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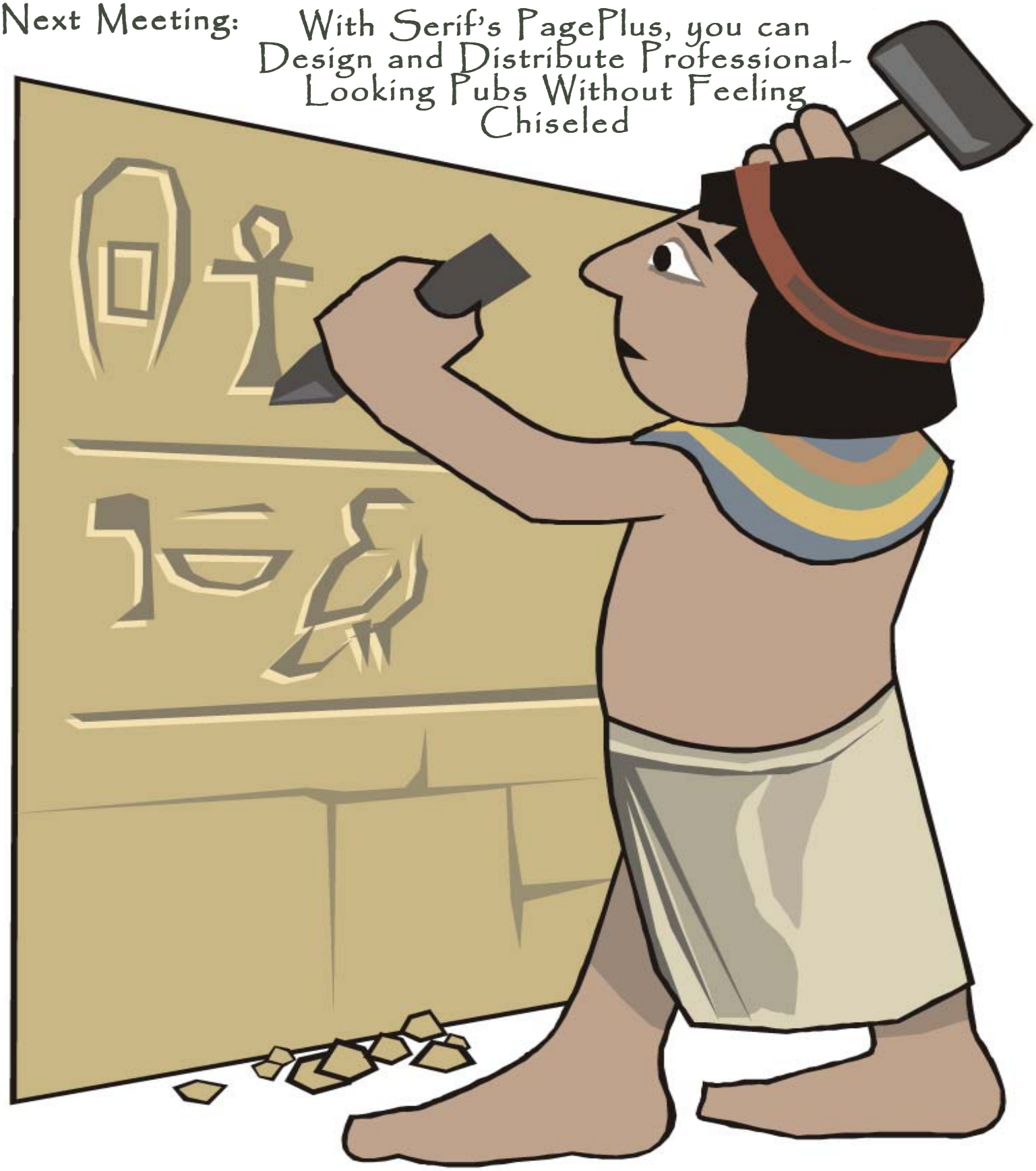
A Computer & Technology Newsletter

July 2013 Volume 24, Issue 7 $2.00

Next Meeting: With Serif's PagePlus, you can Design and Distribute Professional-Looking Pubs Without Feeling Chiseled



Directors' Notes

A meeting of your board of directors was held on Wednesday, June 12, 2013. The meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM.

Attending were Richard Corzo, Richard Teasdale, Andy Woodruff, Dave Green, Bruce Preston, Jim Scheef, Bill Saturno, Annette van Ommeren. Visitors were: Charlie Bovaird, Mike Kaltschnee, John Gatrell, Rob Limbaugh

The minutes of last meeting were accepted.

Treasurer's Report

Balance on hand 5/1/13: $4,565.09

INCOME	
Dues:	$325.32
Bank Interest:	$0.20
Total Income:	$325.52
EXPENSES	
Resource Center Phone:	$82.84
Resource Center Security:	$79.60
Newsletter Printing:	$103.00
Newsletter Postage:	$41.58
Renewal Letter Postage:	$7.26
Check Printing:	$15.05
Total Expenses:	$329.33
Balance on hand 5/31/13:	$4,561.28

Membership Report

APR 2 - On-Line Education - Lynda.com
MAY 7 - Health Care & Internet - John Patrick
JUNE 4 -Twitter & Soc. Media - Jennifer Scott

	APR	MAY	JUNE
seat count	36	46	38
members signed in	31	34	31
visitors signed in	5	4	7
Paying members	122	124	124
w/ email address	107	112	115
new members	2	1	1

DACSDOC			
printed	75	75	75
mailed	65	64	63
mailed-members	46	45	44
mailed-other	5	5	5
mailed-free lib	14	14	14

Old Business

1. General meetings

• June 4: Jennifer Scott - Twitter. Preview: Lisa Leifels Review: Andy Woodruff

• July 2: Bruce Preston - PagePlus X6 Desktop Publishing. Preview: Drew Kwashnak Review: Allan Ostergren

• August 6: Office 2013. Carolyn Bighinatti will attend with some speaker from the Microsoft Store. Preview: _____ Review: Richard Teasdale

• September 3: Ken Graff - digital photo editing, organizing, and sharing online.

• Possible future topics:

° Note: Jim had success with his Windows 8 machine at the June meeting, as it appears the hospital has a new projector. So if a presenter brings a Windows 8 laptop that should work fine.

° Presentation on Facebook - Jim has worked with another organization (AMC) and they have gotten volunteers to post about 3 times a week. It is a long - shot as a meeting topic, but he hasn't crossed it off as a possible topic yet.

° Jeff Robbins (Drupal expert) - Jeff was interested in doing a presentation but is not able to commit to a date at this time. We have decided not to pursue this topic at this time.

o Demonstrate apps for mobile devices-smartphones and tablets. 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. Since it appears there is a new projector, Richard can try again to demonstrate the News Bento Windows 8 app.

° "SIG Open House" session where the SIG leaders set up 'tables' to discuss their activities. This would be done between the Ask DACS session and the featured presentation. It was suggested that the room across the hall would be a good location for this.

° Mike Kaltschnee and John Gatrell volunteered to do a presentation in Sep-

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Membership Information

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

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apcug Large Group 1st Place 2012

Apple User Group

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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	Forum
Microsoft Access	Access SIG
.NET Programming	ASP.Net and C#VB.Net SIG
Digital cameras/scanners/image processing	Digital Imaging SIG
Content Management Systems	Drupal SIG
Linux	Linux SIG
Mac and iPhone/iPad/iPod touch	Apple SIG
PC maintenance	PC Maintenance SIG
Smartphones & Tablets	Mobile Devices SIG
Virtual machine software	Virtual Computing SIG
Desktop publishing and website design	Web Site Design SIG
Windows	Windows SIG

***Directors' Notes**, Cont. from page 2*

tember on the Danbury Hackerspace and Innovation Center. We will investigate a tie-in with the World Maker Faire conference at Javitts this September and the Danbury HackerSpace. This would require slipping Ken Graff to October. Richard will check with Ken as to his availability.

° Jim is pursuing a presentation originally termed "Electronic Medical Records" Danbury Hospital is leading edge on integrating systems, EMR is probably not a good term. Jim was referred to the hospital's CIO. Jim has communicated with the Danbury Hospital's CIO's secretary who understands our request and will investigate finding a suitable presenter. Perhaps change the topic to something like "LifeStream" monitoring. Mike Kaltschnee mentioned FitBit (currently available at BestBuy) or other 'wearable electronics'.

° Windows 8.1 Blue - will be a free upgrade out later this year. We should have a presentation on the update from the Microsoft Store.

° Microsoft Surface Pro (the Intel - based Microsoft tablet that also runs Windows desktop applications in addition to 'apps'). Perhaps this should be included within a Windows 8 presentation as it probably is not enough for a full presentation.

° Bruce suggested repurposing an old machine (such as an XP era machine since XP support is being sunsetted) to a machine that runs a variant of Linux such as one of the Puppy releases. He had recently converted a very sluggish netbook to one that runs impressively fast. Bruce talked to Dave Mawdsley at the last Linux SIG meeting to see if he would be interested.

° Something on Pinterest? Bruce has not yet talked to a Ridgefield Librarian who did a brief session on Pinterest - but the general feeling was that it probably isn't enough to warrant a full presentation.

° Animation software - drop from consideration.

° Do a tour of Windows Live Suite: Photo Gallery, Movie Maker, Mail, Writer (blogs) etc. Roll into Ken Graff's session?

° Now that the new OS X Mavericks release has been announced to come out in the fall, we should ask Dave

***Directors' Notes**, Cont. on page 5*

Meeting Review

Reasons to Reconsider Twitter: Leveraging Social Networking for your Career Campaign

By Andrew Woodruff

JENNIFER SCOTT (HireEffect LLC) gave a fast-moving and informative talk about Twitter and how to use it effectively. Her presentation title indicated that she would discuss how to use Twitter in a career hunt, but she quickly moved way past that.

Jennifer started the evening by describing and contrasting the various social net-

working organizations, including Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+, and Pinterest. In particular, she explained that Twitter allows users to search for topics or for people with certain interests … and users can rapidly build networks of people who share that interest. This approach is not possible with Facebook, because Facebook precludes users from searching other users' content and focuses instead on more personal sharing between people who already know one another.

Twitter can be used for research on specific topics, as well as for social networking … and Jennifer personally uses it for both. However, she strongly dispelled the notion that Twitter is just about useless chatting like "I'm walking my dog right now." She admitted that such chatting was indeed how Twitter initially marketed itself … and also how Twitter was initially utilized …but, she explained, Twitter is now used for much more than that.

Jennifer outlined how one can use Twitter effectively:

Information Gathering. Anyone can search Twitter; a Twitter account is not required. Anyone can access all posts on Twitter.

Information Sharing. Twitter users can share information. Twitter users at the Boston Marathon tweeted about the bombings before news appeared on any mainstream news media.

Socializing. Twitter can be used simply as a way to socialize and develop friendships. Jennifer said she is planning a trip to another state, where she hopes to visit people she met on Twitter.

Connecting. Twitter can be used to build relationships between people who share interests.

People who use multiple social networking organizations may want to use a "dashboard" like Hootsuite or Tweetdeck. Jennifer demonstrated Hootsuite with the overhead projector. A dashboard is a free application that allows a user to simultaneously post to Twitter, Facebook, Google+, and LinkedIn. When a user writes a post, they can select which social networking organizations will receive the post. The dashboard will even handle multiple different Twitter accounts, for those that may have two businesses.

Each of the social networking organizations has developed its own new vocabulary. Jennifer explained the similar phrases that appear, such as "Follow me" on Twitter, "Like me" on Facebook, and "Pin This" on Pinterest. She explained some of the specific Twitter vocabulary:

Tweet. A message that a user sends out. A tweet can be no longer than 140 characters.

Follow. If a user follows someone, the tweets from the person being followed appear on the follower's account and can be seen by others. The person being followed can see the follower's screen name … and can optionally block that particular user from following.

Re-Tweet (RT). A user can forward a received tweet by resending it. This is re-tweeting. The Twitter application includes a button to make it easy to re-tweet. Active Twitter users generally hope that others will RT their messages, so that a larger number of users will see these messages.

Call out or Reply (@). A user can reply to a particular tweet. This reply will get posted on the user's account, and others can see the reply. Jennifer said that just after the Boston Marathon bombings, she saw someone's tweet "I can't believe what just happened in Boston" … so she searched on @Boston … and received 50,000 messages. (Jennifer said this was how she learned about the Boston bombings … all before it appeared on the mainstream news.)

Direct Message (DM). A user can send a private message to a single other user … so long as both users are following one another. This is a means to privately socialize or to exchange information.

Hashtag (#). A hashtag is a keyword. A hashtag generally makes a tweet more likely to be seen and re-tweeted.

Twitter users frequently use URL shorteners, such as ow.ly, bitly, and goo.gl. These services create very short URL's, which are web addresses, in order to save space in 140-character tweets.

Twitter limits the number of people a user is allowed to follow. The limits are high and will not impact most users. Users who have many followers are allowed to follow more other people.

Jennifer discussed how to use Twitter in a career hunt, as promised in her presentation title. She recommended a group of Twitter users that meets at noon (Eastern time) every Friday. Any user can access this group with the hashtag #HireFriday. The group includes some helpful people who make a point of retweeting tweets from job seekers, so long as the job hunters send their tweets during the meeting.

Jennifer founded HireEffect LLC (*www.hireeffect.com, @HireEffect*), which is an independent job search coaching firm specializing in reverse-engineering the recruitment process and helping executives leverage social media to enhance their networking efforts.

Meeting Preview

Desktop Publishing for the Rest of Us

by Drew Kwashnak

THOUGH IT SEEMS THE world is moving from print to electronic publications, there has always been a need for Desktop Publishing to put everything together into a clean, professional looking format that not only gets its message across, but also captures one's attention and engages the viewer. As long as it matters how a page looks, desktop publishing will be there.

While word processors such as Microsoft Word, Apple Pages, and LibreOffice Writer have become more powerful with each version and have even added some desktop publishing capabili-ties, they still do not provide the same level of precision and control over how different components work together on a page.

At July's General Meeting, Bruce Preston will present features of desktop publishing using Serif Software's PagePlus X6, an affordable yet powerful desktop publishing program. With this software he has produced newsletters, and a book available via Amazon as a print-on-demand hard copy or Kindle edition.

A key aspect of desktop publishing is being able to control how the page looks. Desktop publishing programs do this by creating a palate, on which the user can place text and images, specify where a picture goes and whether the text on the page will wrap around the image, overlay it, or be tucked behind. The use of master pages, or a template used throughout the document, ensures a consistent look and feel.

Bruce will demonstrate the concept of frames and flowing, importing content from various sources (Word, PDF, etc.) and adding photographs or clipart, and will create a masthead logo for a two or three page newsletter.

Images and text will be manipulated within the program. This includes the building of mastheads and logos as well as editing pictures without resorting to an external image editing program like Adobe Photoshop. Then, of course, there are tools to make some functions easier, such as the creation of indexes and tables of contents, and many style templates.

Of course after the fun stuff is done, how does the publication get to where others will see it? Bruce will talk about printing as well as publishing in an electronic format, such as ePub for the Kindle.

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.

A scene form the first Danbury Maker Faire and MadHackers' Conference on June 8th. A lot of new faces and some old friends of DACS stopped by at our booth. Many thanks to all those who helped make the event a success.

***Directors' Notes**, Cont. from page 3*

Marra to do another presentation as the time draws nearer.

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. Did he succeed in getting a logon?

3. To help launch the Innovation Center and Hackerspace, the city of Danbury hosted the Danbury Mad Hacker Social Media Conference and the Danbury Mini Maker Faire on June 8. Mike Kaltschnee invited us to have a booth where we showed Windows 8 and had ready a presentation on malware and a useful utilities list. We had a lot of visitors and had 37 people leave us their e - mail address. We may get more afterward with the http://makerfaire.dacs.org website Andy and Bruce created. Jim complained that there was no navigation or links within the pages, Andy will revise to include links to the 50+ utilities and provide page navigation.

4. Do we need to do something to verify that SIG participants are still members? Decided that SIG leaders should get a membership list with expiration date, and privately check membership status. If someone is lapsed then notify membership who will correspond privately. We don't want to embarrass SIG attendees during a meeting. SIG leaders should remind attendees that SIG attendance is for members in good standing. We should also add that renewal post card should mention that membership is a requirement for SIG participation.

New Business

1. Sean Henderson declined our offer to join the DACS board, but we will follow up with him with a mechanism to support and encourage his activities.

2. Do we need to order anything from TechSoup? Our treasurer uses Quicken, not QuickBooks. Quicken is not distributed by TechSoup - but the retail price is well within the discretionary spending amount that the president may authorize. In addition Richard will look into getting the Adobe software needed to support co - webmaster activities.

3. We placed examining the 2014 budget at the July BOD meeting.

Adjourned: 9:35

— Bruce Preston

Special Interest Groups

SIG NOTES: July 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: July 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: July 31

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: July 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 job 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: Sep 18

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: July 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. 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@telemarrksys.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: July 16

SIG News & Events

Linux. This month's technical meeting included three presentations: "Infrared Communication with the Arduino Uno," a demonstration with an infrared keypad with an Arduino Uno; a second presentation, "Sticky Scheduling with Crontab," an example of the annoying gap between human requirements and computer code; and finally the presentation, "'camE,' a Web Camera Time Lapse Program" along with a demonstration of the capabilities of using time-lapse with a webcam.

Infrared Communication with the Arduino Uno (sending infrared keypad commands to an Arduino project)

An infrared (IR) keypad such as a TV remote transmits a stream of short or long pulses by lighting up an IR LED that can be detected by an IR receiver a short line-of-sight distance away. A technique called Pulse Wave Modulation is used to encode and decode the pulses. Each pulse in the stream received can be assigned the binary bits 0 for a short pulse or 1 for a long pulse. Once the bits are captured, an integer can be computed representing them.

Since each key of the keypad transmits pulses that assign unique integers, the integers can be used to cause different actions to be applied to the Arduino Uno. The Arduino Uno then electronically controls any devices wired to it. My keypad transmits 32 pulses. The first15 identify the company's keypad integer. There are then 2 separation pulses, and finally, 15 pulses which represent the integer of the key being pressed. All the code to accomplish these tasks is compiled and stored in the Arduino Uno. The code runs once the Arduino Uno is turned on.

My particular keypad is used to control the 4-wheeled DFRobot that was featured during our January 16th meeting. On that robot there are 4 IR receivers placed so that the robot can be controlled no matter which way it faces. (Today's presentation can be downloaded from http://madmod.com/infrared.odp and viewed using LibreOffice or OpenOffice. The previous presentation can be found and viewed at http://madmod.com/dfrduino.odp . [odp: open document presentation])

Sticky Scheduling with Crontab (coping with complicated scheduling beyond the constraints of 'crontab'.)

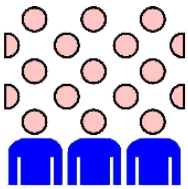
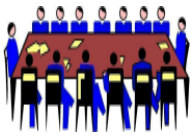
My scheduling constraint required a Microsoft Patch Tuesday reminder to appear on my computer on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. However, the 2nd Tuesday of a month could occur on any of the following days: 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 or 14. But looking at the day numbers another way, they are not restricted to Tuesdays.

Crontab has 5 time-date fields: * * * * * followed by a command. The crontab time-date format of 30 9 8-14 * * means any month day 8 through 14 at 9:30 AM. The format 30 9 * * 2

***SIG notes**, Cont.on page 11*

July 2013

Danbury Area Computer Society

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2  **General Meeting** 7:00 PM	3	4 	5	6
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** Annette van Ommeren 7:00 - 9:00 PM *avanommeren@dacs.org*	17	18  **SQL Server Study Group** 7:00 -8:30 PM Sean Henderson *203-837-7068*	19	20  **DACS.DOC Deadline**
21	22	23	24	25  **Mobile Devices** 7:00 PM Jim Scheef & Richard Corzo *mobilesig@dacs.org*	26	27
28	29	30	31  **Digital Imaging** 7:00 PM Ken Graff 203 648-9747 *thedigitalwiz@gmail.com*			

Jun 2013

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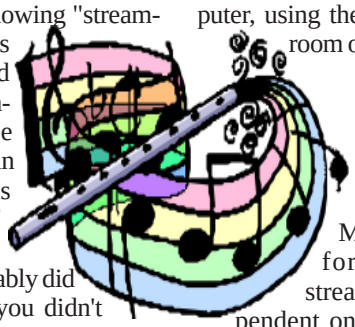
SoundBytes

Streaming Music - An Alternative Method

By Phil Sorrentino,

WITH WINDOWS 7, Microsoft has provided a great way to share music on your home network. Each computer (using Windows Media Player), can share the music from every other computer within a Windows7 "homegroup." This is accomplished by allowing "streaming" when the homegroup is set up. If streaming is turned on, then the music from another computer in the homegroup will show up in Windows Media Player as available music to play. If you don't see the other computer's music, you probably did not turn on streaming. If you didn't turn on streaming when you set up your homegroup, you can remedy that by going to the other computer, starting Windows Media Player, clicking "Stream" and choosing "Turn on Media Streaming with Homegroup," and then checking "Music." That should allow you to play the music from the other computer on your computer.



Though this is a great accomplishment, it may not be very useful, especially if both computers are in the same room or at least close by. But if the computers are in different rooms or on a different level in the house, or at the other end of the house, it could be very useful. Just imagine playing music from your music collection, which resides on your main computer in the computer room, on your laptop while sitting at the pool. Or in my particular case, playing the music that resides on my main computer in the computer room, in the living/family room through my very high fidelity stereo system.

Streaming within a homegroup is a great feature for computers running Windows7, but if you have network computers that are not running Windows7, there is still a way to play music on these computers. This method is called "Play to." It allows you to play music in the main computer, but listen to it at another computer, possibly where there is a better set of speakers, or a room where there will be a large number of listeners. (This feature supposedly works with any electronic component that advertises the DLNA (Digital Living Network Alliance) logo, though I have not tried any.) On the computer that is to receive the music, you will have to Open Media Player, Choose Stream, Choose "Allow remote control of my player, and click the confirmation box, "Allow remote control on this network." Then, on the main computer, In Media Player, on the Play tab, click the "Play to" icon. The pop-up menu should list all the PCs in the house that have been prepared for remote operation. Just choose the computer to receive the music and you're set to enjoy the music from your main computer, using the computer in the listening room of choice.

The Alternative Method:

The above two methods are built into Windows Media Player and can suffice for most network music streaming, but they are very dependent on these features being part of Windows Media Player, and future versions of Windows Media Player. A more general way to accomplish playing music in a main computer, but listening to it on another computer, is to develop Playlists that can be used on any computer in the network. Playlists developed in this fashion do not restrict you to the use of Windows Media Player, and can be used with many other music players.

There are a handful of file extensions for playlists, such as .m3u, .wpl, .pls, and .b4s. Windows media player can use .m3u and .wpl. It seems to prefer .wpl as its default setup for playlists. The .m3u extension is the most general format and is recognized by many music players, so this is my preferred playlist file extension. (If you use Windows Media Player to create your playlists, make sure you select the .m3u format when the playlist is created.) An m3u file is a plain text file that specifies the location of one or more music files. Each line indicates one specification. The specification can be any one of the following: an absolute local pathname (e.g. C:\My Music\Brooklyn Roads.mp3), a local pathname relative to the m3u file location (e.g. Brooklyn Roads.mp3), a URL (used to access a stream on the Internet). The m3u file can also contain comments prefaced by the "#" character.

So the alternative method consists of creating a set of playlists that can be used on any machine on your network that will play the music from your main computer (where your music collection is stored). For example, let's say we have four computers on your wired and/or wireless home network, named D1, D2, L1, and L2 (D is used here to designate a desktop computer and L is used to designate a laptop, but in reality these will be the names of the computers on the network.) And further let's think of D2 as the main computer, where the music collection is housed and maintained. (Note here that there is only one computer collection to be maintained which makes maintenance and backup simpler.

The only thing to be maintained on the computers other than the main computer is the folder of playlist files, which can be easily copied when or if the original files change.) So each playlist will be defined by a playlist file, which has the extension .m3u, and should have entries that represent the music choices on the D2 computer. Each playlist file should probably have names that represent the type of music in that playlist, like Oldies.m3u, or SentimentalMusic.m3u, or MoodMusic.m3u, or TheBeatles.m3u. The playlist file will have a series of lines of text, each one representing a music title to play. Each line will be as follows:

\\D2\E:MP3Music Collection\MusicTitle.mp3,

where "D2" represents the main computer name, "E:" represents the disk that the music collection is on, "MP3MusicCollection" represents the folder the music is stored in and should be the "share name" for the shared folder, and MusicTitle.mp3 represents a song to play. Here is an example:

\\Desktop2\ MP3MusicOn2E\MusicA\ Jefferson Starship - Miracles.mp3.

(Note here that there is a Music folder, MusicA, within the top level Music folder, MP3MusicOn2E.)

This type of file can automatically be created by Windows Media Player when a playlist is created, or it can be created manually with Notepad. (Not wordpad or word because the playlist file must be a simple text file without any associated formatting. Once a playlist is created it should only be opened and edited within Windows Media Player or with Notepad, again for the same reason.)

With the above defined playlist files copied to any networked computer, you should be able to play the music at that computer; D1, D2, L1, or L2, using the music collection on the main computer, D2. Any computer that is on your network only needs a copy of the playlist files and a music player to use this alternative streaming method to allow you to enjoy, remotely, the fruits of your music collection.

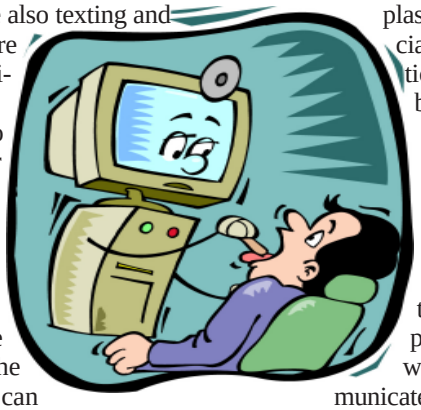
Phil Sorrentino *is a member of Sarasota PCUG, FL. This article appearwed in the November 2012 issue, PC Monitor, and is distributed for reprint by user groups.* (www.spcug.org; philsorr (at) yahoo.com).

Health Technology

Will You Be Texting Your Doctor Soon?

By Sandy Berger,

TEXTING HAS BECOME very popular. We've all seen teenagers' texting each other across the dinner table or from the front seat of the car to the back seat. You may be surprised, however, to find that older people are also texting and now even some doctors are using texting to communicate with their patients.



Because texting is so popular with the younger crowd, many older folks have started texting just to keep in contact with their children. Over and over again, I have heard the lament, "They (the kids) just don't answer the phone. The only way I can get them to respond is to text them."

Yet, when these people start texting, they find it just as useful for everyone they communicate with. Texts are less intrusive than phone calls. You don't feel forced to run and answer the phone, you can deal with a text whenever you like. With a text, you don't disturb a person who happens to be sleeping because he is in a different time zone. And you don't disturb him during an important meeting, but you still get your message across. Two other advantages are that texting is faster than phoning and text messages are archived on your cell phone so you can search for previous conversations.

The newer cell phones make texting easy. With on-screen keyboards and predictive text, you can tap out a message quickly and easily. If you don't like to type, you can speak your message and have the phone type it out for you will pretty good results.

Although some predicted that texting would die out with the proliferation of smartphones, that doesn't seem to have happened. Texting does not use data, so it is often cheaper than using email on a cell phone. Also, several large cellular providers now offer free texting with their share plans, making it a very cost-effective method of communications.

Kids are still texting, and older people are also texting. In fact, in the future, you may even text with your doctor. If you think about it, texting is a quite suitable way to communicate with a doctor.

My conversations with several doctors indicate that they are happy to embrace texting patients but there are several hurdles to overcome before texting between physicians and patients can become routine.

Dr. Adam Schaffner, a New York City plastic surgeon, who specialized in aesthetic plastic surgery of the face, breast and body has been texting to communicate with his patients for several years. He says that "texting promotes comfort for the patient." In his practice, post-operative patients who used texting to communicate with him fared better than others. He says, "This type of access (texting) empowers patients and is of great benefit during the immediate post-operative period." He also finds texting a great way to start a necessary conversation with patients and found that patients who texted him had a reduced number of office visits. This, in effect, could reduce the cost of health care.

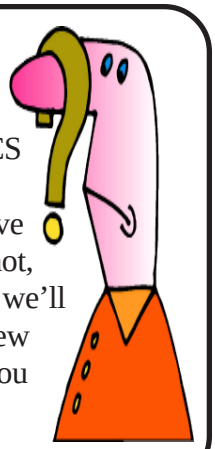
Although Dr. Schaffner finds texting "extremely beneficial", he sees several hurdles to this type of texting becoming commonplace in the medical industry. The first is that the time spent texting is currently not billable or covered by insurance. So doctors who are currently taking advantage of the benefits of texting are doctors in fields like plastic surgery and concierge medicine whose main patient base is not covered by insurance.

Second is the investment of capital needed to implement secure texting platforms to comply with HIPAA laws brought on by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. Because of this individual doctors and even most medical clinics are still not embracing texting. Besides offices like Dr. Schaffner's, you will only find doctor-patient texting in large University hospitals that have more technology funding available.

There is little doubt that many of us will be tapping out texts for years to come. Perhaps we will be texting to improve our health as well as to improve communications.

Sandy Berger, *is a nationally respected computer authority, and founder of CompuKISS, a technology information Website (*www.compukiss.com*); You can reach her at* Sandy(at)compukiss. com.

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.



"Here's how we cut the defense budget. Since the Chinese have already hacked the technology . . . why not license them to do the manufacturing and technical support?"

Ask DACS

June 2013

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.

Q – When I use my computer at home I often get a message that Windows has detected a duplicate IP address. When this happens I can't get on the network. If my husband's computer is turned off, my computer works fine. How can we use both computers in marital bliss? (Paraphrased from the actual question.) Both computers are laptops using a wireless connection from a Comcast cable modem wireless router.

A – Distilling the responses at the meeting: When both computers are off and you first boot one of them, the computer will request the same IP address it had when last on the network. If the address is available, the router agrees and everyone is happy. When the second computer boots, it does the same thing. If this results in a duplicate address, the second computer is supposed to ask the router for a "new" address. The router should be happy to oblige, but somehow this process is not happening. Discussion then moved to how to correct the most likely configuration error. To correct this situation:

1. Check that your router is set to assign IP addresses. The technical term is DHCP (dynamic host configuration protocol) and this should be "on" which is the default. You check this by logging into the router's configuration screens. Look on the router for how to do this.

2. Make sure both computers are set to get their IP address automatically. Again this is the default. This setting is in the TCP/IPv4 properties of the network adapter. How you get to that point depends on which Windows version is on your computer. Most Windows laptops will have two network adapters, wired and wireless.

Q – When I first turn on my computer, there is a message about a CMOS configuration error with a prompt to hit F1 to continue or F2 to enter the BIOS Setup. How can I make this stop?

A – This prompt is a result of a POST (power on self test) error and indicates that the computer's BIOS (basic input output system) settings are not correct. When this occurs every time you turn on the computer, it indicates that the computer's configuration backup battery is dead. This is the small 3-volt "silver cell" battery that powers the computer's clock and a small memory that stores basic hardware settings like the amount of RAM installed and the type of hard drive. The battery is located on the main system board along with the processor and memory. Replacing this battery is straight forward in a desktop machine, but can be easy or very involved in a laptop depending on the mood of the gods when the machine was designed. There is no way to know what size battery to buy until you open the computer and find the old battery, but CR2032 and CR2325 are the most common. Once you have a good battery installed, turn on the computer and hit the appropriate key to enter the BIOS setup. Look for a menu item or F-key to load the system's "optimal settings", then set the system clock to the current date and time. Follow the menu to save the settings and exit. The system will reboot and should boot without the error message.

Q – When I run the Windows Check Disk (chkdsk.exe or the GUI equivalent) with the fix errors option on the C: drive (the system partition), it schedules the operation for the next time the system boots. This is normal, but when check disk runs, I get a message that "check disk cannot run due to errors". The operating system is Win7.

A – A member suggested to boot from a "live CD" and run Check Disk from there. The reason the actual Check Disk operation is done on boot-up is to give the Check Disk program total control of the file system on the partition. Normally Windows is in control and "protects" the system partition from "harm" by other programs. As a first step, open a Command window as Administrator. Navigate the Start menu to the Accessories folder and right-click on the "Command Prompt" icon. Select "Run as Administrator" from the context menu. A command window will open. Type "chkdsk c:" and press enter. Check Disk will run in read-only mode and you will see any resulting messages. If this runs to completion, you may have a chance to fix the error after booting from a live CD. Some sources for such a bootable CD are:

1. BartPE (*www.nu2.nu/pebuilder*) which you must build from an XP installation CD. BartPE and PE Builder are free but you must build and then burn the CD yourself.

2. Active@ Data Studio (*www.livecd. com*) is based on Win7 and costs $80 for a personal license. The trial version may be sufficient in this case.

3. The official Microsoft tool is called WinPE and is available only to those who are "qualified". There are versions of WinPE that correspond to each version of Windows since XP.

4. Hiren's Boot CD was mentioned at the meeting. (*www.hirensbootcd.org*) There is a lot of information on this website.

5. Follow these instructions on eHow.com to make a Windows 7 "System Repair Disk" (tinyurl.com/lcy8ey7) This appears to be the easiest and least expensive option. I have not tested this to make sure it contains the chkdsk.exe program, but it will take only a few minutes to burn a CD and test it.

6. There are many Linux-based "recovery" CDs available, but in this situation, I think a Windows-based CD is the least risky.

The fact that Check Disk is aborting indicates serious errors in the file system of this partition, the tables and indices

that track where files are stored on the disk and the permissions on those files. The corruption may be due to physical bad sectors on the disk or just bad data written to the worst files possible. Since NTFS (NT file system) was introduced in Windows NT 3.1 in 1993, it has had "journaling" features that should make such file system errors impossible. Unfortunately, computers will be computers. As I said at the meeting, when you run check disk with the fix option from a live CD, that may be the last time to access anything on that partition. On the other hand, if you continue using the system without repairing the damage, eventually the corruption will grow and disk will become unusable anyway, so the end result is the same either way. The caveat is to back up any personal files on that partition before attempting the repair. Once you have the "live CD", boot from it. BartPE displays a very simple GUI-based environment with a few very basic tools, including the command line chkdsk.exe. The Active@ CD would be preferred because it specifically supports Win7 (and Win8). One last caveat on these live CDs. The CD must include support for the disk controller used in your computer. This is not guaranteed. Bart PE Builder includes instructions on how to add new drivers for both disk controllers and network adapters when building the image file to burn to a CD. If all this fails, it will eventually be necessary to reinstall Windows. A normal backup of the partition that is NOT an image, may allow you to restore your system after reinstalling Windows. An image backup will include the file system corruption.

D – Richard Corzo shared his experience upgrading to AT&T Uverse: Overall the changeover went smoothly. On the appointed day, there was a service technician waiting outside my (Richard's) garage. Substituting the new Uverse device for the old DSL modem was all that was required. My old wireless router is connected to the Uverse device and my various devices continue to connect to the Internet thru the wireless router. Since the installation, there have been a few outages, one lasting a few hours that required power cycling the Uverse device. Hopefully this will settle down and become more reliable.

Q – Has anyone tried the new Flickr service with 1T (terabyte) of free storage? Can you use the space for any type file? Does it resize pictures automatically?

A – The discussion ranged because no one had investigated this in depth. I have a Flickr Pro account that I opened many years ago to share vacation pictures. I need the 'pro' account to get extra space and so the account would not expire due to inactivity. This could be a future general meeting topic. It appears that the space is usable only for image and video files. They do say you can now share pictures at full resolution.

Q – I purchased a new television but I'm not sure I'm getting HD (hi-definition) pictures on my Charter cable. There is no place on the cable box to plug in an HDMI cable so I'm using the VGA connection.

A – You need a new cable box. Any HD cable box will have an HDMI output connection for the television. Using any other type of cable to connect to the television will give reduced picture quality.

Note: I did not have my regular recorder. Two members made recordings on their phones for which I am grateful, but these were not always clear. The discussion above is based on what I could hear on these two recordings.

[**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!

***SIG Notes**, Cont. from page 7*

means any Tuesday at 9:30 AM. Unfortunately, the format 30 918-14 * 2 means [any Tuesday or any month day 8 through 14] OR [any Tuesday] AND 9:30 AM. Oops - too many days because of the inclusive OR!

My solution was to use 30 9 8-14 * * followed by a command to invoke a Bash script to check for whether or not the day was a Tuesday. If so, the script sent the reminder; otherwise it just exited. The presentation included the crontab and scripting details. (This presentation can be downloaded from http://madmod.com/crondate.odp)

Demonstration of camE

Jim Ritterbusch presented and demonstrated the use of 'camE' which uses a program to take webcam pictures at specified intervals, then store the pictures and finally present them in a web browser. Owing to the many capabilities of this program, there are multiple configuration settings to work through. Once completed, a number of security cameras could be used to record and present activities at remote sites.

A webcam was set up to view Jim's new puppy to see if he was eating, sleeping, using the room properly and/or behaving normally. Then Jim set up his computer to use its webcam to take periodic pictures at tonight's meeting.

Because capturing and storing pictures could use a lot of disk space, a program such as 'camE' is needed to limit the number of pictures stored. 480 pictures taken and stored in an 8-hour period would be fairly easy to view and decide if the situation is normal. When a large number of pictures are taken using time-lapse, many show the same image anyway. Thus configuring the time-lapse intervals is important.

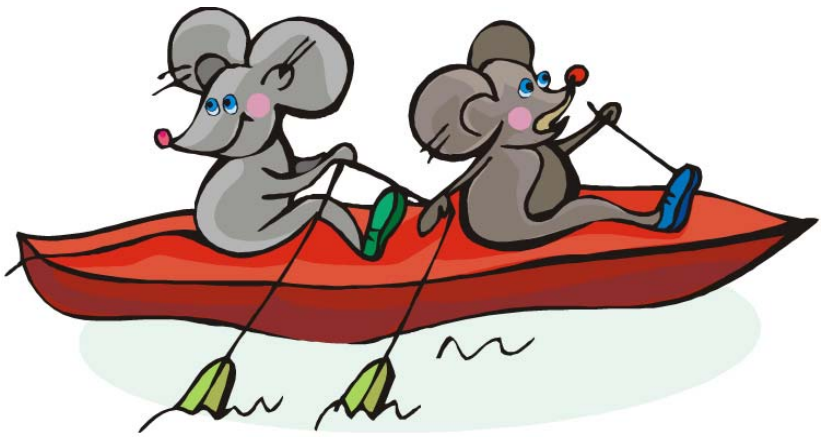
Next Linux SIG Meeting

No meetings in July, August. Next Linux SIG meeting: Sept. 18th at 7:30 PM

The September 18th meeting topics will include: "Make the Raspberry Pi use GPIO" with a demonstration.

If these items connect with your interests, join us at our next meeting in the DACS Resource Center of Ives Manor. Bring your laptop, Arduino or Raspberry Pi and show us a thing or two. Our meetings are for the beginner, intermediate or advanced user, so topics vary considerably depending upon the needs of the attendees.

Danbury Area Computer Society
27 Ole Musket Lane
Danbury, CT 06810-8232



When you come to the next DACS meeting, why not bring a friend?

Voice for Joanie

Help give the gift of speech
Call Shirley Fredlund at 203 770-6203 and become a Voice for Joanie volunteer
www.voiceforjoanie.org

Future Events:

July

Bruce Preston
PagePlus X6
Desktop Publishing

August

Microsoft
Office 2013

September

Ken Graff
Organizing, Editing & Sharing Photos

October

TBD