

PACC TALK

Official Newsletter of the Pittsburgh Area Computer Club

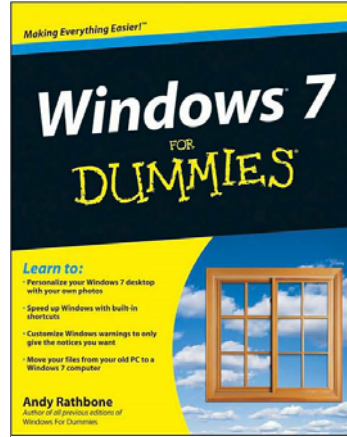
February 2011

MEETING SCHEDULE

Sunday, February 20, 2011

- 11:00 -11:25 am Sign In, Pay Dues, Greet visitors, Purchase 50/50
ROOM # 311 tickets (Optional), Setup Computers,
Connect to Internet , Prep for Meetings
- 11:00 - 11:25 pm PACC BOD Meeting
ROOM # 301
- 11:35 - 12:00 pm Windows New Users
ROOM # 301 Can we help you? V. Agrawala
- 12:00 - 12:30 pm General Meeting, . Raffle. (pg. 1)
ROOM # 301
- 12:35 - 2:00 pm LibreOffice 3.3 and portable,
ROOM # 301 Cyber-D's Autodelete, Secunia PSI (pg. 1)
- 2:05 - 3:30 pm More programs and utilities (pg. 1)
ROOM # 301
- 2:05 - 3:30 pm Hardware SIG
ROOM # 311 Users Helping Users - guests included
- 1:00 - 3:30 pm Linux SIG, Members Helping Members,
ROOM # 311 Computer troubleshooting, Info Exchange
- 3:30 - 4:00 pm Pack Up Equipment, Doors Close

*** RAFFLE ***



“Windows For Dummies is the all-time bestselling guide to the Windows operating system. Windows 7 For Dummies answers all your questions about the interface adjustments and all the new tools in Windows 7. “

Come and get lucky! PJK

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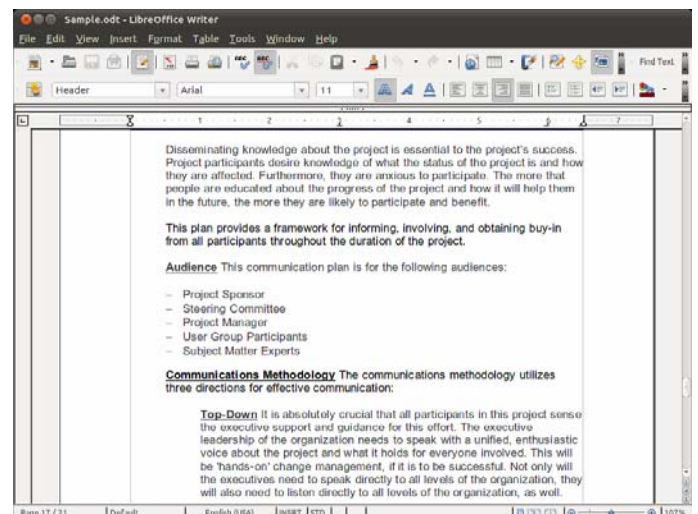
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O'REILLY
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oreilly.com

Open Source personal productivity suite for Windows, Macintosh and Linux, that gives you six feature-rich applications for all your document production and data processing needs: Writer, Calc, Impress, Draw, Math and Base. [Support](#) and [documentation](#) is free from our large, dedicated community of users, contributors and developers. You, too, can also [get involved!](#)”



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Windows SIG

LibreOffice Portable and LibreOffice 3.3

Since the Oracle acquisition of SUN the OpenOffice was put on back burner, but here comes its free worthy replacement. The Document Foundation is a non-profit organization. Read more about it at:

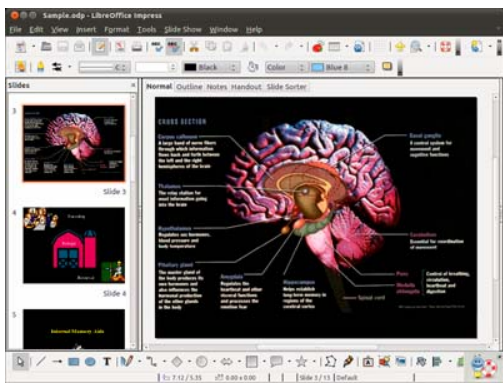
<http://www.libreoffice.org/>

From the web site: “LibreOffice Portable is a full-featured office suite -- including a word processor, spreadsheet, presentation tool, drawing package and database -- packaged as a portable app, so you can take all your documents and everything you need to work with them wherever you go. LibreOffice is the free power-packed

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The Portable version download is 118 MB, installed size is 428 MB. Download this one from here:



<http://portableapps.com/apps/office/libreoffice-portable>

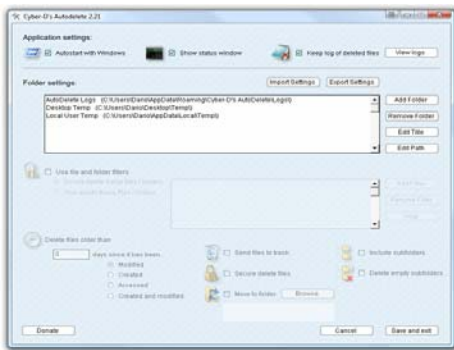
To install this on your PC, the file size for Windows installation is 215 MB that can balloon to 1.5 GB. That depends on your

needs and also on how many additional packages you want to add.

To get it go to: <http://www.libreoffice.org/download>

From the Cyber-D web site at: <http://cyber-d.blogspot.com/> "Cyber-D's Autodelete can delete old files in a folder (and subfolders) you selected. Simply select the folder you wish to clean

(downloads for example), set the rules (older than 30 days since created) and how to delete (move, recycle, secure delete). The cleanup is done on system startup only so it does not stay open in the background or you can run the cleanup manually."



The download from the above web site is only 1.8 MB.

"The Secunia PSI is a **FREE** security tool designed to detect vulnerable and out-dated programs and plug-ins which expose your PC to attacks. Attacks exploiting vulnerable programs and plug-ins are rarely blocked by traditional anti-virus and are therefore increasingly "popular" among criminals. Only 1.7 MB. Download it from:

http://secunia.com/vulnerability_scanning/personal/



the end of the story

Space, the Final Frontier

By Terry Currier, President,
WINNERS (WINDOWS users), CA
October / November issue, Notepad
www.windowsusers.org
[editor\(at\)windowsusers.org](mailto:editor(at)windowsusers.org)

We've all heard, or said it – my hard drive is so big I'll never run out of room. I had two 250GB drives in my main computer setup as RAID 0. I hated the RAID 0, but it came set up at that. It came with Windows XP with the promise of getting a Vista upgrade. I received the Vista, but never put it on. Eventually I did put Windows 7 on the computer using PC Mover. But, I was still not satisfied. If you take a lot of video with an HD video camera it can add up to a lot of space used. With our eight day vacation to Walt Disney World I came back with 24GB of video and pictures. The folder I kept all videos was over 200GB and that did not include many that I put onto an external drive.

I brought a 1.5TB drive at the computer swap meet several months ago and finally got around to installing it. I backed up the complete drive using Rebit to one drive, and made sure I backed up the data twice. First, to one external drive I used the Seagate Manager, to a second I copied the data directly to another external drive. I put Windows 7 Ultimate on the new drive, and have been adding programs slowing, making sure I want them rather than just putting everything back on. I even held up on installing my Adobe Premiere/Photoshop Elements 7 figuring I would purchase version 9 when it went on sale. I brought it at a Black Friday (online) sale and got it two weeks later.

Other software I put back on – VIPRE antivirus, Faststone graphics viewer, Total Recorder, Snagit, CyberLink's Power Director and my Microsoft Office 2003. I also updated my Applian Programs which was well worth it.

As to my scanning old photos for restoring and backup – I just finished the first of eight photo books of which most of them fit onto a CD for backup. I am recording the last five of my VCR tapes and will then edit them for putting onto DVDs. I figure I should be done about 2013.

ClearCloud

From GFI, the company that recently brought Sunbelt (VIPRE, Counterspy), ClearCloud is a free service that checks every website address your computer tries to access, whether you're browsing the internet, clicking a link in an email, or a program on your hard drive trying to communicate with servers for information or updates.

ClearCloud prevents you from being able to access known bad websites, sites that will download malicious files to your computer. Even better, ClearCloud prevents you from being able to access malicious websites that you may not even know your computer is trying to access — and it prevents potentially nasty programs from "phoning home" and secretly communicating between your computer and cyber-criminals.

Many programs legitimately phone home to get software updates: Microsoft Windows and Adobe Reader are two common programs that will check for current updates. ClearCloud knows the websites accessed by over a million safe programs and provides free passage to these sites.

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How does ClearCloud know which websites are malicious?

ClearCloud is part of the DNS network, and has access to every URL in the world. When you type the URL in your browser and click “Go” or “Enter” your browser sends the URL to ClearCloud. ClearCloud looks it up in a table, checks it against the list of bad websites, and if it passes, sends back the numeric IP address so your browser knows where to go to get the web page. All in milliseconds.

If ClearCloud discovers that it’s a bad URL, it sends the IP address back to their webpage and informs you about the malicious site.

<http://clearclouddns.com/Setup/>

the end of the story

Circuit Writer Version 8.4

By Jim Scheef, Director,
Danbury Area Computer Society, CT
January 2011 Issue,
DACs.doc – A Computer & Technology Newsletter
www.dacs.org
jscheef (at) dacs.org

Last month, I mentioned that Christie’s would feature an Apple-1 in an auction that included some other interesting artifacts. Well the Apple-1 sold for \$213,000. Now that Christie’s has shown interest, vintage computer collecting will never be the same. Read more on CNN (tinyurl.com/2uu7e6a).

Killing the Web

Remember when email was new and it was cool to have an email address on your business card? Some people had more than one; in the early-90’s I had four. My primary email was on CompuServe but of course not everyone was on CS, so on the back of the card I had the X.400 addressing needed to reach me on CS from forward-thinking companies that had gateways, plus my BIX address, and one other I can’t remember right now. Why would anyone print all this on business cards? Because back then, few email systems were connected. The offer “Send me an email” was always followed by “Which email do you use?” Of course all that changed when Congress opened up the “acceptable use” policy for the group of government-sponsored networks that became the Internet.

Unfortunately, the openness of the Internet as well as the universality of email is being threatened by the islands of communication we call social networks. Just like the pre-Internet email on CS, messages sent on Facebook must be retrieved (there are exceptions to this) on Facebook. More importantly, to continue the conversation, one must return to Facebook and send your reply there. Now Facebook is extending Facebook messaging to include an email address that will be @facebook.com. According to Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg, “This is not an e-mail killer.” (Which means he thinks it is.) He continued, “This is a messaging system that includes e-mail as one part of it.” The new email offering will be an extension of the existing Messages facility and is not available yet as far as I can determine. Read more on Information Week (tinyurl.com/23ghv7f). A scary part of Facebook email is a new Messages API that will allow appli-

cations access to messages. We know how well that has worked in the past.

This is just one of the many reasons Google is worried about Facebook. Another reason is that Google and other search sites cannot search and index the content on Facebook. If you want to search Facebook, you must log on Facebook and use their search facility. From the outside Facebook is a black hole in the web that leaks only what it wants to let out. You can see how these social networking “features” create a walled garden around the user community. Balkanizing the Internet is a facet of net neutrality from the other side of the stone.

WikiLeaks

Is free speech conservative or liberal? It shouldn’t even be a question, yet interpreting the First Amendment consumes an awful lot of speech. Wikipedia has this warning at the top of the article on WikiLeaks: “This article may be affected by the following current event: United States diplomatic cables leak. Information in this article may change rapidly as the event progresses.” Well, the article, (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikileaks) with its 289 footnotes, did not change while I was perusing it.

Then again, is the current WikiLeaks issue one of free speech? Some say it is, but maybe not. The current coverage on some news media would have you believe that Julian Assange, generally described as the founder or director of the organization, masterminded the whole thing, whatever that might be. Assuming you still have an open mind on this issue, I urge you to read the Wikipedia article and review the list of “leaks”. The best summary of the current controversy I have found is Steven Colbert’s December 9 interview of Daniel Ellsberg (tinyurl.com/2b3ay3d). No one could better understand this situation than Daniel Ellsberg (source of the Pentagon Papers) and he gives fabulously relevant answers to Colbert’s questions. Also pay close attention to the people threatening Assange’s life in the lead-in to the interview.

So far it looks like we will hang (figuratively if not literally) PFC Bradley Manning, the US Army intelligence analyst to whom the current leaks are attributed. Right now this guy has to be Assange’s biggest fan because the manhunt and legal issues in Great Britain have diverted media attention from PFC Manning. Soon enough the media’s Eye of Sauron will return its gaze to the presumed source of the material and how he was able to replicate the copyrighted graphics on a Lady Gaga CD.

I wish I had some clear lucid observations on the WikiLeaks issue. Assange can’t be tried as a traitor because he is not an American. WikiLeaks did not publish the leaked materials, the New York Times, and other newspapers did. Chew on that for a while.

Last Column

I have asked for a sabbatical from my column. My request was granted because, well, what else could they say? My rationale is to devote more time to several related projects that are not making sufficient progress. One of these projects is the conversion of the DACS website to Drupal; another is a website for my high school class reunion coming in 2013. I hope to return to writing in these pages in a few months. In the meantime, be kind to whoever fills this space in DACS.doc!

the end of the story

Incredible, Spectacular, Amazing ...and of course, Innovative

By Lou Torraca, President, The TUG MOAA Computer User
Group, Hawaii
www.the-tug.org
Af06hi (at) gmail.com

By the time u read this, I should be in Las Vegas for the annual Consumer Electronics Show (CES) where oohs and aahs are regularly heard as thousands of new electronic goodies are unveiled. So, to tweak your curiosity about all this, I have listed a handful of new products that have been chosen as Innovation Award winners I will hopefully see in person while I'm at the show.



The Innovations Design and Engineering Awards program, sponsored by PCWorld recognizes the most innovative consumer electronics (CE) products in the industry's hottest product categories. Innovations has become a hallmark for the best designed products in consumer technology.

Without further ado, the winners are:



HP Photosmart eStation All-in-One Printer C510

Overview

Combine full Web browsing with high-performance printing, faxing without a phone line, copying and scanning. The detachable, 7-inch, full-color touchscreen doubles as a wireless digital companion and control panel for remote printing.

Features

- Full Web browsing from a detachable touchscreen.
- Tap into your online world-browse the Web, access news and weather updates, e-mail and more.
- Download and print from the Web-documents, photos and more-using a handy, wireless touchscreen.
- Browse the latest e-book bestsellers or old favorites, using the wireless touchscreen.
- Use apps to print from the Web without using a PC.
- Use customized apps to quickly get the prints you want from the Web.
- Access and print, using apps for Yahoo!, Facebook, and Snapfish.
- Get fun and useful templates for calendars, games and more, using HP Quick Forms.
- Wireless all-in-one functionality, plus HP ePrint.
- Print at your convenience-whether it's from across town or across the room-using HP ePrint.
- Print and share from multiple PCs, and stay connected, using integrated wireless networking.
- Count on affordable, individual inks for long-lasting photos, and get a great value for frequent printing.
- Have more fun with your photos with HP Photo Creations software and tools to make photo printing easy.
- Save energy and conserve resources.
- Save time and paper by printing two-sided documents automatically.
- Save energy with the ENERGY STAR, qualified HP Photosmart eStation.
- Reduce packaging waste-the HP Photosmart eStation is shipped in an innovative, reusable bag.
- Get free, easy recycling-cartridges returned through HP Planet Partners are recycled response.



KODAK Zi8 Pocket Video Camera

It's small enough to fit in your pocket, but why would you ever want to put it there? Whether out on the town or just hanging with friends, the KODAK Zi8 Pocket Video Camera captures every experience in stunning 1080p HD video.

Stay in focus while you're on the move with integrated image stabilization. Then kick back and watch all the action on your HDTV or share your scene on Facebook or YouTube with a flick of the built-in USB arm. The Zi8 has all you need to define yourself in high definition Catch life as it happens.

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- Capture HD quality 1080p video with 16:9 aspect ratio
- Plenty of room for more-record up to 10 hours of HD video with the expandable SD/SDHC card slot that can hold up to 32 GB[1]
- Make audio awesome-the external microphone jack lets you record in stereo
- Get a new perspective-take amazing 5 MP 16:9 widescreen HD still pictures.



Sleek Audio's SA7 earphones

The SA7, by Sleek Audio, sets a new standard for mobile audio performance through advanced design technology. A milled aluminum core houses a first-of-its kind custom tuned dual armature driver configuration. The drivers are encased in a layer of silicone, further protected by military-grade carbon fiber sidings and held together with a titanium hexagonal fastener. Yet the groundbreaking construction of this earphone is just one aspect of the technology it employs. The drivers are tuned by Sleek's acoustic engineers to offer striking clarity with brilliant highs, strong mids and accurate, powerful bass. To enhance the audio experience even further, the SA7 boasts Sleek's acclaimed VQ™ Tuning system, allowing you to acoustically tune your music to match your individual sonic preference. No detail of music is lost regardless of where you choose to listen with the SA7. ESC (Environmental Sound Control) blocks more than double the ambient noise of larger, "noise cancelling" earphones allowing you to escape into your music. As part of Sleek's Signature series, the SA7 also offers Wireless Hybrid Technology, giving you the ability to go from wired, to wireless and back again using Klear lossless technology.



Sony Internet TV Blu-ray Disc player, powered by Google TV

Television, meet internet.

Access more entertainment than ever. Search the entire web, TV listings and apps to find exactly what you're looking for. Watch TV, browse the internet, or do both at the same time on the same screen. Plus, finding your favorite content is a breeze thanks to the included, intuitive handheld keypad with mouse. Now you can watch the game

while tracking your fantasy team, tweet about the TV show you're watching, or update your Facebook status while viewing TV.

Google TV delivers a new experience by bringing the TV and internet together. Using your existing cable or satellite service and at no additional cost, Google TV gives you access to more entertainment options and simplifies the process of finding what you're looking. Plus, you can enjoy both TV and web content at the same time, on the same screen.



Kenmore Elite® Dishwasher with Interactive Color LCD Controls

These Kenmore Elite® high-efficiency dishwashers feature 360° PowerWash™ technology. This innovative spray arm reaches into corners to blast dishes from all angles, getting every last one sparkling clean. These dishwashers also include TurboZone™ with Rotating Spray Jets, an exclusive option that power cleans stuck on foods to eliminate the need to presoak dishes. The a color-touch LCD display puts important information at your fingertips and allows you to stay in control.

- Get your dishes done in a hurry - The 1-Hour Wash cycle will quickly clean dishes when you most need them
- Wash oversized items with ease - The premium, adjustable upper rack with fold-down tines can be raised, lowered, or even removed to wash dishes of all sizes
- Save on your energy bills - These dishwashers are ENERGY STAR® qualified and are 38.9% more efficient than dishwashers with a standard energy rating
- Conserve water and energy without sacrificing performance - The high-efficiency Ultra Wash® HE wash system saves water and energy while effectively cleaning the dirtiest dishes
- Take the guesswork out of choosing the right cycle - With the touch of a button, SmartWash™ HE chooses the right cycle and automatically adjusts water levels and temperatures to ensure optimal cleaning
- Save effort with TurboZone rotating spray jets - TurboZone provides a concentrated wash to dishes placed in the back of the rack and eliminates the need to pre-soak dishes
- Get every last dish sparkling clean - 360° PowerWash technology features an innovative spray arm that blasts

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(Continued from page 5)

dishes from all angles and reaches deep into the corners of the dishwasher to clean every dish

- Get the best drying results for each load - With the touch of a button, SmartDry automatically adjusts dry time, heat and energy to match the selected wash cycle for optimized drying performance.



Audiovox MultiView Cam with Pedestrian Warning

We can put a man on the moon, but we've yet to build a car without blind spots. Audiovox's MultiView Cam with Pedestrian Warning goes several steps further than your average car rear-view camera system, offering a 180-degree lens and low-light capabilities that help you see what's coming from side angles when you're backing up. The system even gives audio alerts to let you know if a car, bike, or pedestrian is approaching from the rear sides of your car.



The Jabra STONE2 Bluetooth wireless headset takes the incredible ease-of-use of the original STONE to exciting new levels. To start with, there is now no need to even touch the headset to answer or reject a call - you just use your voice. The headset tells you each caller's number and you then simply say yes if you want to accept the call, and no if you don't.

You don't have to look at the Jabra STONE2 headset to check battery level or the strength of the connection with your mobile phone. It will tell you just what you need to know via voice alerts.

The Jabra STONE2 wireless handset also puts extra power in the palm of your hand. Its portable charger enables you to fast charge on the go

up to 3 times - and each charge takes only 20 minutes. You get up to 10 full hours of wireless talk time in a charger that slips easily into your pocket or bag.

With the Jabra STONE2 everything sounds great. Dual mic technology eliminates background noise and maintains the natural sound of your voice. You will feel comfortable too. The lightness of the headset, its curved shape and personalized eargels, will make every conversation a pleasure.

With the Jabra STONE2 you have new opportunities. You can take talk much further.



HomePlug AV with ClearPath is a breakthrough home networking technology that enables unprecedented, carrier-class streaming of HD video, voice, and data over existing powerlines in the home. Sigma's chipset uses all three wires - phase, neutral, and ground to deliver improved performance and up to twice the throughput. It is the only (multiple in, multiple out) solution available over powerline. HomePlug AV with ClearPath gives substantially better coverage, and the ability to deliver HD where it is not possible. Both ClearPath and MIMO over powerline are Sigma technologies.

As you can see, there are lots of electronic goodies, so stay tuned as I give you a rundown in my next several columns on a lot of the new products you will be seeing during my visit at the CES from 4 to 9 January. If you had fun during the holidays, and are taking some time to relax and get back to a normal schedule.

Aloha, Lou

You can read Lou's monthly column at



http://www.aroundhawaii.com/technology_in_plain_english.html
<http://bit.ly/f3TQ5t>

the end of the story

Plustek Film Scanner

A review by George Harding,
Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society, AZ
December 2010 issue, TCS eJournal

www.aztcs.org [georgehardingsbd \(at\) earthlink.net](mailto:georgehardingsbd@earthlink.net)

Plustek has come out with a film scanner that is compact in size and efficient in operation. It connects to a PC by USB and is powered from a regular power outlet. It comes with two CD-ROMs, one for installation of the device drivers for the scanner and a couple of pieces of software that can be used after you do your scanning. The other CD-ROM is the installation disk for Silverfast, software to help you make your scan and to modify the result if necessary.

Also in the box are two strip holders, one for slides, the other for negative film. These are easy to use and durable. More may be obtained from Plustek, the manufacturer. A padded bag is included, which allows you to safely carry your scanner when required. The scanner illumination is by LED, which means less power usage and lower heat emanation.

Installation takes awhile and requires a restart. It also takes hard disk space of some 400 MB. The result is an easy-to-use application that scans either slide or negative film. The scans are stored as TIFF format files by default, although you can also save as JPG or PDF. The use of TIFF saves the pixel information even with repeated opening and saving, whereas each such action with JPG causes some loss of data.

When you start Silverfast, five separate windows open. The largest is the prescan window. You can use it to size the scan properly and adjust certain aspects of the image before the final scan.



The two strip holders are designed to hold either slides or negative film. The slide holder has four slots and the negative film holder has six openings. The scanner has two openings on either side of the box, into which you slide the holder. There are appropriate indents in the holder so that you can tell when a slide or section of film is properly centered for scanning.

The output size can be adjusted for printing, for use in documents or on a web page. The resolution can be selected from 72 to 7200 dpi. The effect of higher resolution is two-fold. First, higher resolution produces larger files. Second, higher resolution requires longer scan times. I found that 150 dpi is adequate for normal scanning.

There are adjustments available for different types of film, for example, Kodak, Fuji, Polaroid and so on. There are, in fact, many more adjustments available than I could try out! The Silverfast software is a photographer/graphic artist's "dream come true." Learning how to productively use the software is a challenge. There are several tools to help with this. Each window has a Quick Time

icon, which represents a QT movie illustrating briefly how to use that Window's tools.

The product comes with a 450-page manual and there are several helps on the Silverfast web site.

There is no automatic advance from one slide/film to the next. It is strictly a manual operation. However, this is probably what you want, since you may want to make adjustments to the prescan before the final one.

About: Plustek Film Scanner
Manufacturer: Plustek
www.plustek.com
Price: \$349 MSRP
Works with Windows 2000, XP,
Vista, 7 and MAC.



the end of the story

The MAC Corner

By Danny Uff, a member of the Help Line,
Mac OS X and Windows XP
Tiger/Leopard/Networking, Lehigh Valley Computer Group, PA
December 2010 issue, The LVCG Journal
www.lvcg.org www.connectingpeoplesoftware.com
[danny.uff \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:danny.uff@gmail.com)

Computers are not perfect - even Macs. If you've been involved with computers for any length of time, then you've probably experienced the below. If you haven't, then God Bless You, and count your blessings.

My long time girlfriend and I share our calendars and contacts via our iPhones, iPods and Mobile Me. We've been doing this for quite some time without problems - that is, until the other night when all of our 125 plus contacts and appointments suddenly disappeared on all of our devices AND Mobile Me.

After seeing my hair turn pure white, and saying words that I will not write here, I began to troubleshoot the problem. While doing so, I found a few things out about my Mac.

If it wasn't for an offline backup service called Mozy.com (\$4.00/Month), which backs up all of my key Mac files (calendar files, contacts, etc.) I would not have been able to have a happy ending to this article.

Most Mac application data files are stored in the \username\Library\Application Support\ folder. Once you get to the last folder, you should be able to figure out what Mac application uses what folder. In the case of the contacts app, you want to be in the \AddressBook\ folder. If you use the contacts app like we do, then you may want to backup this folder to an external source (such as Mozy.com, or even a USB drive).

When making a backup, make sure you copy all of the files in the \AddressBook\ folder to the external source.

If you do have a crash, just reinstall the necessary files you'd need to get the computer back up, and use the external source to restore any lost data - making sure you're in the correct data folder for the Mac Application. Most offline data storage services will do this for you. All in all, it took me 20 minutes to restore all of the necessary data and create a new sync session with Mobile Me. All is back, and I am NOT in the Doghouse :-)

the end of the story

Should You Try Linux? (Well, it depends on....)

By Dick Maybach
n2nd(at)charter.net

There are many good reasons why you should.

►It's fast. Every time I use Windows I can feel myself growing older as it creeps through booting up, shutting down, and starting a new program. My wife had an old laptop with XP that had become unusably slow under XP. She replaced the operating system with Linux, and it's now back to its original speed.

►It's free. Not only is Linux free, but so are the great majority of its applications. Such things as office suites, desktop publishing, Web page design, photo, audio, and video editors, computer aided design, and games (to name a few) are there for you to try out and use. Many of these can import and use Windows documents, such as from MS Word, PowerPoint, and Excel.

►It's more secure. While no software is absolutely secure, Linux is far ahead of Windows. This is partly by design and partly because PCs running Windows are far more common than are those running Linux. Malware designers tend to target the most common configuration. Linux users must keep their systems up-to-date (a one click process) and must use the built-in firewall, but they very seldom worry about computer viruses.

►It's more fun. Linux users are continually trying new programs. They are free, so why not try to find which you like best. Linux is also much more customizable; you can make your desktop look like Windows, like a Mac, or like something only you could love. Finally, because it's open, you are free to poke around its guts to figure out what is really going on under the hood.

Good reasons for caution

There are also good reasons why you might not want to.

►Linux is not Windows. It doesn't run most Windows applications. (There are ways around this, but they are more trouble than most Linux novices will find comfortable.) Worse, some Windows applications have no Linux counterparts. For example, although it may change, today you can't watch movies on-line from Netflix in Linux, and there is no Linux program equivalent to TurboTax.

►Some hardware doesn't work with Linux. Again, there are ways around this, but they require some experience with Linux. The most common offenders are printers, scanners, and anything made by Apple. This isn't a problem if you are buying a new machine; you just buy only the devices you know are Linux compatible.

►Most PCs come with Windows and not Linux installed. You will have to install a new operating system, which is something most PC users have never done. Despite what you may have heard, installing Linux isn't difficult (in fact, it's much easier than installing Windows), but it does require some care.

Let's suppose you've decided to look into Linux. How should you start? First, find a Linux user who is willing to help, not because Linux is so difficult, but because it's new to you. He or she will probably recommend the toe-in-the-water approach. Many versions of Linux are available as a live CD, which lets you run Linux without writing anything to your hard disk. Shut down, remove the CD-ROM, and your machine boots Windows and has no idea it had been running Linux.



From the Editor's desk

Hi PACCsters!



It is possible the weather will be sunny and lower 40', so you all will come to the meeting?!

Required reading list:

Space, the Final Frontier by Terry Currier
Circuit Writer Version 8.4 by Jim Scheef
Incredible, Spectacular, Amazingand of course, Innovative
.... By Lou Torraca
Plustek Film Scanner a review by George Harding
The MAC Corner by Danny Uff
Should You Try Linux? (Well, it depends on....)
..... by Dick Maybach

I'll see all you at the February 20, 2011 meeting. PJK

IMPORTANT NOTICE

As of now, I am still trying to get the guys in APCUG to fix things on our web site. It should have been simple, but....evidently, there are still problems. I will let you know as soon as it happens, and PACC TALK goes by e-mail of course!

Please have patience waiting for a new address of PACC Web.
As soon as the migration is resolved I will send out the information.

Set up your boot order

To do this, set up your PC to boot from a CD-ROM, insert a Linux live CD, and turn on the power. You will most likely have to select between trying Linux (right!) and installing Linux (wrong!). CD-ROMs are much slower than hard disks, but you can see exactly how Linux works with your hardware. Keep in mind that unless you copy your results to a read/write device, anything you do in the live session will be lost when you log off.

The next level of commitment is to install Linux in a dual-boot configuration. Here each time you boot, you choose either Linux or Windows. For instance, you might choose Windows to watch a Netflix movie, work on your taxes, or sync your iPhone and choose Linux to surf the Web, retouch your photos, or update your Web page. Again, the installation will be much easier with the help of a Linux-savvy friend. Just be sure to back up your files before you begin. Another good approach is to replace Windows with Linux on an old computer.

Linux is a rather large clan of operating systems, the most common of which are Ubuntu, Red Hat Fedora, and SUSE. However, I recommend that you first try Linux Mint, which is a variant of Ubuntu. Its appearance closely resembles Windows', and you will probably be comfortable almost immediately. It shares Ubuntu's compatibility with hardware, which minimizes the chances of problems during and after installation.

There are hundreds of other versions of Linux, and each one has its niche, for example to recover files from damaged disks, to be fast on old and slow hardware, to accommodate children, to run on netbooks and smart phones, and one even lets you use an old PC as a TiVo type video controller.

Give Linux a try. You will probably like it, and if you don't, at least you will have better reason to use Windows other than being ignorant of everything else.

the end of the story

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Help is available to PACC members on various computer topics by contacting one of those listed below. It is recommended that the initial contact with any of these experts should be made via the PACC WEB SITE. In this way others can benefit from the questions and responses. Be courteous and call only during the listed times.

NAME	COMPUTER AREA	PHONE	TIME
Agrawala, Vishnu	Hardware	724-553-8051	3 - 6:00 pm
Cutrara, Phil	Geoworks	766-0274	
Fisher, Bill	Cobol, Word Perfect	367-8996	7 - 9:00 pm
Konecny, P.	Windows, DOS 6.2x, MS IE., Hardware	795-6075	8 - 9:00 pm

If you would like to become PACC HELP LINE volunteer inform the editor by sending e-mail to: pacccomm@aol.com

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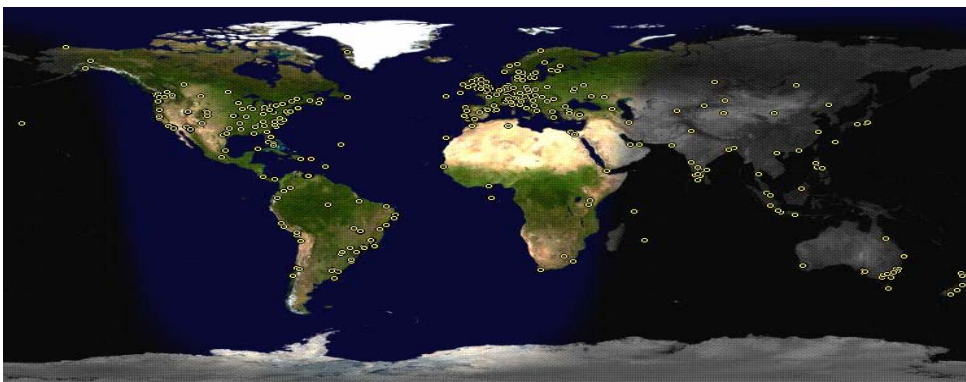


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IF YOU HAVE NOTICED THAT THE EXPIRATION DATE ON YOUR LABEL DOES NOT REFLECT CORRECTLY YOUR MEMBERSHIP STATUS OR HAVE AN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION YOU WANT TO SHARE SEND E-MAIL DIRECTLY TO: pacccomm@aol.com

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NEXT PACC MEETING IS ON FEBRUARY 20, 2011

PACC 1975 - 2011
IN ITS THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR



PACC TALK

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NEXT MEETING: February 20, 2011

The Pittsburgh Area Computer Club (PACC) holds its meetings the **THIRD** Sunday of each month. The next meeting will be in room 311 at **Point Park University**, Wood St. and Blvd. of the Allies. The doors open at 11:00 am and close at 4:30 pm. Bring your PC!
NOTICE THE EXPIRATION DATE ON THE MAILING LABEL OF YOUR NEWSLETTER.
You won't get your newsletter if you let your membership expire. Renew your Memberships !!! Send a check or money order for \$25 made out to 'PACC' and addressed to Treasurer, PACC, P.O. Box 6435, Pittsburgh, PA 15212-6435.
Classified ads. Buy, Sell, Trade. Members may place free ads (up to 5 lines). Articles should be prepared in plain ASCII text. **WITHOUT** formatting. Deadline for articles is the 25th of the month. Send them to P.J. Konecny, P.O. Box 557, Monroeville, PA 15146.
PACC homepage can be found at: <http://pacc.apcug.org>

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