

Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey NEWS

Volume 25, Number 1

January 2000



Newly elected officers and directors of ACGNJ pause for a photo opportunity. L to R: Evan Williams, Arnold Milstein, Charlie Huffsmith, Marty Rosenblum, John Sheetz (rear) and Jo-Anne Head (front), Scott Vincent, Frank Warren, John Raff and Sheldon Koepf.

Story on page 14.

The year 2000 marks two important mileposts for ACGNJ

TCF celebrates silver (25 years), and recruiting of speakers has begun — see page 18.

ACGNJ News begins Volume 25 with this issue. The editor would very much like to see issues from those early years — does anyone have a complete collection?



www.acgnj.org

Founded 1975

Notice:

From Membership Chair


Marty Rosenblum

We are aware of the sad state of the membership database due to a breakdown in the renewal reminder process. Your Treasurer and I have been in frequent contact over this.

I shall be taking over the maintenance of the database and the production of ACGNJ Newsletter mailing labels. For this issue we are sending copies to many of you whose membership has recently expired. This is a one-time effort.

Please check the label on your newsletter carefully and note the expiration date printed there. If you find your membership has expired, we hope that you will want to renew and keep receiving our newsletter. To do so, please remove the renewal application from this newsletter, fill it out and mail it to the address listed there with your check. If you choose not to deface your newsletter, the application can be printed from the Web:

(<http://www.acgnj.org/applicat.html>).

We sincerely hope that you will all choose to continue as active members of the ACGNJ and we apologize for our past problems. 

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Submissions: Articles, reviews, cartoons, illustrations. Most word processors or ASCII text are acceptable. Fax or mail hard copy and/or disk to Editor; OR e-mail to Editor. **Always confirm by voice.** Date your review and include name of word processor used, your name, address and phone *and* name, address and phone of the product manufacturer, if available.

Tips for reviewers: Why does anyone need it? Why did you like it or hate it? Ease (or difficulty) of installation, learning and use. Would you pay for it? If you include graphics, they should be separate files.

Advertising: Non-commercial announcements from members are welcome. Commercial ads are 15 cents per word, \$5 minimum. Camera ready display ads: Full page (7 x 10 inches) \$150, two-thirds page (4½ x 10) \$115, half-page \$85, one-third \$57, quarter \$50, eighth \$30. Discount 10% on 3 or more consecutive insertions. Enclose payment.

Publication Exchange: Other computer user groups are invited to send a their newsletters to Editor at the ACGNJ address above. We will respond in kind.

Address Changes should be directed to David Lampe (david.lampe@entex.com) and/or to his attention at the ACGNJ address above.

Membership, including subscription: 1 year \$25, 2 years \$40, 3 years \$55. Student or Senior Citizen (over 65): 1 year \$20, 3 years \$45. Family of member, without subscription, \$10 per year. Send name, address and payment to ACGNJ, PO Box 135, Scotch Plains NJ 07076.

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The Internet Corner

by Martin Rosenblum

Web News

Item: PC Magazine, January 4, After Hours: "Virtual Health." Doug Beizer gives this review of health and medical Web sites from *allhealth.com* to *WebMD.com*. The winner: *AmericasDoctor.com*, a new one to me. It's been up since September 1998 and seems to have lots of useful stuff. I found chat rooms where real physicians hold forth, and some recorded chats on particular medical problems. The site is sponsored by a number of hospitals and from the looks of it I would say it should be included in your armamentarium.

Item: Business Week, December 27/January 3, "What's on Cable? The Internet." In some places you can buy cable modems for a mere \$99. Early next year internal PC Modem cards should be available for \$200 to \$300 and by year's end they should be standard equipment on PCs.

Item: Same issue: "The Web's Southern Frontier." Elizabeth Malkin claims "Net stocks are starting to shine in Latin America." Driving into the city the other day we heard a news report on *www.starmedia.com*, which claimed to be the Latino Yahoo! Actually, they look more like CNN, since it's a newsy home page. You have to tell them whether you want Spanish or Portuguese, and the Portuguese is Brazilian, since it's primarily Latin American. They're doing well financially, even though they aren't in the black yet, but they're buying up smaller operations and are determined to make a success.

Item: The New York Times, December 26: "The Internet Wears Out Its Welcome." Steve Lohr seems angry that Time Magazine chose Jeff Bezos, Mr. Amazon.com, for its Person of the Year.

Item: The Star-Ledger, December 13: "'Star Trek' fans will beam up over new offerings on the Net." Well! The only thing Net about these is that you can buy them on the Publisher's Web site, *www.ssinteractive.com*.

Item: Same issue: "Online convenience has a price." In case you haven't heard of the Real Networks gaffe, this piece by Deborah Kong of the San Jose Mercury News. The first big user of this stuff was Prodigy, and the controversy about the use of their stage.dat file, which some users discovered contained all sorts of info about their viewing and buying habits. Prodigy insisted that they never uploaded these files and that they were only used to speed up the program on the user's PC. Then, amazon.com, started collecting info about their customers' tastes so as to match them up with other like minded folk and share recommendations. There are two new Net client programs, MusicMatch and RealJukebox, which let you download compressed audio files in different formats and organize and store them locally on your hard drive. Like amazon.com they looked over your shoulder and tried to match you up with others with the same likes and dislikes and make suggestions — targeted advertising! MusicMatch asks your permission to do this when you install it. Real Networks didn't. The fallout made them squirm. The issue? Will they now try to make a buck by selling your taste profile to other

retailers? Some say no. Some have privacy policies. But business is business.

Item: The Star-Ledger, December 1: "Designing the Net of tomorrow." The next-generation Internet, called Pegasus, is under development, partly here in New Jersey, by Princeton, Lucent, and Bell Atlantic. The target bandwidth is about 5 trillion bits/second, and should be more secure than the current Net. Drexel University will also be involved, here.

Item: NJ Tech, December: "The new political machine." More and more, political operatives are using the Net for recruiting and coordinating election campaigns.

Item: The New York Times, November 28: "M.B.A. Boom Fades as Candidates Seek Instead the Rewards of the Internet." Looks as though some of the interns who would have gone off to business school think they can do well enough hitching their wagon to a hot Net startup.

Miscellany

While getting out holiday cards, I found the Net quite useful. One of Maria's old assistants was an Irish nurse, married to and Italian-American. He died and she went back to Ireland with the children. Maria called her sister-in-law to check on the address in Ireland. The sister-in-law was gone. I looked up the last name in anywho.com and found there were just 5 listings in the U.S., one in Jersey, one in Brooklyn and three in Texas. Maria called the Jersey listing, but they never heard of the other family. I thought that if it was such an odd name here, it couldn't be too common in Ireland. I looked up the international telephone directory, found the Irish white pages, typed the name in and there she was, the sole listing in Ireland under that name. I called to make sure it was she, and Maria and she had a nice little chat.

Another case: the folks we bought our Long Island house from, almost forty years ago, had been living in Amherst MA. Maria asked for their street address and I couldn't find it in my PC address book, so I looked them up on the Web. They weren't there! Then I called their old number and the woman who answered the phone told me they had moved, she thought, to Cambridge. Checked with anywho.com and up they popped! Called to make sure it was they. It was, and next time we go to visit Rebecca, we'll stop in and visit with them.

From Gilmer to Heerlen and Back

Gertie, the mother of my oldest daughter's partner was recently widowed. She came north from her small town Texas home to visit her daughter. We went to my daughter's place to say hello, do some babysitting, and I did a little surfing. When Gertie came in she found me online, and remarked that she wasn't a computer person. I took this as a challenge and asked her for the name of her hometown newspaper. She gave me the name of the Longview News-Journal, which I promptly found via Yahoo! at *www.news-journal.com*. We spent some time looking at the front page stories, and then I asked the name of the paper of the town where she was born. She's a Dutch war bride, and really didn't expect me to find anything. I asked Yahoo! to look for the Limburger Dagblad.

continued

It came right up at www.limburger.nl. That really blew her socks off! Then her daughter was passing by and remarked that even her small town weekly, The Gilmer Mirror, was on-line. We popped over there and found pictures of the staff, most of whom she knew, and checked out the front page news. She was really quite excited. Maybe she'll get online after all!

The Year 2000

I can't call it the millennium without incurring the wrath of Alex and other purists who insist that the new millennium starts in 2001. (Why is there no one who insists it started with 1999? I'm sure some wag could make a logical argument for it!) There has certainly been enough hype about Y2K (I should say 2000, since cute abbreviations are what got us into all the trouble) to warrant treating next year as something special, if we survive the transition.

I do believe that this is a convenient moment in history to do some summing up, and, for the bold, some prognosticating. I've been playing with programmable (plug board) computers since 1950, and calculators even longer. I even started plans to network two IBM 602A calculating punches together to save manual labor, though that was a year or two later. I remember reading a U.S. Airforce paper by Frank Rosenblat describing his perceptron project back in the 1950s and persuading my boss to let me do some research along those lines. (I was at Yale back then.) I remember Marvin Minsky and his proposal for fabricating synthetic synapses. I remember the early work done on time-shared computer systems at Berkeley and Scientific Data Systems, later acquired by Xerox during the 1960s. (I was at Brookhaven Labs, then.) I remember the Unix e-mail and Netnews systems with connectivity supplied by uucp (Unix to Unix Copy) protocols over dialup phone lines (after 11 P.M. to take advantage of night rates) in the 1970s. I remember the real time networking which came to Unix in the 1980s, and eventually was standardized under TCP/IP when Bell Labs, Universities and Government Labs joined hands on the Internet. (I was at Bell Labs, then.)

I was very privileged to be so close to the action through my professional career and believe we all have been privileged to witness these interesting times. The history of human communication has progressed through the development of language, writing, printing, telegraph, radio and the Internet. Language lubricated the development of villages and tribes; writing led to religions and governments; printing to both nation building and the fragmentation of religions; electrical and electronic communications amplified both unifying and divisive forces. Each one of these technologies has profoundly affected human societies. With the incorporation of language translation technology, we are, as far as communication is concerned, on the threshold of becoming one society.

All of which brings us back to the millennium. In both Jewish and Christian traditions there are musings about the end of the world. There are those who believe that numerological signposts like 2000 are crucial events in this prognostication,

though this assumes that the decimal system plays a decisive role in divine plans. The Book of Revelations predicts that the end will be preceded by the unification of the peoples of the earth under a false prophet, which causes some to condemn any move to world government and view suspiciously technology which could lead us there. Needless to say, the Internet serves both to disperse this message and encourage world unification.

On the other hand, there are many who see the Internet as fostering the fractionalization of society by making it easy for people with odd views to find and connect with other like minded folks. We are only in the beginnings of this virtual community era, and it remains to see how it will be played out. Are we creating One World or a new Tower of Babel?

These ruminations were inspired by the Y2K and millennial hype, by thinking about my own history and by tuning in on a ZDTV edition of Big Thinkers, where the host interviewed Howard Rheingold, previously unknown to me, but a real old time writer about some of these issues. He's the author of *Tools for Thought* (1984) and *The Virtual Community* (1993) (and others) and in 1985 joined *the Well* (www.well.com) one of the first and also one of the most famous virtual communities. He has a Web site, www.rheingold.com, which is well worth a visit and contains the complete text to *Tools for Thought*. Don't know how I missed him!

This led me to look a bit deeper into the folks who do this sort of prognosticating, and I found that the University of North Carolina maintains a Web page devoted to them at metalab.unc.edu/team/history/tprophets/tprophets.html. It includes the likes of Buckminster Fuller, Norbert Wiener (misspelled "Weiner"), Arthur C. Clarke, William Gibson, Alvin Toffler, Nicholas Negroponte, Marvin Minsky, Esther Dyson, Bob Lucky and Cliff Stoll. The religious musings were inspired by a Public Television Frontline special on the Apocalypse, which you can view at

www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/apocalypse, as well as Neil Stephenson's book, *Snow Crash*, which has some interesting references to very early middle eastern religious ideas, including the Tower of Babel, and draws some interesting analogies between the propagation of these ideas and computer viruses.

And what about the future of our special interest group? There don't seem to be many meetings of ordinary folks interested in telephony! When will the Internet be so pervasive and so familiar that we will be begging to question to write about it and have meetings to discuss the latest embellishments and controversies? How do we tell when we've outlived our usefulness?

Back to "millennium." In spite of Alex, the dictionary defines it as a span of 1,000 years. Some folks attach a great deal of significance to dates of religious importance — after all, the years are numbered here more or less from the birth of Jesus. I prefer to choose my span to match the numbers, 1-999, 1,000-1,999, 2,000-2,999, even if it means short-changing the first millennium C.E. So I'm going to wish you all a happy

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Delorme GPS System

by Dick Freymoyer and Jacque Rohrbaugh

The Hardware

A GPS (Global Positioning System) uses a radio receiver tuned to the frequency of satellite signals. It locks on to several of the 24 positioning satellites our US Department of Defense launched for navigation purposes. Our military uses these same satellites and can pinpoint a position down to the inch or less. The military uses a system designated PPS (Precise Positioning Service) and we civilians use SPS (Single Positioning Service). The satellites transmit on two different frequencies, one for the military's PPS and one for us. If you have ever been on a cruise ship, you will find that they also get their positions from these same satellites and plot their courses by using them. Kind of neat!

The GPS receives signals from as many as 4 satellites and with these signals can pinpoint your location on earth. The broadcast signals from the satellites are very low power and each satellite has its own identity code. The satellites are transmitting this code and the exact time down to a nanosecond. When your GPS receives the signal it identifies the satellite and its location and compares the satellite's time with your time, allowing for the time it takes the signal to travel to your GP. Once you have signals from two or more satellites, your computer can calculate where you are on earth and pinpoints your location to the map on your computer. With this information it can also calculate your speed, how long it will take to get to your next turn or your destination, and your elevation.

Ideally you should have signals from four satellites, so you can have a three-dimensional picture of where you are. The system will work in two-dimensional mode, which is not as accurate. Your computer's clock must be set accurately for the system to work properly. If your clock is off, you may be past your turn on the road before your computer tells you to turn. DeLorme suggests that you get the exact time off the web and adjust your laptop's clock.

The EarthMate GPS receiver has a Serial Plug. You simply just plug it into your Com1 port. It is like a USB device in that you can attach it any time to the Com1 port and the GPS detection program built into Map'n'Go or Street Atlas software will find it. The GPS Receiver operates on four AAA batteries, which last for 8 to 10 hours. Because the operation of the GPS Receiver is dependent its power supply, I requested DeLorme's 12-Volt Power Adapter. They offer one which consists of a male and female serial plugs with a plug that inserts into your car's cigarette lighter socket. They also make an adapter which plugs into a PS-2 port to provide power for the GPS receiver. The adapter that powers the EarthMate from your PS2 port works great and made a world of difference to the operation. I used a PS-2 "Y" cable with it, because I use an external PS-2 mouse with my laptop.

Hardware Installation

Installing the EarthMate is very simple. Once you plug the unit into your Com1 port, click on the tab marked GPS, then Initialize and a settings screen opens up. You set the port (de-

fault is COM1), the speed of that port, then check the box to read Auto Detect Connections. The next screen has your locations on it by state, latitude and longitude, also check boxes to use the date and time on your Laptop and your zone.

The third screen has five tabs: Position, Navigate, Satellites, DOP, and Raw Data. They speak for themselves. The first one, Position, is the key to all of them. On this page you will notice a Magnifying Glass rotating around the GPS Icon, indicating that the program is looking for GPS receiver. After the computer has recognized the EarthMate, it will show the world with satellites spinning around it.

The Navigate tab displays longitude, latitude, etc.. Satellites gives you the identities of the satellites .DOP shows you how strong the signal strength is for the different DOPs and Data, shows the data being received to your laptop. Setup is very simple and pain-free. To find the Satellites faster, type in your latitude and longitude when you initialize the Receiver.

The Software

For this review we received two DeLorme software products, AAA Map'n'Go version 5.0 and Street Atlas USA version 6.0. Map 'n' Go is intended for the vacationer who is looking for restaurants, attractions, motel/hotel etc. It doesn't give you as much detail in the urban areas, but you can use it in Canada as well as the US. Street Atlas USA has much more detailed information on urban streets, but can be used only in the USA. Both are really great programs. Because we were planning for a real test and we wanted locations all the way down to a street address, we used Street Atlas USA.

The first thing you do when setting up for a trip is to click on the Green Button (Start) on the task bar and type in your starting location or right click your location on the map, then click on "Set as Start". Next you click on (Finish), which is a red button, to set your destination. This could be a street address with city, state and zip code or a telephone number. Here again you can right click on your destination point on the map and click on "Set As Finish". We chose the street address, city and state, since we really wanted to know how smart this program really was. You can program Stops or Vias with the yellow button using the same procedures. A "Stop" could be a gas station, motel, a sight seeing attraction or someone's house. You can give it a name like Dick's House, Joe's Restaurant, etc. and that description will show up on the directions. A "Via" lets you force the program to use a particular highway. If you prefer to stay off toll roads, super highways, ferries, etc., you can customize the program to accomplish this for you. You set your preferences as to the type of roads, speeds etc. to suit your driving skills or habits.

When you have finished programming a trip, you click on the "Go" button, and the software calculates the whole trip with lines on a map, showing your Vias and/or Stops. Your directions are located on the left side of the screen and the map on the right portion of the screen. The directions give you names of the roads and stops and mileages and estimated time to get to the locations. You can print both maps and directions or

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simply just print one or the other. All maps from DeLorme's programs are orientated with north to the top of the page. Both Programs allow you to zoom in and out by using the arrow keys on the Icon Task bar or by using the Page Up or Page Down keys.

Our Trip

On our trip to Brooklyn, NY, Jacques started from his home in York, PA., and stopped at my home in Hamburg, PA (our first inserted stop). We selected the rural roads out to the main US highway by using "Via". GPS system worked really great. We noticed that the signal faded a little when we were going through underpasses or on tree-covered roads. When we entered the Tunnel from NJ into NY, we (of course) lost the signal and it took the GPS receiver several minutes to find us again. This caused us a problem and we had to get a map out to find ourselves — we didn't prepare ourselves for this reaction. The tall buildings also were a problem — it was hard to get a fix on our satellites, but we were tracking again after a few minutes. On the way home, we didn't have any problems, except through the Tunnel, as expected, but as soon as we were out of the tube, it picked up the signals. We didn't have any high rise buildings to clutter the sky, leaving the GPS Receiver open to receive the broadcast signals. I would say the GPS system did its job for us.

We'd Like to See...

1. A stronger GPS Receiver, so it tracks the satellites better around high rise buildings. By increasing the Strength of the receiver, the GPS unit would lock onto the satellites faster, it took us about 5 minutes to find the satellites after we lost them. When you use the Initialize sequence it times out in about three minutes, and we could/should have set the default for a longer period of time, but then like so many other things we just didn't know.
2. Compass headings somewhere on the map display, so it is always telling you your direction of travel. At present if you want to use the compass you must go into GPS tab under Navigate. This is dangerous when operating your vehicle. It is hard to bring up the compass and also concentrate on your highway driving when you are alone in the auto. When you do use this compass, it places itself in the middle of your map, right over the point showing your present location.
3. Amplified speakers that could draw from the adapter's power supply. The sound coming from speakers of a laptop is hard to hear when you are on the road.
4. Adding Voice Recognition into the software programs would be a plus for DeLorme. It needn't be a full-fledged system, just use some special words so you don't have to take your hands off the steering wheel. It would have to be limited to special phrases like "Expand Map"/"Reduce Map", etc., so normal conversations wouldn't confuse the program.
5. Find a way to have the satellites change and correct your laptop's time. I know this is a very hard thing to do, because you could be sitting on a peak of a mountain or sitting at sea level and the time from the transmitter to the receiver would be different and making it hard to get the real time. If none of this is possible, give your customers instructions on where to

go (Web Site) to get the correct time for the laptop, maybe even put the real time on the DeLorme site. Stress how important it is to make sure that the laptop's time is corrected and synchronized to an atomic clock right down to the second, when using the GPS system.

Evaluation

The system is like a toy for Dick and he would need to justify the cost. Jacques considers it a necessity, since he has a motor home and tows his Suburban behind it. Because of the length of motor home plus auto, a wrong turn could cause really big problems, so he must know where he is at all times, and the GPS System accomplishes this for him. We both feel you must have the power adapter to operate the GPS Receiver, you just can't worry about the batteries going bad and losing the signal. We both also agree that if the GPS Receiver were more powerful, it could detect the satellites faster and would work better in a city like New York. Jacques has owned the TripMate GPS unit by DeLorme for several years likes it. He is looking into either upgrading to the new EarthMate or finding a more powerful GPS receiver from another company, such as Garmin. All in all, the EarthMate unit is affordable, and does a decent job. If you are looking for a GPS system you should consider DeLorme's System.

The cost of the units from DeLorme direct are as follows: EarthMate with AAA Map 'n' Go is \$149.95, EarthMate with Street Atlas USA and the Power Adapter is \$199.99. For previous owners, EarthMate with either Map 'n' Go or Street Atlas is \$124.95, and the upgrade for just the EarthMate is \$119.95. The 12-Volt adapter is \$ 24.95, and the DeLorme GPS Receiver Power Adapter Kit that includes a 12-Volt adapter and the plug to use your PS-2 port for power is \$39.95. AAA Map 'n' Go is \$34.95 and Street Atlas USA is \$54.95. DeLorme pays for all the shipping and handling. DeLorme has a 30-day money-back guarantee (less shipping and handling). DeLorme's Web site is www.DeLorme.com, and support is at www.support@DeLorme.com. Telephone support: 207-846-8900 (voice) or 207-846-7051 (fax).

We would like to thank Mr. Andy Sturtevant; Public Relations Associate for DeLorme, who made the GPS System available to us for this evaluation. He was a great help, giving us answers on a few details we used for the review. At some time in the future we will do a more detailed review article on Map "n" Go and Street Atlas USA because we could not cover everything in one article. ☺

Classified

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Computing Changes Predicted for the 2000s

by Ken Fermoye

Now that “Y2K” is behind us and we are actually into the year 2000, it’s time to look at the changes we can expect in computers and how we use them. Predictions are risky, but two things are certain. First, there will be major alterations in the very structure of computing. Second, some will benefit grassroots computer users — but many will not. In fact, they probably will have just the opposite effect.

Microsoft will be the focal point for many of the changes. Some will result from the Department of Justice (DOJ) and state attorneys general suit against the company. Also pending are suits against Microsoft by Sun Microsystems, Bristol Technology and other companies, not to mention several class actions that have been filed.

Findings already made by Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson in the DOJ case guarantee shifts in the way Gates & Co. do business. The questions are when and how. Other changes will come from within Microsoft itself.

Long Struggle or Compromise?

On the legal front, opinion is divided as to whether Microsoft and DOJ can reach a compromise settlement. Most observers felt this would not happen, that Bill Gates would fight any decision by Judge Jackson all the way through the appeal process up to the Supreme Court. This kind of delaying action could take years and would be very expensive, but Microsoft has deep pockets and Gates has shown in the past he can be a stubborn, difficult adversary.

Those hoping for a settlement were encouraged when Judge Jackson tapped Judge Richard A. Posner (chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit in Chicago) to mediate between DOJ, state attorneys general and Microsoft. Posner is a well-respected jurist and an expert in economics and antitrust law. He has looked with favor on corporate arguments in other antitrust situations. The computer press and other media regard his appointment as an attempt to assure Microsoft that it will get a fair hearing from a mediator who is not a fervent supporter of antitrust actions.

Microsoft spokesman Jim Cullinan said the company looks forward to working with Posner toward a fair resolution to the case. “We think this is potentially a very positive step. Both sides voluntarily agreed to it,” Cullinan added.

What will happen eventually? Microsoft could be hit by anything from a large fine to a court order requiring that it spin off one or more individual companies. Almost certainly, it will have to stop treating Internet Explorer as an integral part of the operating system (OS) and change its high-handed dealings with PC vendors, which has virtually forced those vendors to use the Windows OS.

However, it’s done, the DOJ and attorneys general seem determined to “restore competition” by nullifying Microsoft’s “monopolistic practices.” That would be good news for Linux and other Open Source software, as well as for resurgent Apple. Market share for them is still tiny compared to the Windows OS, of course.

Buy or Lease?

Perhaps more disturbing for many of us are indications that Microsoft and other software companies plan a dramatic change in the way software is distributed. It seems the trend will be to the system increasingly used by automobile companies: leasing of products rather than selling them outright.

This has obvious benefits for the vendors. Microsoft and others could reduce packaging and distribution costs and perhaps reduce the piracy potential. It could also insure a smoother cash flow than results from the peaks that now occur when new software versions are introduced and valleys as sales decrease over time. It also solves the growing “problem” of individuals and companies who refuse to upgrade slavishly when a new software version debuts.

It provides benefits for corporate uses too, as we will see, but what does it mean for grassroots users working in home offices or small businesses? My feeling is that such a trend does not look good from their standpoint.

Corporations should love it, especially the Information Technology (IT) people. They will be able to get rid of those pesky PCs, which employees insist on customizing to suit themselves and their jobs in favor of dumb machines, not much different from the terminals that were my introduction to computing some 20 years ago.

Application Service Providers (ASPs) will provide programs. An ASP is defined in a Spotlight Service Report as “a third-party service firm, which deploys, manages and remotely hosts a pre-packaged software application through centrally located servers in a ‘rental’ or lease arrangement. In exchange for accessing the application, the client renders rental-like payments.” The report also notes that an independent software vendor (ISV) could bypass a third party and act as its own ASP. Don’t you think Bill Gates would find it attractive to eliminate the middleman completely?

Death of the PC?

Note the terms “remotely hosts” and “centrally located servers.” That means accessing software via the Internet, or perhaps a gigantic corporate Wide Area Network (WAN) or an Extranet. Whatever, it essentially leaves grassroots users out in the cold. Can you imagine trying to use a modem and dial-up access use all your software if it was located on the Internet? It boggles the mind! Most of us don’t have the broadband Internet access available to big corporations.

If leasing of software becomes the norm, how else could vendors control their user base other than by having them access it from a central host that could be monitored easily?

Not to worry, corporate spokesmen hasten to assure us, the PC is dead anyway. Oh really, and when did this happen? Last time I looked PC sales were up last year over the previous year — which were higher than the year before, etc., etc. — despite shortages of chips and other components caused by the Taiwan earthquakes.

continued

Is On-Line Privacy Dead?

Sol Libes

Online companies have assured us that even though they could track users' actions, their identity remained anonymous. Many advertisers have for years placed "cookies" on user computer hard disks so they could tailor their web pages to each user's specific needs, but they have assured us that the cookies did not identify the specific user.

E-Mail Cookies

Advertisers, in their eagerness to promote their products and services, are finding ways to get around the anonymity of cookies. The most recent stratagem is to have the cookie tell the advertiser the user's e-mail address. From this they can build a profile on each user of the World Wide Web.

This has become possible via a security hole in most e-mail programs. If you want to see exactly how this is done go to <http://www.tiac.net/users/smiths/privacy/cookleak.htm>

In brief, most e-mail programs can accept HTML code and banner ads as part of e-mail messages. The e-mail programs can also accept cookies that are placed in the user's cookie file. The sender knows the recipient's e-mail address and can embed it in the cookie file. Later, when the user uses his browser to access a web page that looks for cookies, it can get the cookie and know the e-mail address of the person viewing the web page. Web marketing companies (Exactis, Digital Impact, and Responsys) have appeared serving many different web advertisers that specialize in this activity. They collect the data and develop a detailed profile of the user's web browsing activities, which they market to advertisers. The following advertisers are already using this data: Barnes and Noble, eToys, Cooking.com, Microsoft, and InfoBeat.

Junkbusters (www.Junkbusters.com) and several advocacy groups including The Electronic Privacy Information Center (www.epic.org), the Center for Media Education, Privacy International, Ralph Nader's Consumer Project on Technology, The Consumer Federation of America and the Electronic Frontier Foundation have petitioned the FTC asking that suppliers of e-mail programs close this security hole in their programs.

It is interesting to note that in Europe the European Union does not permit companies to collect and transfer personal data to United States data-gathering companies.

You can protect your privacy to some extent by sending your e-mail through an anonymous service such as the Global Internet Liberty Campaign's W3 Anonymous Remailer (www.gilc.org/speech/anonymous/remailer.html), or one of the free Web-based e-mail services such as Hotmail (www.hotmail.com) or HushMail (www.hushmail.com), which offers encryption-based privacy features that other Web-based e-mail services lack. Both ask for personal information when you create an account, but nothing says that information has to be true.

Another way of protecting yourself is to limit your cookies file to contain only the cookies you need to surf the web sites you are interested in. Several shareware programs are available

for this purpose and can be downloaded from a number of web sites (e.g. Cookie Crusher and Cookie Pal). If you are using Windows 98 and Internet Explorer you can install a VBScript program to manage cookies. See

www.zdnet.com/pcmag/ptech/content/solutions/in1801c.htm

Web Bugs & Privacy Holes

A Web Bug is an HTML graphics tag in a Web page or in an E-mail message that is designed to monitor who is reading the Web page or Email message. Web Bugs are often invisible because they are typically only 1 pixel in size. An example of a GIF image HTML tag that collects data on the <http://www.quicken.com> web page can be found at: <http://www.tiac.net/users/smiths/privacy/wbfaq.htm>

The tag sends the user's IP address (in the case of users of Cable modem, DSL, etc.) which tells the advertisers exactly who the user is. It also includes the time the page was viewed, the browser used, and the information in a previously set cookie value. The following companies are already reported to be using the Web Bug technique: Quicken, FedEx, Metamucil, Oil of Olay, and StatMarket. This technique can also be used in HTML newsgroup messages.

Microsoft and Netscape recently disclosed that their browsers contain potentially serious privacy and security holes. Both have been busy creating patches, which can be downloaded from their web sites to close these holes. For more information go to

(news.cnet.com/news/0-1005-200-1494316.html) and (www.winmag.com/fixes/webbugs.htm).

Commercial Web Site Security

Most commercial Web sites, portals, and online businesses ask you to give information about yourself in exchange for the free news, software, and other services they provide. The site may claim that it doesn't share the information with anyone else. However, government search warrants, subpoenas, and marketer's pressures have in many instances opened these files. Also, Webmasters who administer these sites have committed errors that make user personal information available. Protect yourself by giving a made-up name, address, and phone number. Skip the optional fields and look for an option to not receive promotional mailings.

Bugging Web Plug-ins

In November, Real Networks was caught collecting musical preference information on users of its Real Jukebox Music Player. Music Player was a web browser plug-in program that a user downloaded from the web. In order to download it the user filled out a questionnaire that Real Networks required. What the user did not know was that the player software monitored its use reporting back information on every song the user listened to via the software.

InfoBeat Newsletter Service also was found to be collecting data on readers and forwarding it to advertisers. Once exposed in the press, both Real Networks and InfoBeat have

promised to remove the code from their software and cease collecting this data.

And then there are things such as Comet. Comet is software that can be downloaded from the web that changes your Web browser's cursor into a cartoon character. Behind the scenes it is also tracking your movements on the Web. For more information on this invasion of your privacy go to news.cnet.com/news/0-1005-200-1474252.html?tag=st.ne.1005-200-1489189

There are already several hundred Web browser plug-ins now in use. Who knows what is in the other plug-ins. If asked to fill out a questionnaire to get the plug-in, use your judgement when filling it out.

Software and Hardware Privacy

On the software front, Microsoft faced the fury of privacy advocates for collecting data from owner's systems. Microsoft acknowledged that Windows 98 collected information from each user through an on-line registration process and the "Windows Update" feature on the Start menu.

Earlier in the year, Intel disclosed that each of their newer processor chips contain a unique serial number which can be transmitted to Internet sites for identification purposes. Most systems currently on the market have a BIOS setting to disable access to this serial number. Check if yours is disabled.

Protecting Your Privacy

If you are really concerned about maintaining your privacy, there is software available which enables you to create a digital persona, or pseudonym, to mask your true identity as you surf, Browse the web, use e-mail, chat sessions, telnet and access newsgroups. One such product is Freedom 1.0 from Zero-Knowledge (www.freedom.net). It routes your Internet communications through its servers, hiding both the source and destination IP addresses and substituting a new identity, and it allows you to filter cookies that identify you. Similar products and services are available from Lumeria (www.Lumeria.com).

Conclusion

We are fortunate to have organizations such as the ones mentioned above protecting our privacy. It looks as though it will be a never-ending battle. As far as the e-mail security hole, we will have to wait for our government to force the companies to close the hole. There does not appear to be any way of preventing Web Bugs except by inspecting the source code of web pages. If you see an image tag with a 1-bit size, you may want to stop accessing that page.

For more information on protecting your privacy on-line, I recommend the following web sites:

- <http://www.ptclub.com/Links.html>
- <http://www.privacyexchange.org/tsi/ptintro.htm>
- <http://cyber.findlaw.com/privacy/anon.html>
- <http://slaughterhouse.com/privacy.html>
- <http://proxys4all.cgi.net/>
- <http://www.ultimate-anonymity.com/>
- <http://www.shadow-chasers.com/shadowknows.html>

TCF — 25 Years Old

Marin Light, KGP Productions

When is silver golden? This question will be answered May 6-7, 2000, when the Trenton Computer Festival celebrates its 25th anniversary. Trenton Computer Festival is the oldest show in the world catering to the personal computer end user. For years it was held at either Trenton State College or Mercer County Community College, but it outgrew both of those venues. Last year, it made its way to the New Jersey Convention Center in Edison, N.J. This was an impressive feat, since most shows of its kind have become obsolete.

Trenton Computer Festival has grown stronger and larger, boasting attendance of more than 20,000 consumers in 1999. This year the show founders, Alan Katz and Sol Libes are shooting for 25,000 attendees, to commemorate the silver anniversary of the festival.

Some of the highlights for Trenton Computer Festival 2000 include hundreds of indoor and outdoor exhibitors, major national exhibitors demonstrating products of the future, and speaker programs including a session on the past and future of computing and an Internet cafe. New to this years exhibition are a game contest, a computer auction and a proposed computer museum. For more information visit the websites at: TCFshow.com and TCF-NJ.org.

Katz and Libes are founders of the Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey (ACGNJ) which, along with five other 501-C-3 not-for-profit groups, shares in the proceeds of the Festival. Profits go towards scholarships for students in the computer sciences. Trenton Computer Festival will surely turn up golden after 25 years. ☐

Changes Predicted, *continued*

IBM's 1998 annual report, issued last spring, had a whole section entitled "The PC Era Is Over." Major PC antagonists such as Sun Microsystems' Scott McNealy and Oracle's Larry Ellison have been singing the same song for several years. But how much of that is sour grapes? Are McNealy and Ellison still pouting because their vision of the Net PC died on the vine?

IBM CEO Lou Gerstner believes "new personal computing devices, such as personal digital assistants, Web-enabled TVs, screenphones, smart cards, and a host of products we have yet to imagine" will gradually replace the PC. Maybe so, but I don't expect to be tossing my PCs on the scrap heap anytime soon. I do expect to be upgrading and/or replacing them with new, faster, more capable machines well into the 21st century (which will not start officially until January 1, 2001, of course).

What's your opinion? I'd love to hear from you on these points. I will revisit this subject in an upcoming column and include insightful comments from readers.

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Java at Javits

Cass Lewart (rlewart@monmouth.com)

On December 9 I went to the Java Business Convention at the Javits Center in New York. This annual event draws Java developers, people interested in large scale business applications and me. The main promoter of Java, Sun Microsystems Inc., tries with Java, a four year old programming language, to develop applications and operating systems to compete with Microsoft. Will Java conquer the world? I see some business applications and many applications in the PC world — Java applets perform lively tasks on the desktop. However, this year the Java convention drew considerably fewer exhibitors than last year.

One of the highlights of the convention was the keynote speech by Scott McNealy, chairman of Sun Microsystems, who claimed that the more money Sun loses supporting Java the higher their stock flies. He also exposed the “real” culprit behind the Y2K problem. In a short (tongue-in-cheek) video, McNealy showed the interrogation at a police station of a programmer in his seventies. He admitted to introducing the two-digit convention for keeping track of years, and convincing his bosses that this was the way to go. Anticipating his retirement near the year 2000, this programmer said he only wanted to have some insurance to increment the measly Social Security pension (\$100/hour consulting fees for fixing old Cobol programs)!

An interesting demonstration was a virtual office in which the current status of the work PC is always stored on the server. In the middle of a demonstration McNealy pulled the plug on his PC, then walked to another PC, inserted his ID card, and the demo resumed a couple of seconds later on the new PC exactly where he left it. This concept would allow assigning office space every morning on a first come, first served basis. If you come early you get the corner office with the window!

Each keynote attendee received a copy of Sun’s StarOffice 5.1 on a CD. The office suite contains a word processor, a spreadsheet, presentation graphics, a database program and other assorted goodies. The suite runs under Windows, OS/2, Linux, Unix and Solaris. Its major feature is that it is free, including upgrades. I opened Word and Excel Microsoft files and they all ran well under StarOffice. Both the interface and functions are very similar to Microsoft Office. According to McNealy, “If you need more features than StarOffice, you better get a life.” I was particularly impressed when StarOffice opened one of my Wordstar files, with all formatting intact. StarOffice can be downloaded free from Sun’s site at:

<http://www.sun.com/products/staroffice/get.cgi>

The download is over 64 Mb, so unless you have a cable modem or DSL, you may want to purchase the CD from SUN at a nominal fee. A standard installation takes about 130 Mb of disk space. ☞

Scott’s Commandments

(For peaceful co-existence with thy PC)

Scott Vincent

- Thou shalt not come from the school of if it ain’t broke don’t fix it.
- Thou shalt not have one single partition on thy drive.
- Thou shalt create a SYSTEM partition.
- Thou shalt create an APPLICATION partition.
- Thou shalt create a DATA partition.
- Thou shalt have a copy of thy systems CAB files and device drivers directories preferably on APPLICATION partition.
- Thou shalt ONLY have SYSTEM on SYSTEM
- Thou shalt ONLY have APPLICATIONS on APPLICATION.
- Thou shalt edit application default file locations to a specific directory on thy DATA partition including(cache directories).
- Thou shalt only write DATA to thy DATA partition.
- Thou shalt not use the default setting in W9x for swap file size.
- Thou shalt not have ~*.tmp files on thy drive.
- Thou shalt always have a current copy of thy systemÆs registry on the APPLICATION partition.
- Thou shalt only need to make backups of thy DATA partition regularly.
- Thou shalt clean out old and junk files regularly.
- Thou shalt run SCANDISK regularly !!!
- Thou shalt DEFRAG regularly !!!
- Thou shalt only need to make backups of thy DATA partition regularly.
- Thou should make images of thy SYSTEM & APPLICATION partitions.
- Thou shalt keep a boot diskette with CD-ROM driver
- Thou shalt look into getting Windows 2000 (NT 5).
- If already a good computerist using NT, thou shalt keep thy Emergency Repair Disk (ERD) updated.
- If all else fails — run LINUX!

Congratulations to Scott on having passed his Microsoft Certification !



Internet Connection Sharing

April Miller Cripliver, MCSE, MCP+I, MCT, A+ (Danbury Area Computer Society)

The Internet Connection Sharing feature in Windows 98 Second Edition (Win98 SE) is a set of advanced home networking technologies that will enable you to configure multiple computers to use the same modem, the same phone line, and the same Internet Service Provider (ISP) to simultaneously access the Internet. If you already have NICs (Network Interface Cards) installed on your home PCs, you're only minutes away from surfing the 'Net on every PC in your home at the same time.

Here's how it works: When your modem dials your ISP, the ISP assigns your computer an IP address. This is a unique number that acts like a ticket that identifies your computer and allows it to access and communicate with other computers on the Internet. Without this IP address, your computer can't connect to the Internet.

With the Internet Connection Sharing feature of Win98 SE, one computer establishes a connection to the Internet through the ISP and receives a unique IP address. This computer, known as the Connection Sharing computer, then lets the other computers in your home borrow its IP address. When the other computers, called clients, borrow the IP address from the Connection Sharing computer, they can access the Internet over your home network without having a direct connection to the Internet and without having their own IP addresses.

To set up Internet Connection Sharing, each computer must have a network card installed and be connected to the home network. The computer acting as the Connection Sharing computer must already be configured to connect to the Internet through an ISP. The client computers must be running Windows 98 (any version) or Windows 95 (any version) and be using version 3.0 or later of either Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator. Each client computer must also have the TCP/IP network protocol installed.

Now you're ready to set up Internet Connection Sharing. Select which computer will act as the Connection Sharing computer on your home network. On this computer, open Control Panel and double-click the Add/Remove Programs icon. Select the Windows Setup tab, then scroll through the Components list to select the Internet Tools component and click the Details button. When you see the Internet Tools dialog box, select the Internet Connection Sharing check box. You may be prompted to insert your Win98 SE CD-ROM for Setup to install the Internet Connection Sharing feature.

Once Setup finishes the installation procedure on your Connection Sharing computer, it launches the Internet Connection Sharing Wizard, which guides you through the process of creating the Client Configuration Disk. You'll use this disk to reconfigure the browsers on the client computers on your home network to communicate with the Connection Sharing computer.

The first screen in the Internet Connection Sharing Wizard is the introductory screen; read over the instructions before you proceed. When you click the Next button, the Internet Con-

nection Sharing Wizard informs you that it's now ready to create the Client Configuration Disk.

When you click Next, you're prompted to label a floppy disk and insert it into your computer's floppy disk drive. When you click OK, the Internet Connection Sharing Wizard creates the Client Configuration Disk. Once the Wizard creates this disk, it prompts you to remove it and click OK. Just click Finish to complete the Wizard. At this point, you'll be prompted to restart your computer.

While your Connection Sharing computer is restarting, you can begin configuring the client computers. Make sure the TCP/IP settings for the network card are configured correctly. To do this, open Control Panel and double-click on the Network icon. When you see the Network dialog box, scroll through the list of components and select the TCP/IP component that's connected, or bound, directly to your network card.

When you see the TCP/IP Properties dialog box, you need to make sure that the TCP/IP settings are correctly configured. On the IP address tab. Make sure that the Obtain An IP Address Automatically check box is selected. Then, click the WINS Configuration tab and make sure that the Use DHCP For WINS Resolution check box is selected. Next, click the Gateway tab and make sure that the Installed Gateway list box is empty. Now select the DNS Configuration tab, and make sure that the Disable DNS option is selected. Say OK to close the TCP/IP Properties dialog box. You may be required to restart your client computer.

Once you've made sure that your TCP/IP settings are correctly configured on your client computers, run the Browser Connection Setup Wizard on each client computer on your home network. Do this by inserting the Client Configuration Disk into the floppy drive, click START/Run, and type `a:\icsclset.exe` in the Open text box. Click OK.

You'll see the Browser Connection Setup [Browser Connection Setup Wizard.] Wizard's introductory screen, which contains a few instructions that you should read over before you proceed. As the instructions state, make sure that the Connection Sharing computer is already connected to the Internet.

When you click Next, the Wizard will inform you that it will now check and change your browser's connection settings. To continue, simply click Next again. You'll see the final screen in the Browser Connection Setup Wizard. Select the check box to immediately connect to the Internet through the Connection Sharing computer.

Now, click Finish. As soon as you do, the browser on your client computer will launch, connect to the Internet through the Connection Sharing computer, and open your home page. Once you run the Browser Connection Setup Wizard on all the client computers, you can surf the Internet from any computer on your home network.

In the future, just be sure your Connection Sharing computer is powered on. When you attempt to surf the Internet on any

continued

Filesitter

Alan Lynn (NOCCC)

How many times have you heard: "I have all my business and tax records on that drive. You have to get them back." Or "All my Internet and e-mail addresses were on the hard drive and now it won't boot." Then there's, "I didn't mean to delete the whole presentation I don't know why I cleared the recycle bin." The answer to all these is backup.

Backup is not a four-letter word. "Backup is complicated." "Backup is time consuming." "Restoring is really hard." There is now an answer. This backup program is very easy to install, easy to configure, and easy to change. It runs while you use the computer, transparently, so when you have finished using the computer your files can already be archived.

The program is Filesitter from Bytecode Technologies. The requirements are not excessive. A computer with a Pentium 100 MHz or better. It will run on a 486 66MHz computer, but it will slow things down noticeably. It runs on Windows 95/98 or NT. The only other requirement is a removable media hard drive (Iomega's Zip or Jaz drives or SyQuest's Ez-Flyer, Sparq or Sy-Jet drives). It archives only data type files and it compresses them so you don't use huge numbers of disks. Network types take notice: It also backs your files up onto a network drive if you happen to be on a LAN.

The philosophy is that you have your application disks. In case of a crash, you can reinstall from these disks. What you don't want to lose is the data that you have on your hard disk(s). This type of backup takes a large part of the load off your shoulders. It is still a good idea to backup your system so you can restore everything in one restore. Having a complete working system to restore can speed up recovery. Once you have your system backed up Filesitter can take over with the current data backup you need to complete your protection.

Filesitter puts up a logo that looks like a radar screen. The default "sweep" takes two hours but you can vary this according to how your system reacts. The faster the sweep the more resources it takes. There is also *ôRapid Sweepö* to do a fast sweep to ensure everything is archived, this is good before shutdown. After a backup by another backup program, your files are all marked as being archived. If you want Filesitter to back these files up there is a manual backup. Filesitter looks for new files and changed files to archive.

You that you don't know this program is running until you need the data. Restoring even a single file is easy. You right click on the logo (the radar screen), and a menu appears. Instructions are straightforward and always worked. There have been no problems.

You can get a free evaluation download from <http://www.filesitter.com> or you can buy the program for \$49.95. I like their motto, "A whole new way to not think about file backups."

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Lost & Found

by Jim Karsjens (NOCCC), kinjim@aol.com

"Blessed is the septic for he shall back up." We continually talk about the necessity of backing up your data regularly, but how many people regularly backup on a systematic basis. PowerQuest, maker of Partition Magic, Drive Image, and Drive Copy has come to our rescue again. Rather than spending thousands of dollars to send your hard drive to a data recovery center, Lost & Found lets you automatically recover and restore data from drives on which the file allocation table (FAT) or directory has been lost or damaged, or from corrupted media caused by a disk crash or logical system failure. You can even recover files after reformatting, provided you have not written over them. If the disk is spinning and the read/write heads and electronics are functioning properly, Lost & Found can do a sector-by-sector analysis of the disk, report back its findings and assist with the transfer of recovered data to another harddrive, floppy or zip drive.

The program comes on two 3 1/2" disks, installs from the A: drive, and does not need to be installed prior to your problem. The program consists of three parts: recovery, restore and backup modules. The program analyzes your drives and reports the odds of recovery of any corrupted or lost file. The odds of recovery are color coded: Gray (files cannot be recovered). Red (poor chance of recovery), Yellow (reasonable chance of recovery, White (Root directory), Blue (previously recovered, Bright Green (directory okay, files present), Dark Green (directory okay, no files).

The program is easy to install and run. You must boot from the floppy in the A: drive with its installed copy of Caldera's DOS. The floppy has a hidden key, and must be in the A: drive for the program to work. The floppy disk has a serial number on the front which you must type in before you can use the program. This is a one computer program and it is automatically "registered" to your computer system when you install it. After being installed on one computer, it will not run on a second computer. If you need to recover a drive from a second system, you must purchase another copy. If you have many systems to run, PowerQuest has a multi-use program called Search & Rescue.

Security of files has now changed. Have you ever purchased or sold a used harddrive that had been formatted prior to sale thinking that all the information is gone? This program is extremely powerful and capable of recovering just about anything you delete.

Suggested retail price \$69.95 User group members may purchase Lost & Found at a special price of \$30 by ordering from the secure web site at www.ugr.com/order. Indicate the special price code of UGEVAL99 with your order. The special user group price makes the product a bargain to buy and hopefully never use. PowerQuest Corp., PO. Box 1911, Orem, UT 84059 Tel: 800/226-8977

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Why I'm Dying to Pay Bills Online

Jesse Berst, Editorial Director ZDNet AnchorDesk

I'm dying to pay my bills online. It's dumb to write checks, stuff them in envelopes, stick on stamps and drop them in a mailbox. But I'm troubled by how long it's taking for online bill payment to take off. I know there's tremendous potential. But also many problems. Glitches. High churn rates. Psychological obstacles.

Still, more and more banks and bill payment services are jockeying for position in this promising space. Microsoft and America Online are both making moves to grab share. Consider why:

Forrester Research estimates electronic bill presentation/payment (EBPP) will account for 13% of all consumer bills in five years. Dataquest anticipates 13.7 million U.S. households will be paying bills and banking online by 2004. Killen & Associates expects 40,000 service companies to engage in EBPP by 2003. But that's the future. What about right now? Should you make the leap to online bill paying yet? My answer is a firm, unequivocal ... big fat maybe. I'm eager to give it a try, just because I'm so tired of paying bills the old-fashioned way. But I'm still dragging my feet. A recent study by Cybercitizen Finance indicated a third of all customers who opened an online bank account in the last 12 months have since closed their accounts. Talk about churn! Reasons given: sites too complicated to navigate and customer service too lax.

Of course, banks aren't the only entities offering online bill payment. I've listed a few of the many options below. But approach this with caution. And understand the limitations.

Quicken.com. Right now this comprehensive personal finance site is running an online bill payments beta test. Sign up to receive and pay bills online for free, albeit from a limited list of participating billers. An optional fee-based service allows you to pay anyone in the U.S. from any U.S. checking account.

MoneyCentral. Microsoft's personal finance site has a free bill payment service provided by TransPoint. But again, the number of e-billers associated with the service is limited.

CheckFree. This online bill payment service has been around for more than a decade. Consumers receive bills electronically from a list of about 30 e-billers. They arrive in your billing and payment service inbox where you view and click to authorize payment.

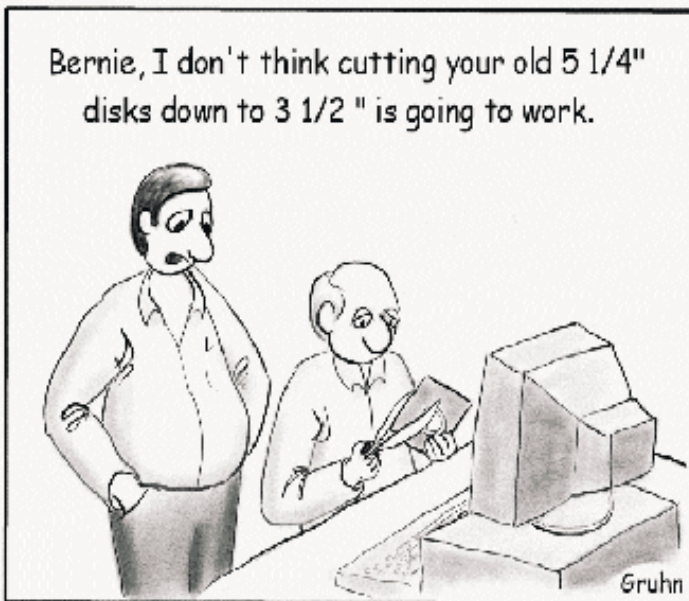
Paytrust. You have your bills sent to Paytrust's address; you get an email notifying you when the bill has arrived. When you log onto the *Paytrust.com* site you can view the bill and pay it automatically through a linked checking account. You can also establish rules for automatic bill paying. *StatusFactory.com* offers similar services.

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Connection Sharing, continued from page 11

client computer, the Connection Sharing computer will automatically begin dialing your ISP—no need to connect it yourself first. Finally!! A way to solve the modern family feud of two or more family members needing access to the Internet at the same time. Peace in the home once again.

Reprinted from *dacs.doc electric* (Danbury Area Computer Society). April Miller holds several certifications and degrees in business and computer science. She is a trainer and computer consultant in Indiana. April welcomes e-mail from readers at april@cripliver.com. ☐



Cartoon by Paul Gruhn, P.E., a HAL-PC member, who can be contacted at pgruhn@ix.netcom.com

C-Net TV Schedule		
Sci-Fi Channel	Saturday	Sunday
CNet Central	6:00 a.m.	9:00 a.m.
New Edge	6:30 a.m.	9:30 a.m.
USA Network		
Cnet Central		6:00 a.m.
The New Edge		6:30 p.m.
For more information visit the C-Net Web Site (www.cnet.com)		

SIG News

PC Users Group

Jo-Anne Head (tinarock@aol.com)

<http://www.intac.com/~tinarock/pcug.html>

January 21: How Was Your Y2K? Come and tell us how Y2K affected you! Let's swap stories. ☞

Main Meeting

Frank Warren (kb4cyc@webwarren.com)

January: Host Sol Libes; Topic Windows 2000; Speaker Alan Goldberg, Senior Software Support Specialist at Princeton University and Windows 2000 beta tester.

February: Frank Warren and Scott Vincent on Home Networking ☞

Random Access

Scott Vincent (svincent@ix.netcom.com)

Those of us who have been involved in computer user groups for a long time remember when the Random Access Session was the only source of information about your particular computer. Even though PCs and the software that runs on them are pretty much standardized now, users occasionally have problems or want more information.

Random Access is for *everyone*. There is no such thing as a dumb question. Everyone usually benefits from the discussed topics regardless of their level of expertise. Many of the regulars can help solve your problem or at least get you started in the right direction.

This is an official "Newbies too" group. ☞

Layman's Forum

Matt Skoda

(matthew.skoda@acgnj.org)

We discuss issues of interest to novice users or persons who are just interested in getting started. Watch the ACGNJ Web page for updates. ☞

MCP

(Preparing for MS Certification Exams)

Scott Vincent (svincent@ix.netcom.com)

Wednesdays from 7:00PM to 10:00PM except for the 4th Wed of each month. We review typical exam questions. Those who attend are expected to bring a PC properly configured with: NT, 10BaseT network card, and NetMeeting 2.1. Most of us have the 4-volume set of Exam Cram books. We do not teach NT but help prepare for the exam. Meetings are hands on and everyone is expected to participate.

C/C++ Users Group

Bruce Arnold (barnold@blast.net)

<http://www.blast.net/barnold>

December: For this meeting we had a review of material covered during the last year or so, pointing out some of the more interesting problems and concepts that were demonstrated and answering any questions. In some cases, there was discussion on possible alternatives.

As usual, the code for demonstrated programs is available at <http://www.blast.net/barnold/Csig9910.htm> ☞

Investing

Sheldon Koepf (sheldonk@intac.com)

<http://www.intac.com/~sheldonk/invsig>

December 9: We took a look at equity investments that are different from both common stocks and mutual funds — SPYDRS and WEBS. Your chairman, using the well proved technique of testing relative strength of those equities against the S&P 500, picked out the strongest performing of the group. A printed list of those best performers was handed out to the group. We reviewed the MetaStock Professional Version 7.0's explorer function in general and more specifically demonstrated how to use explorer to pick sectors, SPYDRS, WEBS, and stocks that have a better than average chance of increasing in value. Attendees showed much enthusiasm in learning about these different types of investments and were very impressed with both the speed and efficiency of the MetaStock explorer.

Our next meeting will be January 13, 2000. Come and learn about investing in the new century. ☞

Main Meeting Election Results

Election of Officers and Directors was held at the December Main Meeting as prescribed by the ACGNJ By-Laws. The results follow:

President	Frank Warren
Vice-President	Jo-Anne Head
Rec. Secretary	Charlie Huffsmith
Corr. Secretary	Evan Williams
Treasurer	John Sheetz
Directors:	

John Raff
Arnold Milstein
Scott Vincent
Marty Rosenblum
Sheldon Koepf

These newly elected or re-elected Officers and Directors will assume their positions at the January Board meeting. ☞

continued

Lunics (Linux/Unix)

Peter Fillingham (pete@panix.com)

<http://www.acgnj.org/groups/lunics.htm>

This is a group for those who share an interest in the Linux operating system and its relatives (UN*X, BSD, Coherent, AIX, etc.). Currently there is a strong interest in Linux as an alternative to other operating systems, especially since there is no charge for the system. It and its source code are freely distributable. Meetings the first Monday of the month. ☞

Multimedia & Mobile

Steven Rodriguez

(cybertech72@bigfoot.com)

The MultiMedia and Mobile Computing Activity meets at 7 P.M. the same night as PC Users Group, and will introduce the topic being discussed at PCUG. ☞

VBA

Jim Ditaranto (fryr92a@prodigy.com)

VBA = Visual Basic for Applications

VBA is currently implemented in Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Project and Microsoft Access. In the future, Microsoft will implement VBA in Microsoft Word and in Microsoft PowerPoint. Anyone interested in using any one of the Microsoft Office products and VBA is urged to attend.

Meetings start at 7 P.M. on the fourth Monday of the month. ☞

Genealogy

Frank Warren (kb4cyc@webwarren.com)

<http://www.webwarren.com/kb4cyc/gensig.html>

The Genealogy SIG is a group for genealogists who have an interest in computers and for computer users who have an interest in genealogy. We provide a forum to assist members in furtherance of both computing and genealogical endeavors. Meetings generally focus on genealogy more than on computers. We meet at 8:00 PM on the fourth Thursday of each month at the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad

In addition to our Web page the SIG also has an electronic mailing list. Messages to be sent to the list should be addressed to gensig@webwarren.com. Subscription requests should be addressed to gensig@webwarren.com and include the line "subscribe gensig" in the body of the message. ☞

Macintosh Users Group

Keith Sproul (ksproul@noc.rutgers.edu)

The Macintosh group generally meets on the fourth Friday of the month in Hill Center, Room 114, Busch Campus, Rutgers University, Piscataway, NJ. In June, November, and December, the meeting is usually pushed to the third Friday. The meeting starts at 7 pm. We meet in the Busch Campus Student Center Food Court for supper around 5 pm for those people that come to the meeting straight from work. ☞

Lotus Notes

Mike Barlow (mwb@injersey.com)

<http://www.njlnug.org>

Meetings are held at the offices of Bright Ideas Software in Edison. You'll find directions on our Web page. ☞

Symposium

John Raff (jraff@injersey.com)

January: (Tentative) Phil Gaunt of Technicadd Corp., an AutoCadd Expert and instructor at the prestigious Pratt Institute in New York. He is also involved with the North Jersey Auto-Cad Group ☞

Internet

Martin Rosenblum (m.rosenblum@ieee.org)

December 3: I was finally billed for the Netscape 4.7 Cds and I owe those of you who got one from me a dollar each, since the price was less than that advertised. Come to the January meeting to get your money back. I received only one call for help on the encryption upgrade, so I suppose the rest of you got it OK. I reviewed briefly some Web news, including the (failed) Mars lander story. Vilis Ozolins gave his talk on Modem Magic. He mentioned some of its features were very nice and quite useful in speeding up even cable connections. Since he finished early, he had some other stuff he wanted to report on so we encouraged him. He had gotten a copy of WebWasher from Siemens at www.siemens.de. It's a filter for your browser that can be set to remove Java script and banner ads from Web pages that you download. They now have their own site at www.webwasher.com. Although Vilis really liked it, he reports that he has since tried AtGuard, ostensibly a home network firewall, but which also has filtering capabilities, even though not the same as WebWasher. Vilis says he likes AtGuard better all around. AtGuard has, however, been acquired by Symantec and is now a part of Symantec's new Internet Security product, and costs real money. (It used to be a free download.) Vilis reports that AtGuard rendered his PC invisible to Steve Gibson's ShieldsUP probe (at www.grc.com).

January 6: On this first meeting of the year we will have the prescribed elections of SIG leader, tec., for the coming year. There may be a Web news report. If we can persuade him, Jim Wong will tell us his plans for the ACGNJ Web site. Since the odometer that marks the year will be making a transition that happens but rarely, I thought that this would be a good time to review the historic changes that have taken place because of the Net, and some of the things we think might happen in the future. Alex and I will kick off a round table on these notions and hope they will stimulate "big thinking", comments, arguments, brilliant prognostications, etc., from all. ☞

millennium, 2000-2999, however much of it you live through. It should be an interesting one!

Virtual Private Networks

The backbone of the Internet, the part your ISP sees, is often diagrammed as a cloud. You stick a plug into it and it finds the plug connecting to the resource you seek, but what the inside looks like is best thought of as a cloud, for its structure and interconnections are in a constant state of flux, and irrelevant to your purpose, which is to maintain a virtual circuit connecting you to your resource.

I worked with a group at Bell Labs which developed a "virtual circuit switch" and other digital communications technologies. The next step was the interjection of the World Wide Web by Tim Berners-Lee. It changed the idea of the other end of the circuit from a single process to a diffuse hodgepodge of processes interrupting each other as we click on hot links, pull in ads and then go on or return whence we came. The Web, however was just one humongous collection of pages.

The next change we saw came very quietly, but naturally, in the form of home networks and intranets. A group of people, collocated, could have a private sub-network, using all the technology of the Internet, but with limited access in and out of their shell. The need for isolation is natural and its techniques, both hardware and software have been the topics of a number of club meetings. Thus came proxies, firewalls, etc.

It is a basic theorem of set theory that there are more groups of people than there are people, so it is not surprising that this concept soon proved inadequate. Thus the virtual private network (VPN). Any grouping of people with private business to transact can define a private network. The "virtual" comes in because we can't afford to construct separate physical networks for each grouping, so we want to find a way to isolate its internal communications on the global Internet.

The January 4 issue of PC Magazine has a lengthy article on VPNs. Since many of the more serious attempts in this direction are mainly hardware implementations, the article reviews these options. They are interesting, serious and important, but I can't help but feel that some of the other attempts to solve the many problems in software and new features in the next generation Internet must be carefully watched. Most Internet nodes receive packets from other nodes and use envelope information contained therein to identify the sending node. This may have to be changed in the future to insure that a packet comes from whom it says sent it. Already we have "private" coalitions on the Net via list servers, chat rooms and Instant Messaging. All these technologies will merge in the future, and, hopefully, we shall participate in them without thinking.

E-Commerce

From ACM's Technews, December 27, quoting E-Commerce Times: "Eighty-three percent of e-tailers are increasing revenues over 1998's revenues, according to a study from International Data (IDC). Twenty-six percent of e-tailers

have almost doubled their online business, and 23 percent report growth of more than 61 percent, according to the study. Amazon had the most holiday sales, followed by Buy.com, barnesandnoble.com, and eToys, while Toys R Us moved up 19 places to number seven on NextCard's list of the top 10 retailers by transaction volume."

From ZDNet News, December 23: "Amazon tops holiday traffic report." "The Internet ratings firm Media Metrics reported that Amazon (Nasdaq: AMZN) once again topped its list of e-commerce sites for the week ending Dec. 19, with an estimated 6.9 million unique visitors stopping by the company's Web site. Amazon, which sells books, music, games, toys, software and hardware online, also leads the list for average weekly traffic for the entire holiday season." That even beats the traffic for www.acgnj.org!

There's no question but that e-commerce is popping! It's still nowhere near the top medium, but the growth continues to astound. It's no surprise then, that: "Net tax surprise — states want you to pay," in ZDNet News and similar tales all over the news. It's pitting national politicians against their state brethren, since the latter raise the bulk of their revenue from sales taxes. Where does it leave the brainless national candidates who want no income tax and no Internet sales tax? This is one of those debates that would delight the likes of Mark Twain and Molly Ivans. Sit back and watch and chuckle.

Although they have an online component, the firms that stand to profit most from e-commerce are strictly off line: UPS and FedEx. S&H (especially S) doesn't come free. And think of the returns and exchanges. Of course a lot of the e-commerce retail business will come out of the catalogue trade, but any new stuff can only add to the coffers of the shipping companies. Even the lowly U.S. Post Office should make a buck or two on this. Could UPS be the hottest dot com IPO?

And then there's the MP3 donnybrook. I don't think that the advent of the cassette tape put much of a dent in the profits of record companies. There was a big panic when the DAT format came out. The companies were afraid that the higher quality of DAT would make counterfeiting much more common. Now, they're afraid that a technology that produces poorer (but acceptable) quality than CDs, but lets them be compressed fantastically, will put them out of business. Why would anyone buy our stuff when they can get it for free? Well, I have news for them. Most people just like to shop. Most people will even go along with reasonable download charges, since they want their stars to get the royalties.

Science

December IEEE Spectrum has two articles worth mention here: "Networks for homes" and "Why the Mars Probe went off course." The first of these predicts that initially phone lines shall underlie most home networks for the next year, but that wireless will take a growing percentage of the service and powerline will remain a distant third. The forecast is for about 800,000 networked homes by 2003. Heating and ventilating systems will be networked with thermostats, outdoor temper-

continued

ature sensors and perhaps attic temperature sensors. Your microwave, appliances and security systems will all be on the network, as will your house lighting. All will be controlled by a computer or a special purpose home environment management device. Your communications and entertainment will be networked, as well. We'll see! If you're a member, you can read this online or in your hard copy. (We all get one, so why the Web copy?)

The second article is of interest to space buffs. It goes into a detailed analysis of the causes of the failure, detailing all the little mistakes that led up to the sad ending and concluding that a principal cause, as with Challenger, was the difficulty with which managers receive bad news. For NASA's initial views on reasons for the loss of the Mars Climate Observer, issued 30 September, see www.mars.jpl.nasa.gov/msp98/orbiter/. I popped over to www.flatoday.com/space/today to see what they had to say, and learned the shuttle landed safely after repairing the Hubble Space Telescope. Great! You can also find there "Are failed Mars probes the price of cost-cutting?" (another take on the problems). *Spectrum* also mentions www.space.com where you can find "Space 1999: NASA's Annus Horribilis," and a critical NASA watch site, www.reston.com/nasa/watch.html, where you will also find "Blunder of the Year: NASA Tangles with the Metric System."

From Science Magazine's NetWatch column, December 24: "Virtual Green Thumb." Here's an example of the use of fractals to model plant growth with some amazing examples that mirror reality with frightening accuracy. See: www.cpsc.ucalgary.ca/projects/bmv/vmm-delux/TitlePage.html.

From the same issue, if you want to avoid earthquakes, "Charting the Shakes From Quakes." The Swiss Seismological Service has published a map showing the likelihood of quakes by frequency and severity over the whole globe. At: seismo.ethz.ch/GSHAP

Then there's www.fishbase.org, a site devoted to cataloguing the world's fish species, part of a larger dream to catalogue all the world's species on the Web. They seem to have a good start here.

For you folks who like to memorize physical constants, there is a new update published by the National Institute of Standards and Technology giving results of the latest measurements with ever greater accuracy. If you need the more precise values, look at physics.nist.gov/cuu/Constants.

Like many other publications, *Science* makes available some of its papers in a Web-enhanced versions, which have a wealth of hot links to other Web sites. I peeked at one of these "Enhanced Perspectives," "Enhanced: Semiconductor Lasers Lose Their Cool," and the results are spectacular, with over 75 "hypernotes" included in a relatively short article.

From the December 17 issue, "Fielding Questions on Biotech Crops." There's been a lot of controversy surrounding genetic engineering of our feed stock. This piece mentions three Web sites devoted to exchanges on these issues:

www.nbiap.vt.edu, by Virginia Tech and the U.S. D.A., www.ncbe.reading.ac.uk/NCBE/GMFOOD/menu.html, inspired by Prince Charles' 10 questions, responses and subsequent contributions on the subject, and www.usia.gov/topical/global/biotech/, a government-run information site.

The theme of this issue is the "Breakthrough of the Year" and there's a wealth of information on their choice, "Capturing the Promise of Youth," the dramatic advances in stem cell research and their implications for medicine and ethics.

From the December 10 issue, there's a link to Koko, a gorilla who's become quite an accomplished artist. There's a retrospective at www.koko.org. (If he were more enterprising, it would be www.koko.com, but maybe he knows he'd have to share some of the profits with his humans — who actually do sell things on his site.) You can get to his art work easily.

Same issue: "Watching creationism." If you want to follow the debates on creationism in Kansas, try surfing over to www.natcensci.ed.org, the National Center for Science Education Website.

Same issue: "Electrifying." Visit www.thinkquest.org, a site devoted to students and teachers. They have an annual contest for best Website design. You can visit this year's winner via www.thinkquest.org/library/28032.shtml, and check out *Electricity Online*, where you'll find a nice, bright site which offers a comprehensive overview of electricity by a team of high school students from around the world.

Scientific American's Web Features for the week of December 20 include "1999 In Science," "When is the Millennium," (this is for Alex.) "Superluminal Speed," (you'll find some wormholes here,) and "Gift Wrap Math," for a novel take on partridges in pear trees, etc.

Finance

In January's Scientific American, see Wendy Grossman's article on online trading, "Making Money the New-Fashioned Way" in which she claims that online investing will not affect the markets nearly as much as the inevitable move to 24/7 trading, which will just give more influence to the pros. Read it at www.sciam.com/2000/0100issue/0100cyber.html.

Business Week's December 27/January 3 issue has "Don't Just Wander the Web." It gives a number of Web sites that rate online brokers. Check out:

- www.forrister.com
- www.gomezadvisors.com
- www.investorguide.com
- www.keynote.com
- www.ragingbull.com
- www.sonic.net//donaldj/brokers.html ☞

Call for TCF Speakers

TCF2000 — the 25th Annual Trenton Computer Festival

Saturday & Sunday, May 6th & 7th, 2000

The New Jersey Convention Center, Edison, New Jersey

You are invited to speak, organize a forum, or lead a user group meeting at TCF2000.

TCF is the world's oldest Personal Computer Show, with an attendance of over 15,000. There will be over 80 talks, forums and User Group meetings as well as other activities for personal computer users, consultants, and hobbyists. There will also be more than 500 indoor exhibitor spaces and over 1,000 outdoor flea market spaces. TCF is sponsored jointly by six Personal Computer Clubs and their volunteer members. The income supports the operations of the clubs. For more TCF information go to <http://www.tcf-nj.org>.

The Speaker Program is a very important part of TCF. We are seeking speakers on topics such as the Internet, multimedia, networking, desktop publishing, CAD, word processing, database management, spreadsheets, operating systems, programming, and business and home applications.

As part of our combined 25th TCF and Millenium celebration, special emphasis will be placed on talks dealing with the future and history of all aspects of computing. We are interested in talks on high speed Internet connection, as well as other computer-related topics. We are also seeking people to lead hardware and software forums and user group meetings.

If you would like to present a talk, or lead a forum or user group session, please fill out the TCF Speaker Application form. Submission of your speaker application via the World Wide Web is preferred:

http://www.tcf-nj.org/spkr_reg2000.html

Although the deadline for submitting applications is Feb. 1, 2000, it would be very helpful if your submission could be received as soon as possible. For more information contact: Allen Katz, TCF Speaker Program Chairperson

email: katz@ieee.org

telephone: 609-771-2666 or 584-8424

fax: 609-631-0177

US Mail: Dr. Allen Katz

Department of Engineering

The College of New Jersey

PO Box 7718

ACGNJ MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

	US/CANADA	FAMILY OF MEMBER (No Newsletter)	Dues	FOREIGN	STUDENT	SENIOR CITIZEN (Over 65)
1 Year	\$25	\$10		\$55	\$20	\$20
2 Years	\$40					
3 Years	\$55					\$45

Mail this application and your check to:
AMATEUR COMPUTER GROUP OF NEW JERSEY, INC., P.O. BOX 135, SCOTCH PLAINS, NJ 07076

New Member Renewal Address Change

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Phone _____

Mailing Address _____ E-Mail _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____ URL _____

Do not list me in the Membership Directory. (Street addresses are not listed in the directory.)

What topics would you like to see covered at club meetings? _____

Other Local Computer Groups

Princeton Macintosh User Group: 7:15 pm 2nd Tuesday, Jadwin Hall, Princeton U. (609) 252-1163	NY/NJ/CT Relational Database User Group: Corporate and independent users. (212) 839-0125	New York Personal Computer Club: For information call hotline, (212) 533-NYPC
Computer Education Society of Philadelphia: 7:30 pm, 2nd Wednesday, St. Asaph's Episcopal Church. Lee Le'mon, (717)786-2260	Brookdale Computer Users Group: 7 pm,3rd Friday, Forums 103 at Brookdale Community College, Lincroft NJ. Andrea Tarr (732) 229-2959.	Macintosh User Group: Third Tuesday, Mallory Hall, Montclair State University, Montclair NJ. (201) 893-5274 or (201) 659-1017.
WordPerfect SIG of PCUG of So. Jersey: 2nd Tue., Queen of Heaven School, Cherry Hill; 4th Wed., Cherry Hill Library. (609) 354-1159.	Hunterdon Computer Club: 8:30 am to noon 3rd Saturday, Hunterdon Medical Center, Rt 31, Flemington. (908) 995-4042	PC Club of South Jersey: 7 pm, 2nd Tuesday, Holy Cross HS, Route 130, Delran NJ. Pat Murphy, (609) 428-8759
Philadelphia Area Computer Society: 3rd Sat., 9 am Main Meeting, groups follow. Drexel U., Philadelphia. Pat Murphy, (609) 428-8759	Central Jersey Computer Club: 8 pm, 4th Friday, Rm 74, Armstrong Hall, Trenton St. College. Rich Williams, (609) 466-0909.	NJ PC Users Group: Bergen County Community College, Paramus NJ. Maureen Shannon, (201) 853-7432
Morris Micro Computer Club: Bill Traywick, (973) 635-5393.	Fairlawn Computer Club: Last Monday, Fairlawn Senior Citizen Center. Joe Mathias (fair.lawn.computer.club@juno.com)	Princeton PC Users Group: 2nd Monday, Lawrence Library, Rt 1 & Darrah Ln, Lawrenceville, Paul Kurivchack (908) 281-3107, http://www.ppcug-nj.org
Workshop, Hands-On: 2 P.M. to Midnight on last Saturday of the month. First United Methodist Church, Church and Atlantic Streets (one mile from GSP exit 117A), Aberdeen NJ. Bring your project, computer and extension cord. For information call Burke Mawby, (908) 566-7445.		

Radio and TV Programs

ACGNJ's Bill Farrell: METV 12 (Metuchen), Thurs. & Sat., 8:30 p.m.

Computer Radio Show, WBAI 99.5 FM, New York, Wednesday 8-9 p.m.

Software Review TLC Sat.10 p.m.

On Computers, WCTC 1450 AM, New Brunswick, Sunday 1-4 p.m. To ask questions call (800) 227-7770.

Computer Talk, WPHT 1210 AM, Saturdays 11 a.m-1 p.m.

Free Help Line

Dell Computer: Sundays 1-4 P.M. (800) 677-0874. Call with your questions.

KGP Computer Shows

(More at <http://www.pcshow.com>)

Jan. 8-9: South Jersey Expo Center, Pennsauken

Jan. 15-16: FDU Rothman Center, Hackensack.

ACGNJ Hotline

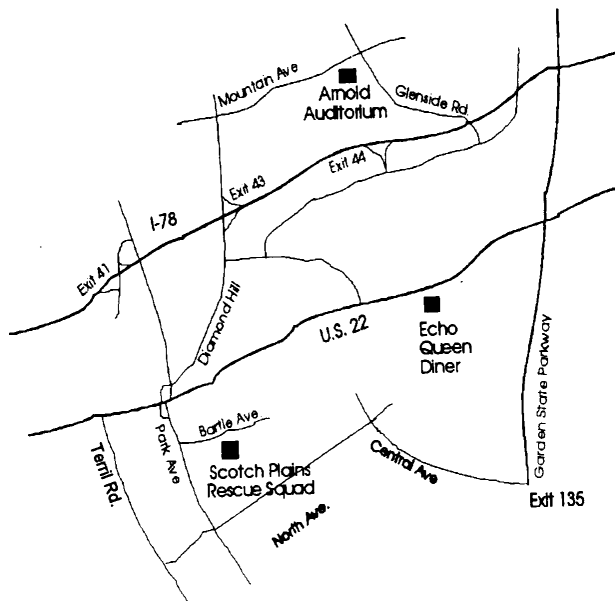
(908) 322-4654

ACGNJ Bulletin Boards

The ACGNJ Bulletin boards were shut down in April due to lack of interest. Of the all the other bulletin boards previously listed in this spot, only one is still in operation.

(732) 739-3693 Dave Wrobel

For a comprehensive listing of NJ bulletin boards, look for and download GSBBS???.ZIP (Garden State BBS List).



Directions to Meetings at Scotch Plains Rescue Squad, 1916 Bartle Ave., Scotch Plains, NJ

From New York City or Northern New Jersey

Take either Route 1&9 or the Garden State Parkway to US 22 Westbound.

From Southern New Jersey

Take Parkway north to Exit 135 (Clark). Stay on left of ramp and follow circle under Parkway. Bear right onto Central Avenue; follow to Westfield and under RR overpass. Left at light onto North Avenue; follow to light in Fanwood. Right onto Martine (which turns into Park Ave.). Right onto Bartle Avenue in middle of shopping district. The Scotch Plains Rescue Squad is located on the right. It is a two-story brick building. Please do not park in the row next to the building.

From I-78 (either direction)

Take exit for Scotch Plains (Exit 41) and follow signs to US 22. Turn right at light at bottom of hill and use overpass to cross over low US 22 Westbound directions.

From US 22 Westbound

Exit at Park Avenue, Scotch Plains. The exit is after a McDonalds Restaurant on the right, diagonally opposite the Scotchwood Diner on the left, and immediately before the overpass. After exiting, turn left at the light and use the overpass to cross US 22. Bear right at bottom of ramp to continue south on Park Avenue. Turn left at the second light (a staggered intersection). The Scotch Plains Rescue Squad is located on the right. It is a two-story brick building. Please do not park in the row next to the building. We normally meet upstairs, entering by the door at the right front of the building.

From Western New Jersey

Take US 22 Eastbound to the Park Avenue exit. The exit is about a mile past Terrill Road and immediately past the overpass. Exit onto Park Avenue South and follow the directions above to the Rescue Squad building.

ACGNJ NEWS

AMATEUR COMPUTER GROUP OF NEW JERSEY, INC.
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ACGNJ MEETINGS

For the very latest news on ACGNJ meetings, including weather cancellations, call our Hotline (908) 322-4654
or visit the ACGNJ Web Page (<http://www.acgnj.org>)

Monday, January 3, 2000

8 P.M. - Lunics, Peter Fillingham, 973-731-9269 CANCELLED

Tuesday, January 4

8 P.M. - ACGNJ Board Meeting.

Wednesday, January 5

7 P.M. - MCP Study Group, Scott Vincent, 973-361-5793

Thursday, January 6

8 P.M. - Internet. Marty Rosenblum, 973-376-8965.

Friday, January 7

8 P.M. - Main Meeting. Frank Warren, 908-756-1681

Monday, January 10

8 P.M. - Layman's Forum, Matt Skoda, (908) 359-8842.

Wednesday, January 12

7 P.M. - MCP Study Group, Scott Vincent, 973-361-5793

Thursday, January 13

8 P.M. - Computerized Investing. Sheldon Koepf, 973-740-2489.

Friday, January 14

8 P.M. - PC Symposium. John Raff, 973-533-0664

Tuesday, January 18

7:30 P.M. - C/C++ Users, Bruce Arnold, 908-735-7898.

8 P.M. - Lotus Notes, Mike Barlow. Meeting at the offices of Bright Ideas Software, Edison NJ. Info Line: (732) 417-5778 ext 5.

Wednesday, January 19

7 P.M. - MCP Study Group, Scott Vincent, 973-361-5793

Friday, January 21

7 P.M. - Multimedia & Mobile Computing. Steve Rodriguez.

8 P.M. - PC Users (<http://www.intac.com/~tinacrock/pcug.html>).
Jo-Anne Head, 908-769-7385.

Monday, January 24

7 P.M. - VBA (Visual Basic, Excel). James Ditaranto,
973-772-7171.

Thursday, January 23

8 P.M. - Genealogy. Frank Warren, 908-756-1681.

Friday, January 28

7 P.M. - Macintosh Users Group, meeting at Rutgers University,
Piscataway. Keith Sproul (ksproul@noc.rutgers.edu),
732-821-4828.

8 P.M. - Random Access, Computer Q&A, Scott Vincent,
973-361-5793

Tuesday, February 1

8 P.M. - ACGNJ Board Meeting.

Wednesday, February 2

7 P.M. - MCP Study Group, Scott Vincent, 973-361-5793

Thursday, February 3

8 P.M. - Internet. Marty Rosenblum, 973-376-8965.

Friday, February 4

8 P.M. - Main Meeting. Frank Warren, 908-756-1681

Monday, February 7

8 P.M. - Lunics, Peter Fillingham, 973-731-9269

Wednesday, February 9

7 P.M. - MCP Study Group, Scott Vincent, 973-361-5793

Thursday, February 10

8 P.M. - Computerized Investing. Sheldon Koepf, 973-740-2489.

All club meetings, unless otherwise noted, are at Scotch Plains Rescue Squad, 1916 Bartle Ave., Scotch Plains, N.J.
Directions and map inside back cover.