

**Next Meeting
September 3:**

Come and assemble and bring a friend to find out how to create great photo art with a simple cell phone camera and inexpensive online apps.



Inside

**Is This the End of DACS?
(See Page 9)**

Directors' Notes

A meeting of your board of directors was held on Wednesday, August 14, 2013. The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM.

Attending were Richard Corzo, Jim Scheef, Annette van Ommeren, Lisa Leifels, Andy Woodruff, Bruce Preston.

The minutes of last meeting were accepted.

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer was unable to attend and had not submitted a report.

Membership Report

JUNE 6 - Twitter - Jennifer Scott
 JULY 2 - PagePlus X6 - Bruce Preston
 AUGUST 6 - Office 365 - Microsoft Store

	JUNE	JULY	AUG
seat count	38	33	29
members signed in	31	27	24
visitors signed in	7	6	4
Paying members	124	121	121
w/ email address	115	111	111
new members	1	1	0

	JUNE	JULY	AUG
DACSDOC printed	75	75	75
number of pages mailed	16	12	12
mailed-members	63	64	62
mailed-other	44	45	43
mailed-free lib	5	5	5
	14	14	14

Old Business

1. General meetings

- August 6: Office 2013. Carolyn Bighinatti attended with Mike Walters and Nick Volant from the Microsoft Store. Preview: Richard Corzo, Review: Richard Teasdale

- September 3: Ken Graff-digital photo editing, organizing, and sharing online. Preview: Lisa Leifels, Review: Richard Koser

- October 1 - Bruce Preston - Virtual Machine Technology, how it works and demonstration. Preview: Jim Scheef Review: _____.

- November 5: Mike Kaltschnee-Danbury Hackerspace. Preview: Bill Saturno, Review: _____

- December 3: Bill DeRosa-Facebook and Pinterest. Preview: _____, Review: _____

• Possible future topics:

- 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.

- "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.

- We will continue with "LifeStream" monitoring. Mike Kaltschnee mentioned FitBit (currently available at BestBuy) or other 'wearable electronics'. Considering session on wearable technology such as this for the January session. Andy spoke with Jeff Schlicht, professor of phys ed at West Conn, about a possible presentation at DACS re wearable electronic devices that monitor exercise and/or body functions.

- Windows 8.1 - will be a free upgrade out October 17-18. We should have a presentation on the update from the Microsoft Store. It could also include information about the Microsoft Surface Pro (the Intel-based Microsoft tablet that will also run Windows desktop applications in addition to 'apps').

- Bruce will do a Virtual Machine session in October and show that an XP machine (or earlier) could be built to support legacy applications. At the general meeting there appeared to be interest in learning about virtual machine software, such as VirtualBox, for installing and running older versions of Windows. There could also be a hands-on workshop as a follow-on.

◦ Do a tour of Windows Live Suite: *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.



Bill Saturno
 APCUG Liaison
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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

Microsoft Access
.NET Programming
Digital cameras/scanners/image processing
Content Management Systems
Linux
Mac and iPhone/iPad/iPod touch
PC maintenance
Smartphones & Tablets
Virtual machine software
Desktop publishing and website design
Windows

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

Directors' Notes, Cont. from page 2

Photo Gallery, Movie Maker, Mail, Writer (blogs) etc.? It looks like Ken Graff will be mentioning Picasa, a Google alternative to Photo Gallery in his presentation. It was decided to table Windows Live as not being sufficient to require a full meeting.

° Now that the new OS X Mavericks release has been announced to come out in the fall, we should ask Dave Marra to do another presentation as the time draws nearer.

° Andy suggested a session on creating a web site of various types: blog, brochure, e-commerce site, etc.) - making use of such as products/services as site builder (online or on PC), turn-key sites, etc. Andy suggested that as a computer group we should do some sort of session that would answer the question: "I think I need a web site, what are my options?" This might involve a "high level" overview of the various approaches. Would include discussion of WordPress, Blogger, and using a hosting service.

° Lisa suggested a "decision tree" presentation - "What should I get?" - Windows or Mac, Desktop, All-in-One, Notebook, Tablet, or even SmartPhone - Android or iOS, etc. Lots of decisions - how to decide what meets your needs. We think this would be a 'tough' presentation to pull off but a lively session.

° Bruce suggested a session on advanced Google search techniques. For example here's a search: "a * saved is a * earned" would find the quotation.

2. Bill Saturno is our new APCUG representative. Is he receiving APCUG e-mails?

3. Open positions

• Treasurer - when Dave Green retires March 31.

• President - when Richard Corzo retires March 31.

4. DACS had a booth at the Danbury Mini Maker Faire on June 8. We had 37 visitors leave us their e-mail address. We followed up with a welcome e-mail and a reminder prior to the July and August meetings. We got no visitors from that list in July or August

New Business

1. Since Microsoft has extended the
Directors' Notes, Cont. on page 4

Meeting Review

Microsoft Office 2013 and 365

By Richard Teasdale

OFFICE IS ONE OF Microsoft's most important products. Used by millions of computer users around the world, it has been updated periodically and is today the dominant office software product on the market. The latest version, Office 2013, together with Office 365, were the main topics of Microsoft's presentation at the DACS August 2013 general meeting.

The presenters were Mike Walters and Nick Volant, both staff members at the Microsoft Store in the Danbury Mall. They were introduced to us by Carolyn Bighinatti, the Community Development Specialist at the store.

Mike began the meeting with an overview of Office 365.

Office 365 is a relatively new product, launched about 3 years ago. Two new versions were introduced in 2013: Home Premium and the Small business version. Most of the evening's discussion was focused on the Home Premium version. (Information about other versions, including Enterprise editions, is at <http://office.microsoft.com>).

There are three versions of the basic MS Office product:

- (1) Home & Student: includes Word, Excel, Powerpoint, and One-Note.
- (2) Home & Business: includes Word, Excel, Powerpoint, One-Note, and Outlook.
- (3) Professional: includes Word, Excel, Powerpoint, One-Note, Outlook, Access, and Publisher.

Office 365 is a subscription program. Home Premium, which is priced at \$99/year, allows Office Professional to be installed and used on up to 5 machines for one year. After a year, the subscription has to be renewed. If not renewed, the software can still be used but reverts to read-only mode. The 5 users do not have to be all in the same household. The 5 "downloads" can be migrated between machines, i.e. one of the 5 instances can be removed from one machine and installed on another. Both PC and Mac versions of Office may be used. Users may even access Office as a web application from machines where it is not installed (so long as they are internet-connected).

Mike explained how an Office 365 subscription is potentially much more eco-

nomical than the equivalent 5 individual licenses for Office Professional. 5 individual licenses would cost about \$2,000. Assuming that the user can make full use of all the software in Office Professional, on all 5 machines, it would take many years of use before the equivalent Office 365 subscription would cease to be the less expensive option.

At this point the meeting digressed to a discussion of the relative merits of different versions of the Windows operating system. Mike mentioned that Office 365 requires Windows 7 or 8, and is not compatible with earlier versions of Windows. He also advocated some of the pluses of more recent versions, e.g. that Windows 7's start-up time is faster than that of Windows XP. Several members of the audience took issue with the implication that more recent versions of Windows are better than earlier ones, particularly Windows XP. The Windows 8 user interface was criticised as "tough to work with". Nick conceded that Microsoft may have done a less than adequate job of educating users in how to use its latest version of Windows.

Mike and Nick made the point that technology will move forward, regardless of whether individual users like it or not. But they also mentioned that Windows usability concerns are being addressed in the impending release of Windows 8.1. They gave a quick demo of some features of the Windows 8 interface and answered a few audience questions about it. Mike described his personal use of SkyDrive (Microsoft's cloud storage service) to access his data from anywhere. The two speakers together gave an overview of the Surface RT and Surface Pro products.

The discussion of Office 365 resumed with a live demonstration of some of the product's features. These included the built-in interface to SkyDrive, the range of different save formats that are supported, and PDF Reflow. PDF Reflow is a new feature in Word 2013 which enables a PDF to be opened, edited, and saved, as if it were an ordinary document file.

Outlook was discussed, including its new feature: "Conversations". Some detailed technical questions were asked and discussed about the configuration of Outlook and e-mail on smartphones.

Mike commented that the biggest new feature of Office 365 is that it is designed to connect to the outside world in more ways than just via SkyDrive. The web browser interface allows a user to access (for free) some features of Office 365 from any computer that is internet-connected. All that is required is a free Windows account.

Nick concluded the presentation by inviting all attendees to visit the Microsoft Store in the Danbury Fair Mall, where the staff will be happy to answer questions, provide demos, and assist users with problems they may have encountered with any Microsoft products. Microsoft provides free workshops and consultations at the store, as well as personal training sessions (for which fees are charged). Richard Corzo reminded members that further questions about Windows 8 may be brought to meetings of the Mobile Devices / Windows 8 SIG, on the 4th Thursday of each month.

Directors' Notes, Cont. from page 3

deadline for the exam, Sean H. will be continuing his SQL Server study group through December.

2. Jim has suggested we need to revisit our social media strategy. Richard Corzo is posting the general meeting on Meetup and LinkedIn. He and some other SIG leaders are sometimes posting SIG meetings on Meetup. It looks like no one is updating Facebook. Annette will post links to the website as this may draw interest to the site. She is not expected to add content to Facebook.
3. Richard Corzo announced his and Dave Green's upcoming retirements at the August general meeting. If we don't find replacements, we will need to disband DACS as a society. What do we need to do should it come time to end DACS? Should we consider closing up at the end of 2013? What shall we do with the Resource Center and its contents? It was suggested that operations cease with the December meeting as that is when board member terms expire, and that the officers then use January through March to do the steps needed to dissolve the corporation filing the paperwork with the state and the IRS. Jim will write an article for DACS.DOC detailing the situation.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20

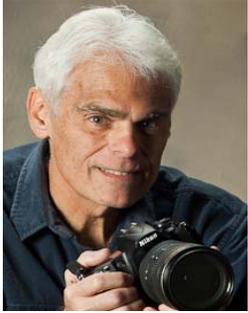
— Bruce Preston

Meeting Preview

Ken Graff Organizing, Editing and Sharing Photos

by Lisa Leifels

PHOTOGRAPHER CHASE JARVIS once said that ‘the best camera is the one that’s with you.’ This is a quote I found on the website (www.graffix.com) of Ken Graff, whom we are lucky to have as our presenter at the September 3rd general meeting. Ken is going to show us some examples of the amazing photographs that the small camera on your phone is capable of taking.



The first digital camera was sold in Japan back in 1989 and, about a decade later, in the year 2000, the first camera phone was sold in Japan. Since that time the quality of the cameras included on most phones has improved dramatically. In today’s world more photographs are taken on smartphones than on any other type of device. Now that it has gotten more convenient than ever to take pictures spontaneously of both the trivial and monumental events unfolding around us, a common problem many of us face is what to do next. How do you organize the large volume of valuable photographs you have accumulated over the years? This is one of the many questions that Ken will be addressing.

Ken is a photographer, educator, and digital artist who worked for more than three decades at Union Carbide, taking photographs all over the world. He has been the digital imaging SIG leader for DACS for the past 15 years and he teaches at The Danbury Senior Net.

He will also be demonstrating how much fun digital photography can be by exploring the editing features of the free program Picasa. He will show us how a simple photograph can be transformed into an exciting piece of art with the touch of a mouse. Picasa was originally created by a company named Lifescape in 2002 and was bought by Google in 2004. The program can be used to help you organize, view, edit, and even share your photos. In case you were curious, the name “Picasa” is a blend of the name of the Spanish painter, Pablo Picasso, the Spanish phrase mi casa for “my house”, and “pic” for pictures.

Not only does the device in your pocket make phone calls, play music, and take pic-

tures and video, according to Ken it is also a digital darkroom. There is no shortage of apps in the photography category, there are literally thousands, and they can do unbelievable things. Another topic Ken plans on covering is showing us a few other editing apps available for the Android and iPhone, which rival the capabilities of Photoshop for a fraction of the cost.

Ken will end his presentation with a Question and Answer session, so bring all your fellow photography friends and plenty of questions, and you will end up with the knowledge you need to finally gain better control over all of those priceless images you’ve taken on your phone.

DACS meetings are held at the Danbury Hospital auditorium. (Go to www.dacs.org to find directions and parking info). Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for registration and casual networking. The meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. with a Q&A period (Ask DACS), followed by announcements and a short break. The featured presentation begins at 8:00 p.m. 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.

Editor’s Note

The front page image is part of a series inspired by unusual objects at the Elephant’s Trunk flea market in New Milford, CT. Ken says “The image has not been heavily retouched in photoshop (just some tonal correction and a little background cleanup) - I try to get things right in the camera when I can.”



DACS Community Forum

Ever wanted to ask a question and get an answer without waiting for the next general meeting? How about sharing news with other DACS members, or communicating with fellow participants in a SIG you attend?

The DACS Community Forum (<http://www.dacs.org/forum/>) is another benefit of being a DACS member, and it’s open 24/7. Once you register there you’ll be able to post questions, answers, and comments. You can even set up an RSS subscription to be notified of updates to the forums.

Try out the DACS forum today!



Special Interest Groups

SIG NOTES: September 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: Sep 9

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: Sep 25

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

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

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

Next meeting: Sep 12

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 Monday, 7 p.m. at the DACS Resource Center

Next Meeting: Sep 23

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@telemarrsys.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: Sep 17

SIG News & Events

Apple. At the August meeting we had a visitor with an iPhone and a Mac who needed to give presentations for work. He had originally created a presentation with Microsoft PowerPoint, which is available in a Mac version. Since he wanted to control the slideshow presentation with his iPhone, he converted it to an Apple Keynote presentation, which is available as both a Mac application and an iOS app. He found that he had to replace some of the Microsoft fonts with Apple fonts.

He figured he needed to run the presentation from the Keynote app on his iPhone, so then he bought a Mac application called AirServer. This takes advantage of the AirPlay capability built in to the iPhone (as well as the iPad) that broadcasts what's appearing on the iPhone's screen to an AirPlay receiver, typically an Apple TV box or, in this case, a Mac running AirServer.

That method definitely works but I made him aware of another option, which is to use the 99 cent Keynote Remote app and pair it with Keynote on the Mac to remotely control the presentation.

We also answered a question from a different member, who wondered why the disk drives appeared differently on his customized desktop when he booted what he hoped was a perfect clone of his main hard drive. He was using Carbon Copy Cloner so I told him to contact the developer. Indeed the developer got back to him with an answer that involved deleting a corrupted preference in another of the user accounts on his Mac mini.

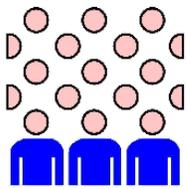
Finally I showed how to read the funny QR codes you may see on product packaging, magazine pages, or business cards. Using your iPhone or iPad's camera and an app for reading QR codes (and typically also bar codes), the QR code will typically be converted to a URL (Internet address) that leads to a web page. You can even do this with your Mac's iSight camera and a Mac application like QR Journal. If you like, you can even generate a QR code from your contact information.

Mobile Devices. In July we wanted to cover the topic of printing from a Mobile device. There is a utility called PrinterShare which requires a Windows or Mac desktop application to share a printer and then either an Android app or an iOS app to print from your mobile device. We were unable to get our Resource Center printer to show up on the network to have a printer to test with. After the meeting I was able to get it to appear after swapping out an apparently bad network cable for a different one, so we'll try again at the August meeting.

One member had gotten an Android phone to replace an iPhone 4 a few months ago. I reminded her that some smartphones, particularly the iPhone, have good resale value. She could sell to a service like Gazelle but she shouldn't delay any further since the value will continue to drop as new models come out. The article Get the most money for your iPhone ... talks about some other options and also applies to other devices you may own.

September 2013

Danbury Area Computer Society

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																		
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15	16	17  Web Design & DTP Annette van Ommeren 7:00 - 9:00 PM avanommeren@dacs.org	18  Linux 7:00 - 9:30 PM Dave Mawdsley linuxsig@dacs.org	19	20	21																																																																																																		
22	23  Mobile Devices 7:00 PM Jim Scheef & Richard Corzo mobilesig@dacs.org	24	25  Digital Imaging 7:00 PM Ken Graff 203 648-9747 thedigitalwiz@gmail.com	26	27	28																																																																																																		
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PC Security

Protect Your PC with IObit Malware Fighter 2

By Frank Ramsey

MALWARE REMAINS A POTENTIAL threat for many PC owners. Here at MakeUseOf, we've been helping to combat that threat by offering several anti-malware apps free of charge through our Rewards Program. And one of those apps, IObit Malware Fighter, has a sequel.

The appropriately named IObit Malware Fighter 2 (I must admit, I'm disappointed it isn't subtitled "The Reckoning") is a major overhaul of the company's anti-malware app. It adds a variety of features that update the software for modern times, including a Metro-style UI, cloud security and full Windows 8 support. Though I was given access to the paid version, the basic anti-virus functionality can be accessed for free. Let's see how IObit's new app stacks up



Going Modern



Users who've previously used IObit Malware Fighter will immediately notice the new interface, which is a complete overhaul of the software's aging UI. To keep itself up to date, IObit has opted for a Metro UI interface inspired by Windows 8. This ensures it integrates well with the new Windows interface and also makes the software easier to use on a touchscreen device.

With that said, the developers haven't gone crazy with the new design. Software re-forged with Windows 8 sometimes ends up with an interface that looks comically huge on a desktop, but there's no such problem here. The default window is large enough to make buttons usable with touch, but not so large that it consumes your entire desktop.

Once you move past the main screen you'll find that most portions of the interface look quite slick. The Smart Scan view, for example, has a minimalist look that's at once informative and futuristic.

One-Touch Protection



Obit's interface is not just meant to look more modern. It's also meant to provide protection without confusing users. To this end, the company has implemented a simple "Fix All" button. This is something that has appeared in previous IObit software, and it's a nice feature to carry over.

The Fix All option covers four main areas; scan, protect, update and action center. Protect and Update will generally be correct unless the user purposely turns off automatic updates and protection. Scan runs a quick scan for threats, a feature that can be scheduled to occur at a specific time or happen whenever your PC is idle. And finally there's the action center, which highlights problems (like malware that has been quarantined) that need additional user input.

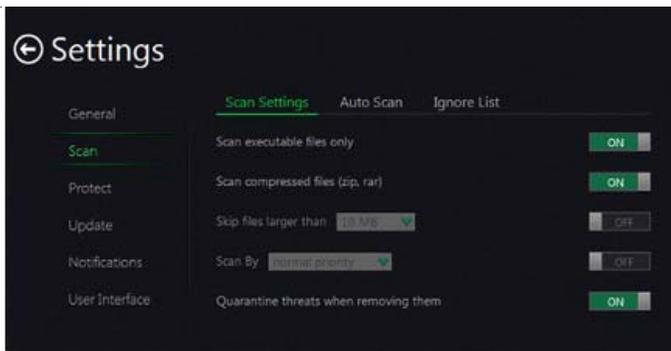
There's no doubt that the Fix All button does its job. However, I was dismayed to find the Action Center reports "problems" which can only be resolved by Advanced SystemCare and Smart Defrag, two other IObit products. The latter was particularly irksome because my system's primary drive is solid state and thus doesn't benefit from defragmentation. I can understand such advertisements in the free version, but these alerts continued even after I upgraded to Pro.



Cloud Security

Perhaps the most significant feature added to IObit Malware Fighter Pro 2 is Cloud Security. For those unfamiliar with the concept, cloud security uses the power of collective analysis to help identify files that are troublesome. If a file behaves suspiciously on one PC, that information is uploaded to IObit's server and can be used to flag similar or identical files on other PCs. Also, users can directly upload a file that they believe suspicious for analysis before uploading it.

IObit is not the only company to offer this feature, but it's far from the last, and I'm glad to see that it's been included. This review was largely written with a pre-release version of the software but, even so, there were already almost 200,000 files analyzed. Most were fine. But a small handful (about 2%, as can be seen in the screenshot above) were not.



Advanced Options

The app's settings menu is split into six sections. The most important is the scan options, as this is where you'll set up how the software handles both the quicker "smart" scans and through system scans. The software lets users decide if they'd like to skip

certain files (like large files or compressed archives) and choose if threats should be automatically quarantined. There's also a scan scheduling feature and an ignore list, which can be helpful if a certain program you know is safe for some reason generates a false positive.

In the protect menu users can make a few minor adjustments to protection levels. There are only two different levels of protection, High and Recommended, as well as one feature (DOG, a heuristic malware detection algorithm). In theory, reducing protection levels and turning off DOG may make IObit less intrusive and solve performance problems on slow systems, but I had no such issues, so I can't comment on if these options would actually resolve them.

Also important are the update and notifications options. Malware Fighter 2 has a slick notifications system that pops up in the lower right, based on several different conditions. Some of these may eventually annoy. For example, you probably don't have to know every time the software auto-updates. So you can turn some notifications off. And speaking of updates, they can be changed so they occur only at a scheduled time or only when the program starts. There is no option to turn updates off, though they can be skipped if a system is on battery power.

Conclusion

This is a solid update that offers improved protection, a better interface and easy one-button protection. Anyone looking for a simple, intuitive anti-malware solution should check it out. You can download Malware Fighter 2 for free, then upgrade to Pro, or grab a Pro version key with your MakeUseOf Rewards points.

MATT SMITH writes for *MakeUseOf* (<http://www.makeuseof.com.com>).

The article can be found at <http://bit.ly/14IhOBk>, and is distributed for reprint by APCUG member groups.

Commentary

Urgent Need for Officers Or, Is This the End of DACS?

By Jim Scheef

The Danbury Area Computer Society is in danger of closing. If this happens the December general meeting would be the last meeting. The DACS.doc newsletter would cease publication at the same time. The website would be closed in February when the hosting account expires. Whether or not this happens is up to you.

Richard Corzo, DACS President, made a brief announcement at the August general meeting in which he stated that several officers were retiring from DACS at the end their current term. The two key officers are Dave Green, our treasurer for the last three years, and Richard Corzo, our president for the last four years. Without someone to fill these two offices,

DACS cannot legally continue as an organization. If no one volunteers to fill these offices, DACS will cease operations as of the end of this year.

Membership dues and DACS.doc subscription fees would be refunded pro rata.

We have sufficient funds to cover these refunds, but the issue is not money. DACS is solvent. What we lack are volunteers willing to fill these two key positions. Most of the current board members have already served as president or one of the other major officer positions. All have more than paid their dues to DACS. There is now an opportunity and a need for someone who doesn't want to see the demise of DACS to step forward and take a turn.



We need More bodies

Ask DACS

August 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 – I have a Nexus 7 tablet and they just updated the Android operating system. Since the update I cannot turn off the cellular 4G mobile data. The Wi-Fi continues to work but occasionally I notice something has been “delivered” to the tablet over 4G. I don’t want to accidentally use up the megabyte allotment of my data plan and then get a surprise bill from AT&T.

A – After some discussion we determined that this is a problem with the settings in Android. The problem is that the setting is “stuck” on. Changing to “airplane mode” would also disable Wi-Fi, which needs to be on. The problem was deferred to the Mobile Devices SIG meeting.

Q – My old machine running Windows XP has become very slow to boot up. Someone suggested that I need to “clean out the registry”. Is there a good, free registry cleaner that is reliable?

A – The consensus was that “reliable” and “registry cleaner” are an oxymoron. While individuals at past DACS meetings may have recommended one product or another; we do not suggest using any registry cleaner product, free or paid. Such products most often do more harm than good. The only truly reliable way to get a clean registry is to reinstall Windows and reapply all of the Windows updates. Given the time required to do that plus reinstalling all of your applications, the break-even time for the fast boot would be at least a decade in the future, when you would be back to where you are now. If the machine runs well otherwise, I would just leave it and endure the boot up time. Several members offered suggestions: Look at the list of

programs that run on startup using the *msconfig* utility that comes with Windows. This allows disabling individual programs such as the various “quick start” programs that preload parts of applications. Also look in Add-Remove Programs in Control Panel and uninstall anything you no longer need. Then run the Windows Defrag utility two or three times to thoroughly defrag your disk. Another suggestion was to remove shortcuts from the desktop as each icon must be found and loaded when the desktop is first displayed. Combined, these suggestions should yield some improvement.

Q – Is there a resource where you can look up a line in the registry to find what it means?

A – The first suggestion on this was to paste the key into your favorite search engine and see what is returned. My approach is to look at the values or parameters assigned to the key and look for a path to an executable. If the path points to an application then you have a significant clue. Many dll files have the name of the company in their properties (find the dll file, right-click and pick properties; look at all of the tabs). The Windows registry is not intended to be an “open book” for the typical user so deciphering it is not easy!

D – There are several very helpful websites that can help determine the origin and safety of something on your computer. The first is called System Explorer (systemexplorer.net) where you can search on the name of a mysterious file to find information. You don't even need to remember this name because searching on the filename in a search engine will often

point to this site or the other one below. For example, I typed “green.dll” (I just made up this name) and one of the top results was a link to System Explorer which told me about three versions of my fictions file and assured me that all three seem to “safe”. The other helpful website is Process Library (processlibrary.com) which will often show when you search on a process name you see running in Task Manager.

Q – In Windows 8 how do I change the size of the font on icons on the desktop?

A – The Windows 8 desktop, where “regular” traditional applications run, is essentially unchanged from Windows 7 and supports scaling of text and other items on the screen. To start, right-click on the desktop and pick ‘Screen Resolution’. This should always be set to the native resolution of the display, which is what Windows will recommend (even if this makes the text too small). On this same screen, look for ‘Make text and other items larger or smaller’. On this new dialog, you have the choice of smaller, medium, and larger, which do what you would expect. There is another item in the menu choices of ‘Set custom text size (DPI)’. DPI is dots per inch. Here you can adjust the scaling up to 200% of the normal 96dpi. Once you have a setting you like, select ‘Adjust ClearType text’ to make text appear clearer. This works like an eye exam where you select the clearest text from several choices while Windows tunes things to fit your monitor.

Q – Will the update to Windows 8.1 come as a regular Windows update or will you need to go to a website?

A – The answer from the Microsoft presenters was that Win 8.1 will be available in the Microsoft App Store and it will be free. Warning: the Win 8.1 previews available on the Microsoft website will not allow an upgrade to the final version. Thus if you install a preview, you will lose everything on that installation when you move to the final release version. So the moral is: do not install a preview on your “production” machine.

Q – Has anyone used the “Action Center” in Windows 8?

A – Action Center was introduced in Vista. In XP SP2+ it was called the Security Center. It’s a central place where Windows tells you about things that Windows thinks you should change or fix. It displays an icon in the task tray (desktop only in Win8) with a little pennant flag. The icon changes with the severity of the message or action waiting for your attention. In Win8, the Action Center now monitors your Windows activation along with the traditional things like the firewall settings and whether or not you have installed an antivirus program. The Wikipedia article is wikipedia.org/wiki/Security_Center.

Q – That’s not what I meant. What I’m looking for is something called “God mode”.

A – God Mode is a Windows “special folder” that contains shortcuts to all of the dialogs in all of the applets in Control Panel. I found all of the following by searching in my favorite search engine (Yahoo) for “win8 god mode”. God Mode is available for Vista, Win7 and Win8. To set up God Mode on your computer, pick a location somewhere (I did this in the Windows folder), right click and create a new folder. When Windows asks you to name the folder, paste in this string: “GodMode.{ED7BA470-8E54-465E-825C-99712043E01C}”. When you hit enter to save the name, the folder icon will change to the Control Panel icon. Open the folder to see a list of all the settings dialogs grouped by the name of the Control Panel applet. Very cool. To add polish and make this new tool easier to use, I created a shortcut to the God Mode folder in the Start Menu folder for Administrative Tools. Contrary to the questioner’s understanding, God Mode does not contain instructions on how to use these settings dialogs, and nothing in God Mode is not already available thru the normal Control Panel. If you can already find what you need in Control Panel, there is no advantage to creating a God Mode folder.

D – During the discussion, several

members mentioned a utility called Belarc Advisor, a tool that inventories your computer and documents all of the setting and installed software on your computer. Searching for this I found it has morphed into a much more capable tool called Network Inventory Advisor (www.network-inventory-advisor.com). This newer tool does for your entire network, what Belarc did for a single machine. A license to inventory up to ten computers on a single network is free. Running this on my network I noticed several errors. It did not detect the anti-virus software (Vipre) on any machine. If you try it, I suggest that you not accept the report without verifying the results.

Q – I’m looking for a very simple backup program that is so simple that “even my sister can use it”. Any suggestions? It must provide a fairly simple way to restore a backup on bare metal, ie: restoring to an empty hard drive following a hard drive crash.

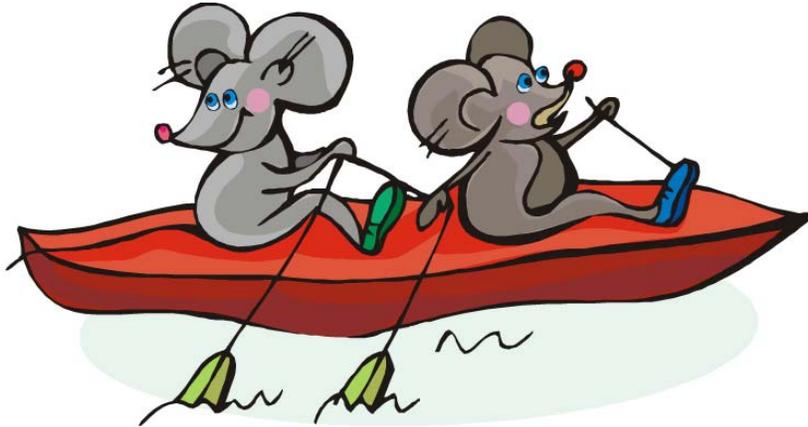
A – There were several suggestions, not all of them meeting the simplicity criteria or the bare metal restore. Cloud solutions like Mozy (www.mozy.com) or Carbonite (www.carbonite.com) would be appropriate. Both offer a variety of features including a local mirror image hard drive for a bare metal restore all for a variety of prices. Window 8 has a feature called ‘File History’ that keeps multiple versions of a file, but this is not a full system

backup. Some external hard drives come with a backup utility. Another member asked about hard drive mirroring, also known as RAID0. This is best done in hardware, but mirroring is also available in Windows using software. Discussion continued with how to restore to bare metal from an off-site backup. The easy solution is to have your files and a restore program copied to DVD’s and sent overnite. For a large amount of files, I think this would be the fastest solution. If you have a fast Internet connection, it might be faster to download. The procedure would be to reinstall Windows, run Windows update, download and install the backup and restore software from the backup service and start the restore. A key here is that the restore must include a restore of the registry or your computer will not have all your old settings when the restore is complete. We ran out of time without reaching a totally satisfactory solution, so further research is left for the reader.

[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!



Do the General Meetings leave you thirsting for more?
Find all that after the meeting at the DACS Pig SIG.



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