

# PACC TALK


Official Newsletter of the Pittsburgh Area Computer Club

March 2010

## MEETING SCHEDULE Sunday, March 21 2010

- 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, PACC BOD Elections,  
ROOM # 301 Raffle. (pg. 1)
- 12:35 - 2:00 pm Opera 10.0, CDBurnerXP, Ketarin, FreeCom-  
ROOM # 301 mander, Windows Double Explorer (pg. 1)
- 2:05 - 3:30 pm More on programs and utilities .....  
ROOM # 301 and past months recap (pg. 1)
- 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

### What is inside....

Windows SIG	PAGE # 1
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### Windows SIG

What I missed since Windows 3.1 is a decent and easy to use double pane file manager. I am sure that Microsoft will come out with a brand new double pane file manager in, say Windows 9, 10 or 11. But while we wait here is one for Windows XP, 200 and Vista. From the web site: "FreeCommander is an easy-to-use alternative to the standard windows file manager. The program helps you with daily work in Windows. Here you can find all the necessary functions to manage your data stock. You can take FreeCommander anywhere - just copy the installation directory on a CD or USB-Stick - and you can even work with this program on a foreign computer." Only a 2.3MB file, download it from

[http://www.freecommander.com/fc\\_downl\\_en.htm](http://www.freecommander.com/fc_downl_en.htm)

### Opera 10.0

Recently released, is a fast web browser, claiming to be the fastest. It allows for private browsing window or a tab. Yes this is the one who took Microsoft to court in Europe and actually won! Microsoft Windows OS has to now offer a choice of browsers in European Union market to all Internet Explorer users. Get it free at [www.opera.com](http://www.opera.com) (9.6 MB)



## Pittsburgh Area Computer Club Board Of Directors \*\*\* ELECTIONS \*\*\* Sunday, March 21, 2010

**Go on Safari with your user group and you can receive FREE O'Reilly gifts and an on-site visit with Tim O'Reilly.** With the O'Reilly Network Safari Bookshelf, you have access to over 1,000 of the top technical books online using your web browser. And with Safari's advanced search capabilities, you'll find the answers--and code samples--you need fast. Go to <http://www.oreilly.com/safari/ug> to learn more!

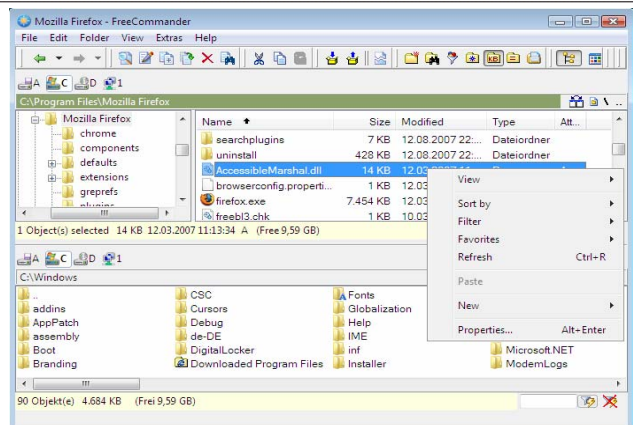


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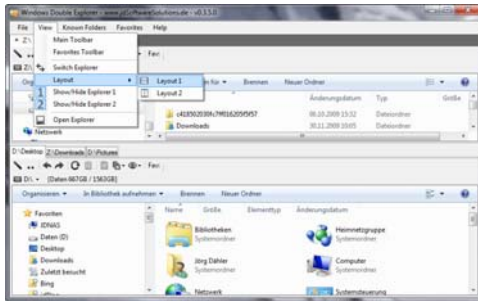
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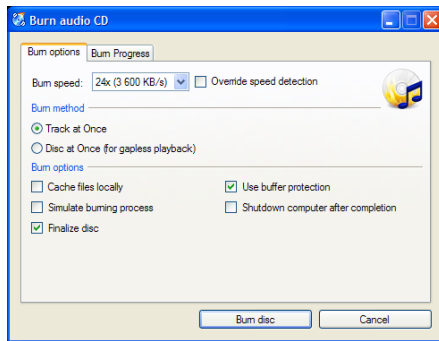
If you are already using Windows 7, then you need to visit **Codeplex** web site at <http://wde.codeplex.com/> and download the 608KB WDE v0.3.7 portable file. Notice that it is in Beta, there is a certain risk in running Betas. So consider it carefully! From the web site: **“Windows Double Explorer manages two or more Windows Explorer in one application. Also you can add your favorite folders with drag and drop to the toolbar for quick access. It's easier to manage your disc structure. (A kind of Norton Commander or Total Commander).”**



We have discussed a CD Burners of several kinds in our PACC meetings, so I am always glad to find one more I like. Very versatile and free and only 4.4MB size file, it can be downloaded from:

<http://cdburnerxp.se/>

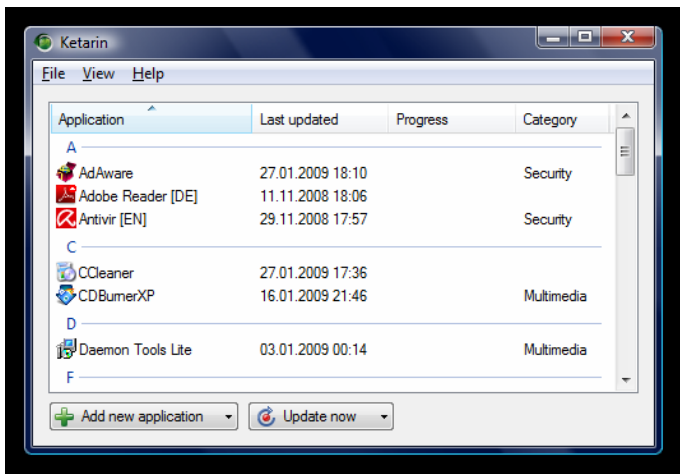
From the web site: **“CDBurnerXP is a free application to burn CDs and DVDs, including Blu-Ray and HD-DVDs. It also includes the feature to burn and create ISOs, as well as a multilanguage interface. Everyone, even companies, can use it for free. It does not include adware or similar malicious components.”**



A complement program for the above as stated on web site:

**“Ketarin is a small application which automatically updates setup packages. As opposed to other tools, Ketarin is not meant to keep your system up-to-date, but rather to maintain a compilation of all important setup packages which can then be burned to disc or put on a USB stick.”**

Get it here: <http://ketarin.canneverbe.com/> only 730KB zipped.



## BeWARES!

By **Berry F. Phillips,**

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The wares have often perplexed computer users with numerous decisions regarding software. The multitude of wares have been even more confusing. Comware is commercial software which generally has more "bells and whistles" but requires the highest financial expenditure without the option to try the software in advance. Trialware is usually characterized on the Internet as a free download for a limited time but requires a purchase to continue using the software. Shareware is also free to download but often has features turned off or has an expiration date unless you purchase the software. Trialware and Shareware do offer an opportunity to use the software before making the decision to purchase. Freeware is free for personal use on the Internet but it may contain adware, viruses, or be poor software. Further, the marketing promotion of the wares can be even more misleading, causing you to download and then delete software that you thought was freeware when you discover it is, in fact, pay ware.

The world of wares can be very frustrating a well as expensive to the computer user. One can spend considerable time, frustration, and even expense downloading and deleting various wares on the Internet. Beware, retailers will not accept returned comware after it has been opened for a money back guarantee. Relax, my holiday gift to my readers is a solution to the problem that I have used for several years, saving me considerable time and money! However, I have had to endure personal comments from some of my fellow computer users that I am "cheap!" Since my ancestry is Scottish who are known for being thrifty, I do not consider that comment an insult. However, I do prefer the use of the word "conservative" to the rather blunt, "cheap."

Excluding my operating system, I have nothing but freeware downloaded from the Internet on my system! Aha, you are thinking, but what about adware, viruses, or poor freeware, and the considerable time in downloading and deleting it takes to find the best freeware on the Internet? There are several sites that contain only freeware. However, I recommend Gizmo's Freeware site because I have used it for several years and found it to be very effective in reviewing freeware and efficient to use in going quickly via links to safe and secure freeware sites for downloading. I am reluctant to recommend other sites that I have not used for purposes of this article.

Gizmo's Freeware is easy to use and makes it very simple to locate the best freeware on the Internet because it is extensively reviewed before it is recommended. Until July 2008 Gizmo was the editor of "Support Alert", a highly recommended technical newsletter that was distributed to over 150,000 subscribers. The site evolved from his highly popular list of the "46 Best-ever Freeware Utilities." The site grew well beyond 46 and reached the point that it could not be maintained by one person. Today, the site has grown into a kind of Wikipedia for Freeware utilizing contributions of dozens of volunteer editors who edit and moderate suggestions from thousands of site visitors. As a result, the range of free software covered by the site is ever increasing and the quality of the reviews are ever improving. Gizmo's Freeware has, in a real sense, become the "Wikipedia for Freeware." I strongly suggest you check your freeware on your system against the recom-

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# Networking For Dummies (Part 1 of 2)

Written by Ron Hirsch, Member & Contributing Editor,  
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## Introduction

This is part one of a two part article on this topic. Now, before anyone feels that I'm out of line for referring to someone as a dummy, I want to make it clear that I was the networking dummy in question, for many years.

While I build and repair my own computers, and have written considerable software, I was always very weak on networking. However, lately I've graduated from dummy school, thanks to some good hardware and software, and more experiences with my home network.

I thought I'd share my old, and new experiences, with you, as they have come from many years of frustrating activities, associated with my home wireless network.

This article will not go into the complete aspect of all types of networks, but is limited to home networks, which are what many of you already have, or are possibly contemplating having in the near future.

## HOME NETWORK PURPOSES

Allowing multiple computers to share the internet, is the usual purpose of a home network. My Internet Service Provider (ISP) is Comcast.

Most homes use either the local cable company, which is Comcast here in Boca Raton, or a DSL (digital sub-scriber line) from the land-line phone company (AT&T here in Boca).

A secondary purpose can be accessing stored files on other computers on the network, or sharing devices such as printers installed on other computers.

## WIRELESS ROUTERS

Most home networks use a wireless router. This is a unit which allows multiple devices (usually computers) to be plugged into it, and also provides a wireless signal which broadcasts in all directions, so that computers which have a wireless adapter (either via an internal card, or a USB plug-in wireless adapter) can connect to the Internet  
My Networking Task & Troubles Back In 2002

First, here's a commentary of what occurred, some years back, in my first brush with home networking.

I decided that I wanted a wireless network, as I had two computers, and I wanted both to have access to the Internet. Since it would have been very inconvenient to run an ethernet cable from my main computer's router to the second computer, I opted for a router with wireless capability.

## MAIN COMPUTER SET UP

I purchased a Linksys wireless router, since Linksys was one of the biggest names in this product area, then I installed the router, and connected my main computer via an ethernet cable, which uses RJ-

45 connectors. These connectors look like the connectors on telephones, but they are larger. I connected my Adelphia computer modem to my new router, and just assumed that all would work right away. Of course, nothing worked to start off.

There was no installation CD disc, but there were many pages of manual instructions on what one had to do to set things up. The complexity of the instructions was mind boggling, so I called Linksys support - which was in the Philippines.

Tech support worked by rote. They followed various sets of instructions, and most of the support staff really was not that capable. I also called Adelphia tech support, finding someone "network knowledgeable" there was also quite difficult.

After several days of back and forth calls, and speaking to quite a number of different persons, I finally got my main computer (which was hard wired to the router) online and working properly with my Internet connection.

## SECOND COMPUTER SET UP

Next came getting my #2 computer connected to the router, via the wireless capability. I had bought a Linksys USB wireless adapter. It also had nothing much in the way of information on how to use it, and no install CD.

I connected the wireless adapter to machine #2, and guess what - nothing happened. So, it was back onto Linksys tech support. I must have spent eight to ten hours fumbling around, while talking to Linksys support. We tried everything, but we could not get the second computer to connect to the Internet.

Finally, the Linksys tech support person advised me that he could only suggest one final step. There was a free program available on the Internet, called "Boingo" - some name! He gave me the URL to that page, which was not a Linksys page. He suggested that I download and install it, and it would get my wireless adapter connected up, so I did, and amazingly 5 minutes later, I realized success.

So why couldn't Linksys have some similar software included with the wireless adapter?

## TASK NOT QUITE FINISHED YET

I noted that when my #2 computer finally made it on line, that the received wireless signal was quite weak. Out of a possible 5 bars of signal strength, it hopped back and forth between one and none, so I did some investigating, and learned that the large distance between my wireless router, and the #2 computer was right at the max usable distance. Checking around, I found, on the Linksys site, a "booster amp", that was designed to work with my router. There were even four recessed holes on the top of my router, to hold the four feet of the booster amp.

So I bought this amp, and finally the install went smoothly. Since it was nothing but an amplifier, there were no settings or adjustments. It did improve the signal strength slightly, and I now had a solid one bar reading. This was good enough to maintain Internet connectivity, but did give me a very slow connection.

So after about 10 days of stumbling around, I finally got my system working.

This picture is what the router and booster look like. The picture is actually the new router, with the old booster on top of it. The new and old routers are virtually identical in size.

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### Moving Ahead In Time

In mid April 2009, I suddenly started having problems with my main computer's Internet access, and then my wireless computers' access.

After reviewing the symptoms, and running a few checks, I became convinced that my Linksys router had developed a problem. Because of its age (7 years), and the fact that it was an older 802.11b model, I decided that the simplest approach was just to get a new router. And, if I stayed with the Linksys WRT54GL, which was an 802.11G unit, I could have the faster speed of the G series. And, the new router would accommodate my old booster, since it had the same mating holes to mount the booster.

### EXTENDED NETWORK

By this point in time, I had my main desktop computer hard wired to the router, and two other desktops and a laptop wirelessly connected to the router. And yes, as I added computers 3 and 4 some years back, all things did not go smoothly. My laptop was the easiest. When I got it in 2004, it already had a wireless adapter built in. When I turned it on, it immediately found the wireless network, and was connected.

The #3 desktop also had a built in wireless card, but getting it online was a struggle, similar to the first wire-less connection. Finally, I did get it working, without having to resort to BOINGO.

### Coming in Part 2

In part 2 of "Networking for Dummies", I'll relate my experiences in installing the new Linksys router, and then getting all four machines running smoothly there. I was dreading going through what I'd been through in the past.

This was a night and day difference from my first experiences in 2002. The router came with an installation CD. And it installed the router and my main computer, "as smooth as silk".

When I started on the installs of the three wireless computers, there were a few hiccups. But I then went on line, to check out a program called "Network Magic". It was touted as being the way to go when installing and configuring networks. They offered a free 7 day trial, which allows the user to install the software on up to eight computers, and let Network Magic do all the work for you.

Since Network Magic was created by Cisco, and Cisco now owns Linksys, if you were using a Linksys router, most of the important software features would continue working forever, at no cost to the user.

If you did not have a Linksys router, you could buy the lesser standard (up to 3 computers), or the Pro version (up to 8 computers), for \$29.99 and \$39.99 respectively.

### Conclusion

This is the end of part 1 of "Networking for Dummies". Next month, the second part of this will cover in-installing my new router, and getting all 4 computers online, and talking to each other. This was indeed a real eye-opener for me. I was most happy to see that the setup and configuration had gone from a terrifying experience to a "walk-in-the-park".

*If you find this material useful, you may want to download this article in PDF format, from our web site [www.brccs.org](http://www.brccs.org). This allows readers to keep the material either as a PDF file, and/or print it out, and place it in a loose-leaf notebook, for future reference.*

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## NETWORKING FOR DUMMIES (Part 2 of 2)

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In part 1, I reviewed the history of my first network installation about 7 years ago, and the difficulties I encountered. Part 2 will cover all the work I did to essentially replace the old network, since the main wireless router had failed. For all practical purposes, the work involved now would have been the same as if this were a new network installation, starting from scratch.

### THE PURPOSE OF A HOME NETWORK

The main purpose of most home networks is to share an internet connection among several computers. Using a wireless router typically provides 4 plug in ports for hard wired cable connections, and a receiver/transmitter which broadcasts the connection wirelessly, with a typical range of up to 300 feet, depending upon the router, the surroundings, walls, etc.. You can of course share files, printers, et al, should you wish to do so, but configuring this is done after the initial setup.

### YOU WILL NEED THE FOLLOWING

First you will need a wireless router. The two current main varieties of routers are the "G" and "N" series. The "G" series wireless capability can handle up to 54 Mbps (megabits per second), and the "N" series is roughly twice as fast. But for home use, the "G" series hardware is more than fast enough for any high speed cable modem connection. And the "G" series runs at 2.4 Ghz, as opposed to a much higher frequency for the "N" series. Considering all the spec variables between "G" and "N", I would recommend the "G" series, since it is also more readily compatible with earlier hardware types, especially "B". I used a Linksys WRT54GL for this new install. The price range for this is in the \$70 region, depending upon your choice of vendors.

This router comes with an installation CD. Just run the CD, and follow the instructions which are plainly and clearly presented. In the areas of security, I would accept the suggestions made along the way. You will have to establish some passwords et al, and connect things up as di-

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rected. From what I've seen, most routers today come with a good install CD. Before you buy your router, check to make sure that is the case for the unit you choose.

There may be one window which comes up along the way, where there are fields to be filled in re IP addresses, gateways, etc.. But the one key item to be selected is the choice of static or dynamic IP addresses. In most instances, such as Comcast, dynamic IP addresses are used, and when that choice is made in the window, all the other fields disappear, making life that much easier. Locate the router as high up as possible.

A computer cable modem is required. But if you already have an Internet service provider, you already have the necessary modem in place and working. For a number of years, I rented the cable modem, for \$5 per month on my Comcast cable bill. You are allowed to purchase your own modem, which I did, and save the monthly charge. A suitable Motorola cable modem will cost in the \$40-\$55 region, and will quickly pay for itself. Of course, if you own it, you are responsible for it. Cable modems seem to have very long life however.

Several lengths of Ethernet Cat-5 cable with RJ-45 connectors You will need one length to connect the cable modem to the wireless router, and then another length to connect the router to your computer. You can of course have all your computers run via a wireless adapter. But it is usually better to have your "main" computer hard wired to the router. However, if your cable modem is in a location which is not convenient for this, all computers can run in the wireless mode. Most routers come with one length of cable. If you need more, CompUSA is as good place as any to go. Even Office Depot may carry the needed cables.

If you find this material useful, you may want to download this article in PDF format, from our web site [www.brcs.org](http://www.brcs.org). This allows readers to keep the material either as a PDF file, and/or print it out, and place it in a loose-leaf notebook for future reference.

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*the end of the story*

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recommendations of the best and consider downloading the best.



The primary purpose of Gizmo's Freeware is to make it easy to select the best freeware product for your particular needs.

The best freeware programs are as good or better than their commercial counterparts but finding the most appropriate programs can be challenging. There are dozens of freeware download sites but few of these actually help you select the best program for your needs. The site has no downloads just honest advice and useful guidance. Links are provided where you can safely and securely download the product you want. Furthermore, you will know that what you have selected is the best available. Gizmo's Freeware is easy to use and will save you time, money, and lots of frustration!

**BE SURE TO BOOKMARK GIZMO'S FREEWARE  
BECAUSE YOU WILL USE IT  
FREQUENTLY TO SOLVE PROBLEMS -- SAVING YOU  
MONEY, TIME, AND LOTS OF STRESS:**

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

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*the end of the story*

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## Broadsides

February 2010, The Space Coast PC Journal

By Ron Broadhurst,

Member of the Space Coast PC Users Group, Inc., Florida

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Dear friends,

These ideas are compiled from years of accumulations from various magazines, books, on-line sites and my own personal experience. I claim neither originality nor ownership to any of its contents. My only intent is to share the various "tips," "tricks" & "hints" in hopes of helping & maybe enhancing your computing experiences. They are all intended for anyone who uses a PC. It is for beginners as well as advanced users.

Enjoy and use as you will.

### DEFRAGMENTATION EXPLAINED

Fragmentation is caused by creating and deleting files and folders, installing new software, and downloading files from the Internet. Computers do not necessarily save an entire file or folder in a single space on a disk; they're saved in the first available space. After a large portion of a disk has been used, most of the subsequent files and folders are saved in pieces across the volume.

When you delete files or folders, the empty spaces left behind are filled in randomly as you store new ones. This is how fragmentation occurs. The more fragmented the volume is, the slower the computer's file input and output performance will be, and there will be a significant degradation in performance.

Defragmentation is the process of rewriting non-contiguous parts of a file to contiguous sectors on a disk for the purpose of increasing data access and retrieval speeds. Because FAT and NTFS disks can deteriorate and become badly fragmented over time, defragmentation is vital for optimal system performance.

In June 1999 the ABR Corporation of Irvine, California, performed a fragmentation analysis and found that, out of 100 corporate offices that were not using a defragmenter, 50 percent of the respondents had server files with 2,000 to 10,000 fragments. In all cases the results were the same: Servers and workstations experienced a significant degradation in performance.

### CAN'T USE THE XP THEME

The most probable reason for this is that the Themes service isn't running. If it's not running, XP reverts to the classic style. Do this:

Click Start | Run and type `services.msc` to open the Services console. In the right pane, find the Themes service and Click the Start Service button.

If that doesn't work, try this: right click My Computer | Properties. In

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## Editorial Bits

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### Computers and Healthcare

We have all probably had it "up to here" with the health care debate. Medicine is in the twenty-first century; medical record keeping in the nineteenth!

Pet peeve? When I visit my physician's office, a new computer monitor adorns the exam room. Is it used to access my medical history during my visit? Not in the least! It's much easier to leaf through a copious file folder, unable to find (once again) whether or not I had a recommended exam the previous year. Time wasted: several minutes which could have been better utilized to discuss current health topics.

In my opinion, the only in way in which we are going to accelerate this modernizing process is to use the populist approach. Tell your doctor(s), your hospital, your medical insurance company that you **demand** an immediate improvement. You will be pleasantly surprised at the power of a letter or of an email. I do it all the time; so can you!

### Social Networking

That relatively new phrase now permeates our daily conversations and actions. The press sometimes depicts this new web-based activity as a waste of time, a fad which will eventually disappear. On the contrary, this is a technological evolution which can help everyone.

Whoa! Hold on for a minute. Let's not just think of this as an online dating service, or an activity reserved for teens. On the contrary, social networking is a remarkable way to communicate with existing and long-lost friends and family with little delay.

In my case, having several siblings and friends in Europe, we are now able to rapidly exchange comments, photo albums and various files thanks to social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. I would even include Skype as a form of social network because we can speak to and see each other and bring our family communications to a degree never before possible without crossing the Atlantic.

Were I not retired, I surely would be actively participating on LinkedIn to broaden my professional knowledge and network.

### New and Notable



**Readability!** (<http://lab.arc90.com/experiments/readability/>)

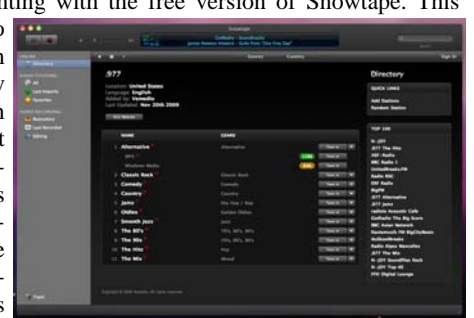
How cool is this! How many times have you opened the link to a web page and seen a gobbledygook of mixed messages and ads surrounding the article you really want to read?

Install this free bookmarklet in your browser's bookmark bar, click on the bookmark after you have chosen the page you want to see. Abracadabra! All the clutter on the page is removed.

Many of you may already be aware of this site <http://www.komando.com/>. Kim Komando has a syndicated nationwide radio show and columnist. Her site has a multitude of useable information for all computer users, PC or Mac. I have bookmarked many links found on her web site.

### Snowtape (<http://snowtape.com/>)

I have been experimenting with the free version of Snowtape. This software allows me to listen to a radio stream and record at my choosing any portion of the broadcast. It then transfers automatically to my iTunes music gallery for future listening. There are other similar applications but, so far, this is my favorite.



### Browser Speed

Being primarily a Mac nut, my principal browser is Safari. I also use Firefox and Opera 10.10 regularly. Less frequently, I have used Flock and, very recently, Chrome now that I have an Intel mac.

I like Firefox but find it to be at times a little slow compared to Safari 4. There appears to be a lot more going on in the background with Firefox which may explain the speed differential.

Chrome is mean and lean. It is very fast on my Mac and as it adds more functions and extensions, I may use it more often, ever mindful that as a Google product, it probably is the equivalent of having a spy cam watching all my actions.

Opera continues to amaze me with its multiple capabilities allowing the browser to serve as your email program, your RSS reader and many other functions integrated in the browser. The latest release is version 10.10 but there is much more coming from the developers. I have been a beta tester for Opera since mid-2003 and I can tell you that this is an exciting venture. The speed of the latest version matches that of Chrome but in a much more complex offering. Stay tuned.

### Lala (<http://www.lala.com/>)

After reading last month that Apple had bought lala, I joined their site and began to delve into their music library. According to some, Apple's motivation for this investment was to have the capability of having members not only download their mp3 music but to have the option of assembling a music collection "in the cloud." Great idea!

Lala has an extensive music library which one can download to one's computer or, at a much lower cost, buy and add to one's lala "cloud" collection. I used the free 30 song credits offered for joining to save many different songs in my new account. I can sign on to my account on the lala.com site, access my "collection" and play it through my computer. If networked to my home audio system, I can listen to this music in different rooms.

The cost? The price to download a song varies from \$0.79 to \$1.29. However, adding a song to the cloud collection: TEN CENTS! In my opinion, that makes it a very attractive way to compile a substantial collection of one's favorite music.



**From The DealsGuy**  
by Bob (The Cheap skate) Click  
Greater Orlando Computer Users Group  
April 2010

I finally received the necessary data to prepare and file my 2009 federal income tax. I had download TaxAct when it was only \$12.95 in preparation. I entered the data and when the program computed my taxes, I printed the pages to study them. It showed I was only paying a small income tax and would get back most of the withholding taxes as a refund. My return was relatively simple with five W2s, three 1099s for interest received, and two 1099s for dividends received, neither of which amounted to much this year.

I also had a capital loss for the almost worthless GM stock I sold and I also had insulation installed in our attic which was deductible. The fact that I would be getting back almost all of the money that I paid in made me suspicious. I've always had excellent results using TaxAct in previous years, but getting most of my money back didn't look right. I decided to do it all over again with another free tax product, to compare results.

I decided to try the popular free Turbo Tax to double check. It's done right online. I studied my way through it and found some interesting features; and a few confusing items. When I was almost finished, I discovered that the free Turbo Tax would not handle a capital stock loss transaction unless you paid \$14.95 for its other features, (I may have missed something in it). However, it did ask for information about loss carry forwards from my '08 tax return (naming the line numbers) and I could probably use that part by substituting some figures to accomplish what I wanted to know. I tried it and ended up with a result that was somewhat different than I expected, but I thought "it was possible it could be right and maybe TaxAct was wrong." I liked Turbo Tax, although the W2 importing feature didn't work for me in either of the free products I tried.

After considering my valuable time, I decided to try a free tax preparation program from the IRS Web site. There were many free ones listed there, but only four worked for Florida Residents. I choose one called "Complete Tax" and had to do that one on line. I entered the data and it was continuously computing and showing my refund as I entered the data, with a few wild refund numbers. This one allowed my capital loss transaction and asked for loss carry forwards, but when I was done; my refund was more than I had paid in. I rechecked it and found several insignificant omissions, but had to do trial and error to see if they fixed anything. Some were places I hadn't put a check mark for the page being finished, and two were minor data errors.

After an hour of checking and rechecking numbers and check marks, it finally showed a refund that was within \$20 of what TaxAct had come up with. Again, I rechecked most of the figures in both programs. I was unable to figure out how to get Turbo Tax to print the pages, or even look at them on the screen, which made comparisons tough. However, Complete Tax did let me print the return and I could easily study the printed pages from Tax Act and Complete Tax to compare numbers. I was finally convinced I could submit the Tax Act return after I input the \$250 Stimulus checks I had originally missed. Complete Tax had easily shown me I should enter our stimulus checks, which I missed in the other two. I had to call Tax Act tech support to find where to make that entry, but they answered immediately and walked me through it quickly. They have great tech support.

It's been submitted and the refund should be here in ten days, unless the IRS finds fault with my work. Tax Act did its job again and I'm

happy, although Complete Tax was good. I'm already considering what to do with the funds. Spending it seems like a good idea to help the economy. Maybe I'll call the cruise line!

### Conference Update

FACUG (Florida Association of Computer User Groups) is having great success with the 2010 spring conference. Holding it on a cruise ship is certainly different, and I applaud Sam Wexler and the other officers for taking on such an enormous task. There are about 250 conference registrants and, considering the spouses, there will be over 350 attendees. APCUG is not a cosponsor this year because of differing opinions. FACUG has always used the same time frame for this conference with continued success year after year. Why fix something that isn't broken. I'm happy that there will be several attendees from APCUG and a few are doing breakout sessions which I'm looking forward to. There's going to be so many breakout sessions that attendees will have problems making choices. More next month.

### Ever Wonder???

Perhaps some have wondered just what files, DLLs or other things are being used by a particular program. The folks in the local Technology SIG were talking about "Process Explorer" which tells you that information. The CFCS (Central Florida Computer Society) technology SIG is interesting because anything and everything might get discussed and you always come away with new knowledge. I can't attend because I don't drive at night, but I am on their Googlegroups so I can keep up. Process Explorer is free at <<http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/sysinternals/bb896653.aspx>>. CFCS is not the only group with that kind of SIG. I read many newsletters and noticed a few other user groups have a SIG like that.

### This One Does A Lot For Your Videos and Photos (I edited this announcement to shorten it.)

STOIK Imaging announced the release of the Premium edition of Imagic, a video and image processing solution with enriched functionality. The standard edition is distributed free of charge and provides the advanced features of the Premium edition for 30 days. Features include creation of stereo images, panoramas, slideshows and collages, sophisticated photo editing tools and more. Both editions support direct uploading of photos to Google Picasa and Flickr. A combination of various functions allows working with one versatile solution instead of purchasing and installing several programs.

The built-in photo editor features a Retouch Brush, Skin Makeup, Lens Correction, Color Variations, and many automatic correction functions. It is easy to align and crop photos as well as apply various artistic effects, frames, and clipart images. Besides photo processing, the photo editor also features creation of different kinds of puzzles.

In addition to support for .MPO files (available in the previous edition), Imagic Premium now features creation of stereo images (anaglyphs, .JPS and .PNS files); extending a photographers' opportunities. Another useful feature is Dark Room editor for processing of .RAW and flat photos. The original image remains unchanged, as all adjustments are saved as a set of parameters. The .RAW files can be converted to a variety of formats, while .JPEG files can be optimized in quality and reduced in size.

The convenient browsers of Imagic Premium allow the user to find any file quickly and easily due to fast indexing algorithm scans and their ability to search by EXIF attributes. There are three browser

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types; a common Folder Browser, a Calendar Browser for organizing files chronologically and the Tags Browser for organizing by categories. However, the browsers are not intended just for organizing photos and video files, but they can automatically detect all matching photos and seamlessly create panoramas in a single click. Other sophisticated browser features are Batch processing, Geotagging, Slideshow creation and more.

The built-in video editor offers other features; frames can be cut, trimmed and rotated, adjust brightness and contrast, apply effects and transitions, use various titles and captions, and add audio files or record narration. The results can be exported to a variety of popular formats. The program supports multiple ways of sharing images; e-mailing, creating slideshows, uploading images to Google Picasa, Flickr and other web photo albums, as well as direct printing with advanced options.

STOIK Imagic Premium is compatible with Windows XP/ Vista/ 7 and costs \$49.00 USD for a single-user license.

User group members get a 25% discount on all STOIK products by using the coupon code "DEALSGUY" in the appropriate space when ordering; good through May 2010.

Direct download link: <<http://store.eSellerate.net/sti/dg>>

(Check the calculated closely when ordering)

Company website: <<http://www.stoik.com/>>

That's it for this month. I'll soon 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*

(Continued from page 5)

the System Properties dialog box, click the Advanced tab. Under Performance, click Settings. Click the Visual Effects tab. Select "Use Visual Styles on Windows and Buttons" in the Custom box.

### HOW TO SET XP TO DISPLAY THE SHUTDOWN MENU WHEN YOU PRESS THE POWER BUTTON

By default, when you press your computer's power button, the system shuts down. That can be a problem if it sometimes gets pressed accidentally. You can configure XP to instead display the shutdown menu, giving you the option to choose whether to shut down, restart, etc. Here's how:

- Right click an empty spot on the desktop
- Select Properties
- In the display properties dialog box, click the Screen Saver tab
- Near the bottom of the dialog box, click the Power button
- In the Power Options Properties dialog box, click the Advanced tab
- At the bottom of the page, under "When I press the power button on my computer," select "Ask me what to do."



## From the Editor's desk Hi PACCsters!



Read all of the articles. Consider the efforts of all the authors are contributing. **Networking For Dummies** by Ron Hirsch (Part 1 and 2)..good stuff! **BeWARES!** by Berry F. Phillips.. check out the Gizmo Freeware web site: <http://www.techsupportalert.com/> **Broadsides** by Ron Broadhurst always a good advise. **Editorial Bits** by Patrick Libert .... some good tips, and of course the **Deals Guy** by Bob (The Cheapskate) Click ... TaxAct anyone?

I'll see all you on the March 21, 2010.

Please come and vote! The BOD of PACC needs you!

PJK

Please change your address of PACC Web site to the following URL:  
<http://pacc.apcug.org>

## Pittsburgh Area Computer Club Board Of Directors \*\*\* ELECTIONS \*\*\* Sunday, March 21, 2010

### FIX VIRTUAL MEMORY

You receive the following error message.....Your system is low on virtual memory. To ensure that Windows runs properly, increase the size of your virtual memory paging file.

- Click Start, right-click My Computer, and then click Properties.
- In the System Properties dialog box, click the Advanced tab.
- In the Performance pane, click Settings.
- In the Performance Options dialog box, click the Advanced tab.
- In the Virtual memory pane, click Change.
- Change the Initial size value and the Maximum size value to a higher value, click Set, and then click OK.

Click OK to close the Performance Options dialog box, and then click OK to close the System Properties dialog box

### HOW TO REMOVE SP3

There are a couple of ways to do it. The easiest is to use the Add/Remove Programs item in Control Panel, but if that doesn't work, try this:

- Click Start | Run
- Type : `c:\windows\$NtServicePackUninstall$\spuninst.exe`
- Click OK
- This should start the Service Pack 3 Removal Wizard, which walks you through the steps of uninstalling the SP

If these methods don't work, frst restart the computer and then use System Restore to roll back to a restore point that was prior to the time you installed the service pack (this will also undo any other changes that you've made since that time).

*the end of the story*



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

NAME.....DATE.....

ADDRESS.....COMPANY.....

CITY.....STATE.....ZIP+4.....

PHONE.....E-MAIL.....

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.

<b>NAME</b>	<b>COMPUTER AREA</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>TIME</b>
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**

**Your ads PACCsters?**

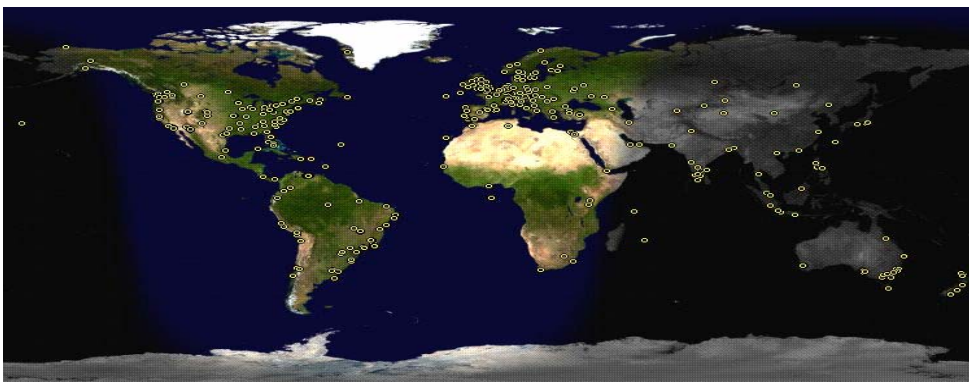


Classified ads. Buy, Sell, Trade. Members may place free ads (up to 5 lines). For commercial ads send an inquiry to: [PACCCOMM@Aol.com](mailto:PACCCOMM@Aol.com)

**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)**

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**NEXT PACC MEETING  
IS ON MARCH 21, 2010**

**Pittsburgh Area Computer Club  
Board Of Directors  
\*\*\* ELECTIONS \*\*\*  
Sunday, March 21 2010**

**PACC 1975 - 2010  
IN ITS THIRTY-FIFTH YEAR**



**PACC TALK**

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***NEXT MEETING: March 21, 2010***

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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