
Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey NEWS

Volume 26, Number 7

September 2001



We're looking high and low for a few good people to lead or help lead SIGs. You don't need to be an expert — just help find the experts to speak at meetings.

We need your help.



<http://www.acgnj.org>

Founded 1975

SIGs in Crisis Doesn't Anyone Care?

Several ACGNJ SIGs face shut-down due to lack of interest. This seems to have been a summer of unprecedented apathy, at least at ACGNJ.

The Main Meeting Planning Session, which is traditionally held during the summer, was poorly attended — only six members showed up. As a result, there is no plan for topics for the Main Meetings past September. Bill Machrone of Ziff Davis will speak at the September Main Meeting on a subject of his own choosing. He has left the topic open, but may touch on WindowsXP Security, new advances in processors, or other topics, and he's leaving it open-ended for a Q&A session.

The PC Users Group has no leader, and no meetings are scheduled for the coming season

The PC Symposium has had difficulty scheduling speakers who will actually show up on the appointed evening, so meetings will probably be held as and when dependable speakers or presenters are available.

Random Access has been poorly attended, and Scott is contemplating discontinuing it.

Several hard-working leaders have burned out and retired from their positions in recent months, and no one has stepped forward to take their places, leaving the meeting structure at risk. If you've been sitting back waiting for Someone Else to take over and do the job, I have news for you — Someone Else is dead. (Obituary on page 7.)

If you care what happens to the ACGNJ, please write to board@acgnj.org and offer to lead or help co-lead one of these SIG groups. We need your active participation. ☐

If you care what happens to the ACGNJ, please write to board@acgnj.org and offer to lead or help co-lead one of our SIG groups. We need your active participation.

Back issues of ACGNJ News are available in PDF format with hyperlinks at <http://acgnj.port5.com/>

In This Issue

Internet Corner, <i>Martin Rosenblum</i>	3	Buying a PC (<i>Burton Shane</i>)	5
Belarc Advisor (<i>Dick Freymoyer</i>)	6	Correction, CD Maker 2000 Pro (<i>Freymoyer</i>)	6
Palm Court #7 (Cass Lewart)	7	Getting Started with Internet Music (<i>Bruce Fries</i>)	8
The DealsGuy, <i>Bob Click</i>	10	SIG News,	11
Guru Corner, <i>Jo-Anne Head</i>	14	MS Software Activation (<i>Bill Farrell</i>).	14

For Your Inquiries

Officers President Scott Vincent (973) 361-5793 Vice President John Raff (973) 533-0664 Treasurer Dr. Graham Curtis (973) 762-9366 Recording Secretary Charlie Huffsmith (732) 549-1734 Corresponding Sec'y Evan Williams (908) 359-8070 Past President Frank Warren (908) 756-1681	Board of Directors Director Emeritus Through 2002 Through 2001	Sol Libes (609) 520-9024 Bill Farrell (732) 572-3481 Jo-Anne Head (908) 769-7385 Ted Martin (732) 636-1942 Samuel Hecht Malthi Masurekar (732) 560-1534 Rick Elbanna (800) 323-7575 Sheldon Koepf (973) 740-2489 Arnold Milstein (908) 753-8036 Martin Rosenblum (973) 376-8965
Special Interest Groups C Languages Bruce Arnold (908) 735-7898 Concordia Jerry Entin (609) 395-8178 Genealogy Frank Warren (908) 756-1681 Internet Marty Rosenblum (973) 376-8965 Investing Sheldon Koepf (973) 740-2489 Java Michael Redlich (732) 469-2072 Layman's Forum Matthew Skoda (908) 359-8842 Lotus Notes Mike Barlow (732) 873-1107 LUNICS Andreas Meyer Macintosh Keith Sproul (732) 821-4828 PC Users Vacant Random Access Scott Vincent (973) 361-5793 Symposium John Raff (973) 533-0664 Visual Basic for Apps James Ditaranto (201) 986-1104 Web Development Jim Wong	Standing Committees APCUG Rep. Frank Warren (908) 756-1681 Facilities John Raff (973) 533-0664 Financial John Raff (973) 533-0664 Liaison Bill Farrell (732) 572-3481 Membership Martin Rosenblum (973) 376-8965 Newsletter Jo-Anne Head (908) 769-7385 Trenton ComputerFest Scott Vincent (973) 361-5793 Webmasters Jo-Anne Head (908) 769-7385 John Raff (973) 533-0664	

ACGNJ News

Editor

Barbara DeGroot
 145 Gun Club Road
 Palmerton PA 18071
 Tel: (610) 377-8632
 Fax: (610) 377-9362
bdegroot@ptd.net

Publisher

Associate Editors

Jo-Anne Head
 (908) 769-7385
tinarock@aol.com

Bill Farrell
 (732) 572-3481
wfarr18124@aol.com

ACGNJ News is published by the Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey, Incorporated (ACGNJ), PO Box 135, Scotch Plains NJ 07076. ACGNJ, a non-profit educational corporation, is an independent computer user group. Opinions expressed herein are solely those of the individual author or editor. This publication is **Copyright © 2001 by the Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey, Inc., all rights reserved. Permission to reprint with appropriate credit is hereby given to non-profit organizations.**

Submissions: Articles, reviews, cartoons, illustrations. Most common formats are acceptable. Graphics embedded in the document must also be included as separate files. Fax or mail hard copy and/or disk to editor; OR e-mail to Editor. **Always confirm.** Date review and include name of word processor used, your name, address and phone *and* name, address and phone of 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?

Advertising: Non-commercial announcements from members are free. Commercial ads 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 subscription to ACGNJ at the address below. We will respond in kind.

Address Changes should be directed to Charlie Huffsmith (chaz026@aol.com) and/or to his attention at ACGNJ at the address below.

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.

Typographic Note: The ACGNJ News is produced using Corel Ventura 5. Font families used are Times New Roman (TT) for body text, Arial (TT) for headlines.

E-Mail Addresses

Here are the e-mail addresses of ACGNJ Officers, Directors and SIG Leaders (and the Newsletter Editor). This list is also at (<http://www.acgnj.org/officers.htm>).

Bruce Arnold	barnold@blast.net
Mike Barlow	mwb@infi.net
Bob Berto	bb@somerset-nj.com
Barbara DeGroot	bdegroot@ptd.net
Dr. Graham Curtis	curtisgr@erols.com
James Ditaranto	fryr92a@prodigy.com
Rick Elbanna	rick@nobella.com
Jerry Entin	jerryentin@worldnet.att.net
Bill Farrell	wfarr18124@aol.com
Jo-Anne Head	tinarock@aol.com
Samuel Hecht	sammaeh@juno.com
Charlie Huffsmith	chaz026@aol.com
Sheldon Koepf	sheldonk@intac.com
Sol Libes	sol@libes.com
Ted Martin	TedJoy564@aol.com
Malthi Masurekar	masureka@umdny.edu
Andreas Meyer	lunics@acgnj.org
Arnold Milstein	arnold_milstein@bigfoot.com
John Raff	jraff@home.com
Mike Redlich	mike@redlich.net
Marty Rosenblum	m.rosenblum@ieee.org
Kevin Shelly	kjshelly@injersey.com
Matt Skoda	som359@aol.com
Keith Sproul	ksproul@noc.rutgers.edu
Scott Vincent	scottvin@optonline.net
Frank Warren	kb4cyc@webwarren.com
Evan Williams	nhpressgo@blast.net
Jim Wong	webdev@acgnj.org

The Internet Corner

Martin Rosenblum (m.rosenblum@ieee.org)

Web News

Item: The Sunday New York Times, August 26, Front Page: “Exploration of World Wide Web Tilts From Eclectic to Mundane.” “Routine Visits are replacing Cyberspace Surfing.” Are they trying to say we’re becoming more jaded? Or is it simply that most of us have been on for some years and sites have appeared to satisfy our needs and we spend most of our time there. The piece also considers whether the Web has thrown more folks together to make a more democratic space or simply provided more niches for the truly narrow minded. Well, at least it made the front page!

Item: The Star-Ledger, August 23, Business: “Online (and offline) tips on shopping for term life insurance.” Linda Stern of Reuters reports that, according to Consumer Federation of America, most Internet insurance-shopping sites don’t give you the best deals. They recommended term4sale.com, compulive.com, insweb.com and quotesmith.com, in that order. Visit www.consumerfed.org/internetshoppinglifeinsurance.pdf for the full report.

Item: The Sunday Star Ledger, August 12, Section 2: “Suggested precautions for guarding identity.” Letter from Linda Foley to Ann Landers. A sensible guide from our friends at the Federal Trade Commission. More poop at www.idtheftcenter.org/ and www.consumer.gov/idtheft.

Item: The Sunday New York Times Magazine, July 15, Cover story: “Attack Of the Masked Cyberdudes!” This piece by Michael Lewis tells the story of a 15-year-old boy from one of California’s nowhere desert towns and how he became the number one expert in the law section of www.askme.com. Lewis includes this story in his book, “Next: The Future Just Happened.”

Miscellany

Bastille Day this year was also the wedding day of my youngest daughter. She and her betrothed had a Web page, of course, and their honeymoon digital photos are slowly appearing there. I brought Mom along and we were lucky to get her health aide to come up for part of the time. To get her to Boston’s South Station, I went to Amtrak’s Web site, www.amtrak.com, and there was able to make reservations, pay for the ticket by credit card, and receive a confirmation. The site is a bit clunky, but I was able to do the job without much trouble or delay. (The train was another problem — got stuck first in New London and finally, for good, at Back Bay, where another train was sent to pick up the weary passengers.) The wedding was held at Fruitlands Museum in Harvard, MA, www.fruitlands.org. The younger folks stayed at Friendly Crossways Hostel, on a marvelous piece of rural real estate in nearby Littleton, right across the street from another marvelous piece of country real estate owned by Cisco Systems (www.cisco.com.) Check the Hostel out at www.ultranet.com/~friendly/index2.shtml. We old folks stayed with some of our friends in Concord at the Colonial Inn. Very cozy! Check them out at www.concordcolonialinn.com.

My older daughter thinks that the grandson may be ready for the Nutcracker this year, so I went to their Web site, www.nycballet.org, and bought tickets online. While there, I noticed a “Palm Pilots click here” link. There I discovered that you could download stuff for your wireless Palm Pilot, or you can download the schedules for Saratoga 2001, European Summer Tour 2001, and George Balanchine’s The Nutcracker. These files are also available at Memoware.com. The file is in Doc format and can be read by several Doc format reader applications such as AportisDoc (available at www.aptopis.com). The reader and the file can be installed on your Palm using “Install Tool” from the Palm Desktop application folder on your PC.

Earlier, I was looking up Emil Jannings at www.imdb.com. Maria and I spent the day before in NYC where we went to see The Blue Angel with Marlene Dietrich and Emil Jannings, and we wanted to know more about Jannings. The NYC Ballet links took me to www.memoware.com. In addition to finding the Nutcracker and other schedules for the Palm Pilot, I found on that site a 12Mb distillation of www.imdb.com’s Internet Movie Data Base. (Sadly, too large for my 8Mb Palm, but there are truncated (by date and format) versions which are much smaller.)

August is the month of Mostly Mozart in our family, and we had a bang-up time this year. As usual, there was a series of Hadyn quartets available. These were performed at the Walter Reade theater, www.filmlinc.com/wrt/wrt.htm, home of the Film Society of Lincoln Center. We also were able to take in a couple of great, hard to find, movies there: Posthumous Memories from Brazil, and Sentimental Teaser, from Chile.

The main Mostly Mozart fare is presented at Avery Fischer Hall, home of the New York Philharmonic. Up Broadway on 70th Street, can be found the Café Mozart, a live music, restaurant, coffee and pastry bar, which proudly offers “Free Internet Access.” Maria and I stopped by for latte and dessert and I checked my email, etc. You can find their Web site at www.cafemozart.com. On the way out I checked over their array of pastries. To kill for! But, check out their Web site. It’s good enough to eat!

Sorry for the digression — it was worth it — but if you’re more interested in the serious business, Lincoln Center has a superb Web site, www.lincolncenter.org. It’s a pleasure to wander around. Almost as good as being there, and, of course, you can get reservations and buy tickets online!

On one of our Walter Reade visits, coming down the escalator I noticed an ad for Morgan Stanley Dean Witter on what looked like a bus stop. There was a note near the post that said to beam something onto your Palm Pilot. I looked where it pointed, and sure enough, there was a blinking red light. I pulled out my Palm, and it said there was an application waiting for me, did I want it? I said sure — Morgan Stanley wouldn’t do anything naughty, and now I have something called StreetBeam on my Palm. If I click its ad browser, up comes *About* and *Morgan Stanley*. *About* promises that there are more such ads coming in the future. *Morgan Stanley* gave me a financial calendar, a blurb about the company, a directory of

continued

area MSDW offices (my NJ broker's office was listed!), some tax info, and the option of beaming it to another Palm user. See www.streetbeam.com and a NY Times piece, www.nytimes.com/2001/08/23/technology/23NEXT.html.

While this last item doesn't seem Net related — it was IR (see www.nytimes.com/2001/08/23/technology/23NEXT.html), not TCP/IP, and one-way — Stanford University Law School is carrying the idea one step further. Each law student will receive a laptop and a Palm Pilot. Using Bluetooth wireless, the student will be able to place herself in the vicinity of a Bluetooth station and update her personal class schedule. Stanford Law has enlisted the help of IBM, Sun, Cisco, Hewlett-Packard, Palm, Philips, and Sprint, in converting their Silicon Valley Campus to Silicon Valley technology. See www.techtv.com/freshgear/story/0,23158,3343428,00.html for the whole story, or to get Stanford's version, go to www.law.stanford.edu/alumni/lawyer/59/news1.shtml.

1, 2, 3, etc.

While all of us are happily surfing around cyberspace on Internet 1, and we have reported on Internet 2 with its IP6 protocol here, the Net's last Government sponsors, the National Science Foundation, www.nsf.gov, is starting a new complex, the *Distributed Terascale Facility*, aka *TeraGrid*. The core network will consist of four clusters of Intel© Itanium™ processors, each with a processing power of 0.4 - 4.0 teraflops and up to 250 terabytes of storage. They will be located at the University of California at San Diego, Cal Tech in Pasadena, the National Center for Superconducting Applications in Illinois and Argonne National Lab, near Chicago. They will be connected using Myricom's Myrinet at over 2Gigabit links, switches and ports. I read about all this in the August 17 Science magazine. If you can't find that, try ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/newsrel/science/terascale.htm, www.ncsa.edu/News/Access/Releases/010809.DTF.html, or www.nsf.gov/od/lpa/news/press/01pr0167.htm. Myricom can be found at www.myri.com. Should this take off, with other laboratories, institutes and universities patching in, we will have Internet 3.

Received an email bulletin from INTAC on August 8 announcing an upgrade to their email service. Here's the announcement:

"Here are the new features

- * Support for the IMAP4 protocol. IMAP has more functionality than the older (and current) POP3 protocol. It allows for message folders and the previewing of message headers.

- * New webmail based email system. If you point your web browser to <http://webmail.intac.com>, you will now be able to check your email from any computer that has internet access and a web browser (This includes AOL). This adds the benefit of not having to make any configuration changes on another person's computer.

Here are some of the features of this webmail client

- Address book

- Multiple Identities
- Folder support
- Spell checker
- POP3 Fetch (for outside email accounts)
- Different color schemes
- Mail filters
- Attachments

These new features do not have to be used, as the new mail server will also support your current configuration (POP3). None of these new features come with any additional charge." Even our local guys are moving with the tide. It seems we'll have to have another talk by one of INTAC's techies.

Privacy, Security, etc.

Received an email from "Miss Cleo" the other day offering a "Free Tarot Reading!" This was just another piece of spam, but it did make me sit up. It was addressed to an email address I never use at Worldnet, but is forwarded to my real mailbox. I publish it nowhere! AND, it included my first name. I can't think how they can have gotten this without getting into Worldnet's password file. Anyone get the feeling that spam is getting out of control? Is Miss Cleo really psychic?

I suppose you've all been hit by "pop-under" ads. The infamous (by now) X10 is just the first. I went to their home site and found that they had buried deep in their site a page, www.x10.com/x10ads.htm, which has a link that will let you opt out for 30 days. I looked at the link on the status bar in passing, and discovered that it was a cgi call which included the number of days as a parameter. I changed that from 30 to 360 and ran it. Haven't seen any X10 ads in over a month!

Dvorak devoted one session of Silicon Spin (on the TechTV cable channel) to Instant Messaging. Exactly where it will fit in the communication spectrum is still to be seen, but there are lots of interesting aspects having to do with security. Last issue, I reported that my new son-in-law was trying to send me a 100Mb file. FTP seemed to barf, as did email. *Whalemail* now requires paid membership to use their service. He was able to retrieve it using ICQ, the most used IM service.

Jeff Smith, one of Dvorak's guests, runs Tumbleweed Communications which implements IM on company intranets, and claims to control security that way. The problem is that, as the guests agreed, proprietary IM protocols will probably give way to open public versions, since everyone will probably want to talk to everyone else using the same technology, IM-wise. Now the question arises of how to keep the company's crown jewels from being smuggled out via this channel. There was also some discussion of the possibility of transmitting viruses and worms through IM channels. Some of these points appear on the TechTV Website at techtv.com/siliconspin/features/story/0,23008,3343360,00.html.

The July 1 issue of PCMagazine has an article by Jim Seymour, "The Hidden Truth About VPNs." In the old days, when I wanted to connect Charles Schwab's *Equalizer* service, I would dial and log into *Tymnet* and be connected to their computer in San Francisco. The idea of Virtual Private

continued on page 13

Buying a Personal Computer

Burton Shane (bshane39@yahoo.com)

Case And Power Supply: The two general computer case types are desktop and tower. The desktop is the one that sits flat on your desk in a horizontal position. The tower is the one that sits on the floor in a vertical position. If future upgrading is a good possibility, purchase a tower system with as many full expansion bays as possible. This will make future upgrading easier. The three standard tower types are mini, medium, and full. A medium tower is your best choice. It has more to offer you than the mini-tower and is not the overkill of a full-tower. Towers in general also have fewer problems. Since heat rises and parts have more room to breathe, the way towers are designed means they tend to run a bit cooler. Be sure to get a power supply that meets all your needs, present and future. It should have all the connectors needed to complement later internal peripheral additions. A cheap power supply can lead to some severe computer problems.

The CPU: The microprocessor, most commonly called the Central Processing Unit (CPU), is the computer's brain. The CPU is one of the most expensive parts in the computer and is identified by a number such as 286, 386, 486, or Pentium. A Pentium is equivalent to a 586. Each CPU has a number associated with it that is measured in megahertz (Mhz). These numbers represent the speed of the chip and are represented as a number such as 333 Mhz or 500 Mhz. The higher the CPU megahertz number, the faster the chip can process information. Minimum today is 500 Mhz, maximum is 1.7 Ghz. While 500 Mhz is adequate for business applications, 700 Mhz and up is better for multimedia such as movies and games. The most popular of the newer chips are the Pentium, Pentium II, or Pentium III chips manufactured by Intel. Since you cannot copyright a number, Intel chose the name Pentium to distinguish its chip from the other chips on the market. You will notice that other manufactures, i.e., IBM or CYRIX, have a 5X86 or 6X86 chip. AMD has a K5 and K6 chip. These chips are equivalent to the Pentium family. The minimum requirements of new software being developed dictate that the Pentium family or equivalent are the chips of choice. Intel's newest chips may have an MMX associated with the name. This technology is designed to enhance multimedia applications.

System Board: The system board is often called the motherboard. The system board acts as the communication highway of your computer. All the different components and devices in your system are somehow linked to your system board. They use the system board to pass information. Generally, each system board is designed to host a particular type of CPU. Each system board has expansion slots built into it. It is in these slots that different cards plug into. These cards are computer devices that resemble mini-system boards. You have different kinds of cards that plug into your system board, i.e., video card or sound card. Make sure your system board will allow you to upgrade easily. Many of the newer systems from the larger manufacturers (i.e., Dell) may have the video card or modem built directly into the system board to reduce manufacturing costs. This makes it extremely difficult to up-

grade these components later on. Try to get a system board with as many 16-Bit and/or PCI expansion slots as possible and with an AGP slot for a video card. Also make sure your system board has its expansion slots built into the board, not built into an expansion board that plugs into the system board. You should buy a unit that has a parallel port (for printers), and USB ports (for other external peripherals).

Memory: The memory located inside your computer is called Random Access Memory (RAM). This is where your CPU temporarily stores information that it needs to perform a function. The more memory your computer has the more complicated functions it can perform. Often people confuse memory with disk space because they are both measured in megabytes (MBs). Keep in mind that RAM is a temporary storage bin that empties when you turn off or reboot your computer. The disk is the location where programs and files are stored. With Windows 98 or ME, get 32 Mbs of RAM, 64 Mbs preferred. For the most part, the more memory your system can be expanded to later on the better.

Input Devices: Input devices are used to feed information and send commands to your computer. The two most common computer input devices are a keyboard and a mouse. A 104-key Windows keyboard is the most common computer keyboard with new computers. In the right-lower hand corner of the keyboard is a number keypad. The mouse is a pointing device, which plays a major role in Windows. It is used to click onto a command or icon or bring up a shortcut menu. There is no real big advantage in having a three-button mouse over a two-button mouse. A mouse with a scrolling wheel is easy to use with Windows. Optical mice and trackballs require less cleaning, and like wireless devices are available at extra cost. Some computer systems may have a pointing device other than a mouse such as a track ball or touch pad. Pick the pointing device that you are most comfortable with.

Hard Drives: A hard drive is the physical location where programs and data are stored. It is usually located inside your computer system. The storage capacity of a hard drive is measured in megabytes (Mbs) or gigabytes (Gbs). One megabyte is equal to approximately 1,048,576 bytes. One gigabyte is equal to a billion bytes. One byte is equivalent to one character or one space. A printed page is roughly equivalent to 2K (2000) bytes. Picture files are often much larger (1 Mb), although they may be compressed to 15K for transmission over the Internet. The three standard hard drive types are ATA, SCSI, and Enhanced IDE. The Enhanced IDE disk costs anywhere from \$30 to \$100 less than a SCSI disk, is easier to configure, and is ideal for an individual desktop. Be sure to get the biggest hard drive that you can afford. The cost of a hard drive is now well under \$0.15 per megabyte. Be sure to get a minimum hard drive of 4 to 6 Gigabytes, a larger one if possible (30 or 40 GB drives are now reasonable). Computer software programs are always getting larger and more sophisticated. The newer software suites can now take up well over 120 megabytes of space. Before you know it, your hard drive will be filled.

continued on page 6

Floppy Drives: Floppy drives are smaller versions of a hard drive. Unlike an internal hard drive, the media used in floppy drives are removable. They are usually used to transfer files from one computer to another as well as to install new programs on your computer. The standard floppy drive density is 1.44 Mbs (3.5 inches). The old 1.2 Mbs floppy drives (5 inches) are now obsolete.

Video Display: A computer video display is composed of a monitor and a video card. Since your monitor only displays what your video card has sent to it, the two parts must be compatible to get the best video display possible. A non-interlaced monitor is the best buy for your money. Get either a 15- or 17-inch monitor. Make sure the video card and monitor can display a minimum of 256 colors, 16-bit or greater preferred. Many multi-media programs will not run unless the video card can display a minimum of 256 colors. The standard video card now displays over a million colors and plugs into a PCI or AGP slot on your motherboard. Try to get a video card that is AGP. Be sure your computer vendor gives you a floppy disk or CD-ROM containing the video drivers for your specific video card.

Multimedia: Multi-media is composed of a CD-ROM drive, sound card, and speakers. This is now standard equipment on all new computer systems. Having multi-media is highly recommended because many software producers are now putting their software onto CD. Get a CD-ROM drive with a speed equal to or greater than 32X. CD-RW drives cost \$100 to \$300 and allow you to “burn” your own CDs. Combination CD-ROM & DVD drives are also available reasonably priced. The speakers should not be permanently mounted to your monitor or CPU case. Attached speakers will restrict sound flow. Detachable or loose speakers allow you to move them in such a way that you can get the best sound possible.

Modem: The modem is the device that allows your computer to access the Internet or communicate with another computer or fax machine via the phone line. It is now common for them to come packaged with your system. The standard modem is a Data/Fax/Voice type that runs at 56K. A Data/Fax/Voice modem allows you to send or receive data and faxes and set up a voice mailbox system. The faster the modem, the quicker you will be able to send and receive data. ☐



ACGNJ Webmaster seeks paid part-time work in ColdFusion, HTML, or website maintenance (webmaster). Please call Jo-Anne Head at 908-769-7385 evenings/weekends or write tinarock@aol.com.

Correction & Update CD-Maker 2000 Professional

Dick Freymoyer (dickfrey1@aol.com)

In last month's article, it seems I made an error in the section entitled “The Cause (and Cure) of the Problems”. The file names and a folder name are incorrect — one of those “Senior Moments”, I guess! Unfortunately, I noticed it too late to make the corrections.

To correct the names, it should be **WNASPI32.DLL** instead of **WNASPI.DLL** and **APIX.VXD** instead of **ASPI.VXD**. The folder is **C:\Windows\System\IOSUBSYS**. I am truly sorry for the bad information.

Update: The good news is that the latest issue of **Adaptec/Roxio Easy CD-Creator 5 Platinum** looks great and it no longer changes Windows ASPI files. ☐

Belarc Advisor

Dick Freymoyer (dickfrey1@aol.com)

I just had to share this web site and utility with my fellow users. An article entitled PC X-Ray really caught my attention because of what the word “X-Ray” meant to me! (A device or thing to look inside for data.) This utility allows Belarc's server to look inside your computer and tell you what hardware/software you have installed on your computer.

I know what you are thinking! Belarc, whoever they are, would know and retain a record of your software and hardware, which could be bad for you. To try to ease your fears; all you use is the Belarc's server database as a reference to process information found on your computer and come up with a list of hardware/software on your computer. I think there is little risk that someone would be interested in stealing such information. The Belarc Utility lists the installed programs on your system and where each installed. Good to know in case you want to remove a program.

The small file can be downloaded **free** from www.belarc.com in about 3 minutes. It fits on a floppy disk and you can share it with your other computers. After it is downloaded, you just click on the file, (of course, you have to accept their license), and it opens and installs the utility, and puts an icon on your desktop. When you click on the icon, it opens your Internet Service and starts the process of looking at your hardware and software.

The list it compiles is printable and very useful. It not only lists your hardware but also gives you the model numbers, BIOS revision, DIMM sockets, what is used in each, how many sockets are empty, etc. It does a full inventory. I was amazed — I have never seen anything as good as this before. About the only things that it does not define by manufacturer's name are the floppy and hard drives, but it does say how much space is used and how much is still available. The list also includes all software with version numbers. I consider this a good find. Download it and see what I am talking about — you'll be doing yourself a favor! ☐

Palm Court #7

Cass Lewart (rlewart@monmouth.com)

Printing from the Palm

In this issue of the Palm Court, I will discuss various ways of printing information from your Palm. I will also give you the URL for an excellent and free source of Palm articles.

The Palm organizer, besides playing games, also keeps track of appointments, addresses, memos, To Do lists and phone numbers. As you synchronize the Palm with your computer, you get a backup in the Palm folder on your computer. I really appreciated the backups after my Palm crashed a few times due to misbehaving software or inadvertent battery reversal. Still, for those of us who feel paranoid about computers, it would be nice to have a hardcopy of the important Palm data.

Though Palm has no specific printer port there are several ways to get a hard copy of the data, depending on the application. Most are based on transferring data from the Palm to the computer, then manipulating the data and printing it from the computer. Some are based on using the Palm infrared port to communicate with a printer directly.

Grabbing and Printing the Palm Screen: If you installed the Palm Emulator, described in an earlier issue of Palm Court, you can “run” any Palm program on your computer. When you see the screen you want to print, right click and select Save Screen from the menu. The screen is then saved as a BMP file and can be manipulated and printed by most Windows programs. Some Palm programs such as TealPaint let you “grab” any Palm screen. At your next sync session the screen will be saved as a graphical BMP file in the Palm/Backup folder and will be ready for printing.

Printing the Address Book, To Do, Memo and Expense Data: Open the Palm Desktop program on your computer and click on the Address, To Do, or Memo icon. The display and choices are similar to those on the Palm, e.g. you can display all Addresses/To Do /Memos or only certain categories. As you reach retirement age the Medical category is the largest. You can then print the data by selecting “Print” from the File pull-down menu.

For Addresses or Memo you can also select “Export”, then on the “Export to File” panel select CSV (comma separated values) format, give a file name to store the output and click OK. Now your address book or memos are stored on your computer in a format accessible to any database or spreadsheet program like Access, FoxPro or Excel. You can then import the CSV address or memo file into one of these programs, sort, format and print it.

Similarly, when you click on the Expense icon, if Excel is installed on your computer, the spreadsheet will open with your Expense data. You can then use all Excel functions to sort, format and print it.

Direct Output to Printer: There are special Palm printers that communicate over the infrared port, but I did not try any of them. Instead I experimented with a clever product from Bachmann Software called PrintBoy. It consists of software you install on the Palm and a 3-foot cable with a parallel



Centronics plug at one end and an infrared sensor at the other. Plug the Centronics plug into your printer, point the sensor at your Palm, run PrintBoy on your Palm and you are ready to print. Other than the Palm and the printer no computer is involved in the process. PrintBoy lets you print selectively addresses, appointments, memos, To Do lists and output of several Palm database applications. You can specify a range of dates to print your appointments. I tried the program with 3 different printers, and the only printer it failed to work with was a “Windows only” laser printer. The current bundled price for the PrintBoy Deluxe program and the special cable with infrared sensor is \$80. For more information on the PrintBoy go to <http://www.bachmannsoftware.com>.



Infrared printer cable

Free Palm Newsletter

You will find an excellent free Palm newsletter “TealPoint’s Mobile e-Magazine” and other Palm information at <http://www.tealpoint.com>. To subscribe, click on the newsletter link at the top. The current issue (#2) contains a 10-page article about Palm memory management — all you ever wanted to know about Palm memory and more. ☐

Obituary Someone Else

We are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of a faithful long-time member, Someone Else, whose passing has created a vacancy that will be difficult to fill. Else has been with us for many years, and did far more than a normal person’s share of work. Whenever there was a job to do or a meeting to attend, one name was on everybody’s list — and everyone said “let Someone Else do it”. It was common knowledge that Someone Else was among the largest givers in our group. Whenever there was a need, everyone assumed that Someone Else would take care of it.

Someone Else was a wonderful person, sometimes appearing super-human, but a person can only do so much. The truth is that everyone expected too much of Someone Else. Now Else is gone. We wonder what we are going to do. Someone Else left a wonderful example to follow, but who is going to do all the things that Someone Else did?

When you are asked to help or volunteer, please remember, we cannot depend on Someone Else any more. ☐

Getting Started with Internet Music

Bruce Fries, author of The MP3 and Internet Audio Handbook

This article provides an overview of what you need to record and play music on your computer and how to get music from the Internet.

Introduction

New audio compression technologies, such as MP3, allow you to use your computer as a digital jukebox that can hold thousands of CD-quality songs. You can quickly find and play any song with a click of a mouse and never have to worry about tapes wearing out or records getting scratched. Instead of spending hours making tapes or programming a CD changer, you can compile customized playlists in minutes.

Audio compression also makes it practical to download music from the Internet, where you can access thousands of songs from artists all over the world. With MP3, you can download a four-minute song in less than 15 minutes (with a 33.6 kbps modem), compared to more than 3 hours for the same song in CD audio format. Now you can sample a wide variety of music from the comfort of your home and find great music by independent artists you might not otherwise be exposed to.

Music on the Internet

On the Internet, you'll find music in the form of files that can be downloaded to your computer; music that you can listen to as it's "streamed" over the Internet (similar to the way you listen to AM and FM radio), and physical media, such as records, tapes and CDs, that you can purchase and have shipped to you.

Downloadable music is just music in the form of a computer file (usually MP3 or WMA format) that you can download from a Web site to your computer. Downloadable music can be played on your computer, a portable digital audio player like the Rio 800, or newer CD players the Rio Volt (www.riohome.com).

Streaming audio enables you to listen to digital music without having to wait for the entire file to download. Streaming audio is used by many online music stores to play short clips from songs so you can listen to samples before you buy the record or CD. To listen to streaming audio, you need a sound card and an internet connection.

Digital Audio Formats

MP3 (technically, MPEG Audio Layer-III) is a standard format for compressing digital audio. MP3 squeezes audio files to about one tenth of their original size, while maintaining close to CD quality.

RealAudio was the first widely used system for streaming audio and video over the Internet. It is a proprietary format, but it is used by many online music stores for sample clips of songs, and by many Internet radio sites.

WAV is the default format for digital audio on Windows PCs. WAV files usually contain PCM format audio, which means they are uncompressed and take up a lot of space (10MB/minute for CD quality audio).

Windows Media Audio (WMA) is a proprietary format developed by Microsoft. WMA is supported by most full-featured player programs and by many portable players

Internet Radio

Internet radio is a form of streaming audio, usually in Real Audio or Windows Media Audio format. MP3 can also be streamed, but is more commonly used as a downloadable format. Spinner (www.Spinner.com) provides a nice tuner interface with access to dozens of stations and programmable presets. Sites like Live365.com and Radio.Sonicnet.com allow you to set up a personal radio station, which you customize by selecting the artists and the types of music you want to hear.

Hardware Requirements

To listen to music on your PC, you need a sound card. To play MP3 files you need at least a Pentium PC (133MHz or faster recommended) or a PowerPC Macintosh. A CD Recordable (CR-R or CD-RW) drive is recommended for recording audio (Redbook format) or MP3 (data format) CDs.

You will need plenty of RAM, lots of free disk space, and a modem to download songs or listen to music streamed over the Internet. To convert your existing CDs into MP3 files, you'll need a CD-ROM drive that is capable of digital audio extraction (DAE)-commonly called ripping.

Software Requirements

To play MP3 files, you need a player program or a portable player that supports MP3. The latest versions of the Windows and Mac operating systems come with built-in players, but you'll be better off using an all-in-one program like MusicMatch Jukebox (www.musicmatch.com) because it has more features and is easier to use, even for non-technical users

MusicMatch Jukebox includes everything you need to create, organize and play MP3 files. MusicMatch supports ripping from CDs, analog recording from records and tapes, and burning MP3 files directly to a CD. MusicMatch also automatically organizes your MP3 files into separate folders by artist, album, genre and other categories.

To listen to Internet radio you need a program that supports streaming audio. At the very least, you should install the latest versions of the RealPlayer (www.real.com), Windows Media Player (www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia) and a full-featured audio player, such as MusicMatch Jukebox. These programs will allow you to listen to the majority of Internet radio sites.

Downloading Music

To obtain songs in MP3 format, you can download them from the Internet, create them from prerecorded music or obtain pre-made MP3 CDs. Web sites like MP3.com and EMusic.com offer thousands of downloadable songs in MP3 format. Many of these songs are free, and those that aren't usually cost only a dollar or so.

continued

Napster (www.napster.com) is an MP3 file sharing service that maintains a central directory of shared MP3 files that exist on individual user's computers. Users search by song title or artist name and Napster displays links to matching files on the computers of other users. Each link lists the file's resolution and size, and the speed of the user's Internet connection. The first user then selects and downloads the MP3 file directly from the other user's computer.

Creating Your Own MP3 Files

To create MP3 files from records or tapes you'll need to record them in real-time, using a sound card. You should use a good stand-alone recording program like Cool Edit 2000 (www.cooledit.com), since the sound recording applications that come with most computers are fairly limited. Cool Edit also has a nice audio clean-up plug-in that can remove clicks, pops and hiss from the sound before you convert it to MP3 or burn it to a CD.

When you record using Cool Edit, the song will end up as an uncompressed WAV (pronounced wave). The advantage of a WAV file is that you have the option of editing it to adjust the volume or trim off unwanted silence before it is converted to MP3 or burned to a CD. MusicMatch can also record from analog sources like records and tapes, but lacks the advanced editing features of Cool Edit.

WAV files can be recorded directly to an Audio CD or converted to MP3 files. The process of creating an MP3 file is called encoding. Encoding compresses the audio by removing sounds that most people can't hear. The size and sound quality of the MP3 file is a function of the bit-rate used—the higher the bit-rate, the larger the file and the better the sound quality.

To create MP3 files from an audio CD, the best method is to bypass the sound card and rip the audio directly to your hard disk. Ripping is better than recording through a sound card because it results in a perfect copy without added noise or distortion. Because it is a digital process, ripping is also much faster than recording. For example, a system with a fast CD-ROM drive can rip a four-minute song in less than 30 seconds. Recording the same song through a sound card will always take at least four minutes.

Most audio CDs do not contain information, such as artist names and album and song titles. To save you from having to enter this information manually, programs, such as MusicMatch, can automatically get this information from the CDDb (www.cddb.com) and use it to automatically name the files.

Organizing Your Music

Now that you've downloaded or created MP3 files, you need a way to organize them. MP3 files can be organized in one big folder that contains all files, or they can be grouped in separate directories with similar music. It's up to you to decide which method to use, although if you have more than a few hundred songs you should organize them in separate directories.

Playlists are optional text files that contain the name and location of each audio file. Each playlist is like a tape with unlimited capacity, where songs can be added, deleted or moved around without the need to re-record the tape. Playlists

can be created and read by text editors and programs like MusicMatch.

Playing Your Music

You can play songs from Windows Explorer or Mac Finder by double-clicking on them. If your system is set up properly, this should automatically launch the player software (if it's not already running). You can also play individual songs by launching the player and using its "File Open" function.

If you have created playlists, you can load one into MusicMatch, set the "repeat" mode on, and sit back and enjoy hours of continuous music. You can use the player controls to jump forward or backwards in the list, and you can click on individual songs to play them out of order. MusicMatch's playlist manager allows you to add, delete and change the order of songs and even save the playlist to a new file.

Recording Your Own CDs

CD recordable drives (CD-R and CD-RW) can be used to record create music CDs with compilations of songs from different albums and to back up data from your computer's hard disk. CDs are usually recorded in either audio or data formats.

Audio format CDs have the advantage of being playable in most CD players, though the capacity is limited to 74 minutes of music (approximately 18 four-minute songs). MP3 files are just data files as far as a CD recorder is concerned, so you will need to record them to a data format CD.

With MP3 files, you can record more than 12 hours (about 200 songs) of high-quality music on a single CD, in less than 20 minutes with a 4X CD-R drive. You can also use MusicMatch Jukebox to uncompress MP3 files and record the music to an audio format CD.

For More Information

For more information on recording and playing music on your computer, pick up a copy of *The MP3 and Internet Audio Handbook* (\$19.95) from www.TeamComBooks.com or read it online for free at www.MP3Handbook.com.

Bruce Fries is a writer, technology consultant and entrepreneur who lives in Silver Spring, Maryland. He is an associate of the Audio Engineering Society and the founder of TeamCom Books, a customer-focused publishing company that combines the best of traditional print publishing with new media, such as e-books and the Internet. □

From The DealsGuy

Bob Click, Greater Orlando Computer Users Group (bobclick@mindspring.com.)

ACGNJ Ed. Note: Due to space limitations, this column has been considerably shortened, and mentions items from the July and August columns, which we did not publish. To see the full version and the articles for July and August, go to <http://www.dealsguy.com>.

My Profound Apologies

When putting the finishing touches on this month's column, I received e-mail from Rich Gray of Dayton Microcomputer Association letting me know I had done my readers a disservice in the July column concerning the company offering free closeout software just for the price of shipping. He suggested I make my readers aware of the facts. Here is an excerpt from his message:

"Unbeknownst to you, I'm sure (I hope!), the g7ps [name in the ordering URL] folks are [questionable] netizens who have been spamming me, and presumably countless others, incessantly over the past few months. I administer a local community network (freenet). They snarfed two of our addresses from the list at www.ofcn.org and so I see their garbage multiple times! They've also recently discovered an old version of my work e-mail address from a listserv post that made it to the Web, so I'm getting their crap in triplicate!"

Rich included much more and also suggested a way for me to run a check for companies that spam, but I'll have to become more knowledgeable on that one. It is so easy to get in trouble trying to do this column, as you may have noticed in the past. Please forgive me for another blunder as I was completely oblivious to the intent of the free stuff.

Still Good

The Recipe Analyzer mentioned in August may still be good if you haven't ordered it yet. (You enter the ingredients and Recipe Analyzer computes calories and amount of fat, protein, carbohydrates, cholesterol, sodium, fiber, calcium, iron, vitamin A and vitamin C, percentage of calories from fat versus protein versus carbohydrates. It also converts kilojoules to calories, and it contains useful tables of nutritional information.) I don't know how they do it for that price. The CD is just \$5.00 + \$2.50 S&H (only \$2.50 S&H for two CDs to same address); limit two CDs per customer. Mail a request with your name, address, phone number and the number of CDs, plus a check for the correct amount to Ohio Distinctive Software, 6500 Fiesta Drive, P.O. Box 349900, Columbus, Ohio 43235. Phone 1-614-459-0453.

The ClipTrakker deal should also still be good (<http://store.yahoo.com/sharewareonline/clipforregme.html>). I was hoping for a deal on their Mem Turbo, but they have not yet offered. Perhaps it's because there has been no response to the ClipTrakker.

I had to make several changes to keep the word count down, so please bear with me on all the quotes.

I was pressed for time this month, so have not worked on more signature animation deals. There was no feedback on that item anyway, so perhaps it's not popular enough.

How 'Bout Your Very Own Lapdog?

I received this from Shawn Jackson Design. Dave Gerber, from the Sarasota, FL user group, who also has the TV show about computers, also forwarded the announcement to make sure I knew about it. I have inquired about similar products, and in comparison, Lapdog offers a better price. Announcement below:

"We are the designers and manufactures of the award winning Lapdog. The Lapdog is an elegant solution to the problem of using a laptop computer on your lap. Lapdog is a padded carrying case for your computer that unfolds in seconds for use on your lap, on an airline tray, or on any work surface and becomes a completely functional mobile office or work station. At the most recent Comdex Chicago, many reviewers flattered us by suggesting that we were 'best of show'. You may learn more about this and our other products at <http://www.laptopoffice.com>.

"The Lapdog's street price is \$139.95, and we will offer it to your users group for \$79.95. You will need to enter the code '**ugspecial**' on our site when prompted in order to receive the discount. Feel free to post this on your site. You may capture any images you like from our own site. Please let me know if you have any questions/comments. I hope this can help your group out!

Sincerely, Mark Zadvinskis, Shaun Jackson Design Inc. PO Box 130500, Ann Arbor MI 48113-0500, phone 734.975.7500, fax 734.975.7501."

Sick Of Getting Knocked Off?

I found this in the Northwest Arkansas PC UG newsletter and e-mailed Incline Global about their special offer. Here is the description and their response:

"Tired of being disconnected when you are reading a long article or writing an e-mail? Frustrated with those AOL pop-up windows? Use **Stay Connected!** and never get disconnected again. Stay Connected! resumes broken connections for all dial-up networking ISPs and AOL. As seen on ZD TV and in PC World, with more than two million downloads and 19 releases, **Stay Connected!** has the widest compatibility with major ISPs like AOL 6.0, CompuServe2000, NetZero, MSN, Prodigy and AT&T WorldNet. Supports NetZero Z4, AT&T WorldNet i495 service and handles MSN disconnection dialogs. Go to <http://www.inclineglobal.com/download/sc>"

"We are most pleased to offer DealsGuy readers 15% off 'Stay Connected!' (usually \$19.95) in your September column and will offer another product for your October column. For the Stay Connected! promotion in September, mention 'SC-DEALSGUY-0901' in the **comments** field of the order form (<http://www.inclineglobal.com/register>) when purchasing Stay Connected!. The offer is valid until 31 October 2001. The promotional code identifies readers so they are not billed the full license price."

System Requirements: Pentium processor, 8MB of RAM, 4MB of free space.

Operating System: Windows 95/98/ME/NT/2000.

continued on page 12

SIG News

Main Meeting

Scott Vincent (scottvin@optonline.net)

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

September 7: We are very excited to present Bill Machrone of Ziff Davis Publications. Bill is a knowledgeable speaker, and will discuss topics of his choice, including Windows XP, Office XP, and more. There will also be a Q&A. He has spoken at ACGNJ meetings in the past and is always excellent.

01-02 Schedule: It has been the practice of ACGNJ to post the schedule of main meeting subjects for the year in the September issue of the Newsletter. Unfortunately, only six people showed up for the annual meeting to plan the schedule, so there is none. As speakers become available, they will be announced here and on the above Website. ☐

LUNICS (Linux/Unix)

Andreas Meyer (lunics@acgnj.org)

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

September: No meeting because of Labor Day.

This is a group for those who share an interest in Linux 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. We meet at 8 PM 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, and will be implemented in Word and PowerPoint. Anyone interested in using any Microsoft Office product and VBA is urged to attend. We meet at 7 PM on the third Monday of even-numbered months.

October 15: Using Excel 2002 to Read and Write XML Files. Excel 2002 now supports the loading and saving of XML data. XML is emerging as the data exchange format of choice for many business applications because it gives data from different applications a standard format. ☐

Random Access

Scott Vincent (scottvin@optonline.net)

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

In the "olden days", 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. ☐

Macintosh Users Group

Keith Sproul (ksproul@noc.rutgers.edu)

<http://dorm.rutgers.edu/~ksproul/acgnjmug.html>

This group is no longer meeting, but Keith is still available to help Mac users via telephone or email. ☐

Lotus Notes

Mike Barlow (mwb@injersey.com)

<http://www.njlnug.org/njlnugweb.nsf/pages/homepage>

Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the offices of Bright Ideas Software, 1060 Amboy Avenue, 2nd Floor, Edison NJ and start at 7 PM (Random Access starts at 6:30). Bright Ideas has graciously provided us with a voice mail line for information on future meetings, locations, directions, etc. Call (732)417-5778 for last-minute changes, cancellations, etc. Directions are posted on our Web page. ☐

Java

Mike Redlich (mike@redlich.net)

<http://www.webspan.net/~redlich/javasig/>

The Java Users Group is a forum for discussing beginner, intermediate, and advanced level Java programming. Topics will primarily focus on developing useful/practical applets and applications, but can include related topics such as Java I/O, JavaBeans, Reflection, object-oriented programming and software design issues. Meetings are held every second Tuesday of the month at the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad second floor meeting hall starting promptly at 7:30pm. The agenda for each meeting is as follows:

Random Access	7:30 - 8:00
Java Q&A and/or short Java API Presentation	8:00 - 8:30
Main Presentation	8:30 - 10:00

The subject of the September meeting will be a source code review of a Java clock applet that can be used in Web pages. ☐

Symposium

John Raff (jraff@home.com)

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

September: Owing to difficulty in booking speakers who will actually show up, there may or may not be a meeting. Notice will be posted at the Website above. ☐

Web Development

Jim Wong (webdev@acgnj.org)

<http://member.apcug.org/acgnj/webdev/>

A new SIG on web development (WebDev?) had their kickoff meeting on March 19, and will meet on the third Monday of odd-numbered months. On the even-numbered months, the Excel/VBA SIG, led by Jim Ditaranto, will hold their meetings. They are redirecting more of their activities toward the Web, so the two groups should have much in common.

The next meeting of the Web Development SIG will be at 7 PM on **September 17**. The SIG's objective is open ended but primarily revolves around technologies related to web development on the Microsoft platform. For the most up to date meeting info, check our website. ☐

Layman's Forum

Matt Skoda (som359@aol.com)

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

We meet on the second Monday of the month (except July and August) to discuss issues of interest to novice users or those who are planning to get started in computing. Watch our Web page for updates and announcements. ☐

continued

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

The goals of the C/C++ User's Group are 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, and to discuss hardware, software, code, algorithms, operating systems. We strive to present the complete code for working programs in 3-5 sheets of paper, and sample code is posted on our Web page after each demonstration. ☐

Internet*Martin Rosenblum (m.rosenblum@ieee.org)*<http://www.acgnj.org/groups/inetsig.html>

July 5: If you're a Dr. Who fan, the big news, announced at this meeting, was the return of the good doctor for an online only appearance, thanks to the British Broadcasting System, at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cult/doctorwho/death/enhanced>. (Make sure your sound is on!) There was a lot of hacker activity to report, and the Supreme Court had a first with the publication of www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/00pdf/99-8508.pdf, its first online publication, including an exhibit. (This was the case of the pot grower whose house was watched with an infra red camera without benefit of warrant.)

September 6: The meeting will start at 7:30 for newbies, 8 PM for old-timers. We'll catch up on all that's happened during our summer recess. And, of course, there will probably be gems contributed by our seconds, Alex and David. ☐

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

July 12: It is difficult to find good investments in this market. We looked at ideas from Kiplinger's and AG Edward, then used Metastock to interpret their past price movements and tried to judge which was the best investment at this time.

Symbols of stocks checked are: APOL, BBY, BJ, BLK, CCR, CEFT, CHKP, COF, CPN, CPRT, DV, ENE, EXPO, FNM, FRE, HDI, IFIN, INFY, KIM, KRB, KSS, LOW, MNMD, MRK, MTG, PMI, PVN, SEIC, SWY, AND WPPGY.

Those that were emphasized as strongest in the literature were: CCR, CPN, CPRT, COF, DV, ENE, EXPD, FNM, and SWY. With one single exception, charts of the selections looked much stronger than recent market performance. The conclusions of individual members based on chart examination seemed to depend to a great extent on the individual investor's style. There was considerable give and take among all that were present and much discussion of reasons to buy or avoid individual stocks.

August 9: We learned about some techniques to mitigate losses during a down or weak market. If you are cautious, these techniques might even make profits. ☐

PC Users Group

This group currently has no leader, and there are no meetings scheduled. ☐

MCP

(Preparation for Microsoft Certification Exams)

Scott Vincent (scottvin@optonline.net)<http://www.scottsville.net/mcp.htm>

We meet Wednesdays from 7 pm to 10 pm except the fourth Wednesday of the month. We review typical exam questions. Attendees 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, but help prepare for the exam. Meetings are hands-on and everyone is expected to participate. For more info, reading assignments, course schedule, visit our website. ☐

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

Genealogy SIG is for genealogists interested in computers and computer users interested in genealogy, and is a forum to assist members in furtherance of both endeavors. Meetings usually focus on genealogy more than on computers. We meet at 8 PM on the fourth Thursday of the month.

In addition to our Web page, we also have an electronic mailing list. Messages to the list should be addressed to gensig@webwarren.com. To subscribe, include the line "subscribe gensig" in the body of the message. ☐

Deals Guy, continued from page 10

Filesize: 1.61 MB.

Upgrade Your Mouse Bungee To The Pro Version

Jim Packard e-mailed me to announce a new product from the Mouse Bungee Company: a Mouse Bungee attached to a frame-type base. You lay your favorite picture in the frame, then lay the glass provided into the frame for your mouse to roll around on. I was pleased to find glass instead of plastic that might become clouded and scratched. To see it rather than visualize it, go to <http://www.mousebungee.com> and click on the "Pro" version. MSRP is \$29.95, but your special price is discounted by 33% to about \$19.95. I believe S&H is \$3.95. You must order it on their Web order page. Type the special ordering code "Click" into the "promotional code" panel and you receive a 33% discount on any of their products. They have other nice products on the drawing board and I hope to help introduce them.

That's it for this month. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. 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 might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click Bobclick@mindspring.com. Visit my Web site at <http://www.dealsguy.com> for past columns. Also, I keep adding interesting articles (taken from user group newsletters) to my "Articles of Interest" page for viewing or downloading. ☐

Networks (VPNs) is to duplicate this secure connection with a system that rides the Internet. The September 25 issue of the same magazine has a feature article, "Safe Passage," reporting on improvements in VPN security resulting in more corporations trusting more and more of their information command and control to VPNs. A number of companies are involved in the technology: Cisco, Novell, Microsoft, Nokia and others. (Nokia comes up Editor's Choice!) As of this writing, this issue is not yet available on the Web.

For a bit of perspective, AOL, Microsoft and Netscape account for about 70 million IM users, there are over 100 million ICQ users, and in the corporate intranets, about 18 million and growing. IM is still growing faster than Napster.

On the August 22 TechTV's Screensavers, Leo Laporte interviewed Kevin Mitnick, our most persecuted and prosecuted hacker. The transcript and a few video highlights are at www.techtv.com/screensavers/showtell/story/0,23008,3343816,00.html.

On the legal side, the New York Times ran a piece by Carl Kaplan which notes: A "paper co-authored by two partners and a legal assistant at a major law firm also considers whether companies that fail to take reasonable steps to protect their computer systems from malicious attacks or internal malfunctions are sitting ducks for lawsuits." See Cyberlaw at www.nytimes.com/2001/08/24/technology/24CYBERLAW.html.

Browser Wars

I got an email from David McRitchie complaining of another problem, this time with printing, in Netscape 6. I'm afraid Microsoft might just have achieved their goal of putting Netscape out of business. I find that more and more Web sites are ignoring Netscape and writing HTML which runs only on IE and ActiveX. More and more frequently I find that I am having to wait long periods of time for Netscape pages to complete, where IE loads quickly. These NS loads are frequently interrupted by some process that holds my PC in limbo for a number of seconds. Of course, Netscape lost when they sold out to AOL. And, everyone seems to use one variety of Outlook, so I expect that Eudora may fall, as well.

Science

The last few issues of Science magazine have convinced me that this is indeed a golden age for scientific discovery. The number of interesting articles in diverse fields is growing with each passing month. Biotech, Nanotech, Materials Science, Computer Science, Cosmology, etc. show new activity and excitement. A lot is Internet related and even more is computer related. Oddly, in the computer area, one no longer sees people like Hoare, Knuth, Aho, Ullman, Hopcroft, Dijkstra on the shelves of bookstores. They have been drowned by the Dummy and Idiot books and the MSCE industry.

From the August 24th Netwatch:

- Blinded by the Light — an atlas of man-made light polluting the night skies is available at www.lightpollution.it/dmsp.
- Physics jokes at www.dctech.com/physics/humor.html.
- Math stuff at www.mathgate.ac.uk.
- Shark attacks got you worried? All the data you need at www.flmnh.ufl.edu/fish/Sharks/sharks.htm.

This issue also has articles on nanowires for optoelectronics, Josephson junctions for quantum computing, cosmology, materials science and the Gulf War, as well as the usual spate of biology stuff.

From the August 17th Netwatch:

- A Garden of Links - University of Oklahoma Web site with a wealth of gardening and botanical information at www.ou.edu/cas/botany-micro/bot-linx
- Diatom Delight - A California Academy of Sciences site devoted to these beasts with elegant exoskeletons of Silicon Dioxide. See www.calacademy.org/research/diatoms
- Organizing Entropy - if you're curious about information, energy and the organization of matter, visit www.math.psu.edu/gunesch/entropy.html
- Field Trip to a Glacier - from Cincinnati, you can visit, explore and learn about glaciers. See tv11.geo.uc.edu/ice/Image/imageref.html

This issue features articles on Epigenetics (gene expression?) and includes an extensive Web supplement.

Also, I just noticed a new use for the Net included in these pages. I am informed by email every time the WWW Web page on HTML changes by a service called mindit. Researchers are frequently interested in the citations of an article. Authors will frequently maintain a database of citations to their work. There are standard applications for managing this information. Science magazine supports an email service that will notify you by email whenever an article is cited in another piece and let you download the citation into your "Citation Manager" database. Whenever you retrieve an article, you have these options:

- Reprint (PDF) Version of this Article
- Related articles in Science
- Similar articles found in:
SCIENCE Online
PubMed
- PubMed Citation
- Search Medline for articles by: (Authors)
- Alert me when:
new articles cite this article
- Download to Citation Manager

Investing & Finance

I haven't heard from any volunteers to speak on the new on-line trading systems, called Electronic Communications Networks (ECNs,) so I went down to Charles Schwab and asked for a demo. They didn't have a live one set up, just the Web demo which you access at www.schwab.com. Just click on the StreetSmart Pro "Test Drive it today" link. I did discover what Level II NASDAQ quotes are, though. It's a two column presentation of the latest bids and asked offers, sorted by price, on a given stock. Gives you a very good idea of the current spread and your chances of having a limit order go through. Go to www.island.com, enter a NASDAQ stock symbol under "See Island in Action" and click on Go! (Do this when the market is awake, though.) ☐

Guru Corner

Jo-Anne Head (tinrock@aol.com)

If you need help with any of the technologies listed below, you can call on the person listed. Please be considerate and call before 10 PM.

	Hardware	
	Scott Vincent	973-361-5793
	Software	
HTML	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
	Mike Redlich	732-469-2072
CSS	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
ColdFusion	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
Java	Mike Redlich	732-469-2072
C++	Bruce Arnold	908-735-7898
	Mike Redlich	732-469-2072
ASP	Mike Redlich	732-469-2072
Perl	John Raff	973-533-0664
	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
XML	Mike Redlich	732-469-2072
e-Commerce	Rick Elbanna	800-323-7575
Genealogy	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
Networking	Scott Vincent	973-361-5793
Home Automation	Charlie Huffsmith	732-549-1734
	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
	Operating Systems	
WindowsNT	Scott Vincent	973-361-5793
Windows95	Rick Elbanna	800-323-7575
Windows98	Rick Elbanna	800-323-7575
Windows3.1	Ted Martin	732-636-1942
	Charlie Huffsmith	732-549-1734
	Macintosh	
Mac O/S	Keith Sproul	(732) 821-4828

Microsoft Software Activation

Linux Anyone?

Bill Farrell (wfarr18124@aol.com)

Bill Gates blows it again — it looks like Lotus all over again. I just received my “free” copy of the Professional version of Microsoft Office XP eXtreme, which was given to those who volunteered to help Microsoft announce their new product. Boy, what a turn-off. It starts off with Microsoft “Office Product Activation”. To make it work, you have to call Microsoft with your key number and they, via Internet, evaluate your hardware and activate the software. If you change any of your hardware, you have to notify Microsoft and they go thru a new system check and re authorize/reactivate the software. As a result, Big Bill has his hand inside your system.

If you would like to down load or read these stupid activation instructions, go to

www.microsoft.com/officeevaluation/indepth/activation.htm

A brief quote from the file: “Product activation works by verifying that a software programs key, which you must use in order to install the product, has not been used on more personal computers than intended by the software’s license. You can use the software activation wizard that enables you to provide your product ID to Microsoft either through a secure transfer over the Internet, or by phone. The installation ID is sent back to activate your product.” It goes on and on. You get 50 “grace launches” before you must activate, so I can use the program 50 times, then I get bounced into a reduced performance mode. I wasted a day of my time helping Microsoft to get this.

Remember, my friends, some time ago Lotus tried something like this and lost a market. I guess our beloved Pete Fillingham was right when he used to stand up and inform us that LINUX is the way to go. I’m disgusted! ☹

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 _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ URL _____

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, NAS 100 at Brookdale Community College, Lincroft NJ.(732-739-9633) www.bcug.com	Macintosh User Group: Third Tuesday, Dickson Hall, Montclair State University, Montclair NJ. (201) 893-5274 http://www.njmug.org .
WordPerfect SIG of PCUG of So. Jersey: 2nd Mon., 2101 Chapel Ave., Cherry Hill NJ after 7pm Main Meeting. http://www.pcugsj.org	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 Monday, 2101 Chapel Ave, Cherry Hill NJ. L. Horn, (856) 983-5360. http://www.pcugsj.org
Philadelphia Area Computer Society: 3rd Sat., 9 am Main Meeting, groups follow. Drexel Univ., 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, (201) 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) 218-0778, http://www.ppcug.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.		

Classified

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



<http://www.apcug.org>

Radio and TV Programs

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

Software Review, The Learning Channel, Saturday 10-10:30 p.m.

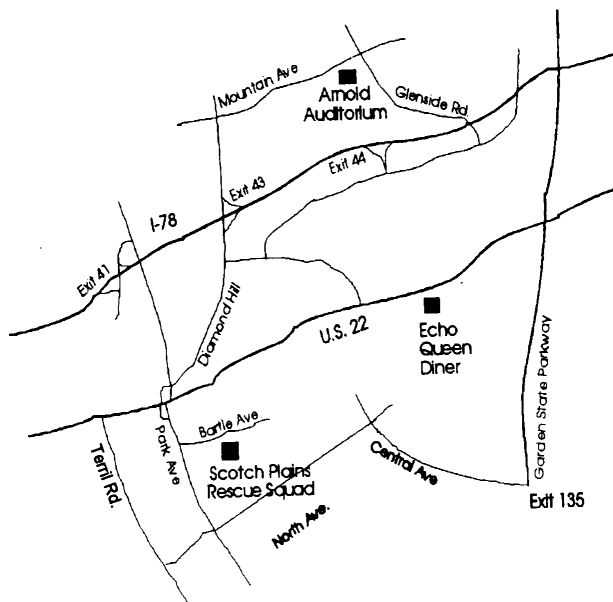
On Computers, WCTC 1450 AM, New Brunswick, Sunday 1-4 p.m. To ask questions call (800) 677-0874.

PC Talk, Sunday from 8p.m. to 10 p.m., on 1210 AM Philadelphia.

KGP Computer Shows

(For more information visit <http://www.pcshow.com>)

Sept. 15-16: South Jersey Expo Center, Pennsauken, NJ



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

From New York City or Northern New Jersey

Take 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, follow circle under Parkway. Bear right to Central Avenue; follow to Westfield and under RR overpass. Left at light to North Avenue; follow to light in Fanwood. Right on Martine (which becomes Park Ave). Right on Bartle Ave in middle of shopping district. Scotch Plains Rescue Squad (2-story brick) is located on the right. Do not park in the row next to the building — you'll be towed.

From I-78 (either direction)

Take exit 41 (Scotch Plains); follow signs to US 22. Turn right at light at bottom of hill and use overpass to cross Rt. 22. Follow US 22 Westbound directions.

From US 22 Westbound

Exit at Park Avenue, Scotch Plains after McDonalds on the right, diagonally opposite Scotchwood Diner on the left, immediately before the overpass. After exiting, turn left at the light and use 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). Scotch Plains Rescue Squad (2-story brick) is on the right. Do not park in the row next to the building — you'll be towed. We meet on the second floor, 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.
P.O. BOX 135
SCOTCH PLAINS, NJ 07076

FIRST CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 89
NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ 08901

FIRST CLASS MAIL

DATED MATERIAL

DO NOT DELAY

TEMP-RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

ACGNJ MEETINGS

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

Monday, September 3, 2001

8 P.M. - Lunics. No Meeting. Andreas Meyer (lunics@acgnj.org).

Tuesday, September 4

7:30 P.M. - Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, September 5

MCP Study Group, Scott Vincent (scottvin@optonline.net),
973-361-5793

Thursday, September 6

8 P.M. - Internet. Marty Rosenblum (m.rosenblum@ieee.org),
973-376-8965.

Friday, September 7

8 P.M. - Main Meeting, Scott Vincent (scottvin@optonline.net).
Bill Machrone speaks on a subject of his choice. Don't miss it!

Monday, September 10

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

Tuesday, September 11

7:30 P.M. - Java, Mike Redlich (mike@redlich.net)

Wednesday, September 12

MCP Study Group, Scott Vincent (scottvin@optonline.net),
973-361-5793

Thursday, September 13

8 P.M. - Computerized Investing, Sheldon Koepf
(sheldonk@intac.com), 201-741-2489

Friday, September 14

8 P.M. - PC Symposium, John Raff (jraff@home.com),
973-533-0664. No meeting.

Monday, September 17

8 P.M. - VBA, Jim Ditaranto (fryr92a@prodigy.com)

Tuesday, September 18

8 P.M. - C/C++ Users, Bruce Arnold (barnold@blast.net),
908-735-7898

Wednesday, September 19

MCP Study Group, Scott Vincent (scottvin@optonline.net),
973-361-5793

Friday, September 21

8 P.M. - PC Users Group, No meeting.

Thursday, September 27

8 P.M. - Genealogy. Frank Warren (kb4cyc@webwarren.com),
908-756-1681

Friday, September 28

8 P.M. - Random Access, Computer Q&A, Scott Vincent
(scottvin@optonline.net), 973-361-5793

Monday, September 30

8 P.M. - Lotus Notes, Mike Barlow (barlowm@bright-ideas.com),
(732) 417-5778 ext 5. Meetings at Bright Ideas offices. ☐

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