



The Cursor

Newsletter of The
Washington Area Computer User Group

September, 2001



Member of
The Association of
Personal Computer User Groups

Next Meeting:
September 15th



THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

by Bob Mason



August's meeting featured a fascinating talk by **Bruce Fries**, author of "The MP3 and Internet Audio Handbook" a definitive guide to using the expanding features of digital audio. Bruce demonstrated a number of programs to create, edit, and play high quality music using your computer. We thank him for his excellent presentation.

The September meeting will feature my second attempt to present a comprehensive look at the premier on-line auction site, **eBay**. (I was scheduled to give this talk at our July meeting but spent that day in the hospital.) The subjects will cover:

- Bidding on Items.
- How to avoid getting ripped off.
- A guide to "Sniping".
- Listing your items for sale.
- Timing your auctions.
- HTML vs. Text listings.
- Using funds transfer sites.

The eBay auction site can be a source for real bargains if you are a smart shopper. The trick is in knowing the rules for bidding, knowing the true value of the items you are bidding on, and avoiding those sellers that could be trying to con you out of your money.

The emphasis in my presentation will be on the second subject, how to avoid being ripped off by unscrupulous sellers. The FBI has ranked on-line auctions as the top source of fraud on the Internet. The eBay site, which carries over 80% of the auctions conducted on-line, is a prime tool used by those who want to part you from your money in exchange for nothing or goods that are inferior or defective. I have conducted over a thousand sales and purchases using the eBay site since 1996, and have been disappointed only three times. In two of these cases, I was able to recover at least part of my money.

In order to demonstrate the process of selling an item on eBay, I will initiate an auction at the meeting and also show one that I previously offered that will close during my presentation.

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PC Disks of the Month. Due to extenuating circumstances, I was unable to produce DOMs for the months of May, June, and July. I also missed the Cursor deadline for the August Disk of the Month, so both the August and September listings are printed in this issue. Note that we are now offering a DC-ROM with all of the PC Disks of the month for the 2000 year. This will supplement the previously issued 1995-1999 CD. These will be offered for members only at the price of \$3.00 each. We also have a few copies of the APCUG Shareware CD-ROM left which carries a reduced price of \$3.00 a copy for members.

Don't Forget The September meeting will be held in Conference rooms 9/10 in the Fairfax County Government Center, instead of the usual room 2/3.

See you there?

- Bob Mason



Lu Spriggs September, 2001 Web Sites



To View Former Collections of Spriggs WebSites. With Hyperlinks

Visit: <http://member.apcug.org/wac/>

1. <http://www.orbitz.com/> Look here for the lowest air-fare on your choice from 5 airlines. Choose any airline, fare, or flight time.
2. <http://www.docboard.org/> Physicians are listed here for 18 states. Use the DocFinder.
3. <http://www.cornfieldmaze.com/> Are you in-to cornfield mazes?

Are you looking for a lowest cost long distance phone provider?

4. <http://www.trac.org/> For free rate comparison among 5 long-distance companies, visit this site. It is maintained by the Telecommunications Research & Action Center (TRAC) in D.C.
5. <http://SaveOnPhone.com/> Look here for the small dial around (10-10-###) phone companies rates, and other services.
6. <http://www.10-10phonerates.com/> Look here for more dial around phone providers.
7. <http://www.ecglongdistance.com/> Here you get 4.9 cents/min.
8. <http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft/> Here you can request the document "ID Theft, When Bad things happen to your Good Name".
9. <http://www.pcusa.com/> Interested in buying a new computer? This site will give you a range of current prices for any system you specify. Note: Gateway Computer (<http://www.gateway.com/>) has a standing offer to match a competitor's price.
10. <http://www.labtestsonline.org/> Here is a public resource on clinical lab testing. Learn the facts about any lab test scheduled by your doctor. The "Screening" Search will describe all the tests you ought to have at various life stages.
11. <http://www.suse.com/> Try Linux Now, Free CD of Linux Eval. ver. 7.2, from SuSE, the Linux System experts.
12. <http://www.cnet.com/> Here you will find reviews about the latest software and hardware by CNET.com experts.
13. <http://www.idtheftcenter.org/> "Helping people Recover from Identity Theft". Includes a list of Frequently Asked Questions, FAQ.
14. <http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft/victim.htm> If you are a victim of Identity Theft, here are the first things to do, supported by the Federal Trade Commission.
15. <http://www.weprevent.org/> Visit this site to learn how to keep crime away from kids, and kids away from crime.

16. <http://www.ciphi.ca/> The Canadian Institute of Public Health works to advance the sanitary sciences, and enhance the field of Public Health Inspection in Canada.
17. <http://website.lineone.net/~stolarczyk/> Visit the World Carrot Museum, and learn fascinating facts about carrots.
18. <http://www.maximumsoft.com/> Go to this site and download "WebCopier V 2.5", free, a 1.5 Meg download. Use this program to download an entire site, (every included page and file) so you can browse the site "offline"! If you pay \$24.95 to register, you can get the enhanced version.
19. <http://cd.netscape.com/> Order Netscape 6.1 Browser CD here for \$6.95, or with book for \$16.95. Or you can order the CD for ver. 4.75.
20. <http://www.automotivehelper.com/> To find out about buying a new or used car, visit this site.
21. <http://www.HouseValues.com/> You can subscribe to the Home Seller Tips e-mail news letter here.
22. <http://www.field-trips.org/> This site provides guidance for field trips about various subjects: Rain Forests, Endangered Species, Salt Marshes, Volcanoes, and more! It includes teachers objectives and resources needed for each trip.
23. <http://www1.classroom.com/community/email/archives.jhtml?A0=NET-HAPPENINGS> Subscribe here to Classroom Connects e-mail list for teachers. Read their Acceptable Use Policy (for minors) here: <http://www1.classroom.com/community/connection/ho wto/aup.jhtml>
24. <http://special.northernlight.com/> Special Edition of today's News Events. Currently, there are 14 subjects available to select. Use browser 4.+
25. <http://www.fandango.com/> This site will give you all the news about movies, and let you buy tickets on-line at \$1.00 service charge per ticket. Includes movie reviews and starting times for local movie screenings.
26. <http://www.easyask.com/> Here is the most precise search for e-commerce sites. Use browser 4.+ Be sure to viewm the product overview and product demo. This is a useful marketing tool for any site that sells a variety of items.
27. <http://www.cvs.com/pulse/> Women, visit this site for heart health. See the Heart in Motion. Use Browser4.*+
28. <http://www.choosetosave.org/> Choose To Save educational program. Here you can find more than 100 financial calculators that can help you project living expenses, budget to save, credit card consolidation and

many other aspects of financial planning.

29. <http://www.asec.org/ballpark/> Here the American Savings Education Council will tell you how to arrange your finances so that you will be able to retire in 10 years, or longer. Their Ballpark Estimate is an easy-to-use, one-page worksheet that identifies how much to save to fund a comfortable retirement.

30. <http://software.xfx.net/ss.php> Download the PopUpKiller here, free, 2.68 MB. Use browser 4.*+ This program will "kill" those annoying pop-up ads.

31. <http://www.premier.org.uk/> Will your prayer be answered? Submit your prayer to the "digital prayer competition" and find out! Send your email prayer to Our_Father@heaven.com.

32. <http://www.roman-emperors.org/> Here is an online encyclopedia of all Roman Emperors. Just the site for

research for the knowledge seeking student of history. Welcome to DIR:De Imperatoribus Romanis ("On the Roman Emperors")! They ruled between 27 B.C. to 1453.

33. <http://www.ncc1701.net/vacation/> Visit this site to see a good illustration of the use of a personal web site, by columnist, David T. Hughes of the Journal Daily Newspaper, showing many photos he took while on his recent vacation trip to Arkansas.

34. <http://www.ncc1701.net/columns/index.htm> Here is an index to many of David Hughes computer oriented columns which appeared in the Journal Newspaper during the past few years.



PC Disk of the Month - August, 2001

By Bob Mason



August's CD-ROM featured a great Freeware Office Suite, similar to MS-Office, the latest version of NetZero along with a comprehensive support/help file, the latest version of an award-winning E-Mail client, and several "Tech Talk" files that can help you with your computer. Enjoy!

The 602 PC Office Suite After you expand MS Windows 9x/NT/2000 with FREE Internet Explorer and Outlook Express, continue with a FREE office suite! Try 602Pro PC SUITE, an under-15MB office suite that contains everything you really need. Free for commercial and non-commercial use. Seamless compatibility with Microsoft Office is a must today. 602Pro PC SUITE 2000 is composed of three components: 602Text (word processor), 602Tab(spreadsheet) and 602Photo (graphic editor). 602Text is a powerful word processor compatible with Microsoft Word (.DOC 9x/2000) and many other document file types. 602Tab is a Microsoft Excel (.XLS 9x/2000) compatible spreadsheet with over 150 available functions. 602Photo is a graphics editor designed for digital camera and scanner image editing with support for over 15 graphic formats.

Word Processor Create simple documents, class papers, complex forms, mailing labels or even chart diagrams (Network topology, Flowcharts, etc.) for home or business use! All the tools are available to you, from simple formatting options (i.e. bold, italic, etc.) to advanced database tools (i.e. database connection, inserting merge fields, etc.). Insert images directly from your digital camera or scanner!

Spreadsheet with Graphs Manage and create data tables with ease. Calculate your budget, complex

automated business forms or analyze active data from a database. Limit results based on sorting rules or through AutoFilters. Setup 8 different graph types (3D and 2D) instantly with the Graph Wizard.

Photo Editor Edit images directly from your digital camera or scanner. Use the eight (8) built-in effects (including Red-eye Removal) to add a custom touch to your images. Convert images between different files formats with ease (over 15 image formats supported: .JPG, .GIF, .PSD, etc.). Gain control over the DPI (Dots Per Inch) resolution for True Scale Printing.

Registration via the Internet is free and will allow you to turn on several additional features. The programs purport to be able to read from and write to Microsoft Word and Excel files. (I haven't tried this yet.) This is perhaps, the best application suite that I've ever seen in the Freeware market. I guarantee you'll love it!

OTHER FILES ON THIS DISK

NETZERO.EXE 3,610K NetZero Internet Access, v4.0, Freeware for Windows 95/98/NT/ME from NetZero. Free direct access to anywhere on the Internet for a full 40 hours each month*. If you exceed the 40 hours in any calendar month, your access will be cut off unless you remit \$9.95 for the remainder of the month. (On the first day of the following month, you will receive 40 new free hours.) Free email account. 24-Hour Customer Support. Fast reliable connections. Thousands of access numbers. The ZeroPort Speed Dial for the Web. Personalized Start Page. Powerful search engines. Compatible with popular instant messaging programs including AOL Instant Messenger, ICQ and Yahoo!

Minimum System Requirements are: A PC with Windows 95/98/NT/ME, 90 MHz Pentium processor, 32 MB of RAM, 12 MB of free disk space, a 28.8K modem and an SVGA monitor (800x600). Recommended: 200 MHz Pentium MMX processor with 32 MB of RAM, 20 MB of hard disk space, 56K modem, sound card, and an SVGA (800x600) monitor.

*The 40 hours per month limit is per household and they assume that each household has only one computer and one phone line. If you are sharing a computer or a phone line with other NetZero users, your hourly usage will be aggregated with those users - even if you have separate Member IDs. If you use more than one computer or more than one phone line to access NetZero, you will be asked to pay more than once if you choose to exceed 40 hours of connect time on more than one computer or more than one phone line.

IMPORTANT UPDATE: Since this disk was issued, I received a message from NetZero that their maximum free on-line time has been reduced to only 10 hours per month! To me (and most people), this is unacceptable and I can no longer recommend this service.

NZASSIST.EXE 4,913K NetZero Speedy Assistant, v4.0, Freeware for Windows 95/98/NT/ME from NetZero. A helpful companion to the NetZero software, makes it easy to find answers to technical support issues whether you are online or not. This offline self-help tool gives you the necessary knowledge and tools to answer many of your questions regarding the Internet and NetZero.

EUDORA.EXE 6,183K Eudora E-Mail Client, the full-featured, industrial strength e-mail program that easily imports your mail, address books and settings from Microsoft Outlook Express 5.0 (or later) and Netscape Communicator 4.0. With Eudora, you can manage messages and eliminate unwanted e-mail easily through extensive filtering capabilities, organize messages by creating virtually unlimited folders and nested mailboxes, and enjoy easy handling of attachments and the ability to view HTML and graphics right in the body of a message. Other useful features include automatic spell checking and numerous font, formatting and color settings.

TECH-TALK A selection of tutorials that will help you overcome technical problems and expand your knowledge of computer systems. I hope to be able to include these type of files in future WAC Disks of the Month. The files are all in the Windows WordPad (.rtf) format which are easily importable into any Windows word processor, including the one in the 602 Office Suite. The files are:

- [200 Ways to Revive a Hard Disk](#)
- [Babel-A Glossary of Computer Terms](#)
- [BIOS Beep Codes Explained](#)
- [Brief Glossary of Motherboard Terms](#)
- [Computer Terms Dictionary](#)

All of these programs may be installed directly from the CD-ROM.

PC Disk of the Month - September, 2001

By Bob Mason



This CD-ROM contains several of the Audio Tools demonstrated and/or recommended by Bruce Fries in his excellent talk on digital audio at the August meeting. It also contains a 76-song collection of current pop music files in MP3 format that was distributed by Bruce at the meeting.

SETUP BLAZEMP.EXE 10,977K Blaze Media Pro, v2002a, Shareware (\$50.00) for Windows 95/98/Me/NT/2K/XP. A powerful, all-in-one multimedia software supporting playback of all popular media formats, audio and video playlist, audio and video conversions, video construction and decompiling, audio editing and recording, video processing (average, brightness, contrast, gamma, edge enhance, sharpen, soften, resizing, resample, dither, add border), and much more! The conversion features are easy to use, yet very



powerful. Both audio and video formats can be converted. Supported conversions include CD to WAV, CD to MP3, CD to WMA, WAV to MP3, MP3 to WAV, WAV to WMA, WMA to WAV, WAV to OGG, OGG to WAV, WAV to CD, WAV Codec Conversions, and two-way conversions among MPEG, AVI, Multi-Page TIFF, and FLIC. The CD Converter module provides a CDDb auto-save feature, which enables track title, artist, and album information to be dynamically downloaded from the Internet CD Database and used when converting CD tracks to WAV, MP3, or WMA. This feature is fully configurable to use as much or little of the information desired in any preferred order. Of course, this feature can also be disabled from those who do not wish to be connected to the Internet while converting CD tracks. The full featured audio editor's capabilities include Amplify, Null Amplitude,

Insert/Delete Silence, Insert Noise, Insert Pulse, Insert Sinus, Fade In/Out, Invert, Normalize, Reverse, Delay, Flanger, Vibrato, Stretch, Mix. Mix from File, Paste from File, Paste from Clipboard, Copy to Clipboard, Delete Selection, Save Selection, Zoom, Convert, Undo, Redo, Cut, Copy, Paste, Filters (Band Pass, Low Pass, High Pass, Low Shelf, High Shelf), Input/Output Volume Control, Audio Information Read/Write, and much more. Furthermore, the audio editor can be used for audio file recording from any available source (such as cassette; record player; phone line; TV tuner audio; CD player; line-In; auxiliary; microphone; wave-out; and wave-out mix) as well. Blaze Media Pro supports all popular multimedia formats for playback, including MPEG Layer-3 (MP3), MPEG Layer-2 (MP2), Active Streaming Format (ASF), MPEG Video (MPG, MPEG, MPE), Windows Video (AVI), Windows Media 4 (WMA, WMV), Vivo Digital Video (VIV), Apple QuickTime (MOV, QT), Windows Audio (WAV), Audio CD (CDA), Video CD (DAT), Media Playlists (ASX, WAX, M3U, WVX), MIDI, AIFF, AU, SND, and more! For video formats, advanced zooming and full-screen modes are supported. The video window is freely resizable, allowing precise zoom adjustment. Playback speed and position control are also supported. The playlist editor gives you the ability to create your own symphony of favorite songs and videos for your listening and viewing pleasure. You can combine both audio and video files within the same playlist. Since Blaze Media Pro supports all popular formats, the creation of playlist(s) is limited only by your imagination. Complete drag and drop support, fully skinnable interface, MP3 tag editing, full CDDDB2 capabilities, and versatile preferences (for maximum control) add in making Blaze Media Pro a powerhouse multimedia solution! System Requirements are: Pentium class 200 MHz processor or better, 64 MB RAM, 30MB Free Space on HDD, SVGA or higher resolution display, 4x or better CD-ROM drive (for CD conversions and CD-ROM playback), Sound Card, Speakers/headphones, Optional CD Writer (for creating CDs). The web site for this program is:

http://www.blazemp.com/blaze_media_pro.html

CEP12DMO.EXE 4,305K Cool Edit 2000, v1.2, Shareware for Windows 95/98/Me/NT/2K/XP. You've got the powerful computer, so why not utilize its power to get those musical ideas out of your head, and onto a CD? Whether you're trying to write an opera, a Broadway show tune, or just convert a file from CD to MP3, Cool Edit is an all-purpose tool that helps get you to that finished product with a minimum of fuss. It lets you record your own music, voice, or other audio, edit it, and then mix it with other audio or musical parts. You can add effects like Reverb, Chorus, and Echo to it, then equalize it all. Then, you can master it so that you can

burn it to a CD, post it on the World Wide Web, or e-mail it. You can cut, paste, and move audio around just as you do text in a word processor, and if you make a mistake, the undo feature will let you back up and try it again. You can also examine the frequency components and other details about your audio with the Frequency Analysis, Statistics, and Spectral View features. If you find yourself on the cutting edge and need audio for DVD, Cool Edit 2000 even supports 24-bit/96kHz files.

MUSICMATCH61.EXE 9,884K MusicMatch Jukebox, v6.1, Shareware for Windows 95/98/Me/NT/2K is an integrated digital music management software tool that combines a CD ripper, MP3 encoder, playlist maker, ID3 tag editor, and a media player all in a single program. CD audio is digitally extracted and encoded directly to MP3 format with no intermediary WAV file using Fraunhofer MPEG-encoding technology. With the program's database, you can sort tracks by artist, title, category, and more, and then add them to a playlist. MusicMatch Jukebox also features an Auto DJ that creates playlists automatically based on your sorting preferences. Additional features include CDDDB support; a two-click CD-burning system; a player that displays cover art, lyrics, track notes, and artist bios for each track while it's playing; MP3-to-WAV conversion; advanced recording capabilities; multiple GUI themes; MP3 streaming; and a new MusicMatch guide to help you find more than 40,000 free downloads. New to this version are several burning improvements, such as multi-session and multitask CD burning, enhanced playlist compilation features, Library Auto-Load, and speed and stability tweaks. Also new in MusicMatch Jukebox 6.1 is MusicMatch Radio MX, the industry's first near music-on-demand CD-quality streaming service. Radio MX offers a completely customized CD-quality streaming music service, giving music fans options to play the music they want, when they want it. Create personalized near music-on-demand radio stations by picking up to 25 artists that influence the ultimate Artist Match station. Requires Pentium 200 or faster, 32MB+ RAM, 50MB free disk space, 4x+ CD-ROM drive, Internet Explorer 5.0 or newer and a sound card. Included in the MusicMatch folder on this disk are three animated/sound tutorials highlighting the features of the software. These do not need to be copied to your hard disk as they may be run directly from the CD-ROM. Website: <http://www.musicmatch.com>

ROSOFTAUDIO.EXE 7,719K Rosoft Audio Tools, v2.0 Beta. Adware for Windows 95/98/Me/NT/2K. This set of tools include: CD Extractor 2.0, Audio Recorder 2.0, MP3 Encoder and the Rosoft Media Player. With this set of tool you can use Rosoft CD Extractor to

record your CD's to .WAV or .MP3 files. You can use the Audio Recorder to record you LP and tape collection into .WAV files that you can then encode to mp3 files. Just record the file using Audio Tools then chose mp3 and Convert Files to MP3. Rosoft MP3 Encoder uses MPEG Layer-3 audio coding technology licensed from Fraunhofer IIS and THOMSON multimedia. The Adware Edition of Rosoft Audio Tools comes with the MP3 Encoder limited to 30 days of trial use. The "no-ad" registered version with limits removed costs \$30.00. Website: <http://www.RosoftEngineering.com/>

SONIQ195.EXE 2,732K Sonique, v1.95, An audio player capable of handling MP3 files, Microsoft Windows Media files, audio CDs, and more. It features a dynamic, windowless interface, complete with a fully animated menu system. Additional features include a full-featured playlist editor, a variety of unique output visualization modes, plug-ins; a robust control set featuring pitch, jog, and shuttle, support for skins, a balance and amplification adjustment; and a 20-band equalizer with spline-based level adjustment. Sonique supports many audio formats, including WMA, MPEG, MP2, MP3, WAV, MOD, XM, IT, S3M, and CD audio. Website: <http://sonique.lycos.com/>

WINAMP276_FULL.EXE 2,178K Winamp, v2.76, Freeware for Windows 95/98/Me/NT/2K/XP. This new version of Winamp plays MPEG Layer 2 (MP2) and Layer 3 (MP3) audio streams and combines extensive functionality with an intuitive interface. Winamp has a full-featured playlist editor and a 10-band graphic equalizer with user-definable presets that can automatically load specific files. New features are: Windows Media Technology 4.0 input/output support, AVS 2.5, TinyVis 2001 (with "Random Intelligent Visualization"), drag-and-drop support for MSIE URLs, a new MIDI plug-in, bug fixes, and more.

MP3 MUSIC 232Mb A collection of 76 complete songs in .MP3 format extracted from a demo album provided by Bruce Fries at the August meeting. Some of these songs are really good, some aren't! These are all freely released to the public to promote the full albums containing the songs. Play these with the Windows Media Player or with many of the programs on this CD-ROM. (Note: The titles and other information on these songs is contained in the file: MP3 Music.rtf on this disk.)

GNU/Linux Special Interest Group By Geof Goodrum



Linux 10th Anniversary On August 25th, 1991, Linus Torvalds first invited others to help him with a new operating system kernel that would become known as Linux. To celebrate the 10th Anniversary of this event, Linux User Groups (LUGs) in Northern California and several Linux vendors participated in a "no media" public picnic in Sunnyvale, California. Similar events were held in Philadelphia and other locations around the world. Although the big day is over, the event web site at <http://www.linux10.org/> has pictures, event links, and Linux history information.

New Anti-Virus Products Two anti-virus vendors have announced new products for Linux.

Panda Software released a free beta version of Panda Antivirus for Linux, downloadable from <http://www.pandasoftware.com/com/linux/linux.asp>. Although Panda Software will not provide technical support for this release, they will accept bug reports and release periodic updates. The software features scanning of DOS and Unix/Linux disks as well as e-mail binary (base 64) file attachments, and supports Red Hat, Mandrake, and Debian Linux distributions as well as



OpenBSD. Panda plans to release versions for SUSE Linux and FreeBSD soon.

On August 27, Kaspersky Labs announced a beta release of Kaspersky Anti-Virus for Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP) Gateways. The software sits between the e-mail server and the outside world to scan incoming and outgoing e-mail for malicious programs, and is independent of the e-mail server software. It also insulates the e-mail server from Denial of Service (DoS) attacks. Features include a heuristic scanning engine to detect new viruses, a Web-based management console, and modules to update the anti-virus database and generate reports. Future versions are planned for OpenBSD, FreeBSD, and Solaris 8. The full version is scheduled for release in October. For more information, see <http://www.kaspersky.com/>.

Loki Bankruptcy Loki Software, Inc., the company responsible for porting many popular PC games to Linux, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on August 2. Loki hopes that filing for Chapter 11 will protect it from creditors while allowing it to remain in business. One former employee and creditor won a judgement against

Loki for \$237,000 for back salary and loans that had not been repaid.

Xandros Licenses Corel Linux OS Corel Corporation entered a strategic licensing agreement for the Corel Desktop OS with Xandros Corporation. In an announcement dated August 29, Xandros revealed plans to develop a distribution based upon version 3.0 of the Debian-based Corel OS. The agreement gives Corel a five percent equity stake in Xandros and two percent in Linux Global Partners, a Linux-specific investment company based in New York that provided a \$10 million capital commitment to the deal. In exchange, Xandros has unlimited rights to the Corel OS and related technologies for eighteen months. More information is available at <http://www.xandros.com/>.

AmigaDE Player Amiga diehards will be interested in

Amiga Corporation's new AmigaDE Player software. Available for both Windows and Linux systems, the AmigaDE Player runs AmigaDE games and applications, such as those developed for the Sharp Zaurus hand-held computer. Several games and applications will be included in the download package. Amiga is taking pre-orders online at a discounted price of \$14.95. After release (expected in September), the software will sell for \$19.95. More information is available at <http://www.amiga.com/corporate/amigadeshop.shtml>.

Open Source Jobs I received an announcement about a new Information Technology job portal site "dedicated to Open Source Community." You are invited to search or post unlimited job opportunities at <http://www.openoid.com/> for free.

Linux September CD of the Month

By Geof Goodrum

In addition to the disc described below, I will make copies of any downloadable Linux distribution. Remember that downloaded commercial distributions typically do not include technical support.

Discs will be available to WAC members by preorder only at a cost of \$3 each. GNU/Linux distributions on two discs (e.g. Red Hat 7.1 and Mandrake 8.0) cost \$5 per set.

All executable programs are for Intel x86 Linux distributions unless stated otherwise. Your requests and suggestions are always welcome!

Ghostscript - AFPL v7.00 & GNU v6.51. Source code only. Ghostscript views, prints, and converts Adobe® PostScript® and Portable Document Format (PDF) files. It is the plug-in point for Linux printer drivers, and also a work-alike for Adobe Acrobat®. Make PDF files from your own text and graphic documents! Both the AFPL and GPL licensed versions are included (The AFPL version is newer but has more restrictive terms for commercial use and distribution).

KDE - v2.2. GPL source code and Red Hat 7.1 RPM binaries. On August 15th, 2001, the KDE Project released KDE 2.2, a powerful and easy-to-use Internet-enabled desktop for Linux and Unix. KDE 2.2

features an impressive catalog of speed/performance enhancements, feature additions and stability improvements. KDE 2.2 is available in 34 languages and includes the core KDE libraries, the core desktop environment, and over 100 applications.

Kohan: Immortal Sovereigns (Preview) - commercial binary code. This is a playable demo of Timegate Studios' epic real-time strategy game ported to Linux by Loki Software. Watch as your troops battle mystical creatures across lush landscapes, trudging through dense forests and exploring vast shorelines. Follow your heroes of age-old lore to victory with some of the most detailed graphics ever seen in this classic genre. The demo features: Kohan's basic tutorial; One single player campaign mission; Two available factions; Multiplayer map for two players, human or AI, and up to six observers. Also included is a promotional MPEG video of the game.

GNU/Linux Distribution Updates. The latest security and bug fix updates for Mandrake 8.0 and Red Hat 7.1.

Kernel Source. The latest stable 2.2 and 2.4 series kernel source code for all platforms. As of this writing, v2.2.19 (with optional OpenWall security and pre-2.2.20-9 patches) and v2.4.9 (with optional grsecurity-1.7.1 security and v2.4.10-pre3 patch), respectively.

Q&A: Home Network Firewall

A WAC member posed the following problem: I currently have DSL, but I must pay through the nose for

a SOHO connection because of my distance from the central office. I am currently using a Netopia router as

my initial connection point (Hub) to my DSL wall connection (RJ-45). The rest of my house is networked 10/100BaseT. I have about six computers connected via hubs into my Netopia Router. That means the router is always plugged-in and turned-on such that when anyone in the house powers-up a computer, it has a high speed connection directly to the Internet. This Friday, Cox is installing a cable modem and I will be able to cancel the higher cost DSL. The advice I seek is connecting all these network components together. Toshiba DOCSIS Cable Modem PCX1100U - I want to connect this to a hub or my Netopia router, so I don't need two NICs in a "gateway" computer which must be turned on to enable other computers to get to the Internet. I am also interested in finding an inexpensive way to provide a hardware firewall for my private network instead of installing ZoneAlarm on each computer.

Before answering, some definitions are in order:

DSL stands for Digital Subscriber Line, a method of providing high-speed Internet access to the home through existing telephone lines. The maximum data rate decreases with distance from the local telephone switching center, and cost varies by data rate. **SOHO** means Small Office/Home Office. A **hub** is a box that connects several devices together to share a network. **RJ-45** is a plastic cable connector commonly used in networks that looks like a slightly larger version of the connectors used to plug home phones into wall jacks. **10/100BaseT** is a standard designation for network components capable of 10 and 100 million bits per second data rates using simple "twisted pair" cable. **DOCSIS** is an industry standard for cable modems, devices that allow Internet access through commercial cable TV services. A **router** is a box that controls connections between devices on a network. Routers sometimes contain firewall software to prevent incoming network connections from potentially hostile computers. **ZoneAlarm** is firewall software from ZoneLabs that runs on Windows-equipped PCs, which is less effective than blocking network connections at the router. **NIC** is a network interface card, which is installed in a computer to connect it to a network. As alluded to above, a "gateway" computer with two NICs can be configured as a router.

The gentleman who asked the question solved the problem before we could answer. Here is his solution:

Upon reviewing, in detail, the documentation with my Netopia Router, I discovered that it only operates in a

symmetrical environment (which is how my DSL connection was configured) but cable modem technology is always asymmetrical (faster download speed than the upload speed). That being the case, the Netopia Router won't work with Cox RoadRunner service.

Instead of renting my Toshiba cable modem from Cox for \$15/month, I purchased one from Buy.com. My cable modem has both the USB port as well as the 10BaseT connection.

I have established my home network as follows: Toshiba PCX1100U - connected via 10BaseT port to my (new) Linksys DSL/Cable Router (with 4 10/100BaseT ports) Linksys DSL/Cable Router is connected to a Linksys 8 port 10/100BaseT hub. Multiple PC's connect directly to the 100BaseT ports on the hub with the uplink connection going upstairs to my wife's office and her desktop and laptop.

My DSL network was configured almost the same way. I was aware of some operational differences between the providers and was seeking more information on how to handle these differences in my networking.

DSL ISP provided a dedicated IP address to the Netopia Router. Cox provides dynamic IP address although both connections are "always on" by definition.

My previous PacBell configuration in Silicon Valley required me to provide a gateway (NT) connection point with multiple NICs. One to connect to the DSL modem (public network side connection) and a second NIC for my private network side. This means the NT machine had to be powered on for the connection to be "alive." Using a router eliminates the pc with two NICs so my wife can power-up her computer (upstairs) without having to come down to my office and power-up the "gateway machine."

Anyway, everything's working great now and the increased cable modem speed vs. DSL is great. The only down side to broadband is, once you've experienced broadband at home, you really can't go back! I get more pressure from my wife to keep our network up and running than I imagined!

The next task is to upgrade our high-speed tape backup on the home network! With Win2000 and XP, most of our older tape backup applications won't work anymore.

Keeping Up
by Paul Howard

[Cue the music] “**Time..Time..Time is on my side, yes it is.**” So said the Rolling Stones, back in the sixties, but you couldn’t prove it by me. Here our computers go faster and faster, and I haven’t found a single extra minute in my day. All I get are another dozen spam messages, offering me a second mortgage to buy Viagra so I can be a dynamic Internet entrepreneur, lose fifty pounds, and send two point five million email messages to my closest friends, helping them avoid bankruptcy by playing at my web casino.

Time has been a problem around my house of late. Several months ago, I retired the GE clock radio I had on the bedside table for years. It was a multipurpose unit, including a telephone handset. The phone cord just got so static ridden the handset was unusable, and the cord was a special configuration I was unable to find an appropriate replacement for.

But what I really miss about that clock radio was the alarm sequence. I could set it for my morning wake-up time, and leave it set forever (all right, I cheated and turned the alarm off on weekends!) But when the radio alarm turned on in the morning, I could tap a button that turned off the radio - but the alarm was still set for the next day. The replacement, also carrying the GE brand, although they’re made by Thompson Electronics these days, requires me to find a small, hard to manipulate switch to turn on the alarm, and then grope for it to turn the radio alarm off in the morning. I’ll not mention how many times I’ve forgotten to set the alarm in the three months since I bought this new radio. Enough so Linda has taken to setting her alarm half an hour after mine so she can be sure I got up!

Last weekend I stopped in the Brookstone store, and found a clock radio (unfortunately with no phone) that allowed two alarm settings (neat - work week alarm time, and weekend snooze time!) Easy to set, tap the button to turn off. But, the AM radio section squealed like stuck pig all across the band - three other AM radios in the same location had no problems at all. Back to the store, got a replacement, same problem. This time, the radio would sort of stop the squealing when you tuned in a station, but it wasn’t completely gone. Back it goes and the search for a reliable clock radio continues. This radio did have one nice feature - a built in, battery powered clock, that would set the time on the clock radio automatically when plugged in, or after power failure - presuming the battery still worked, of course. Just a step up from a battery back up feature, but neat!

What Time Is It, REALLY?

One thing’s really important around my house - I like to see the PBS Mystery series, NYPD Blue, and a couple of other cop shows from the beginning! I had a battery operated table clock that worked well until about a year ago, and then started getting flakey. New battery didn’t help, it would run ok for a couple of weeks, then stop. Guess I’ll need to search the Internet for a replacement clock movement - I’m sure there must be companies that sell them to folks that put clocks in pieces of driftwood and similar woodworking projects.

This clock failure meant ‘time to go to one of my favorite places’ - Herndon Clock and Watch. I’m sure I’ll never be able to justify buying one of the lovely grandfather clocks this store has about thirty varieties of, but I can spend all day looking. (Gee, they cost as much as a computer used to <grin>!) A colleague at work told me about a clock he had, which set itself from the National Institute of Standards radio signal originating from “atomic clock” references in Boulder, Colorado.

After an Internet search, I was able to find a Howard Miller “Accuwave DS” model that met the current decor standards of the homestead police, errr, my lovely wife, so off to the clock shop. We had to order the model we wanted, so it was with great anticipation when we finally brought it home and set it up - basically, setting a switch to calibrate for the correct time zone, and installing a size “AA” battery. The clock starts tracking the NIST radio signal, which it indicates receiving by stepping the second hand three seconds at a time. Then, the hands start moving rapidly, and in a few minutes, the correct time.

Well, almost - unfortunately the first clock had a bad module, and the time was exactly 15 minutes off. The good news was that the clock store had ordered several units when I placed my order, and immediately replaced the defective one. Of course, I forgot to set the time zone switch, and starting jumping up and down when the new clock set itself to a precise three hour difference from the current time - I checked against the WWV radio signal with my shortwave receiver. So, I now have a time standard to use in setting all the other clocks in the house, that’s reasonably portable so I may carry it around for the great updating exercise. If I can only figure out how to set the clock in the VCR?

As some of our computer club colleagues will point out, there are a number of programs available to set your computer’s clock to the NIST time standards. One such is “Web Time for Windows 95/NT” a freeware program available from the author, Gregory Braun. His website is: <http://www.gregorybraun.com/WebTime.html> The

program will allow you to run it automatically on bootup, or by clicking on a desktop icon and synchronizing your computer with the NIST clock as needed. When I tried the program today, I was unable to reach the Boulder server, but was able to use a NIST site in Greenbelt, Maryland instead. I hadn't experienced

any problem reaching Boulder on the dozen or so times I've used the program in the past.

Maybe time will be on my side after all?

**The
Cursor**



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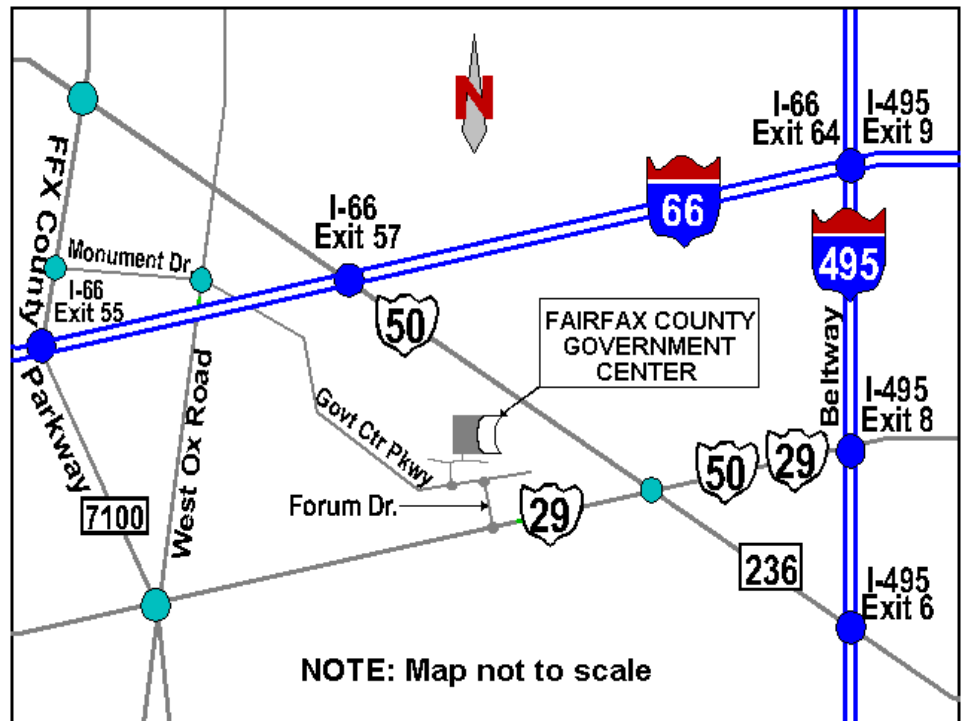
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