

# PACC TALK

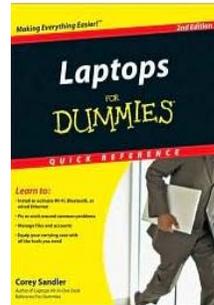
Official Newsletter of the Pittsburgh Area Computer Club

March 2009

## MEETING SCHEDULE

Sunday, March 15, 2009

- 11:00 - 11:25 am Sign In, Pay Dues, Greet visitors, Purchase  
ROOM # 311 50/50 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, PACC BOD Elections,  
ROOM # 301 Raffle. (pg. 1)
- 12:35 - 2:00 pm GreenPrint World Edition, Magical Jelly Bean  
ROOM # 301 Keyfinder v2.0.1, Wysigot (pg. 1)
- 2:05 - 3:30 pm More utilities .....  
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, Com-  
ROOM # 311 puter troubleshooting, Info Exchange
- 3:30 - 4:00 pm Pack Up Equipment, Doors Close



### Déjà Vu

All over again...

Select a laptop to take on the road; Install or activate Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, wired Ethernet, satellite, and other communication media; Choose the best software for mobile computing; Add software tools to synchronize and update files between a laptop, a PDA, and a desktop etc....

\*\*\* RAFFLE \*\*\*

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**Pittsburgh Area Computer Club  
Board Of Directors  
\*\*\* ELECTIONS \*\*\*  
Sunday, March 15, 2009**

### Windows SIG

#### GreenPrint World Edition

A finally a way to not print the empty or underused pages! It also prints to PDF. But read on from the web page:

"GreenPrint's patent-pending software is a simple idea, but it solves a problem nearly everyone can relate to: The ubiquitous wasted page. This is the page with just a URL, banner ad, legal disclaimer, etc. These wasted pages occur many times a day littering homes and offices around the world and wasting money, trees, and time. Windows 2000/XP/Vista (32 bit only)"

Sizable 23,898KB download from:

<http://www.printgreener.com/productworld.html>



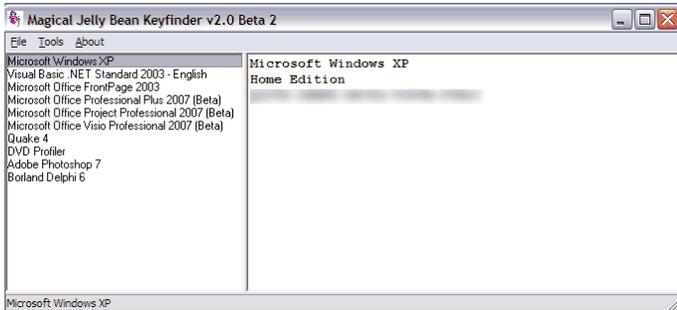
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## Magical Jelly Bean Keyfinder v2.0.1

From the web site:

“The Magical Jelly Bean Keyfinder is a freeware open source utility that retrieves your Product Key (cd key) used to install Windows from your registry. It allows you to print or save your keys for safe-keeping. It works on Windows 95, 98, ME, 2000, XP, Vista, Server 2003, Server 2008, Office XP, Office 2003, and Office 2007 family of products. It also has a community-updated configuration file that retrieves product keys for many other applications. Another feature is the ability to retrieve product keys from unbootable Windows installations.”



A good utility program to have. Only a tiny 331KB file. Download it from here:

<http://www.magicaljellybean.com/keyfinder/>

## Wysigot - the offline web browser

From the web site:

“A new way of browsing, capturing and monitoring all the web  
**Wysigot** is the browser that monitors any site or any file anywhere (web, ftp, LAN, local), with powerful tools for capturing, updating, sorting, comparing, archiving, searching, showing anything new (alarms, highlighting modified texts...)”

Reasonable download at only 2,225KB file size. Download it from here:

<http://www.wysigot.com/>

Afterward, read about the 10 best reasons for using Wysigot.



## Tech News That Affects Everybody

Written by Sandy Berger, CompuKISS

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Some of us scour the technology and business sections of the newspaper and the Web to get the latest news. Some of us head for the lifestyle and community sections, without much of a care about technology. Yet, today’s technology news is often news that will affect everyone’s life in one way or another.

Let me give you a few examples. The Pope recently announced opening of the Vatican YouTube channel ([www.youtube.com/vaticanit](http://www.youtube.com/vaticanit)) which will feature short video clips of Pope Benedict XVI’s activities and links to news and information about the Catholic Church. The Pope is posting two or three videos each day. Most are short clips showing the Pope’s speeches, activities, and participation in important events. In a recent speech, the Pope praised the Internet as offering rich opportunities for dialogue, friendship and spreading the Christian message.

There is a lot of irreverent stuff on YouTube, but the Pope’s participation shows how mainstream this popular video website has become. YouTube, FaceBook, MySpace, and other social networking websites have become more and more popular. If you haven’t yet visited any of these, YouTube is a great place to start. ([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com))

Another recent news announcement was the Palm Pre, which is a smartphone that will be available in a few months through Sprint. You might think that this is just another phone, and you would be right. But the implications for cell phones are quite dramatic. Palm has developed a totally new version of the operating system for this phone. Google now has their own cell phone operating system as do Microsoft, BlackBerry, and Apple. These are some pretty big name and you will notice that the software that runs these phones is called an operating system. That’s because these phone are really mini-computers that can do email, surf the web, and perform many other functions. Cell phones are changing dramatically. They are turning into handheld computers that will change the lives of those who use them.

We also should not overlook Apple’s recent announcement that they will be dropping the DRM (digital rights management) for all songs in their iTunes store. The DRM crippled the songs so they had limited use. For instance, they could only be played on a certain number of devices or be copied a certain number of times. So music lovers the world over will be rejoicing to see that by April of this year, all of iTunes 10 million songs will be DRM-free. There is one caveat. Those who have previously purchased music and/or videos on iTunes that included Apple’s DRM will now have to pay to get the DRM removed. Apple will be charging 30 cents a song. iTunes has sold six billion songs since going online in 2003. They did not offer any DRM-free music until recently. So most of those six billion songs had DRM. If every purchaser pays Apple 30 cents for taking away the DRM, Apple would make \$180,000,000. A boon to Apple, a pain-in-the-rear for honest music lovers who previously used the iTunes store.

Microsoft was also in the news recently with their announcement

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## Improving Vista Performance

Written by Vinny La Bash, a member  
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Microsoft has added security features in Vista which didn't exist in XP. There are new functions and while the graphics are really neat, they can give your system a big performance hit if you don't have enough memory. Thanks to up-to-the-minute technology, and great manufacturing improvements, RAM is cheap. There is no good excuse for not loading up with as much memory as possible.

Vista is the most RAM hungry modern operating system in existence. One gig is about the lowest amount of memory you can have without feeling that you're slogging through a lake of molasses. Two gigs should give you acceptable response time, and four gigs will put wings on your PC with some afterburner boost thrown in. Don't be a cheapskate. It's false economy to starve your system of RAM.

If you are already loaded with Ram, you can use Vista's built-in ReadyBoost feature in conjunction with a flash memory card or USB key to give an added kick to system memory. You need a high performance flash card or USB drive. Insert the device and Vista will politely ask you if you wish to use the device to speed up system performance. Answer yes, and then tell Vista exactly how much of the device to devote to speeding up the system. ReadyBoost will be active as long as the device is plugged into the system.

Once you have enough memory, examine your video card. If you want to experience the full graphic capabilities that Vista offers, buy a video card that's Vista Premium Certified.

To see how your video card checks out, open up Control Panel, switch to Classic View, and then activate the Performance Information and Tools utility. Look at your base score. This number represents the overall graphic capability of your system. Notice that your base score is not some combination of all the subscores. Your base score is the lowest performing member of all your subscores. That doesn't seem fair, but that's reality. You can try updating your score, but it probably won't change.

If you get between 1 and 3, general operations which include word processing and spreadsheet tasks will work fine. Email and web browsing should be OK, but web sites with large amounts of embedded graphics will take a long time to load. Video applications will be problematical.

A base score between 3 and 4 can run Aero and the majority of the new Vista features, but Vista's more advanced capabilities may bog down your system. For example, your monitor will be satisfactory even at its highest resolution, but multiple monitors may slow down your system severely. You will be able to watch most TV shows, but a high definition broadcast could be a slow motion disaster.

A base score higher than 4 should handle anything that Vista throws at it, including HDTV and 3D gaming. If what you want or need from Vista requires a higher base score than your system can provide, you need to replace one or more of your components. Use the subscores to determine what stays or goes. A low score may require you to either turn off the Aero interface or upgrade your video card.

Go back to the Control Panel. From the Classic View activate the

System icon and then select Advanced system settings. When the System Properties dialog box comes up, click the Settings button in the Performance section. You're about to make some tough choices.

If you can't make decisions, you can Let Windows choose the best settings for my computer and be done with it. Adjust for best performance disables all the great visual effects that make Vista a terrific graphical interface. Adjust for best appearance makes your system look spiffy, but you'll take a hit on speed.

Choosing Custom allows you to make some reasonable compromises while keeping full control of your PC. Some features like sliding menus are pure eye candy and do nothing useful. Turning them off gives performance improvement with no loss of function.

There are options in the Advanced tab where you can control how the CPU processes work. What's more important to you, adjusting for visible performance or making sure that the housekeeping services Vista performs are performed efficiently? Make your choice and monitor your system. You can always change it back later.

Unless you know what you are doing, leave the Virtual memory section alone. Virtual memory is a portion of a disk drive that's configured to masquerade as memory. Because it's part of a disk and not physical memory, it can't work as fast as real memory. When the system runs out of physical RAM it can use a disk drive to keep going instead of stopping dead in its tracks.

You can change the location of the file to a different disk, resize it, or do both. Each choice has consequences of its own. Making the wrong choice won't destroy your system, but it could noticeably slow down performance. The default choice is to let Vista manage the file. That's the best choice for most people.

There are many other things that you can do to get the best possible performance from Vista such as modifying the Index Options, but that's a subject for another article.

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*the end of the story*

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## Juice Your Broadband Speed

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People prefer broadband internet connections because of the obvious speed advantages over dial-up and satellite links. Then why is it that broadband never seems to be fast enough? Are you getting the speed promised by your ISP? Broadband can cost \$100 a month or more, but does the provider really provide the advertised speed? Is the connection reliable or does the modem need a reboot several times a day? Fortunately, there are ways to achieve high, reliable throughput without having to have an engineering degree. Here are some suggestions to get every bit per second possible from your modem without any technical hiccups or interruptions in service.

Start with your computer and TV equipment. A common source of line noise can be traced to improper grounding of anything that plugs into household electrical circuits. This can seriously degrade performance of cable equipment. Every electrical device, especially those in the same room as the cable modem, should be plugged into

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properly grounded outlets. The best connections are with polarized plugs oriented in the correct direction, and please don't use any three prong to two prong adapters. Get up-to-date gear. Electric outlet testers are cheap. Buy one and use it to test for excess voltage on your cable wiring. Any problem could indicate a serious safety hazard. Engage a licensed electrician to fix it.

Almost anything manufactured today in the consumer electronics world is light years ahead of its predecessors manufactured only two or three years ago. Cable modems are no exception, so if yours is more than three years old get a new one from your provider. Most providers will make a free exchange, but some will require an extension of your contract. You want to do this because the latest modems conform to the DOCSIS 2.0 standard. This offers higher upload and download capabilities and supports other advanced broadband applications, including online gaming and peer-to-peer computing.

Ask your ISP if they automatically update firmware for the modem. If they don't, have them supply the website address of your modem's manufacturer so you can download the most recent firmware. Check the website about twice a year for new updates.

Next, go to a test site such as PC Pitstop, and check your upload and download speeds to see if they match the terms of your service contract. If they don't, give your ISP a call and have them reset the modem's settings. While you're at it, have them check the signal-to-noise ratio. Too much noise can cause interference, and your modem will then have to resend information cutting down on your throughput.

It's possible that your cable wiring may contain too many splices or simply be too long. That can be fixed by a visit from your ISP technician. Have the technician check the line quality leading to your house. If the signal is good and you're having problems, the house wiring may be the culprit. The definitive answer for cable modems is to create a split directly after the junction box and then run a new cable directly to your modem. The other side of the split will take care of your television sets which aren't nearly as sensitive to line noise.

After you've done everything from a hardware and firmware standpoint, and your cable connection is as clean as possible, you're ready to fine tune the system for best performance. Vista users don't have to do much of anything to optimize the operating system since Vista does TCP stack tuning dynamically. Any internet performance adjustments can be made through the browser. Firefox users may want to try Firetune or Fasterfox. They are both free utilities and allow adjustment to cache memory, capacity and other settings such as pipelining.

If you do a lot of downloading, you can save time by installing a download manager like Flashget. This widely used utility claims the highest number of users on the internet. It uses MHT (Multi-server Hyper-threading Transportation) technique. It's very easy to use and comes with exceptional document management features. Best of all, it's free.

After all this work, it would be a tragedy if you didn't keep in mind that sometimes the simplest solutions are the best ones. Most cable modems and routers have reset features. Many a mysterious internet ailment has been corrected simply by resetting the equipment. Turn off the computer and the modem. Un-plug the modem for a few minutes and then power everything back on. You may be pleasantly surprised.

the end of the story

## SIGNIFICANT BITS

February 2009

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### On Software Installations

I received as a Christmas gift Ahead's Nero 9 – a CD/DVD burning suite with some authoring and backup tools as well. I have a combination of software pieces already on my laptop that in some way do some or all of what Nero 9 claims it can do. However, the promise of having all these tasks integrated into a single package seemed appealing, so I decided I'd give it try. I had also recently reinstalled my copy of Nero 6 on my downstairs PC and was pleasantly reminded how much better I liked Nero 6's interface, so this was another push to try Nero 9.

The Nero 9 installation took 45 minutes on my laptop. One colleague mentioned that maybe I should have tried the install with my anti-virus software turned off to speed up the process. Except for operating systems, I'm curious why a software package would take 45 minutes to install in this day-and-age of high-speed processors and drives.

Nero 9 is much more involved than Nero 6 and similar versions, where Nero 9 includes media players, some authoring tools, and looks like it will replace the need for other software items. In my case, my laptop had separate programs already for viewing DVDs and authoring DVDs/VCDs.

Remember when installing any software, and especially anything that's a "suite" to make a restore point first and backup your system. I'd also recommend if the install left some installation related files, to keep those around, since some software titles need the leftover installation files to uninstall themselves.

First impressions of Nero 9 are that it will extensively "hook" into the Desktop environment, changing file extension associations, and adding context-menu options. For myself, I'm more fond of applications that do not touch the registry and or are "portable" in nature, so Nero 9 has already a bad score in my book before I've even done anything with it yet. While the installer gives options for which components and templates to install, there is no expert mode to prevent Nero 9 from messing with the file extensions. Also, Nero 9 claims some file extensions that are common or else used by another application.

### Opera Mini and Palm TX Part II

You'll recall I had mentioned previously about using Opera Mini on my Palm TX. After a month or so of usage, I'm finding that it works okay most of the time, but it is not really optimized for different networks. In one instance I had to delete all the scanned entries for other Wi-Fi hotspots so that it would stop trying to logon to my distant and not present work network. So currently, I only use Opera Mini on my TX for home use, and the Blazer otherwise. Be forewarned, having installed the particular Java layer and Opera Mini,

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my Palm TX has tended to crash more when using Opera Mini or Blazer.

### Editing Just About Anything

Something I find somewhat irritating when trying to help another computer user with a problem or task is when the person really has not taken the time to learn their software or operating system from a navigational perspective. I can tell they do not know the software well if they do not use the keyboard and/or keyboard shortcuts. (These keyboard shortcuts are also referred to as "hot keys" or "key combinations", and so on.) This is where the person helping, such as myself, says, "Please get out of your chair and let me drive." If you use a computer and do not know your hot keys, read on.

The mouse and graphic desktop are great at giving people quick access to files and a shorter learning curve for applications. However, if someone's primary way to interact with a computer is by way of the mouse, then they may likely take longer to do a task, especially spreadsheet work. The reality is that people are capable of typing (keyboarding?) faster than they can point-and-click (or speak), menu diving or clicking around the screen at teeny-tiny hieroglyphs that may-or-may-not be a link.

A quick way to learn all the key combinations for your desktop and applications is to go cold-turkey and simply to take the mouse off of the computer, have a list of shortcuts and go from there. Here are some hot keys in Windows XP that are pretty common to help get you going. (Check your manuals and or on-line for your particular desktop, application and operating system if different.)

Ctrl-Esc	Start Menu
Alt+F4	Close window, application, or Windows itself
F6	Select or highlight whatever is in the location field, if present (browsers, directories)
F1	Show help
Ctrl-F1	Hide help
F2	Rename a file (Windows and many applications using the standard open file dialog)
Ctrl-c	Copy selected area into the 'Clipboard' aka the buffer
Ctrl-v	Paste from the Clipboard (buffer)
Ctrl-z	Undo last action

One of the reasons I think laptop manufacturers get away with their unique (and thus horrid) keyboard layouts is that most people never take the time to learn how to use the control key in combination with the page keys, arrow keys, and home keys. If people used the navigational keys and hot keys more, I'm guessing the random placement of these keys on laptops would not occur. (Pet peeve: Control keys not being the outermost key on the spacebar row.)

The other thing to consider is that the availability of hot keys are what make local applications so much easier to use than Web applications. Below are some links that list more Windows XP keyboard shortcuts.

### LINKS

- Keyboard Shortcuts for XP  
<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/301583>
- Excel 2003 Keyboard Shortcuts  
<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/excel/HP052037811033.aspx>

Sean N. Henderson is regular contributor to DACS.doc.  
More information at <http://seannhenderson.net/dacs.html>.

the end of the story

## Magic Word Brings Email to the Offline World

A review by Gabe Goldberg,  
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If you've ever wondered how to bring email to the techno-phobe in your life, the answer isn't Abracadabra, it's Presto.

If you're reading this online, you own or have access to a computer. But you likely have friends or relatives -- perhaps elderly, budget-restricted, technophobic -- who don't. So they're not in close touch and can't share online family or community activities.

Presto <<http://www.presto.com>> is a combination color inkjet printer and paid Web-based service which allows people without computers to receive email, including attachments.

Setting it up is simple: after purchasing the device, someone with just a bit of tech savvy creates the account, picks an email address (such as [gabeg99@presto.com](mailto:gabeg99@presto.com)), and lists people allowed to send email to the address. At specified times of day, the printer dials a toll-free telephone number, downloads accumulated email, and prints it.

With only two controls -- Volume and Stop -- it's easy to operate. It plugs directly into a telephone jack and doesn't need a separate phone line or jack or even a splitter, since an existing telephone or accessory (answering machine or Caller ID device) can plug into it, daisy-chain style.

Presto is ideal for letting seniors receive email from children, grandchildren, friends, former colleagues, military buddies, etc. And it's useful when businesses request customer email addresses to conduct or simplify transactions. It handles pictures and many attachment formats nicely, printing them as if it was a FAX machine. So it allows sharing any online or computer content as PDF files such as maps and directions, travel itineraries, Web pages, spreadsheets with financial or family contact information.

Simple steps authorize new people to send email, and when ink runs low, the printer is smart enough to either alert the person who set up the account or automatically order new cartridges.

After failing for a dozen years to excite my in-laws about email -- they steadfastly resisted being online -- my retired Navy father-in-law fell in love with a Presto I loaned him, discovering that it let him hear from his old Navy buddies around the world. And receiving color pictures of the grandchildren sealed the deal.

The printer costs \$150 or less (always comparison shop online!) and the service costs \$12.50/month with yearly subscription. The only thing missing is the printer downloading paper and ink through the phone line -- but that would need real magic!

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**Consumer Electronics Show 2009**  
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The trip to Las Vegas was uneventful. The line to get a cab was about 20–25 minutes long as many were arriving for the show. The Somerset House Motel was surprisingly pleasant. The room had two beds, lots of closet space, a nice bathroom, and a kitchenette with a frig, sink, and stove. The walk from the motel to the press room in South Hall was about 15 minutes.

Wednesday evening, I attended the Sony press conference at the LVCC. The presentation lasted about 30 minutes and was about all the “new toys” they would be showing at CES. One was the Sony Vaio P series. It is an Ultra Mobile PC (UMPC) weighing 1.4 lbs with wireless WAN/LAN, an 8” hi res screen and built in GPS. It runs about \$900. They showed some of their Bravia LDC HDTV's in the 26” to 56” range. Other Sony items were their 10–12 Mp digital cameras and digital picture frames. It was a nice affair with wine, beer, cheese and crackers, and fruit.

The press room featured sweet rolls and Starbucks coffee for breakfast. Chatted with member Frank Fraser on my ASUS using Skype. It worked fine. While checking out Skype, I found my daughter, Marie, in Portland online so I got to see her and my granddaughter, Sara.

The South Hall opened early the first day so I hit the floor at the opening gun. Stopped at the SDCA (that's an FLA for SD Card Association). They reported that the next generation of SD cards (SDXC) will hold up to two terabytes of data and will have read/write speeds of 104 Mb per second with a road map to 300 Mb per second. Hopefully we will see them later this year. At that rate you could buy a camera for a newborn with one of these cards and take photos his/her whole life and never erase any. Imagine, one's whole life on an SD card. UMPCs were everywhere at this show. I had no idea how popular they had become. I spent some time in the morning of the first day in the South Hall, Central Hall, and North Hall (automotive area). I was working my way over to Piero's for Lunch@Piero's sponsored by Pat Meier Johnson. I missed this event last year and wanted to make sure to get there first thing this year. Pat was as lovely and gracious as ever. They did not serve lunch this year, but I had planned to have lunch at the Press Room.

I attended the Sandisk press briefing. They announced several new items. The first was their line of SSDs (Solid State Drives). They now have them in sizes up to 240 GB. Prices range from \$149 for a 60 GB to \$499 for a 240 GB; still a bit pricey. Next was Slot Music. These are devices that play pre-loaded micro SD cards. We all were given a slot player. It will have to wait until I get home to report on it. They also have a slot radio that plays the micro SDs and is also an FM radio. It will sell for about \$99.99. Slot radio cards will run about \$39.99 but will be loaded with music. A couple of other items of news: iTunes will change their pricing structure with songs going from \$.69 to \$1.39, depending on the popularity of the song. They will also no longer be protected.

While at CES, I watched the BCS football championship; first half at the Riviera and the second half in my room. Was glad to see Florida win and also to see that Utah was rated #2! At lunch on Thursday, I sat next to a gentleman from Rome whose family had relatives in Civita di Bagnoregio, one of my favorite spots in Italy. I saw him again at the Victorinox press conference. More on that later.

The Central Hall was loaded with big screen LCD panels from an assortment of vendors with spectacular high definition displays. I spent some time wandering around there. As mentioned earlier, Victorinox, makers of Swiss Army knives, held an affair for the press at the end of the third day. Their big news item was the announcement of Presentation Pro. Many of you have seen their knives. Well, Presentation Pro lets you load a presentation on their flash drive which is part of a Swiss Army knife. The presentation data is encrypted when loaded on the drive using an algorithm based on your finger print so it is totally secure. The unit also has an LED pointer for use during the presentation. The button to advance the slides is also on the unit, using bluetooth technology. Victorinox has been in the business of making Swiss Army knives for close to 125 years and has always tried to stay on the cutting edge of technology. It was quite an impressive presentation which, by the way, was made using their new device. The attendees received a device which looks like a pocket knife but, in fact, contains a flash drive, pen and flashlight. The flash drive contained their press kit.

On Saturday I went over to the Sands/Venetian area to see what all was in that venue. It was home for many gadget devices as well as the home for the Asian vendors' displays. One really neat device I saw was by Pogoplug. This unit is about the size of the electrical conversion transformer I take to Italy with me each year. It plugs into an AC wall outlet. There are two jacks on the other side. Into one you plug your external USB hard drive. Into the second, you plug an RG45 CAT5 cable from your router. You log into the vendor's Web site and register the units registration number, your e-mail address, and password. Once registered, you can access the drive from anywhere in the world. It then appears as a local drive on the computer you are using until you log off. Pretty neat. It runs about \$79.

Speaking of remote access, I have been writing daily reports from my home desktop computer using logmein.com, which I wrote about a few months ago. It works great. I even downloaded Windows 7 beta onto my home desktop when it was released that weekend. It was about 2.5 GB so it took a while. However, the ISO file was sitting there for me when I got home. I plan to borrow an unused computer from the office to run it on. I'm sure I will have to add a bit of RAM.

By Sunday, the last day, many of the attendees had departed so there was not a lot of activity. The effects of the recession were obvious at this year's show. There were fewer vendors. Attendance was down 23% from last year (110,000 versus 140,000). Hopefully, if the economy improves a bit this year, next year the show will return to its old robust size. That's it for CES 2009. I look forward to CES 2010!

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*the end of the story*

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**Pittsburgh Area Computer Club**  
**Board Of Directors**  
**\*\*\* ELECTIONS \*\*\***  
**Sunday, March 15, 2009**



**From The Dealsguy**  
 by Bob (The Cheap skate) Click  
 Greater Orlando Computer Users Group  
 April 2009

**Try This One On For Size**

Three months ago, I purchased a digital picture frame, but when I hooked it to my desktop machine via the USB cable, "My Computer" was unable to "see" the picture frame's memory, which had software on it to install for processing my pictures automatically and sending them to the frame's memory. I tried repeatedly and it might finally see it briefly, but once you clicked somewhere else, then back, it was gone. Windows Explorer didn't work with this frame's memory any better. I tried it on my other desktop computer with the same results. Both of these computers have an Intel Pentium-4 3.06 Gigahertz motherboard. I adjusted the pictures with another software and put them on an SD flash card, inserted it in a memory slot on the picture frame, and it would run the picture slide show fine when standing alone. As I said, neither machine could see that frame's memory, except for a brief glimpse occasionally. I returned the picture frame for a refund thinking it was defective, and the store manager agreed with me after I explained.

I bought another digital frame the other day, bigger and better. When I tried hooking it up to my desktop with the USB cable, I got the same results all over again. I was unable to "see" the digital picture frame's memory with "My Computer" to install the software that came with it. I finally decided to download the software in question from their Web site and install it on my desktop. After that, I ran the software to access the pictures from the My Pictures folder, process them, then send them to the frame's memory, but it gave me a message that it couldn't find the memory. I couldn't find it with Windows Explorer either, except briefly on rare occasion, then it would disappear, however, during that brief viewing, I did notice that there were actually three pictures that got loaded before getting the error message.

After several tries using different USB plugs on the computer, different USB cables and always the same response, I gave up and tried it on my other desktop, with no better luck. I have used many USB items on my desktop machines with no problems. I decided there was a coincidence here and tried hooking it up to my laptop, which has Vista on it. Both desktop machines use XP Professional. It works fine on my laptop and I am at a loss to figure out what's wrong on the two desktop machines that work good otherwise. A knowledgeable friend worked with me on the phone one evening, with no luck. I am out of ideas.

**Want To Get Modern, Stable and Futuristic?**

Do you need a modern, stable and free user interface with 3D effects for Windows Mobile? Touch Shell is now available. MobilityFlow announced the release of Touch Shell Free, a modern user interface integrated with 3D effects for Windows Mobile. With the release of Touch Shell Free, MobilytFlow combines the full screen customizable user interface with a cutting edge 3D effect user interface, giving users the most advanced and intuitive Windows Mobile user interface available on the market today. Touch Shell Free, with its ground-breaking functions, features and design offers much more than other user interfaces with 3D effects on the market today. Many of them are only available on very expensive high-end devices sold direct from the mobile carriers. MobilityFlow also has a Touch Shell Pro version of the application that offers additional functions and

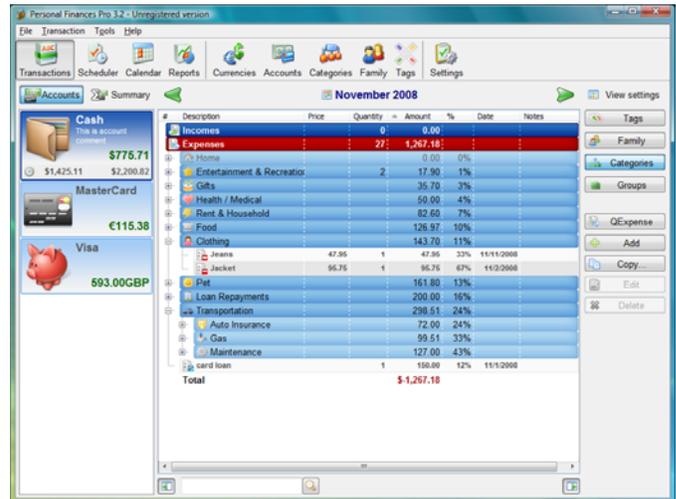
features.

I included this item because there is a free version, but according to the Web site there is also a 50% discount on the right side of their Web page for the Pro version, making it \$9.98. However, I don't know how long that discounted price will last.

Touch Shell Website: <<http://www.touch-shell.com>>

**Tired Of Quicken or MS Money? Try This One**

Alzex announced Personal Finances 3.2, the newest version of a personal finance manager that will help users track income and expenses quickly and virtually automatically. With a glance at its reports and graphs, users will understand their earning and spending patterns, find areas of excessive expenditure and cut down unnecessary expenses. Personal Finances also provides future planning. Users can project expected spending and income, and know their exact financial situation at a future date.



The budgeting task is a snap. Running the program will open a simple, uncluttered interface that puts all the financial details, tools and options that matter most to you up front. First the user needs to start budgeting by setting up accounts, categories, and subcategories. Personal Finances allows for any number of accounts, so the user can set up accounts for your bank, credit card, and cash. Next, set up categories and subcategories. They will classify and sort income and expenses and help the user see this important data in a meaningful and detailed way through reports and graphs.

Next for budgeting is to enter transactions that can reflect income and expenses. Transactions can be one-time or scheduled, which makes Personal Finances handy for regularly occurring expenses, such as tax payments, electricity bills, Internet, etc. Transactions can be identified in a number of ways including categories, family members, and tags. Tags provide a way to differentiate between similar transactions that fall into the same category. Categorization by family members will show spending habits of each member of the family in reports.

Personal Finances offers a summary view of all transactions, reports by categories, family members and tags to see how much of the budget is allocated to each category or family member, and identify areas to cut spending if the budget comes out on the negative side. The user can generate reports that cover any period of time. Results can be printed out, or saved to one of the formats: HTML, CHM, or TXT

(Continued on page 8)

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With Personal Finances, one can have the convenience of the personal finance software without carrying around the laptop. When the user goes out of town, they can install Personal Finances onto a USB flash drive and keep track of all purchases. Simply plug the USB flash drive in to any computer, update transactions and unplug it. No traces are left behind on the host machine.

New to version 3.2 are 50 icons for accounts and 200 icons for categories. Now the user can see the summary for a month, confirmed and non-confirmed transactions, and can group transactions by name.

Personal Finances runs on Windows 98/NT/2000/XP/Vista and comes in two editions: Professional and Freeware. For more information about the products, visit <<http://www.financesoftware.com>>. You can download the 30-day trial version, an absolutely "free" version or the paid version. For the paid version, user group members are offered a 20% discount on the purchase of Personal Finances 3.2. The coupon code is pf43M5G. They failed to respond when I asked when the discount will end, but right now the discount code will still recalculate the price so I hope it's still good when you read this.

Also, be aware that the description I included above is for the paid version, so do your homework if you want the free one and look at the comparison columns on their Web site. Several features in the paid version aren't in the free version. Also, I'm not sure if it tracks securities, which MS Money and Quicken will do.

### Multiple items on the clipboard

Gerry Gerstenberg of Broward Personal Computer Assn. Inc. wrote a review of Clipomatic in their C:\BPCA NEWS, the group's newsletter. <<http://www.bpca.com>> Its an handy product that allows you to save up to 64 text items that it will hold in a cache, and you can retrieve them singularly when you need a particular one. They will be saved even when you shut your computer down, and be available again next time you start it up. She was happy with the performance and it is a free program that can be obtained at <<http://www.mlin.net/Clipomatic.shtml>>, but the author is open to donations, which I consider worthwhile if you like it. She said it's not clear if Clipomatic is compatible with Vista, but it works with other Windows versions. Gerry's review is in their august newsletter at <<ftp://bpca.com/newsletter/2008/bpca0808.pdf>>.

That's it for this month. I'll have some more new product announcements on my Web site that didn't offer discounts. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound.

**Bob (The Cheapskate) Click**  
<[bobclick at bellsouth dot net](mailto:bobclick@bellsouth.net)>.  
Visit my Web site at  
<<http://www.dealsguy.com>>.



the end of the story



## From the Presidents desk



### Hi PACCsters!

I am sure you know the time has come again to elect a PACC BOD. After all it is March. You must be a PACC Member in good standing, and of course be present for you vote to count. The likely slate of candidates will be presented by Vishnu Agrawala during the general meeting. I hope to see a high count of the PACC members. I will see you all Sunday, 15 March 2009. Be there!

PJK

**The PACC web site has recently migrated to another server. The old bookmarks you may have in your browser will therefore not work. Please change your address of PACC Web site to the following URL: <http://pacc.apcug.org>**

the end of the story

**Pittsburgh Area Computer Club  
Board Of Directors  
\*\*\* ELECTIONS \*\*\*  
Sunday, March 15, 2009**

(Continued from page 5)

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the end of the story

(Continued from page 2)

that the beta testing version Windows 7, their next operating system could be downloaded and tried for free. Their website was inundated by curious Windows users. So many came, that they had to add more servers and download services. They originally said that they would limit the downloads to 2.5 million, but recently removed that restriction and will continue to offer the beta trial until February. Don't think that you will be getting something for nothing, though. The beta of Windows 7 will stop being functional on August 1, 2009. At that time you will either have to reinstall your previous operating system or pay for Windows 7.

Last but not least in the technology news is the announcement that Western Digital has created a 2 terabyte hard disk drive. Believe it or not, this may have one of the biggest effects on individual users. As we can store more and more digital data at reasonable prices, more and more data will be digitized. We are already living in a digital world, but that world gets more reliant on technology every day.

the end of the story

**ATTENTION:  
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](mailto:pacccomm@aol.com)**

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FOR PACC: (Please print in CAPS)**

**NAME.....DATE.....**  
**ADDRESS.....COMPANY.....**  
**CITY.....STATE.....ZIP+4.....**  
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**OCCUPATION.....**  
**INTERESTS.....**  
**RECOMMENDED BY PACC MEMBER.....**

Dues: \$25 per year.

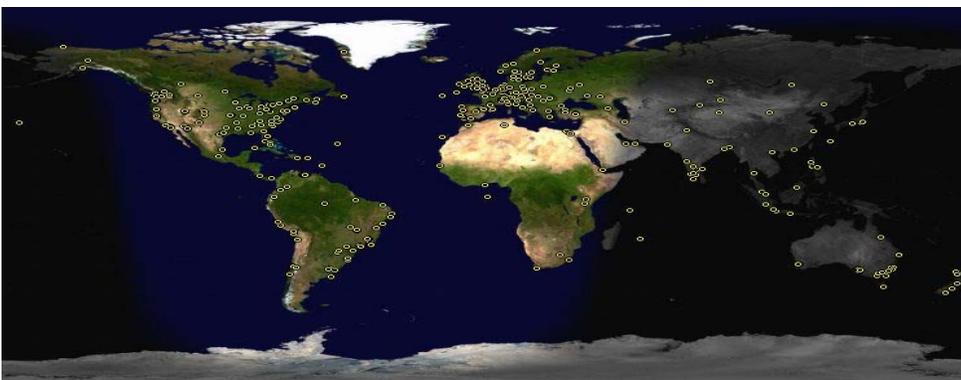
Make your check out to: PACC and send it with your application to:  
**Treasurer, PACC, P.O. Box 6435, Pittsburgh, PA 15212-6435**  
*cut here.....cut here*

***PACC HELP LINE***

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](mailto:pacccomm@aol.com)



**FOR SALE**

Date: 7/13/2008  
**4 GIG USB flash drive - \$15,**  
**Hard drives @ 20 cents per GIG. 160G,**  
**200G available.**  
 Contact Vishnu: [vka@zoominternet.net](mailto:vka@zoominternet.net)

**Your ads PACCsters?**



**Classified ads. Buy, Sell, Trade. Members may place free ads (up to 5 lines). For commercial ads send a inquiry to: [PACCCOMM@Aol.com](mailto:PACCCOMM@Aol.com)**

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## NEXT PACC MEETING IS ON MARCH 15, 2009

PACC 1975 - 2009  
IN ITS THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR



# PACC TALK

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**NEXT MEETING: March 15, 2009**

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://paccapcug.org>**

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