google, Poser, HTML or XML, and much more. Search and watch quality training videos when convenient for your schedule. Select video chapters and rewind or skip ahead to set your own pace — in any of the over 1600 courses offered.

Someone I worked with first introduced me to *lynda.com* about 10 years ago, and it was a godsend for my consulting business. We often had to first say yes, and then later figure out how to do a project with enough efficiency to make money on it. It wasn't long before I subscribed my business — so I could assign someone to research a topic (like the changes to Microsoft Office 2010), locate select videos, and cue them to share with the rest of us over a pizza lunch.

You may come to trust *lynda.com* as I have, to be your premier on-line resource for all things software. The cost is manageable and flexible to your needs, as 2.5 million members attest. These include individuals, small businesses, Fortune 100 companies, universities, schools, and governments.

On Tuesday, April 2, we'll welcome Laura Nute, the *lynda.com* Enterprise Account Executive for the Northeast Region. She'll provide a brief company background, and then jump into a high level demo of the site. Laura will also introduce recent enhancements and discuss some future plans. Laura's presentation begins at 8 p.m., following networking and Ask Dacs. Be sure to stay for the raffle after the presentation!

So come learn how to help yourself better use software products, or your iPad, or camera, or make a decision on software you haven't invested in yet. The breadth of courses is quite stunning — from learning to create a mobile app to a pivot table in Excel, from making the most of your Google calendar to building a website. Come take a look at what a modest investment in a *lynda.com* subscription has to offer. There is something for each and every DACS member and visitor — with easily navigable

Directors' Notes, Cont. from page 3

volunteered to be an assistant. Jim and Charlie canceled the proposed Feb. 27th meeting and will decide upon a date which might be in April. They will need to get the date to the newsletter by this Saturday. It is still viewed as being intended to be only offered to members. We do not see it as being suitable for Meetup, as Meetup participants are generally well beyond beginner status.

4. To help launch the Innovation Center and Hackerspace, the City of Danbury is hosting the Danbury Mad Hacker Social Media Conference - intended to be an annual event. For this year the Danbury Mini Maker Faire would be a one-time event.. Mike Kaltschnee has invited us to have a booth at the Maker Faire in June, and we have accepted the offer.
5. Separately, Tom Carruthers asked to meet with us about possible participation in the Mad Hacker Conference June 8 and 9 in downtown Danbury. Tom says, "I have been put in charge of the task of organizing about 28-35 workshops, panels, symposiums and keynotes for the event. There will also be a Makers Fair on the green and at the Ice Arena as well as events, keynotes and a big bash at the new Danbury Sports Dome located on Shelter Rock Road." Sean H. and Andy Woodruff are willing to do a music workshop, possibly in two sessions — one introductory and the second more advanced Tom mentioned an interest in Google Docs as part of an open source office workshop, asking for a contact.
6. We switched from our former DSL provider to AT&T. Download speed is definitely faster, measured at about 5

video courses specifically for beginners, intermediate and advanced users. Laura will demonstrate.

See you there!

DACS general 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.

Mbps. Received first AT&T bill with new DSL service. We are being charged \$30 phone, \$10 business unlimited calling, \$72 Elite Internet, - \$42 1-year promotional discount on internet. So \$70 total plus surcharges, fees, and taxes. We used to pay \$57.00 phone, \$5.50 additional listing, plus \$3 business calling for a total of \$65.50 without internet (again not counting surcharges, fees, and taxes).

New Business

1. Jim has renewed our initial one-year Microsoft Office 365 subscription, used by the DACS board.
2. Annette has received notification that our Meetup account has been auto-renewed. We have decided to continue with another six months.
3. Annual officer elections for secretary, treasurer, president.
 - a. David Green has agreed to extend his term as Treasurer for one year.
 - b. Bruce Preston has agreed to extend his term as Secretary for one year.
 - c. A search committee has been formed to recruit a new board member as several board members expect to be relocating. The committee consists of Richard Corzo, Jim Scheef, and Bruce Preston.
 - d. Richard Corzo will continue as president on a month to month basis, as per bylaws, until a president is appointed by the board. Note that, as per the bylaws, the president of the society need not be a member of the board. All members are encouraged to suggest candidates for board or president position to a member of the search committee.

Adjourned: 10:10 PM

—Bruce Preston

Special Interest Groups

SIG NOTES: April 2013

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

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

Meets 2nd Monday, 7 p.m. at DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: Apr 8

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

Contact: Ken Graff at 203 648-9747 (thedigitalwiz@gmail.com).

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

Next Meeting: April, 24

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: Apr 11

Jobs. Networking and jobs search

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

Go to DACS Community Forum (<http://forum.dacs.org> for listings).

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

Contact: Dave Mawdsley, linuxsig@dacs.org

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

Next Meeting: Apr 17

Mobile Devices. Focuses on smartphones, tablets, and e-readers of all makes and models.

Contact: Richard Corzo and Jim Scheef (Mobilesig@dacs.org)

Meets 4th Thursday, 7 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center

Next Meeting: Apr 25

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

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

Go to DACS Community Forum (<http://forum.dacs.org>).

Server. SIG is on hiatus and presently merged into the Drupal SIG.

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

SQL Server Study Group. For preparing for the Microsoft SQL Server 2008 Database Development Exam in July 2013.

Contact: Sean Henderson, 203 837-7068 (snh@seanhenderson.net)

Meets 3rd Thursday, 7 p.m. (through July) at DACS Resource Center and online.

Next Meeting: Check with Sean for next online meeting

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 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center.

Next Meeting: Apr 16

SIG News & Events

Apple. In March we looked at a music listening/discovery service called Rdio (<http://www.rdio.com/>). You may be more familiar with services like Pandora or Rhapsody. I have used Pandora which is available free through a web browser, but the iPhone app has a lot of ads that obscure the album cover view of what's playing, or occasionally an audio ad will play before the next song.

Like Pandora, Rdio can be used to create a station based on an artist and play songs by that artist and similar artists. What distinguishes Rdio from Pandora is the ability to play any specific song or album in their catalog of millions of songs. There are three tiers of service. The free version lets you listen to songs on your computer without any ads. There's a nice desktop application for Windows and Mac, so you don't have to listen in your browser. There must be some limit to how much music you get for free, because the next tier for \$4.99 a month gives you unlimited listening on your computer. The top tier for \$9.99 a month adds access to Rdio on your mobile devices. There are apps for your iPhone/iPod touch and Android devices, even Windows Phone and BlackBerry.

I tried the full service with a 14-day free trial. You create an account with just an e-mail address and no credit card, unless

you decide to sign up for the pay service. Rdio has the ability to remember what you were listening to, so if you switch from your computer or mobile device to a different one, you can listen to the song you were last listening to and continue with an album or playlist.

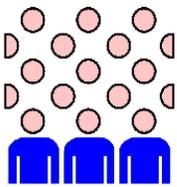
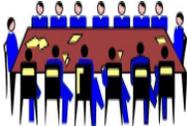
The Mac version at least (I didn't investigate the Windows version) can scan your iTunes collection and include them in your Rdio Collection of artists that you like. This is a convenient way for you to pick an artist you're in the mood for. Otherwise you can just search for an artist you're interested in trying. There are a couple of other new services to consider, Spotify and MOG. The way I chose Rdio was by looking at what songs were available on the three services, which AllMusic (<http://www.allmusic.com/>) will show you when you are exploring artists and their albums. I found Rdio had more of the international artists I was interested in.

Rdio has some social integration with Facebook and Twitter. I don't use Facebook, but I tried the Twitter integration and found one of the music artists I follow on Twitter was also an Rdio customer. I was able to check out some of his playlists.

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April 2013

Danbury Area Computer Society

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																		
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7	8  Apple 7:00 PM Richard Corzo macsig@dacs.org	9	10  Board of Directors 7:00 PM	11  Drupal 7:00 PM Jim Scheef 860-355-0034	12	13																																																																																																		
14	15	16  Web & Graphics Design 7:00 - 9:00 PM Annette van Ommeren avanommeren@dacs.org	17  Linux 7:00 -9:30 PM Dave Mawdsley linuxsig@dacs.org	18  SQL Server Study Group 7:00 - 8:30 PM	19	20  DACs.DOC Deadline																																																																																																		
21	22	23	24	25  Mobile Devices 7:00 PM Jim Scheef & Richard Corzo mobilesig@dacs.org	26	27																																																																																																		
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Internet Tips

Windows Lab - Avoiding Web Ads and Cookies

by Penny Cano

WEB ADVERTISEMENTS often take up half of the real estate on a webpage. Supposedly, they entice the viewer into buying the products. In actuality, they help to financially support the host website. Cookies, on the other hand, are outwardly invisible. They are put on your computer by websites to identify you. There are good cookies and bad cookies. A secure website (bank, credit card, prescription order, etc.) requires a cookie (good) on your computer to verify your identity. You cannot use the website unless you have their cookie. Public, retail, and other non-secure sites put tracking cookies (bad) on your computer to do things like determine which websites you frequent so they can customize all those ads to what they believe are your interests. Personally, I like to avoid both intrusions. Here is how it can be done on the two browsers I use, Internet Explorer and Firefox

Firefox is the easiest because there are add-ons you can download and install from . On the Firefox toolbar, select Tools/Add-ons/ Get Add-ons.Mozilla.org/ (Fig. 1)

The two I find most useful are Adblock Plus and NoScript. Adblock Plus doesn't require setting changes other than to be sure the updates are automatic. NoScript installs easily, but it takes some personal interaction to make it work to your advantage. Many ads on websites use Java script,

Flash player, or other tools for the animation. NoScript gives you the option to choose which of these scripts you want to allow.

If an unknown script is attempting to execute, there is a yellow warning bar at the bottom of the Firefox window. Pressing the small "S" in the lower right corner of the status bar pops up a menu that allows you to trust (permit) scripts or block them. Usually I make "Untrusted" websites with "ads" (*msads.net*, *adrevolver.com*) or "click" (*doubleclick.net*), etc., in their name. If you make a mistake and block something you need, you can always press the "S" button and go back and "Trust" the script. (Fig. 2)

The third Add-on I find useful is *BetterPrivacy*, which lets you choose which cookies to accept or deny. The same rule applies in choosing which website's cookies - deny "ads," "track," "click." etc; accept "Discovercard," "Chasebank," and the like. Internet Explorer provides more of a challenge to block ads and cookies. I have not found an Add-on for IE that allows you to choose which scripts are allowed or blocks ads and tracking cookies on a wholesale basis. So it takes more effort on the user's part to accomplish the same thing. Somewhere in the IE settings there is a check box that says to tell websites you do not want to be tracked. But many of the websites do not honor this.

Also, you can use InPrivate Filtering

("Safety" button or under "Tools" on the menu) to block some sites. The most effective way I have found to block ads in IE is not in the IE settings. I use the Parental Control settings in my Virus/Internet Security suite. I use TrendMicro Titanium Internet Security. Under Parental Controls, I block the general category of "Web Advertisement," but that doesn't get everything. (Fig. 3)

There is also a section of the Parental Controls that blocks individual websites. The same rule applies here as in Firefox - if the name includes "ads," "click," etc., it's usually a "Block."

Cookie blocking can be done with IE settings under Tools/Internet Options on the menu or the Internet Options icon in the Control Panel. Initially, it is a pain in the neck, but worth it in the long run. On the Privacy tab chose the "Sites" button. If you already know the name of the website whose cookie is to be blocked, you can enter it and choose "Block." (Fig. 4)

If the website doesn't work right without the cookie, you can always come back and remove the block. The next part can be annoying at first. On the Privacy tab choose the "Advanced" button. Check the box to "Override automatic cookie handling" and mark "Prompt" for First-party and Third-party cookies. Now, each time a website tries to put a cookie on your computer, a Privacy Alert box will pop up. Hit the "Block" button (Fig. 5)).

They are persistent, and may try 20-40 times before the website loads. But if you can do everything you need to do while denying the cookies, the next time you visit the website and the box pops up, you can check the box that says "Apply my decision to all cookies from

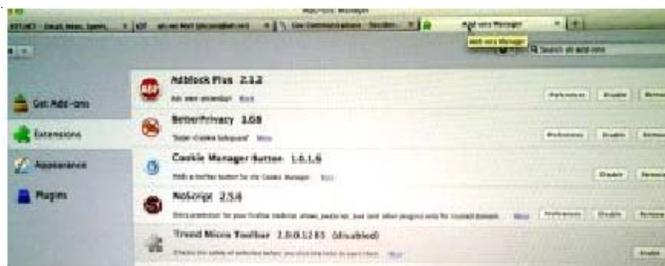


Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

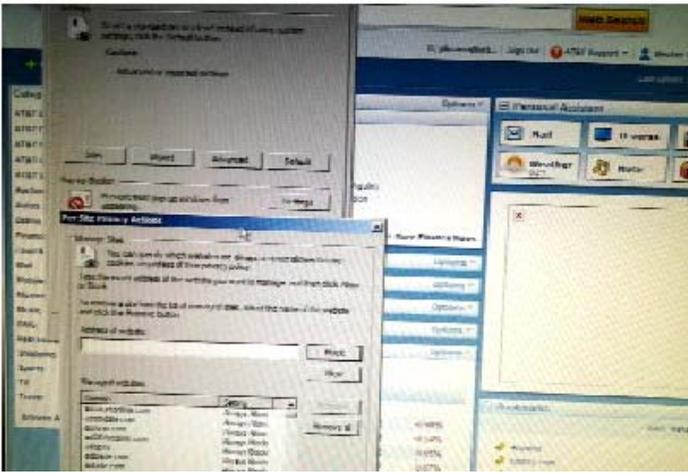


Figure 4

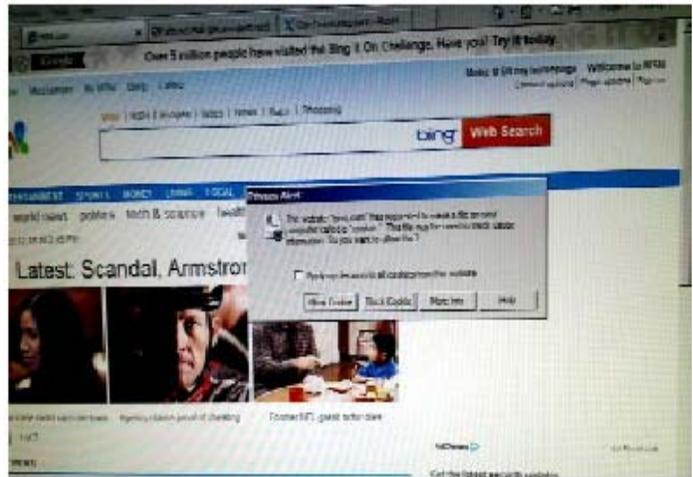


Figure 5

this website." Then when you choose block, the website is added to the "Sites" list and you won't get the alert again. If you do this, after a while you will get few

alerts and the cookies will automatically be blocked.

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& Dumber Workshops.

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SIG Notes, Cont. from page 6

Linux. The busy March meeting included five main items: a presentation by myself for beginners of GIMP using the 'Levels' option, a presentation by Jim Ritterbusch on G4L, a discussion of permissions used with MySQL and PHP, a conversation about the controller board named "Raspberry Pi" and a brief description of the different flavors of Ubuntu and their various desktop configurations using KDE, Gnome, etc.

A First Look at Levels in GIMP

My tutorial on the photo editor GIMP levels was concerned with adjustments to fix images that have brightness and/or darkness problems. A photo that is mostly dark or mostly light can be fixed successfully. More challenging photos having flash reflections in otherwise dark photos requires more effort to make effective fixes. A photo taken with a flash inside a darkened cathedral might show some flash reflections in an otherwise very dark photo. Another example would be a photo taken of people in a room without lighting but with a bright window at their backs saturating the picture thus making the people's faces difficult to see.

Photos taken under poor conditions always cause problems, but even those photos may be the only records of an important event. Thus there is a serious need to be able to adjust values in a photo to bring out the subjects more effectively. Brightness and contrast adjustments help, but using levels in GIMP is one of the ways to adjust unfortunate lighting problems.

Demonstration and Use of 'G4L'

Jim Ritterbusch demonstrated features and uses of the a free operating system environment in Live-CD format for backup and restoration of disks and partitions called "G4L." (<http://sourceforge.net/projects/g4l/>). Jim described how he rescued a failing hard drive containing numerous partitions. He was able to successfully restore the saved partitions to a new hard drive. His presentation showed numerous slides made with the help of a digital camera to capture moment by moment actions of the procedures. G4L is a free download that can be made into a bootable USB drive or CD. The download is quite small (about 85M) but its capabilities are extensive, allowing it to work with Windows, Mac or Linux hard drives.

Discussion about permissions used by MySQL and PHP

I brought up a discussion about migrating a MySQL database from a laptop to my server which then behaved in an inconsistent manner. Searching and viewing any of the records of the database worked just fine. However, writing new records and/or editing old ones resulted in failure. Somehow the read/write permissions seemed incorrect. After spending a considerable amount of time looking for answers, I came upon a solution from an old Internet forum entry written in 2010 that turned out to reveal a different cause from read/write permission, and then the step-by-step procedure needed. The procedure fix worked, so now I could add or edit records in the database. I was happy to have my database working again, but I was still confused since the fix didn't seem to apply to read/write permissions.

From our discussions, I learned that two completely different permission systems are involved and both need to be set correctly. Owner and group assignments with MySQL both have to be 'mysql' and not 'root' and multiple permissions need to be set in PHP using the phpadmin program that is normally installed along with MySQL and PHP. I hadn't payed close enough attention to the assignments or permissions I needed to. (I now have work to do with some other databases to check the assignments and permissions on them.) To the attendees at our session: Thank You for the help!

Raspberry Pi

Discussion next centered on the Raspberry Pi (<http://www.element14.com/community/index.jspa>) which is a small credit-card sized controller board that can be connected up to a monitor, keyboard and mouse to run computer or server operations. The Raspberry Pi also connects to outside equipment to control devices. For example, a Raspberry Pi could be connected to a router at home and connected to the heating system of the house. Permissions could be set to allow access to Raspberry Pi from a computer on the Internet to adjust the heat settings.

My Raspberry Pi is on order, and is expected to be delivered shortly. Another attendee planned to place an order soon. So in addition to the capabilities we've seen in the presenta-

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Ask DACS

March 2013

Moderated and reported by Bill Saturno

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.

At this month's Ask DACS, we reviewed questions posted at the AskDACs forum at DACS.org as well as solicited live questions from the floor of the meeting. An open discussion continued pursuing answers from other audience members. My role as moderator is to try to guide the discussion to a likely solution to the problems presented. The answers below include both the summary of discussion that took place at the general meeting as well as some (pre and post meeting) research.

Q: If I were to get a Windows 7 64bit upgrade, would it be able to upgrade from the 32 bit Windows 7 installation into a 64 bit?

A. Differences between the 32-bit and the 64-bit versions of Windows allow for the computer to handle memory accessibility, memory management, and enhanced security features. Depending on your computer's hardware configuration, you may or may not have an option to install a 64 bit Operating System. Confirming the advice given on the AskDACs forum, there is no official migration path from 32 bit to 64 bit Windows 7. William R. Stanek of Microsoft's Technet magazine confirms this upgrade hurdle, and he strongly suggests moving directly to a 64 bit edition when installing Windows 7.

Follow Up: Is there a way to make the 32bit version see more than 4 GB of RAM? I know Linux includes PAE in their kernel which allows seeing more than 4 GB of RAM with 32bit versions.

One of the greatest advantages with a 64 bit Operating System architecture is the ability to handle increased memory. Unfortunately, unlike Linux, there are no common solutions or memory management tricks on accessing additional memory outside the OS's allotted range. Ken Blake, a ten-year veteran with the Microsoft Desktop Experience on the

Microsoft Community forums, also confirms there are no existing "workarounds." After exploring this answer, the first live question was asked by a member in the general audience:

Q: Where do I find which version of Windows 7 I am running on my own computer?

A. Click Start, right-click Computer, and then click Properties. In the lower half of the dialog box which appears, the information on your specific Windows system will be listed, including if it is a 32 or 64 bit installation. In most instances, your desktop and higher end laptops will be running 64 bit version of Windows 7, while your more economy based machines and light end netbooks will have a 32 bit version installed. All installation options of Windows 7 are available in both 32 and 64 bit versions.

Additional recommendations from the community included a utility called Belarc Advisor. BelArc Advisor builds a detailed profile of your installed software and hardware, including Microsoft Windows version information, and software serial numbers. Advisor then shows the results in your Web browser. BelArc Advisor is available online at a variety of sites. As always, download only programs you are familiar with from the online sources you trust. (In this case, our suggestion was to utilize download.com operated by CNET.)

Q: It seems that VMWare viewer is the common application to get thin clients connected to the virtual desktops. My question is: does an operating system still need to reside on the thin client as a bare essential? Also, if an operating system does need to reside on the thin client and you are running a 64 bit VMWare environment, would it be

ideal to have like windows 7, 64bit or some 64 bit OS on the thin client for optimal speed? I get that the desktop is virtualized, I don't understand how the thin client is setup to connect to the virtual desktops.

A thin client can be a simple piece of computer hardware (or a computer program) that relies on some other computer (usually a server) to fulfill its traditional computational roles. The purpose of using a thin client is multifold, as it can create cost savings within an organization as well as help keep program version standards equal across the entire organizational platform. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thin_client.

VMware is available in a plethora of configurations. The VMware Compatibility Guide online shows that the VMWare viewer is available for dozens of thin client hardware platforms and Operating Systems. To best answer the question: Yes, You may certainly run VMware on a Full Powered PC locally, but there is no real advantage (unless you need the additional computer power to perform higher computational functions or tasks locally at your workstation)

Q: My 4-year old XP laptop is experiencing longer boot times. What suggestions can you recommend?

A. A plethora of ideas were suggested by the community. The first suggestion was to run the Windows Defragmentation Utility. This built in program accesses the computer hard drive and organizes the data into a more efficient arrangement to increase data read and write times.

To further explore what may slow down the laptop's start up time, one suggestion was to use a program called Solutio (www.solutio.com). Solutio is a PC utility that does a variety of functions including examining which Apps are running on your machine, and assessing which apps maybe crashing or hogging the microprocessor. Solutio also will make suggestions on what apps could be turned off (or postponed) at startup to allow you to speed up boot-up time of your machine. By being a community based utility, solutio can inform you of crowd-sourced suggestions of what adjustments you may be able to make for most effective speed solutions.

Other suggestions followed: Space on

the hard drive may become a factor in an older machine that starts slowing down its performance. Look at your drive's free space; compress some files or remove some unneeded data if your drive is almost at capacity. Other recommendations included entering your computer hardware bios and see if there are some unneeded items in the computer boot sequence. Another suggestion was to check your MS Config startup list for the same house cleaning technique.

Sometimes the slowdown in speed is not internal. A recommendation was made to inspect what programs (on startup) are pinging out on boot and are "calling home" to check in for updates. Many times these "calling home" procedures are defaulted to be executed at startup. Instead, try turning off or delaying these procedures until a more appropriate time. (Be aware that if you turn off any auto updating, you should manually check for software updates on a regular basis to make sure you are running the current, safest version.)

Last but not least, double check for Spyware or Malware! In all the above suggestions, the assumption was made that the slow startup is on a virus free machine. Check to make sure your machine is clean of viruses. Suggestions on tools to do this (that operate beyond the scope of your normal anti-virus) include "SuperAntiSpyware.com" and "Spybot: Search and Destroy".

Continuing on the subject of vulnerabilities, the last question was asked about the security risks in using Java.

Q: There have been some recent concerns about vulnerabilities in Java. Recommendations?

A. Java is a popular technology that powers many utilities, games, and business applications on a variety of computer systems. Recently, The U.S. Department of Homeland Security warned that Java poses risks for computer users. Using Java can create various vulnerabilities that allow others from the outside to remotely access and exploit your computer. The safest answer to the Java concern is simply to turn off Java manually. Although the safest and easiest method, this is not feasible to implement because users

many times will need to use Java in their everyday work or computer use. There are settings you can set inside the browser program to require a stop and obtain user permission request every time certain scripts are initiated. This allows for a "stop and warn first" style usage while browsing the web. To help automate this process for a better online experience, there are third party programs available to run in your browser that allow for granularity control in Java use on a case to case basis. Using "NoScript" (in Firefox) or "NotScript" (in Chrome) allows the user to create a permissions whitelist of individual sites that the user trusts to

be allowed to have access running Java.

If you have a question you would like discussed, feel free to ask it at our next monthly General Meeting on April 2nd. In addition, feel free to post your question to the DACS community in the Ask DACS online forum at DACS.org.

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!

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tions on the Arduino Uno or DFRobot controller boards, we may soon be discussing projects with the Raspberry Pi. I offered that I might try to construct a home weather station using my Raspberry Pi.

Discussion of Ubuntu "flavors"

Finally, we had a free ranging discussion about the various kinds of Ubuntu available. (Ubuntu, Kubuntu, Lubuntu, etc.) Issues with different desktop configurations such as Gnome, KDE and Unity were brought up. Under the hood, the Ubuntu distribution are just GNU/Linux, but each variation allows for personal preferences and choices of the default software that comes packaged with the particular distribution.

[David Mawdsley - A+, Network+ and Security+ Certified Service Technician Visit MadMod Computing (madmod.com) for free newsletters or to use the appointment calendar. [Microsoft Windows is okay to use, but the Linux distribution called Ubuntu makes for a lot nicer computing experience!]

Next Linux SIG meeting: April 17th at 7:30 PM

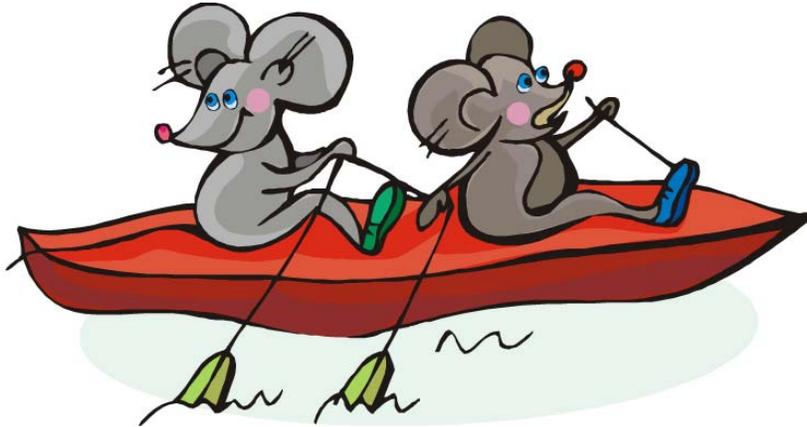
Mobile Devices. In February, we followed up the general meeting topic of cloud storage services and talked about two specific examples, Microsoft's SkyDrive (<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/skydrive/>) and Box (<http://www.box.com/>).

SkyDrive has a desktop application for Windows Vista and above, and for Mac OS X Lion and above. This creates a synchronized folder in your home folder and a shortcut in the left navigation area of Windows Explorer and Mac Finder windows. You can put any files or folders you like in the SkyDrive folder. By default it starts with Documents, Photos, and Videos subfolders, plus a Public folder. You start with 7 GB of free space and can purchase more space if you need it. You can install the desktop application on multiple computers and any changes to the sync folder will propagate across all your computers and mobile devices.

There are SkyDrive mobile apps available for iPhone and iPad, Android, and of course, since it's Microsoft, Windows Phone. For space reasons these mobile apps don't attempt to keep a local off-line copy of your sync folder, but you can access anything you need as long as you are connected.

Box is another service. It seems to emphasize collaboration scenarios where you might be editing a document with a colleague. It will notify you if your colleague/friend updates a document that you are sharing. Of course you can use it to store files without collaborating or sharing. Like SkyDrive, Box also has a desktop application for Windows and Mac. It creates a sync folder inside your Documents folder in your home folder and adds a shortcut to the navigation pane/sidebar. The mobile platforms supported are iPhone/iPad, Android, Windows Phone, and Blackberry. I even found an app for my NOOK Tablet which runs a customized version of Android.

One member brought in her brand new Windows 8 laptop and we advised her to use the Windows 7/8 homegroup feature to transfer files from her old laptop running Windows 7. Since this is a local network copy operation, this would be much quicker than trying to use a cloud storage synchronized folder over the Internet.



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Laura Nute of Lynda.com
Online Learning

May

John Patrick
State of the Internet

June

Jennifer M. Scott
Twitter

July

Bruce Preston
PagePlus X6
Desktop Publishing