



July 1999

Volume 10, Issue 7

<http://www.dacs.org>

Is Your PC a Can of Worms?

WordPerfect Gives You Wiggle Room

By John Heckman

WITH THE MELISSA VIRUS a few weeks ago and now the more deadly "Explorer/Zip" worm virus, those using e-mail to the outside world have to take a close look at what the real risks are and how to best protect themselves. The Explorer virus infected major corporations, including Microsoft, Boeing, AT&T, and General Electric, forcing some of them to shut down their e-mail systems in order to deal with virus infection. The Explorer virus not only replicates itself through the e-mail system, but tries to overwrite files on any accessible drives, including network drives, thus potentially destroying documents on the entire network. Right now, these viruses work through and attack Microsoft products: Outlook, Exchange, Outlook Express, Word, etc. The Explorer virus also attacks Excel spreadsheets, Powerpoint presentation files, and various other types of files. Macro viruses are effective because the structure of Microsoft products requires macros to be contained in and run from documents. Thus if you open a Word file called "word.doc," it can contain

and run a virus. The recent viruses have two "innovations" that make them particularly lethal:

- The Melissa virus reads the Outlook address book and sends messages to the first 50 listings (including groups, which are sorted first) so that an e-mail appears to the recipient to come from someone they know or to

be a response to an e-mail message they have actually sent. The Explorer virus continues to reply to new e-mail you receive, sending itself out as a reply.

- The Explorer worm virus ups the ante, destroying files (and potentially all your data), whereas the Melissa virus did no actually damage other than causing a tremendous bottleneck.



WordPerfect Relatively Immune

Current users of WordPerfect have not had to be very concerned about these

viruses because WordPerfect has a macro strategy and structure different from that of Word. In WordPerfect, macros exist as freestanding files and cannot be incorporated into or run from documents. While macros can run from WordPerfect templates, these must have a .wpt ex-

Viruses Continued on page 4

Ontrack goes offline, derails

Our featured presenter for July, Ontrack Labs, has cancelled, due to scheduling conflicts. A suitable replacement will be found. Please check our Web site, www.dacs.org for further details.



President's File

DACS Gets the Gold

We did it again! Our twin publishing ventures, dacs.doc and dacs.org, took the ribbons in their respective categories at the annual InterGalactic User Group Officers' Conference on June 19.

The KISS principle (Keep it Simple, stupid) must have been the controlling factor in judging Web pages, with dacs.org drawing runner-up for Best Graphics on a Web site. Keeping it simple has been the philosophy of minimalist Webmaster, Jeff Setaro, who has spent many hours each month making sure the DACS site runs lean and mean. In previous years, user groups' Internet pages got top kudos for fancy frames and images that danced across the screen. Trouble was that the dancing slowed to a crawl and the underlying structure got too complex to update with regularity. The trick is to make a site look crisp and professional without slowing it down with fancy graphics. And with the best content around, who needs a side show?

Great content and design were the operant terms for dacs.doc, too, which earned Best User Group Coverage, runner-up for Best Design and Features, and Best Overall for a mid-sized newsletter. We've won some of these awards before, but the nervous anticipation, the gnawed cuticles, the gastric butterflies fluttering within, and

the sudden rush of exhilaration as the prizes are announced, never really disappear. Especially gratifying are the warm congratulations from fellow conferees, combined with questions of "how'd you do it?"

Unsung heroes

Awards and praise are gratifying, but they seldom probe beyond the veneer of print and pixel media that defines the outward expression of a user group. Often missed are the unsung heroes whose contributions may not be as visible, but are just as essential to the mission and work of the group. Here are some of my nominations:

• **Best Supporting Player.** For about a decade, Charlie Bovaird has performed a crucial role in managing the financial affairs and membership relations of DACS. No fanfare, no bluster, and no baloney.

• **Best Chronicler of UG Activities.** As Board secretary, Larry Buoy has combined a flair for the literary with businesslike precision, to flawlessly forge the minutes of our monthly meetings.

• **Best Media Relations.** Marlène Gaberel hit the ground running when she assumed the role of PR director. Through letters, email and phone contacts, she has since established a solid media presence for DACS in all the region.

It is important for members to appreciate all the volunteer efforts that go into the work of DACS. Therefore, in coming months, we will try to profile in dacs.doc these and other volunteers who have contributed so much to our success as a user group.

DACS Macs

Congratulations to the DACS Macintosh SIG! They have just become the proud users of a spanking new iMac, on loan from longtime member, Charlie White of Bethel. We've been having an informal drive going to get some hardware for the SIG to use, and Charlie came through in the pinch. Special thanks also go to Jim Scheef and Ed Heere for their donations of a pair of used Macs to the

Membership Information

Dacs.doc, ISSN 1084-6573, is published monthly by the Danbury Area Computer Society, 12 Noteworthy Drive, Danbury, CT 06810-7271. Annual subscription rates: \$25 to regular members, \$20 to students (included in dues).

Postmaster

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

Editorial Committee

Managing Editor: Frances J. Owles **Production Editor:** Marc Cohen

Technical Editor: Bruce Preston

Public Relations: Marlene Gaberel

Contributors

Charles Bovaird	Larry Buoy
Jacqueline Cohen	Richard Corzo
April Miller Crippliver	Marlene Gaberel
John Heckman	Mike Kaltschnee

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

The editors welcome submissions from DACS members. Contact Frances Owles 860-868-0077 (jones@ct1.nai.net) or Allan Ostergren at 860-210-0047 (dacseditor@aol.com). Advertisers, contact Brad Altland at 203-357-407; (BBA3@exchange.co.westchester.ny.usa).

© 1999 Danbury Area Computer Society. Permission to reprint or publish granted to any non-profit group, provided credit is given and a copy of the final publication is mailed to the copyright holder. All rights reserved.

Technical Support

Dacs.doc is prepared using an AMSYS Pentium 133 and an HP LaserJet 4 Plus printer.

Software packages used to publish *dacs.doc* include:

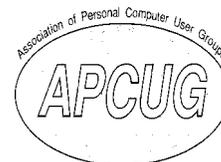
Microsoft Windows 95, Office 7.0, TrueType fonts, Adobe PageMaker 6.5, CorelDRAW 6.0, Calendar Creator+ for Windows

Dacs.doc file transfer security provided by AVP.

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

IN THIS ISSUE

WP AND VIRUSES	1
PRESIDENT'S FILE	2
DIRECTORS' NOTES	3
HELP LINE	3
NEW MEMBERS	4
INTERNET PROVIDERS	4
BEOS REVIEW	5
CREATE GREAT WEB PAGES	6
SIG NOTER & NEWS	8
CALENDAR	9
A+ CREDENTIALLED	10
FOR SALE-99% OFF	12
RANDOM ACCESS	14



Jeff Setaro
APCUG Liaison
748-6748

Continued on page 4

Officers

President: Allan Ostergren (860) 210-0047

VPs: Gene Minasi (860) 354-9380 • Frances Owles (860) 868-0077

Marlène Gaberel (203) 426-4846 • Jeff Setaro (203) 748-6748

Secretary: Larry Buoy (860) 355-0394 • Treasurer: Charles Bovaird (203) 792-7881

Directors

Chair: Wally David (203) 790-7286

Charles Bovaird (203) 792-7881 • Larry Buoy (860) 355-0394

Marc Cohen (203) 775-1102 • Dick Gingras (203) 426-0484

Ed Heere (203) 431-1500 • Bruce Preston (203) 438-4263

Marlène Gaberel (203) 426-4846 • Allan Ostergren (860) 210-0047

Frances Owles (860) 868-0077 • Jeff Setaro (203) 748-6748

Committees

Education: Gene Minasi (860) 354-9380 • Membership: Don Ruffell (203) 797-8138

Newsletter: Frances Owles (860) 868-0077 • Program: Jeff Setaro (203) 748-6748

WEB Master: Jeff Setaro (203) 748-6748

Resource Center: (203) 748-4330

Web Site: <http://www.dacs.org>

HelpLine

Volunteers have offered to field member questions by phone. Please limit calls to the hours indicated below. Days means 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; evening means 6 to 9:30 p.m. Please be considerate of the volunteer you are calling. HelpLine is a free service. If you are asked to pay for help or are solicited for sales, please contact the *dacs.doc* editor; the person requesting payment will be deleted from the listing. Can we add your name to the volunteer listing?

d = day e = evening

Program	Name	Phone #	
Alpha Four	Dick Gingras	(203) 426-0484	(e)
AOL	Marc Cohen	(203) 775-1102	(d e)
APL	Charles Bovaird	(203) 792-7881	(e)
AutoCAD	Peter Hylenski	(203) 797-1042	(e)
C/UNIX/ObjC	Kenneth Lerman	(203) 426-4430	(d e)
C + +	Reg Charney	(914) 833-0762	(d e)
Clipper	Dick Gingras	(203) 426-0484	(e)
COBOL	Charles Godfrey	(203) 775-3543	(e)
Dbase/DOS	Alan Boba	(203) 264-1753	(e)
DOS	John Gallichotte	(203) 426-0394	(e)
Newdeal	Marc Cohen	(203) 775-1102	(d e)
Electronics	Andrew Woodruff	(203) 798-2000	(d e)
Focus	Jim Scheef	(860) 355-0034	(e)
Hardware	John Gallichotte	(203) 426-0394	(e)
Interface -Instrumentation	Andrew Woodruff	(203) 798-2000	(d e)
Internet	Nick Percival	(203) 438-9307	(d)
Lotus 123R5W	Ben Carnevale	(203) 748-1751	(e)
Macintosh OS	Chris Salaz	(203) 798-6417	(d e)
Magic PC	Hira Suri	(203) 748-2473	(d e)
Microsoft Access	Dick Gingras	(203) 426-0484	(e)
Microsoft Works	Ben Carnevale	(203) 748-1751	(e)
Multimedia	Ed Fitzgerald	(203) 222-9253	(d e)
OS/2	Rich Chernock	(203) 270-0224	(e)
Paradox	Alan Boba	(203) 264-1753	(e)
PASCAL	Duane Moser	(203) 797-2716	(d)
Q&A ver 3/4	Anthony Telesha	(203) 748-4478	(d e)
R:BASE	Jerry Frieárich	(203) 740-7175	(e)
Statistics/Data Analysis	Charles Bovaird	(203) 792-7881	(d e)
Viruses	Jeff Setaro	(203) 748-6748	(d)
Visual Basic	Nick Percival	(203) 438-9307	(d)
HTML/Java	James Costello	(203) 426-0097	(e)
Windows 3.1	Nick Strother	(203) 743-5667	(e)
Windows 95	Ben Carnevale	(203) 748-1751	(e)
WordPerfect	John Heckman	(203) 831-0442	(e)

Directors' Notes

The monthly Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors was held at the Resource Center on Monday, June 7, 1999. Present were Messrs. Buoy, David, Gingras, Ostergren, Setaro, and Mrs. Gaberel. Chairman Wally David presided. Secretary Larry Buoy kept the minutes. The minutes of the May 10 meeting were approved.

Finance and membership

Reports were tabled in the absence of the Treasurer.

Intergalactic and PCExpo

Jeff Setaro advised of the expected attendance of DACS members at the forthcoming (June) InterGalactic and PCExpo meetings. He stated that members had expressed insufficient interest for any day's events to warrant hire of a chartered bus. He also confirmed that, as expected, no free space was available for DACS presence at PCExpo this year. Briefly discussed were arrangements for carpooling by those members of the Board planning to attend; these will be finalized as the dates for attendance at various functions approach.

Y2K videotape

Also briefly discussed was the editing and broadcast of the videotape of the Y2K Symposium held on May 4.

News-Times tech column

Discussed at length was the perceived response of The News-Times readership to the Q&A column appearing weekly as part of that newspaper's High Tech section. Judgment of the limited success of the venture was based on the number of questions being submitted as well as adherence to the requested inclusion of system and contact information, etc., to assist those providing answers to problems. Also discussed was the possibility of offering articles from past issues of *dacs.doc* and/or question and answer formats to other regional publications, with emphasis on weekly publications. It was the consensus that such other publications be contacted to determine if they would be amenable to publishing such material and, if so, to set up a source from past issues of *dacs.doc* or reader-submitted questions. Wally David advised of his efforts to recruit DACS members to handle the details of outsourcing technical questions and submitting answers to publishers.

—LARRY BUOY

Viruses *Continued from page 1*

to keep it updated, thus in effect leaving their clients helpless in the future.

People using Microsoft products, Word and Outlook in particular, are at serious risk if they do not take aggressive antivirus measures. People using WordPerfect will realize a new benefit to this program: they are not at immediate risk from the current outbreak of macro viruses (of course, this does not obviate the need for up-to-date antivirus programs as well).

Do's and Don'ts

- Don't routinely open e-mail attachments. View each one to make sure it is safe to open. You may want to save it to a specified directory and run antivirus software against it before you open it.

- Do keep your antivirus software up to date for both PCs and the server. This will cost money and time, but what will it cost you if key documents on your server are destroyed?

- Do find out what antivirus protection your ISP (Internet provider) is offering in terms of e-mail. Consider switching to one that will do a virus scan of all your e-mail before you receive it. Companies such as DotOne (800 826-4666) and Allegro Net (800 209-6245) offer such services. Or contact Heckman Consulting at 203 831-0442 or heckman@heckmanco.com for more information (DotOne, my e-mail provider, scans all my mail for viruses).

JOHN HECKMAN is president of Heckman Consulting, specializing in software integration for law firms, and a frequent contributor to dacs.doc.

Prez *Continued from page 1*

Resource Center. Now...does anyone have PageMaker or Quark for the Mac, just in case the RC PC crashes?

Ontrack offline

Just two weeks before the July General Meeting, our scheduled presenter, Ontrack labs, derailed. At this writing, our fearless program director, Jeff Setaro, was making calls and pressing the flesh at PCExpo to find a suitable replacement. If one is not found, Wally David has graciously offered to do an expanded Surfin' Safari...but then someone else would have to review him! Rest assured that we will have another provocative, stimulating and foot-stomping event, of the kind DACS is famous for. Updates will be posted on the DACS Web page.

—ALLAN OSTERGREN
dacsprez@aol.com

Smart advertisers reach
over 1000 active
computer and software
buyers by taking
advantage of the
attractive advertising
rates in
DACS.DOC



Now Available: Direct From Disk, Black and White,

Spot or 4 Color Copying

"For All Your Printing and Copying Needs"

3 Commerce Dr. Danbury, CT

Phone (203) 792-5045 Fax (203) 792-5064

New Members

05/17/1999 thru 05/17/1999

- 1) Susan Reich
- 2) Francis J. Sullivan

THIS IS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER

If the membership date on
your mailing label reads

EXP 3 1999

You need to renew
your DACS membership
- NOW

Local Area Internet Providers

AT&T WORLDNET	800-967-5363
CLOUD 9	914-682-0384
CONCENTRIC NETWORKS	800-745-2747
C. P. CONNECT	203-734-6600
DELPHI INTERNET	800-695-4005
EARTHLINK	800-395-8425
MAGS-NET	203-207-5695
EROL'S	888-463-7657
GTE INTERNETWORKING	800-927-3000
IBM/ADVANTIS	800-888-4103
INTERNET84	203-830-2122
INTERRAMP/PSI	800-827-7482
JAVANET	800 952-4638
LOCALNET / FAIRFIELD CT	203-425-3535
MCI	800-550-0927
MICROSOFT NETWORK	800-386-5550
NETAXIS	203-969-0618
NETCOM	800-353-6600
NORTH AMERICAN	800-952-INET
NETMEG INTERNET	888-863-8634
ON THE NET	203-270-6388
PARADIGM	800-664-INET
PUTNAM INTERNET	914-225-3234
SMART WORLD TECH.	203-790-4600
SNET INTERNET	800-408-8282
SPRYNET	800-SPRYNET
TIAC	203-323-5957
WEB CONNECT OF RIDGEFIELD	203-438-7650
WEBQUILL INT. SVCS	203-750-1000

List for informational purposes only,
not an endorsement of any service. 4

Further information?
Call Jim Finch @ 203 790-3654

Meeting Review

The Geek Who Spoke Too Much

Tech talk drives me cuckoo!

By Wally David

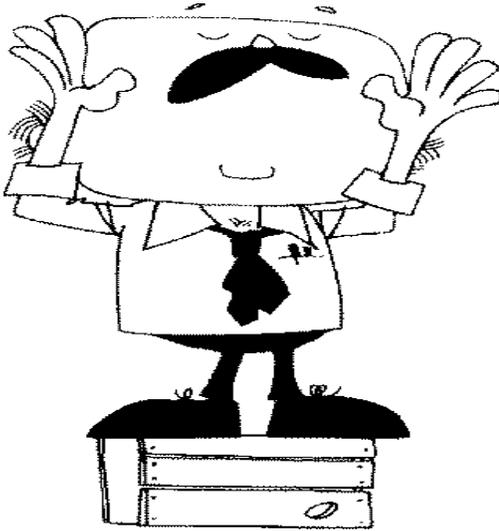
WHEN the presentation started at the June meeting of the Danbury Area Computer Society, I was really glad I wasn't doing meeting reviews anymore. John Brajkovic, who is the president of the CT BeOS user group, came to show DACS what BeOS was all about.

BeOS, from Be, Inc, is a commercially available alternative operating system. It joins the ranks of alternative operating systems, like Linux and OS2, that try to give users something other than Windows or MAC to use to run their computers.

I must say up front, that I am, in no way, knowledgeable about alternative operating systems. And it isn't because I love Windows, Microsoft, and Bill Gates. In fact, I'd love to find something to switch to. Unfortunately, there is no OS I know of that can run the applications I need to use on a daily basis. If there were, I'd be using it in a heartbeat.

Which brings us to that fateful June evening when John Brajkovic launched into his lurching, herky-jerky presentation of BeOS. Now don't get me wrong. John was a nice guy. Being an officer of a user group myself, I had some sympathy for him. However, he was in no way a professional or even an amateur presenter. He was a—and I hesitate to say it—computer geek who liked to hear himself chatter over a PA system. I can't tell you how many times he mumbled something indecipherable and then finished with cheery "Yea." I'm still not sure what he was happy about.

It was at just this time that I was thanking my lucky stars I wouldn't have to write a review on BeOS. I even had some fun scribbling down some headlines that could be used in dacs.doc if Frances had as bad a sense of humor as



I had that night. I won't subject you to them here. Just then, Allan Ostergren came up to me and quietly mentioned that Jack, our usual reviewer, was not available. So, with a big grin, Allan asked me to write the review. Ugh!

If you are reading this article, hoping to learn how you can ditch your

current OS, read no further. You can't! Well, not unless you don't need to use any application you use right now. If you want to create music or graphics files, you may want to look into BeOS. Oh, but don't expect to be able to use Adobe PhotoShop or Picture Publisher, or whatever you are used to using.

John told us there were applications out there for BeOS, but really didn't seem the least bit interested in letting us know what they were. He spent the whole time telling and showing us how easy it was to open up a window—or process, as he called it. And then he showed us how easy it was to close a process that had crashed. In my book, that isn't something I'd be keen on showing an audience. If he had shown us how well BeOS handles crashed applications written by other companies, that would be one thing. But why show us the OS crashing on its own. Go figure.

During the presentation, I tried to pry out of him what exactly BeOS could

offer the typical DACS member. I explained to him that most DACS members were business users or home users who ran Windows or MAC with commercially available applications. He started to respond, with something about how the system could handle very large files with great stability. However, he was quickly distracted, as another window froze.

Here is a quote from Be, Inc's Website:

"Based on an entirely new idea in computing, BeOS was designed to satisfy the higher processing and memory requirements of today's digital media on standard PC hardware, without slowing down or freezing up. Work with audio, video, image, and Internet-based applications, and edit files of millions of gigabytes in size, simultaneously, in real-time."

OK. Sure. But not from what we saw that night.

At the Pig SIG, the "meeting after the meeting" at Chili's in Danbury, we discussed BeOS with John a bit more. I summed up the frustration that I sensed from many people in the audience that night. I think many people were watching the presentation, just as I was, wondering how BeOS could fit into their lives. How could it possibly replace Windows and do what they need it to do every day when their current applications won't even run on it and when there don't seem to be many applications written for BeOS. John responded that it could not replace Windows and was not intended to. I explained to him that had he clearly and concisely told us that up front, people could have relaxed and appreciated BeOS for what it was.

I think that John really loves using BeOS. And I'm sure there are others who do too. After all, Connecticut even has its own user group dedicated to IS. But despite this devotion, I think it will be a long time before BeOS or any other alternative OS supplants Windows or MAC as an everyday OS for the masses.

If you want to learn more about BeOS, please visit their Website at www.be.com. You also might want to contact Don Pearson about the Advanced Operating System SIG. Look for details in dacs.doc about the SIG.

WALLY DAVID is Chairman of DACS' board of directors and leads the Surfin' Safari segment at the General Meeting.

Web Design

Create Great Web Pages

New tools make it a breeze

By Mike Kaltschnee

I'VE BEEN INVOLVED with the creation of Web pages for more than three years, and I often get asked how to get text, video, and graphics into Web pages. Typically, people want to include baby or wedding pictures on their pages, mount images of items they're selling on eBay, or even send short videoclips from a party to a long-distance friend or family member.

Getting text into the computer seems easy at first, but what if you have dozens, or even hundreds of documents? Most scanners sold today come with optical character recognition software (OCR) that will convert scanned documents with a 99% effectiveness rate. If you plan on scanning a lot of documents on a regular basis you should consider purchasing the sheet-feed accessory for your scanner.

These days, the easiest way to get something you see into the computer is by using a digital camera. They used to cost a small fortune, but now you can get a great camera for less than \$400. Look for a "megapixel" camera, which has high enough resolution (lots of pixels) to use for the Web or a color printer. The ease at which these new cameras work is amazing. You simply take a picture, and instead of taking the film out to develop it, you connect a cable to your computer and download the images directly.

If you already have a videocamera, you can use a Snappy or video capture card. Snappy has been around for a while, and can create great-looking captures using special software. It uses several frames in a row to create a better image than can be generated in a single frame. Snappy costs as little as \$50, and you get some fun software with it.

If you are already going to upgrade your video card, spend the extra money and get a video capture board. I just bought an ATI All-In-Wonder Pro for about \$130. It can capture single video frames, video, or even

let you watch TV on your computer. It even comes with software to edit your videos, adding titles and transitions. Finally, you can use a scanner to get your regular photographs into the computer. Scanning for the Web is typically done at 75 to 150 dots per inch (dpi). You should then save the images in the JPEG format, which supports compression. If you compress a typical photo, you can save a lot of download time for your visitors.



www.jasc.com and try it for free for a limited time. PhotoShop comes bundled with some scanners, but you'll probably find Adobe's PhotoDeluxe instead. If you're serious about editing images, then you should consider the hefty investment for PhotoShop, which costs about \$600 on the street.

If you want to create images that move on your Web page, the best route is to create animated GIF files. There are many tools available to help you do this, but I like Ulead's GIF Animator. The program creates very small animations, and has the ability to import and export a large number of file types. You can download a free trial version from <http://www.ulead.com>. Ulead also has a great utility for creating animated titles and text for your Web site. Cool 3D is a slick program for creating the animated words. You simply type your text, and click to select a color, texture, or movement.

Once you have your images, you need to have a place on the Internet to put them. You can use Geocities, Tripod, Angelfire, or any other free hosting site on the Internet to hold your images, movies, or Web pages. They offer free space, up to 11 megabytes, in return for allowing advertising on your Web pages.

The final step is to move your images online. You'll need a file transfer program

(FTP) program such as WSFTP. You can download a trial version from <http://www.shareware.com>. This program works similar to the Windows Explorer, but you're moving files from your computer to another one on the Internet. Most hosting sites have instructions on how to transfer files, in case you get stuck.

Have fun adding some spice to your Web pages. It's a lot easier to add images, animations, and even video to your pages than it was three years ago. You don't even have to spend a lot of money to get professional-looking results.

MIKE KALTSCHNEE is a founder of DeMorgan Industries Corp., the leading developer of Web graphics at www.WebSpice.com. You can reach Mike at mikek@demorgan.com.

Mac News

From the time it began meeting at the DACS Resource Center, the Mac SIG has had to subsist on Macintosh Plus and SE computers. These are the 8086 computers of the Apple Macintosh line.

This sad condition has come to an end with the loan of a Macintosh iMac from DACS member Charlie White of Bethel. Charlie has a Macintosh G3 at home and the iMac was sitting around not being used. He heard the plight of the Mac SIG and sent the Bondi Blue baby over to us.

Now there can be demonstrations during our meetings on a creditable machine. Also, any PC user who would like to try a Mac without anyone knowing about it can come to the Resource Center and take it for a spin. It has a built-in 15" monitor, a 56k modem, 4 Gb IDE hard drive, CD ROM drive, built-in stereo speakers and USB ports. The processor is a 233 MHz G3 Power PC chip. The machine has a modicum of installed software and we have the promise of more software to come. So now, thanks to Charlie White, The Mac SIG can carry on in up to date splendor during our monthly meetings and demonstrations. Charlie, thank you again!"

And I would like to thank Jim Scheef and Ed Heere for the donation of the older Macs as well.

CHRIS SALAZ
MAC SIG

WHY DRAW WHEN YOU CAN ILLUSTRATE?

Step up to the industry standard, Adobe® Illustrator® 8.0, for just \$199.

The Industry Standard
Offering an unrivaled combination of exceptional precision and creative freedom, Adobe Illustrator has long been the choice of savvy designers, graphic artists, technical illustrators, and business professionals around the world.

A Versatile Pencil Tool
Draw and edit smooth, free-form curves on-screen. Just draw a new line near the section you want to change, and Illustrator automatically reshapes the path. It's as easy and accessible as sketching on paper.

More-Sophisticated Tools
Exacting control has always been an Adobe hallmark, and Illustrator 8.0 continues the tradition: four live-editable Brushes, a Gradient Mesh Tool, and over 150 time-saving Actions that let you perform multiple-step procedures with a single click.

Seamless Integration
Illustrator uses the same intuitive interface found in other Adobe applications like Photoshop® and PageMaker®, resulting in a reduced learning curve and a more streamlined workflow.

Illustrator 8.0 offers you more.



When it comes to a complete professional illustration solution, nothing delivers like Adobe



Illustrator. And now CorelDRAW® and Macromedia® FreeHand® owners can upgrade to the full version of Adobe Illustrator 8.0 for just \$199. This offer includes the official Illustrator training workbook (a \$45 value) absolutely FREE.



To order Adobe Illustrator 8.0 or locate a dealer near you, call 1-800-649-3875 and mention offer code 59102.

This offer valid in the U.S. and Canada only. Additional charges for shipping and handling apply. Offer good May 1 through July 31, 1999, while supplies last. This offer is subject to withdrawal without reasonable notice. Adobe, the Adobe logo, Illustrator, PageMaker, and Photoshop are registered trademarks of Adobe Systems, Incorporated. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. © 1999 Adobe Systems, Incorporated. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA.

Special Interest Groups

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

Contact: Bruce Preston, 203 431-2920. Meets on 2nd Tuesday at 7p.m. at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury. **Next meeting:** July 13.

ADVANCED OPERATING SYSTEMS. Explores and develops OS/2, BSD UNIX, and NT operating systems.

Contact: Don Pearson, 914 669-9622. Meets on Wednesday of the week following the general meeting, 7:30 p.m., at Don Pearson's office, North Salem, NY. **Next meeting:** July 14.

EDUCATION. Coordinates DACS education classes.

Contact: Charlie Bovaird (203 792-7881). **Meets as needed.**

GRAPHICS. Create/print high-quality graphics and images. **Contact:** Ken Graff at 203 775-6667. Meets on last Wednesday, 7p.m., at Best Photo, Brookfield. **Next Meeting:** Fall.

INVESTMENT STRATEGIES. Discusses various investment strategies, emphasizing careful selection to maximize profits and limit risk.

Contact: Paul Gehrett (203 426-8436). Meets 3rd Thursday, 7:30 p.m., Edmond Town Hall, Newtown.

Next Meeting: July 15.

INTERNET. Acquaints DACS members with the Internet.

Contact: Larry Stevens (LStevens@usa.net) or Richard Koser (rkoser@worldnet.att.net). Meets on 3rd Wednesday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury. **Next Meeting:** July 21.

MACINTOSH. Discusses Macintosh hardware and software.

Contact: Chris Salaz (203 798-6417). Meets on 3rd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury. **Next Meeting:** July 20.

VISUAL BASIC. Develops Windows apps with Visual Basic.

Contact: Chuck Fizer (203 798-9996) or Jim Scheef (860 355-8001). Meets on 1st Wednesday, 7p.m., at DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury. **Next Meeting:** July 7.

VOICE FOR JOANIE. Provides and supports people with Lou Gehrig's disease with special PC computer equipment.

Contact: Shirley Fredlund (860 355-2611 x4517). Meets on last Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., at Datahr, Brookfield.

Next Meeting: July 27.

WALL STREET. Examines new Windows stock market software.

Contact: Phil Dilloway (203 367-1202). Meets on last Monday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury. **Next Meeting:** July 26.

WEBSITE DESIGN. Designs and maintains dacs.org, the DACS Web site. **Contact:** Jeff Setaro (203 748-6748). Meets on 2nd Wednesday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury. **Next Meeting:** Not until August.

WINDOWS. Explores all aspects of Windows 95 and 3.1.

Contact: Ben Carnevale (203 748-1751 or e-mail W1VZT@aol.com). Meets on 1st Friday, 7p.m., at the DACS Resource Center, Ives Manor (lower level), 198 Main Street, Danbury. **Next Meeting:** Fall of 1999.

SIG News

ACCESS. The Access SIG continues with its split program—the first hour devoted to generalized database instruction, the second to problem solving.

GRAPHICS The SIG will be taking the summer off. Meetings will resume the last Wednesday in September. Have a nice summer.

INTERNET. The June meeting, entitled "Bits to Bytes to Pipes" featured telecommunications professional and DACS member Richard Squires, who offered a look at the physical telco infrastructure of the Internet. We tried to give attendees a high level view of what the actual transport elements are today, where they exist in the network, and how they'll most likely evolve tomorrow. The URL I couldn't remember at the meeting is <http://www.mae.net/east.aggr.overlay.html>. "MAE East—Aggregate Input Traffic," displays five-day volume at the eastern connection to the transcontinental backbone. A year or so ago when I first found this site, volumes were consistently below 1,000 MBAs.

JOB NETWORKING (New SIG proposal from Peter Canevari, who will lead this group if enough members show interest.)

A Job Networking SIG could benefit a lot of people and businesses. I am willing to be a clearinghouse for people looking for positions and companies needing their services. E-mail me at pcanevari@snet.net if you are interested.

MACINTOSH The Mac SIG now has a Bondi Blue iMac on loan. In June we reviewed two CD-ROM-based encyclopedias—Grolier 98 and Encarta 98. Encarta is on two CD-ROMs, which means you have to swap CDs to follow the articles. It's easier if you use two CD-ROM players. Aside from this, both references seemed equal in use and value.

VISUAL BASIC. The June meeting covered a long series of Random Access questions. One led to a discussion of in-process versus out-of-process communications and how a user-created control fits into the COM model. Next month we will continue this topic with a new project Chuck is working on. If you missed last month's raffle you are in luck—it has been moved forward to July. The prizes are a full copy of ACT! and a trial CD of Visual InterDev.

VOICE FOR JOANIE. SIG leader Shirley Fredlund says VFJ desperately needs volunteers. This needn't involve a great deal of time, but from time to time Shirley might have a computer problem she can't solve and would be grateful to have a patient and knowledgeable someone to call to describe the problem and have them walk her through it.

WEBSITE DESIGN. FYI the Web Site Design SIG will be taking its summer vacation during June and July. The next meeting will be held on August 11. Following are the resources mentioned in the E-business presentation at the May meeting: Sites we talked about: <http://www.ibm.com>, <http://www.ibm.com/shop>, <http://www.skytel.com>, <http://www.clk.net>, <http://instant2.icair.org>, <http://www.thawte.com>, <http://www.verisign.com>. Design resources: <http://www.builder.com>, <http://www.webmonkey.com>, <http://www.webreference.com>, <http://www.zdu.com>.

July 1999

Danbury Area Computer Society

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">June</p> <table border="1" style="font-size: small;"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">August</p> <table border="1" style="font-size: small;"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> </div>				S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30				S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					1	2	3
S	M	T	W	T	F	S																																																																																				
	1	2	3	4	5																																																																																					
6	7	8	9	10	11	12																																																																																				
13	14	15	16	17	18	19																																																																																				
20	21	22	23	24	25	26																																																																																				
27	28	29	30																																																																																							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S																																																																																				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7																																																																																				
8	9	10	11	12	13	14																																																																																				
15	16	17	18	19	20	21																																																																																				
22	23	24	25	26	27	28																																																																																				
29	30	31																																																																																								
4	5	6	7	8	9	10																																																																																				
 INDEPENDENCE DAY		 7:00 PM GENERAL MEETING Danbury Hospital	 7:00 PM VISUAL BASIC Chuck Fizer 203 798-9996																																																																																							
11	12	13	14	15	16	17																																																																																				
	 7:30 PM BOARD OF DIRECTORS	 7:00 PM ACCESS Bruce Preston 203 431-2920	 7:30 PM ADVANCED OS Don Pearson 914 669-9622	 7:30 PM INVESTMENT Paul Gehrett 203 426-8436	 NEWSLETTER SIG NEWS DEADLINE																																																																																					
18	19	20	21	22	23	24																																																																																				
		 7:30 PM MACINTOSH Chris Salaz 203 798-6417	 7:00 PM INTERNET Koser/Stevens Lstevens@usa.net																																																																																							
25	26	27	28	29	30	31																																																																																				
	 7:00 PM WALL STREET Phil Dilloway 203 367-1202	 7:30 PM VOICE FOR JOANIE Shirley Fredlund 860 355-2611																																																																																								

A+ Credentialed Expert

How hard work can earn you international recognition

By April Miller Cripliver
MCSE, MCP+I, MCT, A+

AS YOU CAN TELL by all the letters after my name, I've been abused for the past year. I want to thank all of you who have written to say you've missed my articles in *dacs.doc*, and I hope you'll be seeing more of me.

So what are all those letters after my name? They represent a few of the many certifications that are available in the field of computers. Throughout 1998, I prepared for the three Microsoft certifications (MCSE=Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer; MCP+I=Microsoft Certified Professional specializing in the Internet; MCT=Microsoft Certified Trainer, qualifying me to teach MOC [Microsoft Official Curriculum]). Most recently, however, I completed my A+ Certification, which is the topic of this month's article.

A+ Certification is a testing program sponsored by CompTIA that certifies the competency of service technicians in the computer industry. Anyone who wants an internationally recognized credential as a competent computer service professional can take the A+ examination. Major computer hardware and software vendors, distributors, resellers, and publications back the program.

Who is CompTIA?

Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA at www.comptia.org) is a membership trade organization formed in 1982 to promote standards of excellence in computer technology. Its goals are to develop ethical, professional, and business standards and provide educational opportunities to the industry. Its members include more than 7,500 computer resellers, VARs (value-added resellers), distributors, manufacturers, and training companies in the United States and Canada, ranging from large multinational corporations to smaller local computer repair

shops and individual entrepreneurs like me.

How many are certified?

As of May 1, 1999, there were more than 110,000 A+ Certified Technicians worldwide!

Why get A+ certification?

The biggest reason to go through all the stress of studying, studying, studying is to get this little piece of paper that says, "Hey! You really know your computer stuff!" If that's not a good reason, how about these?

- Proof of professional achievement and competence
- Increases your marketability
- Provides opportunity for advancement
- Fulfills training requirements *
Raises customer confidence

Who may take the tests?

A+ Certification is open to anyone who wants to take the tests. The A+ exam is targeted for entry-level computer service technicians with at least six months of on-the-job experience. No specific requirements are necessary, except payment of the fee, which at this writing is \$128 for each of the two tests. Individuals may retake the tests as often as they like, but the two tests must be passed within 90 calendar days of each other in order to become certified.

It is CompTIA's policy to make reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities. If you need special accommodations, you can contact CompTIA two weeks before scheduling your exam. The A+ tests are live throughout the world in English, and have been translated into the following languages: French, German, Portuguese, Japanese, simplified Chinese and traditional Chinese. If you have any questions, you can call the CompTIA Certification Area at 630/268-1818 extension 359.

What A+ exams cover

The tests, which are administered by Sylvan Prometric, were first available in July 1993, and a complete revision of the exams was made July 31, 1998. Earning A+ certification means that the individual possesses the knowledge, ability, and customer relations skill essential for a successful computer service technician, as defined by experts from companies across the industry. The tests cover a broad range of hardware and software technologies, but are not related to any vendor-specific products. To become certified, you must pass two tests-Core and Microsoft DOS/Windows-with a score of at least 66%. The Core test is 60 minutes long and the Microsoft DOS/Windows exam is 70 minutes. When both the Core and the DOS/Windows portions are passed, the candidate receives the A+ designation. Individuals who are already A+ certified when the revised examination 'went live' on July 31, 1998 need not retake the test to remain A+ certified.

The two A+ certification exams are the Core exam, with 70 questions on microcomputers, displays, storage media, printers, basic operating systems, modems, buses, CD-ROMs, IRQs, memory, hexadecimal conversions, and other hardware-related questions. The Microsoft DOS/Windows exam, with 70 questions, tests your ability to use DOS commands and most versions of Windows. Networking and deciphering acronyms are a big part of both tests.

Each test focuses on a specific area of technical service procedures, tools, skills, and customer relations. Some domains are emphasized more than others, so the number of questions on the test from any one domain varies.

The table below lists the domains and the percentage of coverage that each domain has on each test, as well

as the approximate number of test questions that you can expect for each domain.

Where to take them

The A+ exams are given by Sylvan Prometric testing centers at over 700 locations worldwide. To schedule an appointment to take one or both exams, contact them at 800 776-

4276. Register as far in advance as possible to be assured of the date and time you prefer. I took both of my exams in the same morning—first Core, then Windows/DOS, but you may not want to put yourself through that kind of stress. If you study for the tests individually, then take them individually. If you are studying all topics, then take both the exams at the same

time. Get it over with. You'll feel better walking into the testing center with nothing and walking out A+ Certified!

DACS member APRIL MILLER CRIPLIVER holds several certifications and degrees in business and computer science. She is a trainer and computer consultant in Indiana. She welcomes e-mail from readers at april@cripliver.com.

A+ Core Test			
Domain	Percentage of Test	Questions	Content
Installation, Configuration, and Upgrading	30%	20	Identify, install, configure, and upgrade components and peripherals
Diagnosing and Troubleshooting	20%	13	Diagnosing and troubleshooting command problems and malfunctions
Safety and Preventive Maintenance	10%	7	Requires knowledge of safety and preventive maintenance, including the potential hazards of lasers, high-voltage equipment, ESD, and working with items that require special disposal procedures; knowledge of preventive maintenance products, procedures, environmental hazards, and precautions
Motherboard/Processors/Memory	10%	9	Specific terminology, facts, and means of dealing with motherboards, processors, and memory systems
Printers	10%	7	Basic types and concepts of printers and components, including all aspects of their operations, care, service techniques, and common problems
Portable Systems	5%	3	Portable computers and their unique components and problems
Basic Networking	5%	4	Basic networking concepts and terminology, network interface cards, and repairs on a network computer
Customer Satisfaction*	10%	6	The factors, actions, and interpersonal skills that contribute to a quality technician-customer interaction
* <i>The Customer Satisfaction domain of the Core Exam is scored, but it has no impact on your final score. However, it's noted on your score report for your information and use. For example, some employers want to know your score in the Customer Satisfaction domain as a part of their hiring criteria.</i>			

A+ DOS/Windows Test			
Domain	% of Test	Questions	Content
Functions, Structure, Operation, and File Management	30%	23	The functions, structure, file management, navigation, and program execution in DOS, Windows 3.x, and Windows 95
Memory Management	10%	7	The types of memory used by DOS and Windows and the potential for memory address conflicts
Diagnosing and Troubleshooting	25%	13	Diagnostic and troubleshooting procedures relating to DOS, Windows 3.x, and Windows 95
Installation, Configuration, and Upgrading	25%	15	Diagnostic and troubleshooting procedures relating to DOS, Windows 3.x, and Windows 95
Networks	10%	6	Network capabilities and connections in DOS and Windows, and Internet concepts and system setup

For Sale: 99% Off!

The saga of an accidental computer-recycling project.

By Ben Stallings

LET ME BEGIN by saying that I'm no neo-Luddite. I spend 8 to 12 hours a day on the computer, telecommuting to a virtual office where I serve people I've never seen. I resent cathode-ray tubes as backward, inefficient technology that should be phased out. I've been known to take my laptop on camping trips.

That being said, I also refuse to join the rat race. I don't care that I could buy a new laptop that's six times faster than the one I have—I don't need a new laptop. I don't care that a 56K modem could speed up my Internet connection—14,400 bps is good enough for what I do, and it has to be good enough for the thousands of people in the Twin Cities metro area who can't afford better.

Twin Cities Free-Net's (<http://tcfreenet.org>) goal is to build community through electronic communication for all. Since the Internet has become much more accessible and affordable in recent years with terminals in the public libraries, monthly ISP rates as low as \$6.95 a month, and community organizations giving away free 1,200 bps terminals to all comers, the Free-Net has focused its attention on providing content, not access.

Still, before coming here I toyed with the idea of picking up a few old Macintoshes, refurbishing them, and selling them to the public, donating the profits to the Free-Net. When another nonprofit handed me an old Mac SE, the idea became a reality. When I saw the stash of Mac SE/30s and Classic IIs at DRAGnet, a local EPA-licensed computer recycling center, it took hold with a vengeance, and I bought a dozen—keyboards, mice, hardware upgrades, and modems included. I found buyers more quickly than I could fix them up, and soon most of them were out the door for \$60 apiece or \$30 plus 5 hours' volunteer work. That's 1% of the original price: 99% off!

Then things kind of got out of hand. DRAGnet was on its way out of business, and its mountain of SEs and Classics would be trashed if someone didn't

buy them. I thought maybe I could handle another 20, but before I knew it I had bought 40 computers and 48 modems. Now we're talking 1988 technology here. The SE/30s and Classic IIs I had been dealing with before could run all the software I use on my 1994 laptop, but these then-year-old boxes have essentially the same functionality as the original 1984 Macintosh—just more memory and disk space.

Still, they're more than adequate for word processing, painting, drawing, playing certain games, and, of course, accessing the Free-Net. They easily max out their 14,400 bps modems and can transfer files as well as anyone. The \$45 price tag is again 99% off their original price, and who's going to argue with a 10x speed increase over the little terminals you can get for free?

Sales have been sluggish. I have a closet full of Macintoshes, more at the office, and still more in the basement of a volunteer in the suburbs. I've had help from volunteers with testing and assembling the components, but in the end I do the quality control, not to mention the one-on-one training for people who haven't had a computer before. The signs I put up in the neighborhood have attracted a number of people who cannot complete a coherent sentence. I have yet to break even, much less donate the profits.

Still, it was a good idea, and I'm confident I'll eventually get rid of the stockpile and make some money for the Free-Net. I've already helped get a number of people online, and it's very heartening to see the look of pride they get when they realize they own a computer and can use it to do meaningful things. If your community doesn't have a computer-recycling place that sells to the public, you might consider pulling together some volunteers and trying it, but I have a few recommendations:

- Pick a single model of computer that's available in large quantities of identical configurations. That will save you hours and hours of time by simplifying testing, part replacement, configuration, and pricing.

- If at all possible, start with a small number of units and a limited time space, so you can be quite sure of your demand and supply.

- Find a convenient place to store and work on the computers before you buy them.

Good luck! And oh, if you know anyone who wants an old \$45 computer, just let me know.

This article was furnished as a benefit of membership in the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization to which DACS belongs. The author, BEN STALLINGS, is the general manager of Twin Cities Free-Net, a nonprofit online service seeking to build community in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area through electronic communication for all.

CONTACT of Danbury, CT

is a manufacturer, and worldwide provider of high performance equipment for surface mount and through-hole electronic assembly automation. In order to expand our product lines, we require additional support. The following opportunities exist for energetic, highly motivated individuals in our Danbury, CT facility.

PROGRAMMER

Responsible for C language program development and maintenance of real-time embedded systems. 2+ years experience using Windows '95/NT operating system, and experience with C, C++, WIN 32, Visual C++, MFC, and ODBC.

SOFTWARE ENGINEER

Participate in new product development using Windows '95/NT. The product will include the ability to maintain program database using Windows user interface in an embedded system. Position requires 2+ years experience using Windows '95/NT operating system, knowledge of WIN 32, and experience with C, C++, Visual C++, MFC, ODBC, RDBMS, SQL, OOAD, Multi-threading, Client-Server helpful.

We offer a competitive salary and benefits package. Please mail/fax/e-mail your resume indicating position of interest to:
Ellie Susmeyer
Contact Systems, Inc.
50 Miry Brook Rd.
Danbury, CT 06810
Fax: (203) 743-0606
E-Mail: hr@contactsystems.com
EOE

CONTACT
Visit our Web Site at:
www.contactsystems.com

Y2K ADS TO BEWARE OF.



WHEN THE SYSTEM (sic.) BREAKS DOWN **BA LOIE**

YOU CAN GET FREE GOOD

WITH YOUR P.C. JUST PLACE YOUR COMPUTER ON YOUR FRONT PORCH & WE REPLACE IT WITH A SIZZLING PIZZA FROM DORMENTOS

DONT BE CAUGHT WITH YOUR VOLTS DOWN 

\$2.95

HOARD NOW

AMAZING ENERGY ABSORBER FOR THOSE "DIM" DAYS 



INSTANT CONVERTER JUST STICK ON YOUR P.C. TO BE READY FOR Y2K. ONLY \$9.95

HOW TO MAKE FOOD FROM OLD CARPET

MILAM

WHEN THE LIGHTS GO OUT OVER THE GOOD WORLD



WILL YOU BE READY WHEN THE BIG PLUG? IS PULLED?

VESSELS & CROCKS of it CHURCH

RT. 6 OFF 237... FOLLOW DIRT ROAD PAST CAR IN YARD BUNCH OF DEAD PEOPLE, PAY AT NEON CROSS

Praise be To our server 

© 1999 Bucky Milam

Instant replay: June 1999

Bruce Preston, Moderator

Q.I live in Danbury and am wondering if some of the telephone exchanges are capable of better transmission rates than others. I cannot get a connection better than 28.8. Could you ask the membership for typical connection speeds? I have used the 3Com line test number, and it reports that my line will not support speeds better than 28.8.

A. We had about 50 people in the audience with V.90 modems representing the following exchanges—725, 726, 743, 746, 748, 778—that report reliable connections anywhere from 28.8 to a high of 50K. The distribution was fairly uniform as far as speeds attainable for the various exchanges. Here are some suggestions and comments: First, present FCC regulations restrict the signal strength that your ISP's modem may put on the circuit, so the best you can get on download is about 53K. The 56K technology is also asymmetrical: The high speed is only for downloading, which for Internet service is what you would typically want. Next, the signal clarity degrades quickly, so that if you are more than about three miles from your telephone "central office," you won't be able to reach the maximum rate. This section of your connection, usually wired with regular copper and called the "local loop," is the weakest link in the connection. Once the signal reaches the central office it is changed from analog to digital (except for a very few offices that are still all-analog) and should remain digital all of the way to the ISP. You may test your local loop by calling a service number provided by 3Com/US Robotics (visit http://www.3com.com/56k/need4_56k/linetest.html for instructions on how to perform the test.

Q.I have a Dell Pentium-II that came with MacAfee Anti-Virus. I went to The MacAfee Web site to download an update, but I can't identify which

version I have. How do I identify the version?

A. There are several ways to find out, which vary from vendor to vendor. Try clicking (or right-clicking) on the icon in the system tray. There may be an "About" item, or a HELP menu item which usually has an "About" sub-menu. This traditionally shows the version. Another way is to find the program using Windows Explorer. Look in WINDOWS\Start Menu\Programs\StartUp, and right-click on the item. Go to the Properties menu item, then the VERSION page and you will find the version number.

Q.I have a floppy drive that I can't use to read anymore. It typically says that the diskette is unformatted. The diskette is OK on other machines.

A. One of several things could be causing this. One (rare) possibility is that you were hit with a virus that damages the Windows floppy disk driver. To see if this is the case, boot DOS instead of Windows (press F8 as soon as you see the "Starting Windows" message after power-on). Then see if you can read/write the floppy. If yes, then you have a Windows problem; if not, then it is probably a hardware problem. A new 1.44MB floppy costs about \$20 plus installation. Another possibility is that the drive is out of alignment. If that is the case, then the drive can probably format a diskette and then read/write the diskette, but other machines won't be able to work with diskettes created by the drive. Lastly, it is possible that the drive just needs a cleaning. You can get a non-abrasive cleaning diskette which has a fabric insert that you wet with a cleaning fluid. You then try to "read" the drive, which causes the insert to spin and clean the drive heads. Then remove the cleaning disk, wait for the cleaning fluid to evaporate (as per the instructions) and then try the drive.

Q.I am running a 100Base-T Ethernet network, with three Windows 98 machines as a peer-to-peer network. Two of the machines (P-II 300 and Cyrix 333) can read/write to each other, but they can not see the third machine (it happens to be a P-II 450). The machines are in the same workgroup and have the same protocol stacks.

A. The only explanation that was heard from the floor was that there may be an incompatibility between the network cards, or perhaps between the cards and the hub. There was also a suggestion that you might check out your patch cables, and/or that you get a "cross-over" cable and then try connecting two machines without the hub in the middle.

Q.I have a laptop machine that is not able to print anymore. The machine is running Windows 95, and at one time had a Connectix videocamera attached to the printer port, although that is not connected at the time.

A. Just removing the videocamera wouldn't be enough to make the printer available if the software driver is still loaded. You have several choices: You could use the "Hardware Configuration Profile" feature in Windows 9x to create a "printer" and a "camera" configuration; you then select which you want when you boot. The driver for the device that you are not using would then not be loaded. Alternatively, if you don't use the camera on the laptop machine, you could just remove the software via the control panel / system / device manager, or control panel / add/remove software. Which to use is a function of the software's configuration. If you take this route, remember that you typically have to turn the machine off completely and then restart it in order for driver changes to take place.

Q. What controls the "pecking order" for various file formats? Specifically, I can't seem to control which helper application takes control when I want to access certain multimedia files on the Internet.

A. In your browser, take a look at HELP / About Plug-Ins to see which application has taken over control

of which file formats.

Q. I have a Motorola LifeStyle 28.8 modem on my notebook machine. I do not have an installation diskette or CD with software/drivers for it. How do I tweak the best performance out of it?

A. Make sure that you have the drivers specifically created for the device. Start by looking at the Motorola Web site. A search at <http://search.motorola.com> using "LifeStyle modem driver" took us to <http://www.mot.com/MIMS/ISG/Products/lifestyle288internal/faqs.html> with a lot of information about your modem and how to resolve issues. If you can't find it there, try www.driverguide.com. You will need to "register" by filling out a questionnaire, but you may be able to opt out of receiving the company's e-mails and newsletters. The site does not actually have the drivers; rather it contains a user-supported/contributed database featuring links to the sites that contain the

drivers.

Q. We just signed up for cable modem access in Wilton and would like to know about others using cable modems. Do you really get the good speed?

A. Several members have cable modem access and report good speeds most of the time. Some reported degradation at some times of the day; for example, a Wilton user reported that schools with connections tend to bog down the system for about an hour in mid-morning.

Q. Can you suggest a source for a personal firewall?

A. You might take a look at AtGuard from WRQ.

BRUCE PRESTON is the president of West Mountain Systems, a consultancy in Ridgefield, CT, specializing in database applications. A DACS director and moderator of the Random Access sessions at the general meetings, Bruce also leads the Access SIG.

FREE CLASSIFIEDS

DACS members may publish noncommercial, computer-related classified ads in dacs.doc at no charge. Ads may be placed electronically by by fax or modem, or hard-copy may be submitted at our monthly general meeting. Fax your ads to Charlie Bovaird at 203 792-7881.

Leave hard-copy classifieds with Charlie, Marc, or whoever is tending the members' table at our monthly meeting.

CDI INFORMATION SERVICES

Openings in Westchester, Fishkill, Poughkeepsie, White Plains & Connecticut

Around the world, whenever there is a critical need for advanced technology solutions, today's leading companies call on CDI. For over 46 years, we've been America's Largest Technical Services Organization, listed on the NYSE with \$1.5 billion in revenue.

TOP PAID SALARIED & HOURLY POSITIONS
for CLIENT/SERVER and MAINFRAME TECHNOLOGIES

Developers:
ORACLE DBA
APPLICATIONS
SAP
LOTUS NOTES
SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATORS
SW PROJECT MANAGERS
C/C++ SW ENGINEERS
WEB PROGRAMMERS
PC/NETWORK TECHNICIANS

Submit resume to, Attn: DH/DACS
FAX: 888-910-1102
Email: dhikade@cdicorp.com
TEL: 888-910-1101

LOTUS NOTES
PL1, DB2
JAVA/WEB/HTML
C++, OO
AIX SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATORS
SYSTEMS PROGRAMMERS
DBAs
TECH WRITERS
WINDOWS NT TECHNICIANS

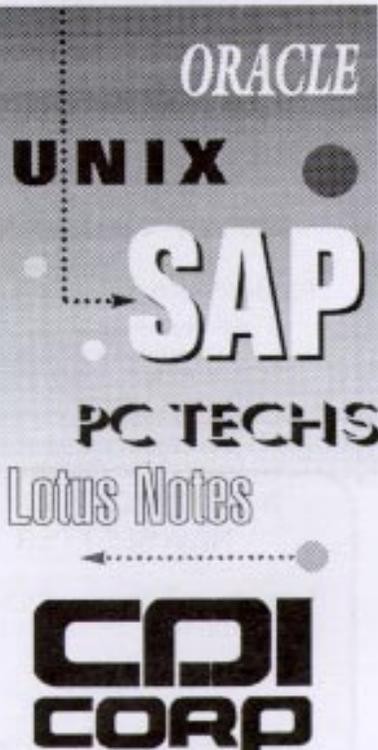
Submit resume to, Attn: DG/DACS
FAX: 800-541-0564
Email: dglazer@cdicorp.com
TEL: 800-683-7484

CDI INFORMATION SERVICES

Division of CDI Corporation-Northeast

Check out our website at: <http://www.cdicorp.com>

EOE



Stop the paperwork shuffle. Access current information when you need it. Create professional looking reports at the touch of a button. Increase office efficiency and productivity. Keep your competitive edge... Let our experienced professional staff help you get the most from your computer system investment.



Business Solutions Provider

**Software Development and Integration
Relational Database design
System Analysis • Needs assessment**

**PC
Solutions**

Mention this ad for a **FREE** initial consultation

Sandy Hook, CT 06482-1106 Phone: (203) 426-1780
FAX: (203) 270-1646

Visit our web site at www.pc-solution.com

Voice for Joanie

Help give the gift of speech
Call Shirley Fredlund
at 355-2611, ext.
4517
and become a

Voice for Joanie
volunteer.

Future Events

July 6 • Open - Check Web Page

August 3 • Red Hat Linux

September 7 • L&H Speech Products, Voice Express Professional

AMSYS Pentium II & III Business Systems

SYSTEMS INCLUDE: Intel BX Chipset System Board with 100Mhz Bus, 512KB Pipeline Burst Cache, 32 MB PC-100 SDRAM, 4.3GB HDD, 4MB AGP SVGA, 3.5" FDD, 2 Serial Ports, 1 Parallel Port, 2 USB Ports, 3 PCI Slots, 3 ISA Slots, 1Shared PCI/ISA Slot, 1 AGP Slot, Mid-Tower Case with 9 Drive Bays and 220W Power Supply, 104 Key Windows 98 Keyboard, Microsoft Mouse.

Intel Pentium/Celeron 333 Mhz CPU w/ 128K Cache
Intel Pentium/Celeron 366 Mhz CPU w/ 128K Cache
Intel Pentium/Celeron 400 Mhz CPU w/ 128K Cache
Intel Pentium II 350Mhz CPU
Intel Pentium II 400Mhz CPU
Intel Pentium III 450Mhz CPU
Intel Pentium III 500Mhz CPU

AMSYS[®]
COMPUTER

900 Ethan Allen Hwy.

Ridgefield, CT 06877

203 431-1500 / www.amsys.net

OPTIONS & UPGRADES

Upgrade to 64MB 100Mhz SDRAM
grade to 96MB 100Mhz SDRAM
grade to 128MB 100Mhz SDRAM
Upgrade from 4.3GB to 6.4GB HDD
Upgrade from 4.3GB to 8.4GB HDD
Upgrade from 4.3GB to 10GB
Upgrade from 4.3GB to 13GB HDD
Add 32X CD-ROM
Add DVD ROM II (Instead of CD-ROM)
Add 100MB Internal ZIP Drive
Add 32-bit PCI Wavetable Sound Card
Add Speakers
Add Microsoft Office 97 Sm, Bus. Ed.

Up -
Up -

PENTIUM II

**266 MMX Notebook
DACS SPECIAL \$1,895**

32MB RAM
4GB HDD
3.5" FDD
24XCD-ROM
Battery
12.1" TFT Display
3D Sound
512K Cache
2MB 128bit VGA
2 PCMCIA Slots
TouchPad
USB Port
Win 98
Carrying Case

© AMSYS, Inc. 1998

Call for latest prices!