
Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey NEWS

Volume 25, Number 10

December 2000



You are Needed!

Nominations for Officers and Board of Directors are now being accepted.

See any officer or Bill Farrell

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And don't forget to come out and vote on December 1



<http://www.acgnj.org>

Founded 1975

Election 2000: The Slate

The Nominating Committee is pleased to announce that the following have expressed an interest in serving as officers or board members of ACGNJ

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Natlit (Pat) Patel	Vice President
Dr. Graham Curtis	Treasurer
Charlie Huffsmith	Recording Secretary
	Corresponding Secretary
Bill Farrell	Director
Jo-Anne Head	Director
Samuel Hecht	Director

Nominations will remain open until just before the voting, which takes place at the December Main Meeting on Friday, December 1. ☐

continued

Back issues of ACGNJ News are available in PDF format with hyperlinks at <http://www.acgnj.org/news/>

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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 Charlie Huffsmith (chaz026@aol.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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Virtual Pages

Burton Shane (bshane39@yahoo.com)

Consider the book. It is a low maintenance random-access knowledge storage device. The original books in medieval times were hand-written, and consequently so expensive (about the cost of a farm — material cost, a year's support, and wages for a skilled scribe) that they were commonly chained to reading desks. Thanks to Gutenberg, movable type, and modern printing presses, a modern book sells for the equivalent of several hours' wages. The cost of chaining them to the racks would be prohibitive, and (fortunately) "shop-lifters" and "boosters" prefer more attractive targets like CDs and Video Tapes.

The personal computer provides yet another low-cost random-access knowledge storage system. The ubiquitous 3½" floppy disk is capable of holding dozens of books. I like buying them for \$9 per hundred, with a \$9 rebate. The catch is that you need a suitcase full of hardware and good vision to read the electronic text. Oh yes, and the suitcase will set you back at least \$700. "Well what's the point?" you might ask.

Consider the Library of Congress (LOC), the largest collection of knowledge and artifacts in the world. It is estimated that the entire collection of the LOC would require approximately 24 Terabytes of storage (1 Terabyte = 1000 Gigabytes). It is also estimated that the Internet now makes available 12 Terabytes of information, and is growing rapidly. By comparison, the fabled Library of Alexandria is believed to have contained about 1.2 Terabytes of information. A major criticism of the Library of Alexandria is that it was not available or used by the general populace — the Internet is notorious for attracting and involving users.

I have saved the best for last. We have watched the evolution of personal computers from 8086 (late 1970s) through 286, 386, 486, 586, and Pentia... What the techies didn't impress upon us was that with the 386 (late 1980s), a quantum leap in power and capacity was achieved. With over a quarter million built-in switches, virtual processing was born. What is the capacity of that old 386 pc, which is now considered barely useable? 64 Terabytes! The Pentium IV will have 40 million switches! Roll over Vannevar Bush and Alan Turing! We'd better get busy. Billions of empty pages are waiting to be filled with art, knowledge, and philosophy.

To read about Vannevar Bush's 1940's prediction about an electronic knowledge machine for the desktop, go to <http://www.theatlantic.com/unbound/flashbks/computer/bushf.htm>

To talk to a primitive computer program as proposed in the "Turing Test", visit http://www-ai.ijs.si/eliza-cgi-bin/eliza_script.

Who is Burton Shane? (In his own words)

While impatiently awaiting the advent of the personal computer, I co-invented the microfiche reader. My intention was to partially fulfill the prophecy of Vannevar Bush. I also helped develop and build the first automated machine for the production of plastic bags. Now you know whom to blame.

I served as a consultant for the Brown's Center of the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago. I used to write programs and build custom interfaces to provide computer access for per-

sons with multiple disabilities. I also wrote and sold (through nationwide distributors) basic info-tainment games for children. I used to demonstrate and lecture on computers and robotics at public and private schools throughout the Chicago area, and had various on-going consulting contracts with private corporations such as AT&T.

I worked as a consultant for the U. of I. (Champaign-Urbana), and as a consultant for the Circle. I was Senior Regional Training Director for Centerpoint Technologies (supervising 800 computer trainers nationwide). I still have a consulting agreement with a major telecommunications company.

My most impressive substantive achievement was the \$15 million budget submitted by the University of Illinois at Chicago to the State of Illinois under my name. The actual appropriation was reduced to \$11.7 million, of which \$3 million was skimmed for "consulting fees" both in Springfield and Chicago.

The "consultants" came to the ultimate conclusion that my budget should be implemented unaltered, so everyone was happy (except the unknowing taxpayers). In any case, \$8.7 million was spent to make the U. of I. more accessible to people with handicaps, so they would benefit, as would society for generations to come.

I qualified as marksman with the M-1 Garand and '03 Springfield, but I don't hunt. I have retired my motorcycle, my horse, my boat, my pilot's logbook, and myself.

I hold an Instructor's Certificate from the Wisconsin Board of Vocational, Technical, and Adult Education (University of Wisconsin) in mathematics and data processing. I retired from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1994. I am now a member of the Adjunct Faculty of Oakton CC, where I teach basic computing to the fastest growing demographic group — seniors.

The only really smart thing I ever did was marry my wife, Diane. ☺

Classified

FREE TO MEMBERS. Use our classified section to sell off your surplus computer stuff. Send copy to Classified, ACGNJ NEWS, P.O. Box 135, Scotch Plains NJ 07076 or via e-mail to the editor, bdegroot@ptdprolog.net. Classified ads are free to members, one per issue. Non-members pay \$10. Send check payable to ACGNJ Inc. with your copy. Reasonable

Palm Court #3

Cass Lewart (rlewart@monmouth.com)

In this issue I am reviewing two commercial programs. The first, Mapopolis, puts street maps on the Palm, the second, ChessGenius, turns your PDA into a great chess player. I also show an undocumented feature that lets you set the battery display to the type of battery you are using.

All screen prints were obtained with the Palm Emulator, which I described in the first issue of Palm Court.

Mapopolis

With Mapopolis your Palm will display any US county down to the street level, including town boundaries, lakes and rivers. You can search for a street address, a street, an intersection, or select from a limited list of landmarks, hospitals, schools, restaurants, etc. This is free to the user but the developers accept advertising, which probably accounts for a large selection of Burger Kings and Pizza Huts but no McDonalds on the county maps.

To start, download the map viewer program mapopolis.prc (Version 2.0). Then decide which US county maps you want to install and download them. The maps vary in size from about 100K to 800K. For example, Monmouth County NJ is 697K; Manhattan is 145K. You can install several maps and choose the one you want displayed. You can zoom in and out, vary the level of displayed details, and scroll by moving the



stylus. GPS users can see the latitude and longitude of the crosshair in the center of the display. A great program if you are lost. The Figure at left shows my street (Georjean Drive).

For more information, and to download the program and county maps go to: <http://www.mapopolis.com>

ChessGenius

When you start working with this program by British programmer Richard Lang, you soon realize it is a labor of love. The chess engine comes from the 1987 World Championship winner, the Mephisto Roma program. It was originally written in Motorola 68000 assembly language and runs unchanged on Palm. The program can be played at 40 levels:

Ten easy levels for beginners — ChessGenius plays instantly and makes deliberate mistakes.

Ten time based levels — Instant, 1 sec, 2 sec, etc. ChessGenius will take on average the specified amount of time to think about each move. The longer it thinks the better it plays.

Ten Blitz levels — Whole game in 1 min, 2 min, etc. Visible Chess Clocks count down, ChessGenius will play the entire game in the specified amount of time.

Ten Problem solving levels — solve newspaper checkmate in ... moves.



At its highest (and slowest) level the program has USCF rating of approximately 2000. The graphics are beautiful. It lets you save, load and transfer games to and from your desktop or PDA using standard chess notation. You can request a hint before each move. (Without hints the program beat me in no time!) The current cost of the program is \$25, and it's well worth it. For more information and to download

Chess Genius, go to <http://www.chessgenius.com>


Setting Voltage Display to Battery Type

Recently I wrote about an undocumented tip for reversing Palm back lighting. Now I have a similar tip to set the Palm battery display icon to agree with the type of AAA batteries you are using. I found this when browsing through messages on a Palm newsgroup, comp.sys.palmtops.pilot. If the battery display is not correctly set it will indicate that the batteries are discharged or fully charged when they are not.



To select the battery type first touch with the stylus the Find icon, then write with the stylus in the left graffiti section the "upside down fish" shortcut symbol, followed by

two taps — still on the left, followed by "7" in the right graffiti section. A message will then appear, either "NiMH" for Nickel Metal Hydride rechargeables, "Alkaline" for regular alkaline batteries, "NiCad" for rechargeable Nickel Cadmium batteries or "Rechargeable A" for rechargeable alkaline batteries. You cycle through the choices by repeating the shortcut sequence and touch the OK icon when you get to the right one. Because each type of battery has a different voltage to indicate a fully charged or discharged battery, the battery icon on the Palm will not display the condition of the batteries correctly unless the correct battery type is selected.

If you like or don't like what you see in this column or have suggestions please contact me via e-mail. 



From The DealsGuy

Bob Click, Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

I attended the Florida Association of Users Groups' one-day fall conference and it was a great meeting. It had 57 attendees representing 15 user groups. We all had a wonderful time with great roundtables and an interesting presenter. The Mac groups were well represented, arriving in a big motor home with an Apple banner on the side. They also helped with some very informative roundtables. The next FACUG (<http://www.facug.org>) meeting will be March 2-4, 2001 in Kissimmee FL. That one is always at capacity, about 150 attendees. I saw no Linux groups, but they are also welcome and encouraged to join. There were even a few Linux prizes in the drawing. Actually, I wish they would open it up to more attendees from wherever.

The Old Disappearing Tech Support Trick

I found out the hard way that Symantec no longer offers free voice tech support on its products. Not even the 90 days they used to give. You must pay, or use the on-line knowledge base. You can also e-mail them and wait for an answer, hoping the answer solves the problem. I hope your luck is better than mine. I knew I should have gotten Zone Alarm, which is free. I wash my hands of Symantec's products.

I've had the same experience with Creative Labs and 3Com. I would like to see APCUG keep a database about vendors giving no tech support. Regardless of opinions of Microsoft, I have unlimited telephone tech support on my MS Office Professional and MS Money (not all MS products offer unlimited). I know tech support cost money, but without it how do you solve your problems, or their bugs.

Received From the MS Rep

Microsoft Press 20% Discount Code

Use the code MCPC to receive a 20% book discount for user group members. Call 800-MSPRESS to order your books. Select a title from the Microsoft Press page at <http://mspress.microsoft.com/>. And if you want to receive their Mindshare newsletter, go to <http://www.microsoft.com/mindshare>. (I found the discount on the Mindshare site, but could not find the newsletter info. You may be better at digging than I am.)

More Book Discounts

Louise Miller from Adobe called and asked me to remind you about the 20% to 40% discounts on Adobe Press and PeachPit Press books. Go to Adobe's user group Web site (<http://www.adobe.com/usergroups>) and download the new form. Louise said it should be posted by the time this is published.

How About Some Trivia

(No deal here, I just liked it.) Lost your dog and can't seem to find it? You've looked all over and have given up. Don't give up just yet — try <http://www.ThePoop.com>, where you'll find data concerning some 5600 different dog rescue groups (I enjoyed the artwork). In this database, you can search for a rescued dog by breed, then narrow it down by city, state, zip code or even an organization. Originally, this site was meant to help owners find lost dogs, but more importantly, to help families

adopt animals from various shelters around the country. Good luck!

On the other hand, if you lost your job instead of your dog, try <http://www.flipdog.com>. No connection as far as I know. How they connect "Flipdog" with jobs, I'll never know.

Other Office Suites of Distinction

Just A Reminder — How much did you pay for your Office Suite? I was lucky. I won Office '97 in a Raffle. We had a great deal on Corel Office 2000 in NY at the APCUG events, and my laptop came with SmartSuite installed. However, I've seen a couple of glowing reviews for StarOffice 5.2 from Sun Microsystems (<http://www.Sun.com>), which is absolutely free and it is multiplatform. However, I did read a complaint about poor importing of WordArt files.

Another suite that's receiving complimentary reviews is Applixware 5.0 from <http://www.vistasource.com>, selling for \$99. This one is for Linux and Unix, and their AnyWhere Office Suite is also for Windows and works with fewer resources. I read two complimentary reviews on Applixware that did include a couple of complaints. I'm only pointing out some other Office Suite choices. (Actually, you can sometimes buy Corel WordPerfect Suite for less than Applixware — I think it's a better deal and it would be my preference.)

If you are a full power user, these might not be for you, but it is a known fact that even most power users don't use more than 35% of the capabilities of the software they are using.

Handy Accessories

I was looking through the "Mobileplanet" catalog the other day and found some interesting things. Do you dig through your car's armrest or glove compartment for your cell phone when you make a call? Mobileplanet has a cell phone holder that fits in the cup holder. I also saw a holder to affix a cell phone to a laptop screen for better data transmission.

I saw the QuickLink Pen Optical Scanner listed for \$139.95, which is almost as good as the UG special offer I published last year. They also offer Palm accessories. Call them at 1-800-675-2638 or use <http://www.mobileplanet.com>. Specialty catalogs are never cheap, but this one was not bad.

Corel Rebate Stuff

Dave Gerber from Sarasota User Group suggested I include the following item: Many rebates and deals are available for a wide variety of Corel software. Go to

<http://ri-r1.corel.com/servlet/click?9hkLsDZEikLlpKLgmFliJNnDhknE0Eikhthmphgl> to learn more about the following offers:

Buy CorelDRAW 9 Premium Color Edition, get \$150 US/\$200 Cdn cash back.

Buy WordPerfect Office 2000 Voice, WordPerfect Pro or WordPerfect Small Business and get a Logitech Cordless Wheel Mouse.

Buy CorelDRAW 9 Office Edition and Get \$30 cash back.

Buy Corel KnockOut 1.5, get \$50 US/\$60 Cdn cash back.

Buy Paradox 9, and get \$50 cash back.

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Networking Your Home

Bruce and Marge Brown, Computer Shopper June 19, 2000 9:00 PM PT

As ubiquitous as the Internet is, sometimes we can't get the access to it that we want. This is an ever-present problem for households with multiple PCs. Dad, Mom, and the kids frequently have to compete for dialing into the Internet one at a time, unless they have separate phone lines and additional ISP accounts. The fortunate few who have cable or DSL modems for broadband Internet access face even greater pressure to share this speedy connection throughout the home.

The simple and inexpensive solution to this problem is to set up a home network. While a home network will let you share hard drives and printers across all the PCs networked within your house—as well as permit room-to-room network gaming—the number-one reason for networking your home is to share Internet access. By sharing Internet access, an entire family of PC users can have multiple systems accessing the Internet simultaneously over a single connection (dial-up or broadband).

The good news is that the hardware has gotten faster and less expensive, software and documentation have improved, and new methods of connecting PCs eliminate the need to run cables all around your house. In fact, network cards based on the new HomePNA 2.0 phone-line standard are already being offered by numerous vendors. Using HomePNA 2.0 (which we chose for this Tune-Up), you can network PCs for as little as \$50 apiece, and cabling is no more complicated than plugging into your telephone wall sockets. You could spend even less if you choose a wired Ethernet solution, but that requires you to string cables throughout your hallways and up and down stairs—or to pass cables through holes in your ceilings and walls.

We'll proceed step by step through the installation of a phone-line network using HomePNA 2.0 PCI network interface cards (NICs), plugged into systems that will share drives, a printer, and Internet access, the last through a dial-up modem. We chose Netgear's Phoneline 10X cards (www.netgear.com), which sell for \$53 on average per card, but most vendors' HomePNA 2.0 solutions should work almost the same. If your PCs don't have available PCI slots, you'll need to use a HomePNA 2.0 USB solution, which should be just hitting the shelves about the time you read this.

Step 1: To run a HomePNA 2.0 network, each networked PC needs to be running Windows 95, Windows 98, or Windows 98 Second Edition. Each system needs an available PCI slot and a CD-ROM drive. It also wouldn't be a bad idea to have your original Windows CD-ROM disc nearby. Of course, each networked system needs to be positioned close to a modular phone jack. (Networked PCs in the same room can share the same jack by using a line splitter.) The only tool you should need is a Phillips-head screwdriver.

Be sure that all of the pieces are included in your starter kit. At a minimum, you should have a NIC and a standard RJ-11 phone cable for each system, plus installation software and documentation.

Warning: Be sure to read all the documentation before starting. All manuals and quick-start guides are not created equal, and installing the hardware and software in the proper order can be critical to success.

Step 2: The first system you set up should be the one that has the direct dial-up or broadband Internet connection. Turn off the PC, unplug all of its power and interface cables, and remove the system's cover. If there is a backplate cover (at the rear of the system unit) for the PCI slot where you'll install the card, remove that cover and put it aside. Insert the NIC firmly into the PCI slot and screw down the backplate bracket to hold the card in place. The card may be difficult to insert, but as long as it fits completely into the slot it should work fine. Replace the cover and plug in the power and data cables you removed.

Warning: To be certain that the card is installed securely, try rocking it back and forth a bit. You should feel very little play.

Step 3: For your initial system (the one with the direct Internet connection), most Home PNA 2.0 solutions will have you route the RJ-11 phone cable from the wall jack to the modem to the back of the NIC, but confirm this in the documentation. For the rest of the PCs on your network, you'll simply route the phone cable from the NIC to the nearest wall jack. If you have multiple phone lines, all the PCs must connect to the same line.

Warning: Make sure your phone cable is long enough to reach from the back of your PC to the wall jack. It's okay to use phone-cable extensions, but if you do, you'll need a coupler to join the two cables.

Step 4: Power your PC back up. Windows should detect the new card and automatically launch the Add New Hardware wizard. Insert the installation disc that came with the starter kit, and direct the wizard to fetch the driver it needs from the kit's CD-ROM. The onscreen prompts will guide you through installing the drivers. You might be prompted to restart your computer during this process; if so, click "Yes."

Step 5: Now it's time to install the network software. If the Setup program doesn't automatically launch from the CD-ROM, you should manually launch it. The program will prompt you to enter a unique network name for the PC and a common name for your network. It's best to name each computer with a simple identifier that makes sense to you (such as "PetesPC" or "DadsOffice"), and to use a generic name for the workgroup (such as "Home" or "Workgroup").

Step 6: During the network software installation, you'll be prompted to select which of the system's drives can be shared by other systems on the network. With Netgear's FirstGear software, the Shared Drives Selection Page displays the available drives in a Private Drives section on the left side of the window. You can set a drive to shared status by highlighting it and clicking the Shared button, which moves the drive over to the Shared Drives section on the right. You can always change these settings later.

continued

Warning: When you make a drive shareable, anyone with access to your network can see, change, or delete files on that drive.

Step 7: If a printer is attached to the PC, FirstGear's installation procedure will next bring up the Shared Printers Selection Page. This window looks and acts just like the Shared Drives screen. Simply highlight each printer you want to share in the Private Printers window on the left and click on the Shared button to make it a shared printer, moving it to the Shared Printers window on the right.

Warning: Making a printer shareable does not automatically mean that other networked purchase can use it. You must "add" the printer to each PC. (See Step 10.)

Step 8: The final step of the First Gear installation is perhaps the most important: setting up the shared Internet connection. Follow the prompts carefully, making certain to choose the desired connection method if more than one is detected on your system.

Warning: Some ISPs restrict access to only one PC at a time.

Step 9: You're not done setting up your network until you have at least two systems networked together. Repeat the above steps for each additional system you want to add to your home network.

Step 10: If you want to print using a printer attached to a different PC on the network, you'll need to run FirstGear's Add Network Printer utility on each system you wish to print from. You should be able to choose any printer that has been set to be shared and is attached to a system currently logged onto the network.

Warning: Some printers have additional software that you'll need to load on each PC.

Learning More

If you want to learn more about home phone-line networking, start with the Home Phonenumber Networking Alliance (www.homepna.org). For further information, visit www.home-networking.org for a glossary and user forums, or check out the International Engineering Consortium's Web ProForums site for a tutorial on home networking (www.webproforum.com/home_net). For a good overview of the state of home networking now and the direction it's taking, Future Home: Home Networking (www.zdnet.com/techlife/futurehome/homenetworking) from ZDNet, our parent company, will get you up to speed quickly.

Security Starts At Home


Whenever you put a computer on any kind of network, it's prudent to consider a few potential security issues. With a home network, you're increasing the likelihood of virus infections and possible threats to your PCs from the outside world over a shared Internet connection. This is especially true if you have a broadband connection and take advantage of this always available connection by leaving your systems on all the time and constantly connected to the Internet.

To guard against virus damage, you should not only use antivirus software, but also update it regularly. In addition, the Internet-sharing utility you use can be vulnerable to

attack. There's no guarantee that the one bundled with your network startup kit will provide an adequate level of protection.

In fact, the Internet Connection Sharing utility included with Windows 98 Second Edition might be a better option than what comes bundled with your starter kit. It provides a decent amount of protection with its Network Address Translation (NAT) feature, which hides the IP addresses of your PCs from others.

Another viable option is investing in third-party software that provides additional levels of security. Two such applications are Norton Internet Security 2000 (downloadable for \$53.95 at www.symantecstore.com) and the McAfee.com Personal Firewall (\$39.95 for a one-year subscription at www.mcafee.com). To test how vulnerable your Internet exposure may be, Gibson Research Corp.'s free utility ShieldsUp (www.grc.com) will check your PC and report on the level of Internet protection your system is affording you.

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ZDNet Tips

from Smart Business

PROBLEM: You have shutdown problems in Windows 98 and want a safe way of turning off the system while you await a more permanent fix.

SOLUTION: If you haven't been able to resolve a recurring shutdown problem and don't have the time to worry about it right now, here's the trick: Don't check the Shut Down option in the Shut Down Windows dialog box. Instead select the "Restart in MS-DOS mode" button. Then, at the MS-DOS prompt, throw the PC's power switch, thereby safely turning the system off..

PROBLEM: You want to buy something at an online auction, but you don't know which auction site to use.

SOLUTION: Online auctions are hot, second only to chat rooms for the amount of traffic they generate. Besides eBay, there's Yahoo, Bid Stream, Amazon, Ruby Lane . . . the list goes on. One of the best ways to keep tabs on these various auction sites is to surf over to AuctionWatch.com, an auction-site search engine.

PROBLEM: You want to use the same Internet connection for more than one computer.

SOLUTION: Practically Networked maintains a series of Web pages that explains how to share an Internet connection between two or more networked computers. You'll find excellent information on wireless options, hardware routers (residential gateways), Apple Airport base stations, and sharing for dial-up, cable/DSL, one-way cable, and ISDN. Check it out at <http://cgi.zdnet.com/slink?63097:2139974>. For more tips surf to <http://cgi.zdnet.com/slink?63098:2139974>.

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Web School for Teachers

Ken Fermoye

Teachers returning to classrooms this fall had an opportunity to become students themselves. Dell's Web School is ready to help them learn to use the Internet for research, lesson plan development and classroom instruction. The Web School, a virtual classroom launched in mid-September, was developed by the computer maker after a recent Dell-commissioned survey of third-, eighth- and twelfth-graders. The study found most students are more likely to learn about the Internet from their parents at home or from trial and error than they are to learn about it from teachers in school. The study also found students are predisposed to use the Internet for education and Research.

The Web School, located at www.dell.com/thewebschool, is part of a broader company initiative to help prepare students for success in the digital world. According to the University of Texas Center for Electronic Commerce, Internet jobs increased by 36 percent last year in the United States, accounting for 2.5 million new jobs. As businesses continue to build their businesses on the Web, demand for tech savvy employees is expected to rise dramatically — becoming a competitive issue for businesses of all sizes and an opportunity for students with Internet training and know-how. "With 95 percent of all public schools wired for Internet access, we believe teachers and schools are our best hopes for training our students and overcoming social or economic barriers to Internet access," said Bill Rodrigues, vice president of Dell's education division.

The Web School includes a self-paced Know the Net course, developed by Dell and based on similar training provided to Dell employees. Know the Net for Teachers helps beginning Internet users expand their knowledge of the Internet and its classroom uses. The Web School also contains links to useful teacher resources such as the ePALS Classroom Exchange and Blackboard.com; education news; products and services for teachers and schools, and information about Dell grant programs.

Know the Net for Teachers takes educators through a 20-question quiz that helps them master the history and navigation of the Web and introduces them to important research sites, lesson plans, and teacher and student community groups. Dell's K-12 customers, including teachers and school district officials in Round Rock TX and Nashville TN (Dell's principal US locations) helped develop and test the site.

"This is a valuable resource for teachers, particularly for those with limited understanding of the Internet and even less time to learn about it," said Barbara Logan, instructional technologist for the Round Rock Independent School District. "Teachers can take the challenge in about 30 minutes and it's available round the clock."

(Author's note: We can only applaud this example of enlightened self-interest by Dell. Teachers, students and the computer maker all stand to gain from it. We can only hope that other high-tech firms see fit to develop more such innovative programs to help teachers of today prepare students for the demands of technology in the world of tomorrow.)

A Ken's Korner TidByte ☐

Dealsguy *continued*

Buy WordPerfect Family Pack and get \$20 cash back.

Buy WordPerfect Office 2000 for Linux Standard, get \$20 cash back.

Buy WordPerfect Office 2000 for Linux Deluxe, get \$40 cash back.

Wow, Great Graphics For Nuthin'

Here is a graphics program that picks up the pieces and makes something out of them. It's called "Hotmedia 3.0" and is by IBM, no less. I read a very positive review for it, and it would take too much room to adequately describe it, but it will combine video, audio and 3D files and produce a great finished product. It runs on Windows 95/98/2000/NT or Macintosh. The best part is it's free just for the download, so point your browser to <http://www6.software.ibm.com/dl/hotmedia/hmkt-p>. I have not tried it yet, but it sounded great. The panorama capability sure piques my interest. According to the Web site, it looks as though you may get the new 3.5 version now. I had problems with this URL, but it worked OK for friends.

Are You Right On Cue, Literally?

Have you asked for your CueCat yet? At a Space Coast meeting recently, they were showing a neat gadget — a hand-held scanner that you run across bar codes. Its input into your computer instantly takes you to the URL and more information. That sounds great if you have tried typing in a long URL, especially if you made a typo. They are free for the asking at any Radio Shack store. They are also seen advertised in some magazines — just call and ask to get it free.

Right away I wanted one, but I wondered why a company would go to that much cost to get thousands of them into people's hands, and free. Included in the package is the cable, booklet and installation disk. The fact that you must register personal information when you install the software to receive an activation code might alert you that something is up. Nobody tells you that each device has its own unique serial number, or the reason for that, nor is it mentioned in the booklet, although I didn't check the CD. The device works with the bar codes you see everywhere, and your TV can also be hooked up to provide bar codes. It sounds like a great device, but I am not ready for it to collect statistics about my browsing habits. If you have no qualms about privacy, you now know where to get one. My firewall should prevent the dis-bursing of my data, but I'm still thinking about it. I could create a new person at my address and see how long it takes before he gets junk mail.

That's it for this month. Meet me here next month if your editor permits. I hope to find some deals at Fall Comdex. If I find anything that can't wait, I'll post it on the Announcements page on my Web site (<http://www.dealsguy.com>). This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage or discourage the purchase of products, no matter how enthused I sound. Bob (The Cheap-skate) Click (dealsguy@mindspring.com). Visit my Web site for past columns or for the unedited version of this one. ☐

Extension Course

Vic Laurie, PrincetonPC Users Group

Although I have discussed the topic previously (for example, in the August, 1998 PPCUG newsletter, <http://www.ppcug-nj.org/newsletters/98aug-c.pdf>) the issue of file extensions and associations is so fundamental and comes up so often in my discussions with Windows 9X users that I feel it deserves another article. No end of problems can arise when users are unaware of how Windows manages files or of the role played by the extension in a file name. And Microsoft certainly does not help by hiding extensions in the default setting for Windows Explorer and My Computer.

What Are Extensions and What Do They Do?

You will recall that in the Windows operating system, most files have names with the format filename.ext where .ext is the extension. An extension is not required but most files have one in their name. Extensions are usually, but not necessarily, three characters. Their function is to tell the computer what the file type is and what is to be done with the file when it is opened or double-clicked or otherwise invoked one way or another. When the operating system is presented with a file for action (e.g., when you double-click it), the Registry is consulted where a list of file types and their extensions is kept. (For those who are interested in such things, it is in HKEY_CLASSES_ROOT). The list contains what actions are possible for that particular file, which software is supposed to carry out the action, and where on the computer that software is located (the path).

By being aware of the role of an extension, a user can make intelligent decisions about how (or whether) to use a file. For example, certain e-mail viruses are spread by means of attachments with the extension .vbs or .shs. An informed user will be able to recognize the danger in indiscriminately opening such attachments and will be prepared to take appropriate action.

Unless you change the settings, Windows Explorer or My Computer will not show the extensions of filenames in the listings of files. Presumably Microsoft thinks users need to be protected from themselves in this way in spite of the fact that a lot of people think it is a poor idea for the default setting. Be that as it may, the setting is easily changed. Go to My

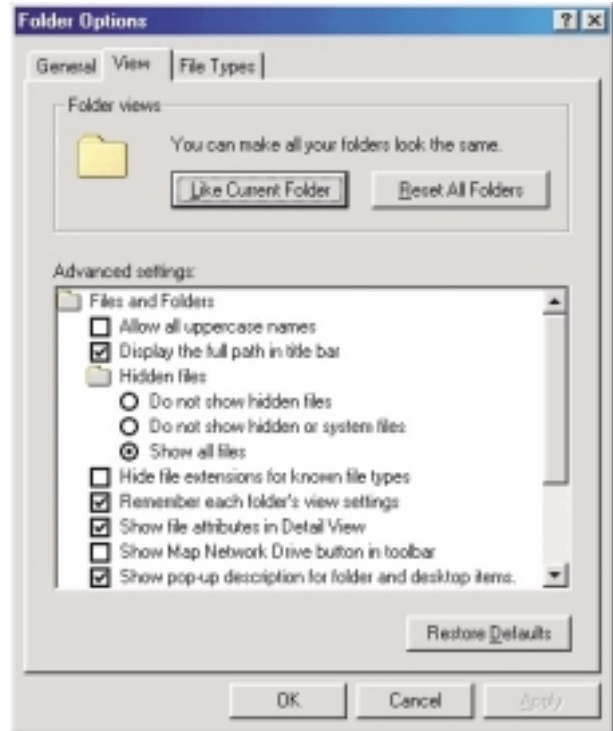


Figure 1

Computer and open the View menu. Then open Folder Options|View. In the list of settings that appears, uncheck the box by the entry, “Hide file extensions for known file types.” (Fig. 1) Personally, I think everyone should make this change.

Information About Extensions

Table I lists a few of the most common extensions and a little information about them. There are several thousand extensions, however, and a downloadable database can be found at <http://www.crosswinds.net/~jom/filex/>. Other sites with large lists and descriptions are:

- <http://thereference.com/computer/filext.html>
- <http://www.computronics.be/courses/append/fileext.html>

Table 1. A few common file extensions

Extension	Description	Comments
jpg	Graphics, pictures	Opened by default browser or by graphics program
gif	Graphics, pictures	Opened by default browser or by graphics program
bmp	(Bulky) graphics	Opened by Paint or by graphics program
doc	Word processing file	Opened by WordPad or Word (several formats)
txt	Text file	Opened by Notepad or text editor or Word, etc.
pdf	Portable document file	Opened by Adobe software
htm, html	Web pages, etc.	Viewed in browser, code edited in text editor
wav	Sound clip	Opened by Windows Media Player
avi	Video clip	Opened by Windows Media Player
rm	Video clip	Opened by RealPlayer
dll	Dynamic link library	Used by software in a variety of functions
exe	Executable file*	File that actually runs software (also type of ZIP)
zip	Compressed file	Opened by WinZip, PKZip, etc.

*Never open unless you know what it does.

continued

Searching for Life

Burton Shane (bshane39@yahoo.com)

Around 1985, physicist Stephen Hawking's life was saved by surgery that rendered him speechless. He had been so ill that his wife was advised to allow the removal of life-support since there was no hope for a useful life. By coincidence, my doctors had also pronounced me terminally ill. I had briefly experienced the helplessness of inability to communicate, and I empathized with Mr. Hawking. He was given a speech-enabled Datavue 25 to ensure that his knowledge would not be lost to mankind. I too had a Datavue 25, and it was apparent to me that many unfortunate people could be greatly aided by adapting proliferating inexpensive personal computers to help overcome disabilities.

I volunteered my services at hospitals and rehabilitative institutes, and was able to create programs and custom interfaces for people with multiple disabilities. I would like to recount just one story of how a personal computer made a difference.

A friend operated a pre-school that specialized in children with disabilities. They usually hired an extra medical aide for each student. He approached me with a special case — a student who was afflicted with cerebral palsy since birth and had volitional control over only one finger. One finger! He could not walk, talk or grasp an object. His development was arrested because he could not interact with the environment.

I wired a position sensor as an input device to be strapped on his finger. I wrote a program that allowed him to select letters and pictures displayed on the CRT and to make simple drawings, and print them out. I demonstrated it to the pre-school owner, and he later told me of its first use. They set up the system and strapped the input sensor to the child's finger. They "walked" him through the necessary steps for creating a drawing, then allowed the child to create one on his own. As his nervous parents looked on, he completed a simple drawing and sent it to the printer. As his very first drawing noisily scrolled out of the printer, the parents started to cry, the teacher started to cry, and as he was telling me this story, I began to cry too.

Like Stephen Hawking's doctors, mine were overly pessimistic, though it took a transplant and some extra help to keep me going. It is ironic that the personal computer that has become such an important part of my life (indeed a more important factor in everybody's life), was instrumental in extending my life. I was critically ill, and after a hectic helicopter ride, was ensconced in a glass-enclosed intensive care facility where I desperately awaited a transplant. I was able to watch as they did remote computer searches in databases across the country trying to find a suitable organ in time. I still remember the look on the computer operator's face as he involuntarily looked up into my eyes when his search was successful. I knew instantly, and though it meant a lot to my family and friends (and myself), my predominant feeling was the excitement that I still feel when I complete a successful search.

I have spent much of the extra time I have been allotted to encourage others to use computers for the betterment of mankind. I hope this story will inspire others who will similarly find some way to contribute. ☐

Extension Course, *continued from page 9*

- <http://www.jozy.nl/index.html>
- <http://www.crosswinds.net/~jom/filex/extensionio.htm>
- <http://www.cknow.com/ckinfo/acronyms/fileextensions.htm>
- http://www.whatis.com/Flat_Files/WhatIs_File_Format_A/0,281899,,00.html

You can do a search for file extensions at <http://kresch.com/exts/index.shtml>. Being cognizant of file extensions and associations can be very important in avoiding viruses, in properly and efficiently managing files, and in many other ways.

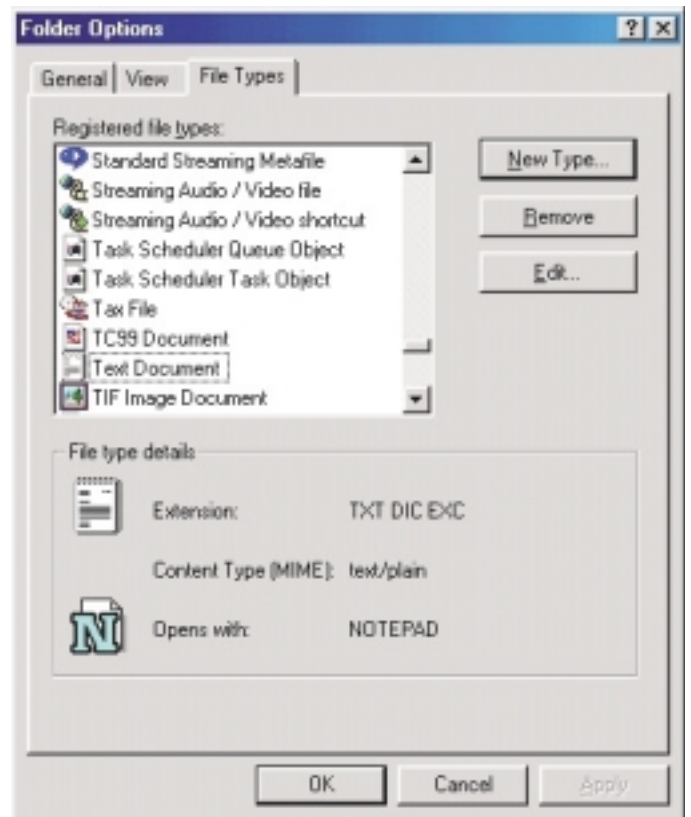


Figure 2

Associations

The software that is assigned to do some action with or to a file is said to be associated. More than one program may be associated with a given extension, each carrying out a different (or at least differently named) action. For example, .html or .htm files can have Internet Explorer associated to open (i.e., display) the file and Notepad or FrontPage associated to edit the file. To see the list of file types and their associations for your own computer go to My Computer|View|Folder Options|File Types. (Fig. 2)

Editing and changing file associations is a separate topic. Some discussion was given previously at <http://www.ppcug-nj.org/newsletters/98aug-c.pdf>. Because of the importance of understanding file associations, I will devote a future article to the subject. Meanwhile, take a look at the article "Understanding Windows File Associations," that can be found at <http://www.microsoft.com/technet/win98/assoc.asp> ☐

SIG News

PC Users Group

Steve Rodriguez (help72@bigfoot.com)

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

http://www.acgnj.org/2k00/sig_pcusersgroup.htm

November 17: The meeting, hosted by Steve Rodriguez, demonstrated the creation of MP3s.

December 15: Steve Rodriguez hosts the meeting and will demonstrate PowerQuest's "Drive Image". There will be a Christmas Party, with plenty of goodies to eat. Come relax and enjoy!!

Our focus is on any topic that touches on personal computers. Some of our meetings are fairly technical and some are oriented to total newbies. Our members reflect this mix. Come out to a meeting and get to know us, we're friendly. Check out news of previous meetings at our Website. ☐

Symposium

John Raff (jraff@home.com)

<http://www.acgnj.org/groups/symposiu.html>

December: Rick Elbana will present on new Internet software. ☐

Internet

Martin Rosenblum (m.rosenblum@ieee.org)

<http://www.acgnj.org/groups/inetsig.html>

The Internet SIG was formed in January of 1995 to deal with the growing interest of ACGNJ members and potential members in exploring the facilities available via the Internet. E-Mail permits us to communicate with colleagues around the world. Directory services permit us to locate anyone from an old friend to a contact at some organization to the President of the United States. The World Wide Web lets us explore public databases around the world in an incredibly powerful way. And each day new businesses, organizations and institutions are installing a presence on the WWW. ☐

MCP

(Preparing for Microsoft Certification Exams)

Scott Vincent (svincent@ix.netcom.com)

<http://www.scottsville.net/mcp.htm>

Wednesdays from 7:00PM to 10:00PM except for the 4th Wed of each month. We review typical exam questions. Those who attend are encouraged 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. For more information, including reading assignments and course schedule, visit us at the Web site above. ☐

Lotus Notes

Mike Barlow (mwb@injersey.com)

<http://www.njlnug.org>

All meetings are held at the offices of Bright Ideas Software in Edison NJ and start at 7:00 PM (Random Access starts at 6:30). Bright Ideas Software has graciously provided us with a voice mail line for information on future meetings, locations, directions etceteras. Please call the ACGNJ Lotus Notes User Group information line at (732) 417-5778 for last minute changes in plan/cancellations, etc. See our Web page for directions to Bright Ideas. ☐

Layman's Forum

Matt Skoda (som359@aol.com)

<http://www.acgnj.org/groups/laymans.html>

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

Random Access

Scott Vincent (scottvin@optonline.net)

<http://www.acgnj.org/groups/random.html>

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. Although 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. ☐

Main Meeting

Frank Warren (kb4cyc@webwarren.com)

<http://www.acgnj.org/groups/main2k-1.htm>

December 1: Annual election of Officers and Directors. Presentation on GPS. There have been many new developments since the last presentation. Host Frank Warren.

January 5: Home Automation - Smart Home. Host Charlie Huffsmith.

February 2: Microsoft presents Windows ME (Millennium Edition), giveaways. Host Jo-Anne Head.

March 2: Building a Computer. Host Ted Martin.

April 6: Use of Scanners, Transmitting Scanned Data via Email. Host Jerry Entin.

May 4: No meeting due to TCF 2001

June 1: Web Technologies such as Dynamic HTML, Cascading Style Sheets, XML, XHTML, XSL, and the use of these technologies to do "neat" things to a website with very little effort. Host Mike Barlow.

Changes and/or updates will be posted to our website. ☐

continued on page 14

Lunics (Linux/Unix)*Andreas Meyer (ahm@spies.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. ☐

VBA & Excel*Jim Ditaranto (fryr92a@prodigy.com)*<http://www.excelvba.homestead.com>

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.

At the November meeting the subject was: "Introduction to Emacs" presented by Doug Lewan. There will be no meeting in December ☐

Multimedia & Mobile*Steven Rodriguez (help72@bigfoot.com)*<http://www.acgnj.org/groups/multi.html>

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

Macintosh Users Group*Keith Sproul (ksproul@noc.rutgers.edu)*<http://dorm.rutgers.edu/~ksproul/acgnjmug.html>

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. ☐

Genealogy*Frank Warren (kb4cyc@webwarren.com)*<http://www.webwarren.com/kb4cyc/gensig.html>

The Genealogy SIG is for genealogists who have an interest in computers and 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. ☐

C/C++ Users Group*Bruce Arnold (barnold@blast.net)*<http://www.blast.net/barnold>

The C/C++ User's Group was founded several years ago to be a forum for discussion about programming in general; to discuss beginning and intermediate level C, C++, and C-Win programming; to demonstrate real programming in a non-intimidating way; to discuss hardware, software, code, algorithms, operating systems; and to present the complete code for working programs in 3-5 sheets of paper. Each meeting is divided into three sections: random access question, answers, and discussion; standard library functions, Windows API functions and other topics of a narrow and simple scope; and a main presentation which is normally a small program, 300-1000 lines, which actually performs some useful function. The program is discussed and demonstrated in terms of its philosophy, algorithm, flow, code, challenges, options, improvements, etc. This case study provides a forum for additional questions and audience participation. Source code for the program is handed out and is also available on the ACGNJ FTP Server: <ftp://ftp.acgnj.lrg/pub/acgnj/cug/>.

November: In October DLLDUPS, which searches your hard drive for redundant DLL files in order to help fix problems caused by DLL file conflicts and provide general auditing of computer files. This month we upgraded the utility into a Windows 32-bit application. Discussion included the new features required to change it into a Windows program. The program uses the Visual C++ Microsoft Foundation Classes (MFC) set up as a Single Document Interface or SDI program. The program code has a number of special features. It uses a recursive file searching algorithm to search the entire hard drive. It uses Microsoft Foundation Library List Controls in order to store the huge amount of data. Whenever duplicates are found, each file is interrogated to determine its version number. It contains a special dialog to prompt the user to select a Starting Path from the directory tree. Good references for MFC include books by Jeff Prosise and books by Mike Blaszcak. ☐

Investing*Sheldon Koepf (sheldonk@intac.com)*<http://www.intac.com/~sheldonk/invsig>

November 9: We took a look at where the current market is going, and discussed a few possible good investments under the current circumstances using charts showing to demonstrate where the market is and predict where it will go. We concluded that we had reached a bottom and the market should improve over the short term.

We covered a few "tricks" for reading charts to determine the strength and direction of prices. The charts of stocks from the recent list in an issue of Kiplinger's were examined. The ones that looked good were: Fannie May (FNM), and possibly Dycom Industries (DY). My favorite trading stock, the Spyder S&P400 midcap (MDY) was also covered. Most attendees felt that the market would stay unsettled until the presidential election results were finally announced. It was a good session with many members participating actively. See news of previous meetings at our SIG Meetings page ☐

System Suite 2000: New Kid on the Block

Part 1 of 2

Dick Freymoyer (dickfrey1@aol.com)

Ontrack's System Suite 2000, the new kid on the block, looks much like Symantec's (Norton) System Works. I love to see a great new product compete with the "King Of The Hill" and System Suite 2000 looks like it could take the hill away from the king. I had been seeing articles and advertising about System Suite 2000 for several months and liked what I was reading although I didn't think anyone would ever replace Norton/Symantec. There are many products similar to theirs, but none good enough so far to take the hill away. When I attended PC Expo 2000 in New York, I had the opportunity to see System Suite 2000 and I knew immediately that I had to test drive it as soon as possible.

System Requirements: 486 or faster; Windows 95-98, NT 4.0 or Windows 2000; 16 MB RAM; a CD-ROM Drive; 3.5 Floppy Drive; at least 35MB free space on your hard drive and at least 25 MB free space if you install Power Desk.

The program comes on one CD disk for a fast and easy installation. The package includes System Suite 2000 and Power Desk. You can install one or both. Installation of System Suite 2000 was smooth and sweet, giving me no problem at all. After you install the program, it reboots your machine and asks if you want to create a rescue set of 3.5" disks. This took 3 disks, one for getting into your computer if it doesn't boot into Windows, two for your anti-virus scanner. After you create the rescue disks, the program asks you if you want to go to Ontrack's web site for the latest updates and register System Suite. It dials through your Internet provider into the web site. It took about 50 minutes to download program and antivirus updates — I suspect they did a lot of work to the program after they released it.

System Suite is broken down into 10 groups of utilities: Fix Wizard; Disk & Files; System Registry; System Diagnostics; System Protection; Crisis Center; Zip Magic Wizards; Easy Uninstall; Disk Cleanup and Virus Scanner.

Fix Wizard — This utility runs the core of System Suite, in that it checks your computer for any problems and fixes the problem. In this mode it checks for the following items and does it really fast: Scan for Viruses; Check & fix 2000 year compliance; Back up system files (registry included); Create a backup Image of the FAT (File Allocation Files); Clean up unused files; Scan for errors on the hard drive; Clean the System Registry; Fix broken Registry entries; & Defrag hard drives. When you click on Fix Wizard, you choose what you want to run by checking the box in front of each task. I like this since things like the 2000-year compliance test need to be run only once. Fix Wizard is the one part of System Suite you may want to run as a regular maintenance routine to keep your computer running smoothly.

Disk & Files — This utility consists of eight parts: Disk Fixer; Defrag Plus; Disk Snapshot; Disk Verifier; System Saver; File Undelete; Size Manager; & Easy Update. Disk Fixer is like Scan Disk and seems faster than Microsoft and Norton. Defrag Plus is much better than what Microsoft sup-

plies with Windows. OnTrack takes defragging your hard drive to a new level with what they call IntelliCluster, which speeds up disk access. With IntelliCluster enabled (under properties), it divides your hard drive into 4 zones. The first is used to store the information of IntelliClusters, the second is used to store most frequently accessed files and is located in the fastest area of your drive. The third stores common files, ones you don't use too often. The fourth is reserved for files you modify frequently and is located next to the free space on your drive. Disk Snapshot backs up your FAT (file allocation tables) and boot sectors as a snapshot just as the name implies. Disk Verifier ensures that all files on your hard drive can be read. If a file is found bad it will identify it, so you can replace it with a good file. System Saver allows you to back up your registry, config.sys, autoexec.bat, system.ini, win.ini, protocol.ini and command.com files. This is a good command for all users; it saves the files in your OnTrack/backup folder. File Undelete is a simple file recovery command, used if you deleted a file. If you need to use this, you should use it as soon as you realize you deleted it, so that you don't overwrite the clusters that it uses. Size Manager is a very interesting utility that works like "My Computer" in Windows, except it gives you a graphical picture of your folder sizes. This utility gives you all kinds of data on your drive: size, bytes/sectors, clusters, free space, used space, how many files, folders, how many revised files and just a load of information of the drive. It lets you copy, delete, move, rename files or folders, create new folder, format disks, etc. In the coming weeks I will explore this in more detail to determine if I can get rid of the utility I've been using for this job. Easy Update connects to OnTrack's web server and downloads the latest updates.

System Registry — Registry services in 5 parts. Registry Fixer searches your registry for invalid links and can repair or remove them — something Microsoft forgot to give us. Registry Cleaner cleans out things like unnecessary registry items, unused international keyboard settings and unused Time Zones. If you want to recover any of these items, go into System Protection Tab; Undo-It; Registry Cleaner, click the box in front of what ever you deleted and the item is restored. I removed and restored the International Keyboards entries without a hitch. Don't forget if you want to recover anything on your computer, do it as soon as possible so it isn't overwritten with new data. Registry Editor is an expanded Windows RegEdit and works about the same, but maybe a little faster to find entries. Once you find the item, it then looks like Microsoft's Find, Edit part of RegEdit.Exe. Registry Defrag defrags your registry to help minimize registry access time and the size of the registry. I didn't see much a difference after using it, maybe because I keep my registry in good shape. If you use this feature, I would suggest that you go into Programs Accessories\System Tools\System InformationTools\System Configuration Utility>Selective Startup and uncheck everything except Process System.Ini File. Your computer will reboot again with nothing running in the background,

continued

System Suite 2000, *continued from page 6*

making this utility run better. You can also get into the MS System Configuration Utility quickly by going to Run, and type in Msconfig.Exe. While in this Utility, be sure to look into your Start Tab, you may want to uncheck some of the programs that are running in the background, since they rob your system resources. (Some time I will have to write an article about all the hidden items within Windows, that most of us are not aware of.) The last item under System Registry is Win Customizer. This is one of the neatest items! With it you can view and change anything within Windows, like the logos opening/closing; edit, add or remove programs; and many more things you can do to customize your computer. I really like this one.

System Diagnostics — five program items. PC Diagnostics does an instant diagnostic on your hardware. Very nice, a little different than Norton's System Works. Year2000 finds and fixes Y2K problems. System Explorer gives you information about hardware, drivers and your main files (like Autoexec.Bat, Win Ini & Etc). System Monitors gives you an instant view of real time resources, with alarms available. System Updates takes you online to *Updates.zdnet.com*, where you can have your PC checked for latest updates for your installed software. You will have to type in your e-mail address to register for the site. I subscribe to Norton's Web site, which does the same thing, but it is not free.

System Protection — Crash Proof gives you information on how many errors, crashes, and system freezes have occurred. System Scheduler lets you schedule any of the System Suite 2000 tests. Rescue Disk is just what it sounds like. Undo-It reverses changes made by System Suite programs. System Log records dates utilities were run.

Crisis Center — contains four specialized tasks. Crisis Information help information and links to web sites where you can get help on System Suite. (A very good sign that OnTrack cares about their customers and wants to help them.) Easy Recovery allows you to recover lost data on your own, and the book says "you don't have to be an engineer". Remote Recovery connects through the Internet to an OnTrack pro-

fessional data recovery engineer, who will diagnose and (hopefully) repair severe data loss. There is a charge for this service. You can also talk to a technical support engineer, also for a price. (Your local computer repair shop can repair or replace your hardware, but data recovery isn't their business.) The last level of Disaster Recovery is In-Lab Data Recovery. This is where you go to find the heavy hitters, for recovery from such things as flood, fire, lightning strike or earthquake. For such major data loss, your hard drive is sent to OnTrack's lab and is worked on in one of their Class 100 Clean Rooms. Your data might not be 100% recoverable, but if you are foolish enough not to have backed it up, this is your best shot. OnTrack has lots of suggestions about how to protect you data on your damaged hard drive, after a major problem. The first big suggestion is never attempt to run the drive after a major disaster occurs and secondly get the media to OnTrack or another disk recovery company, as soon as possible. This is always solid advice if you want and expect to recover data from your system.

Zip Magic Wizards — a seven-function zip program. Zip Extract will locate all zipped files on your computer, then you select the one you want to unzip and where you want extracted files to go. I found this easy to operate and very good. Zip & Mail zips a file and allows you to send it as an attachment — no experience necessary. Zip Create allows you to select any file or files zip them together — nothing to remember. Zip & Backup makes a difficult task easy. (I have used PK Zip for many years and I still have to think hard to do it, because I don't do it often.) Zip Self Extract makes the zipped files, then makes them self extracting (exe) (also something I had to think about with PKZip) You tell it what file or files you want zipped and where you want to store it, and it's done. Zip Repair; and all this does is repairs corrupted Zipped files. I have never had to use this.) Zip Convert converts an already zipped file into a self-extracting file. I rate the Zip program included in System Suite2000 at five stars!

That's it for part 1. Tune in next month for Part 2. You are welcome to email questions or comments. ☺

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:

Date _____ New Member Address Change Renewal of (Membership #) _____

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, Dickson Hall, Montclair State University, Montclair NJ. (973) 655-5274, http://www.njmug.org .
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

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>)

Dec. 16-17: NJ Convention Center, Raritan Center, Edison NJ. Sat. & Sun. 10-4. Children 16 and under are free at this show with parents! ☺

ACGNJ Hotline

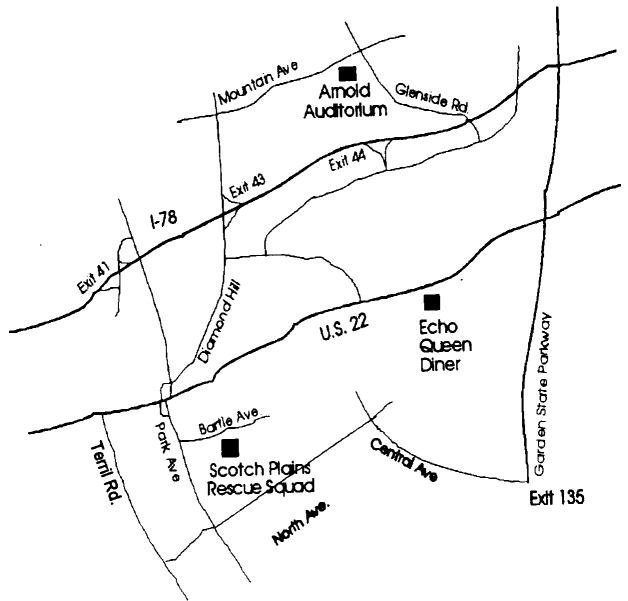
(908) 322-4654

ACGNJ Bulletin Boards

The ACGNJ Bulletin boards were shut down in April due to lack of interest. Of 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

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ACGNJ MEETINGS

For the very latest news on ACGNJ meetings visit the ACGNJ Web Page (<http://www.acgnj.org>)

Friday, December 1, 2000

8 P.M. - Main Meeting: Frank Warren, kb4cyc@webwarren.com, presents on new developments in GPS; Annual Election of Officers and Directors. 908-756-1681

Monday, December 4

8 P.M. - Lunics: Andreas Meyer, ahm@spies.com, 908-382-4297

Wednesday, December 6

7 P.M. - MCP Study Group, Scott Vincent, scottvin@optonline.net, 973-361-5793

Thursday, December 7

8 P.M. - Internet, Martin Rosenblum, m.rosenblum@ieeee.org, 973-376-8965.

Friday, December 8

8 P.M. - PC Symposium. John Raff, jraff@home.com, 973-533-0664

Monday, December 11

8 P.M. - Layman's Forum, Matt Skoda, som359@aol.com, (908) 359-8842.

Wednesday, December 13

7 P.M. - MCP Study Group, Scott Vincent, scottvin@optonline.net, 973-361-5793

Thursday, December 14

8 P.M. - Computerized Investing, Sheldon Koepf, sheldonk@intac.com, 973-740-2489.

Friday, December 15

7 P.M. - Multimedia & Mobile Computing, Steven Rodriguez, help72@bigfoot.com.

8 P.M. - PC Users, Steven Rodriguez. PowerQuest's "Drive Image" and there will be a Christmas Party, with plenty of goodies to eat.

Tuesday, December 19

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

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

Wednesday, December 20

7 P.M. - MCP Study Group, Scott Vincent, scottvin@optonline.net, 973-361-5793

Friday, December 22

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, scottvin@optonline.net, 973-361-5793

Monday, December 25

7 P.M. - No meeting of VBA (Visual Basic, Excel) Merry Christmas! James Ditaranto, fryr92a@prodigy.com, 973-772-7171.

Thursday, December 28

8 P.M. - No meeting of Genealogy. Happy New Year! Frank Warren, kb4cyc@webwarren.com, 908-756-1681.

Tuesday, January 2, 2001

7 P.M. - Board of Directors meeting.

Friday, January 5

8 P.M. - Main Meeting: Frank Warren, kb4cyc@webwarren.com, 908-756-1681 ☎

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.