



The Cursor



Monthly Newsletter of the
Washington Area Computer Users Group

Meeting Location:
Fairfax County
Government Center



Next Meeting:
March 20, 2004



Presidential Bits

By Paul Howard

March Meeting

March's meeting will feature a discussion and demonstration by member Don Miller about scanning. Included will be coverage of the types of scanners, and pointers on the selection of scanners for the type of project you are planning. Scanning basics, including the adjustment of density and contrast ratios of color scans will be discussed, along with automated software tools to help with your projects, and OCR - Optical character recognition.

Video Projector

WACUG has entered into an agreement with the National Capital Tandy Computer Users' Group (NCTCUG) for the joint purchase, ownership, and usage of a computer video projector. Based on recommendations from WAC's Bob Mason, and research by a committee of board members (Jim Brueggeman, Jeff Goodrum, Paul Howard, Chuck Roberts, Bill Walsh), a Dell projector was selected and a proposed agreement prepared.

With several changes proposed

by NCTCUG, the agreement was executed, and the projector has been ordered, with shipping scheduled for March 19th. Through a lucky sequence of circumstances, a discount of \$220, and free shipping (another \$22) was obtained through the efforts of NCTCUG's 1st VP, Ron Schmidt. Also, Dell announced a new, improved model after the initial selection was made, resulting in greater brightness and extended lamp life for the same price. Extended warranty coverage, from two to three years was purchased, and the unit will be covered by loss, theft and damage insurance.

Program Notes on Web Site

An area has been set aside on the WAC web site for the collection of program notes and other information discussed at our monthly meetings. These will include handouts, links to vendors, and information evolving from Q&A discussions. We've also introduced a page with a discussion of the Smart Computing subscription program. Continues. See *BITs* on page 3



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Lu Spriggs March 2004 Web Sites
To View Previous Collections of Spriggs
Web Sites, visit: <http://www.wacug.org/>

Lu Spriggs Web Sites for March 2004

<http://www.wacug.org/> Here is the current site for the Washington Area Computer Users Group. Visit it for past versions of Spriggs Web Sites w/hyperlinks.

1. <http://www.chemistry.org/kids/> This kid-friendly site is aimed at children in 4th thru 6th grades.
2. <http://www.dignitymemorial.com/> This site can provide you with a Memorial Planner book to record all your last wishes. It even has a link to VFW for their members.
3. <http://www.sharealot.com/> Using their free downloaded program, you can swap photos in large numbers.
Like peer-to-peer services, the program can run in the background while you are performing other cpu chores.
4. <http://www.publicdebt.treas.gov/> At this site you can obtain investment advice about all types of government securities.
5. <http://www.firstgov.gov/> This site includes a search engine to find information on 22,000 other federal web sites.
6. <http://www.nasa.gov/> This is the main site for information about the NASA Agency.
7. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/> This is the Agriculture Department Economic Research Service site.
8. <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/> This is the MedlinePlus site for medical information.
9. <http://www.nihseniorhealth.gov/> Developed by the National Institute on Aging and the National Library of Medicine.
10. <http://www.aarp.org/health/> Here is the health and wellness section of the AARP web site.

Computers from the Very Beginning — Monitors

By Charlie Paschal
 Editor/Publisher, Palmetto Personal Computer Club, Columbia, SC
 Columnist, The (Columbia) State newspaper, SC

Just as understanding computer memory can be confusing, so can understanding a computer display, one of the most important parts of a computer.

The display, which also can be called a monitor, is connected to a

computer by a cable that attaches to a video card inside a computer. Troubles with a display can be traced to the cable, the card inside the computer, software that drives the card, the display itself or some piece of equipment nearby.

Monitors can be found in various sizes and shapes but even the best of monitors can be made to look bad if any of the other parts and pieces are not working correctly or of poor quality. A monitor is only as good as the video card in your computer and the software that runs that video card and monitor.

Let's focus first on the monitor. Of all the parts and pieces that make up a computer system, the monitor is one part that you shouldn't scrimp on. If you plan to have a computer for a long time, then buck up and spend the money for a good one. Although you may buy a new computer, you can always use your old monitor on it -- especially if you buy a good quality monitor.

In that purchase, there's a lot to consider.

Although you can find monitors less than 17 inches in size, I don't recommend buying one. Since some very cheap systems come with smaller monitors, it's something you should guard against when looking at buying a system that comes with a monitor. Resolution and dot pitch are very important when it comes to monitors.

A computer screen is made up of dots and these are measured in dot pitch. In this case, you always go with the lowest number, with a cutoff of 28 dot pitch. Anything larger than that will give you a grainy display. More expensive models come with a dot pitch of 24.

Resolution is another measure of a monitor. Common resolutions include 640x480, 800x600, 1024x768 and 1280x1024. Even

Continues. See *Monitor* on page 7

BITs from page 1

for WAC members, which provides a bonus publication with paid two or three year subscriptions. If WAC members purchase five subscriptions in a given quarter, using the form provided, or entering group information with a web subscription, Smart Computing will provide a free subscription to WAC for use as a door prize.

Screen Shots

Over the years, I've had the need at various times to capture what's on the computer screen and use it

to demonstrate a problem I was having, or to illustrate an article. I learned that hitting the Print Screen key would save the image on the screen to the clipboard, which I could then paste into another application, such as Word or WordPerfect, for further manipulation. Several months ago, I read in a magazine that using the <alt><Print Screen> combination would capture just the current active window – very handy when you're only trying to capture a small area of a program display, rather than a full screen view. The "Tips" column in January's Smart

Computing magazine took that a step farther – after getting the image into the clipboard, invoke <Start> <Accessories> <Paint> and paste the image into the Paint program. It can be manipulated in Paint, or saved out as a BMP or JPG file (or .GIF, .TIF or .PNG), and manipulated or used in another program. Talk about hiding in plain site – I'd completely forgotten that the Paint program existed in Windows – hadn't used it since Windows 3.1.

Time To Give Win98 The Boot

by Scot Finnie

Scot's Take, Commentary by Scot Finnie

You may disagree vehemently with what I'm about to say. You may think less of me, decide I'm a shill for Microsoft, or believe I'm one of those Ivory Tower computer writers who doesn't have a clue about the needs of real people computing in the real world. You are, of course, entitled to your opinion, but I have nothing but your best interests at heart.

That's why I'm telling you now: It's time to get out of Windows 98.

Now is the time to move away gracefully. I've waited and waited until what I feel is the last good moment to make this recommendation. Get out now to avoid both unnecessary aggravation and probably increased cost.

Why? Because Microsoft now only marginally supports Win98. It's also vastly inferior to Windows 2000 and Windows XP in terms of reliability and memory

utilization. New software will be less backward compatible with Win98 and Windows Me. New hardware will not work with it, as well. And system resources are even more of an issue than they ever were. As we're forced to layer more and more security utilities on our PCs, Win98 is being pressed harder and harder to its breaking point. WinXP and Win2000 are much better equipped to handle the demands of computing today.

The Life Of Windows

Notice that I'm not claiming your system will be vastly more secure by trading up to Win2000/XP. But sooner or later, Microsoft will become slower on the draw to protect Win98. Technically, it has not promised to continue to develop new support tools at all. You should explore this yourself by looking at Microsoft's stated policies about Windows life cycles. The best place to learn about the official lifespan for each

Windows version is at Microsoft's Windows Desktop Product Life Cycle Support And Availability Policies For Consumers (www.microsoft.com/windows/lifecycleconsumer.mspx).

You have only to notice in this document that WinXP Home has a supported life cycle two years shorter than WinXP Pro to realize that marketing decisions—not technology—are what's driving the thinking at Microsoft about Windows life cycles. I have a hard time stomaching that sort of malarkey.

Even so, Microsoft can't extend its resources indefinitely to support every OS it has ever built. People are still using DOS 4.01; should Microsoft support it? And I think the software giant is well within its rights more than a decade later to have stopped supporting Windows 3.0. Should Ford and GM support 20-year-old vehicles? They do not—at least, not as a matter of course. And the pace of the

computer industry moves much faster than that of automobile manufacturing.

Regardless of what we might think about it, at press time, Win98 and Win98SE were slated to enter the “non-supported phase” on Jan. 16. WinMe enters the same phase the last day of this year. WinXP Home loses support the last day of 2006. Win2000 is good until March 31, 2007. And WinXP Pro’s time runs out at the end of 2008. Also worth noting: Win2000 will no longer be available for purchase by the general public as of March 31 of this year. A year later, it will no longer be available to be purchased with a new PC.

A Good Day To Buy?

If you accept the notion of leaving Win98 behind (or suspend your disbelief), there are three primary ways you can move away from Win98 that are worth exploring, each of which has advantages and disadvantages:

1. Buy a new Win XP PC. This may be the right time to buy. After three years in a down economy there’s a lot of pent-up demand among consumers and corporations to purchase new computer hardware. PC prices were at an all-time low last year, showing early signs of firming up at the end of the year. No one can predict the future, but I hope we’ve seen the worst the economy has to offer. When PC sales go up, prices go up with them—a function of supply and demand. I believe PC sales will rise firmly, if not dramatically. And if I’m right about this, new PCs will cost more soon.

So what about the hardware out there? Is it worth buying? Until

recently, my last new computer was a 1.2GHz Pentium III I built myself with off-the-shelf parts. Cost: About \$1,200. A few months ago I bought a P4 3.0GHz white box PC with virtually every possible option, including twice as much RAM and three times as much hard disk capacity. Cost: \$1,100. PC hardware has advanced significantly in many ways over the last 18 months at the same time prices have fallen some, making for excellent values—so long as you don’t wait.

Buying a new PC involves both a financial hit and some migration issues. You’ll be faced with moving your data and programs over to the new machine. After that, things get better. WinXP user interface is only an evolutionary upgrade from Win98. You already know how to work with it. (The biggest changes are in the network configuration area.) Switching outright to WinXP on a new machine is not as difficult as most people believe, and a lot of the work can be done over time.

2. Upgrade your Win 98 installation with Win 2000 or Win XP. Most of the time, doing a major software upgrade of Win98 sounds a whole lot better in theory than it winds up being in practice. It does vastly minimize the migration issues. But upgraded Windows installations are more prone to disaster, and you take a hit on both performance and reliability of your new version of Windows.

Another variation of this option is to clean install (wipe Win 98 off your computer and install Win XP or Win 2000 fresh) the new version of Windows.

Clean installing is preferable, but it requires the highest degree of technical knowledge and experience. Don’t try a clean install with an older Win98 machine. Make it one that was built in this century.

3. Dual boot Win 98 with Win2000 or Win XP.

Dual booting is when you install two different operating systems on your PC and you’re able to select the OS you want to boot to at system startup. Both Win2000 and WinXP can configure dual boot for you automatically as part of their setup if Win98 is installed in the C: drive.

There are pluses and minuses to dual booting. You won’t lose Win98 at all, and you’ll be able to try out the new OS in a clean install environment. You do need significant free hard drive space, and you will have to install applications for the new version of Windows. I chose this option in August 2001. But after I had WinXP on my machine, I never went back to Win98, making dual boot a giant loss of disk space.

Win XP vs. Win 2000 Pro

Win2000 Professional, though not cheap, continues to hold a lot of appeal for long-term Windows use, especially by power users. It lacks product activation, the hardware it was designed for has a large overlap with the hardware of the Win98 era, it’s got a pretty long life cycle (longer than WinXP Home), and some experts believe its networking features work better than WinXP’s.

Because Win2000 shares a lot in common with WinXP, many device drivers and applications

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written for WinXP era are backwardly compatible with Win2000. In many ways, upgrading to Win2000 provides the perfect bridge from Win98.

WinXP Pro has another set of advantages. On most points of comparison, it's a slightly better operating system than Win2000. It has the longest expected life cycle (at press time, WinXP Pro isn't scheduled to end its life cycle until the end of 2009) and better installation. WinXP Pro is modestly easier to use than Win2000, and provides much better support for newer technologies, such as USB, FireWire, and CD-RW and DVD-recordable drives.

I highly recommend WinXP Pro over the Home Edition. There's a long string of minor differences between the Pro and Home Editions that tilt my opinion in favor of the Pro version.

What About The Alternatives?

What about Linux? What about just sticking with Win 98? After all, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. There are no truly right answers. Linux is a great operating system, but I recommend dabbling with it on another PC first.

The sky isn't going to fall if you stick with Win98. But history shows that many people will stay with Win 98 until their systems work no more. I've done my part to help you avoid the worst. It's up to you to decide what's best for you.

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<http://www.TechWeb.com>, and the author of <http://www.ScotsNewsletter.com>.

com. He was managing editor at Windows Magazine for several years before it ceased operation and served as editor for several other computing publications, as well. Scot has written scores of articles for various magazines and Web sites, mostly about Windows, security, and Internet topics. Catch up with Scot at the Web site for his email newsletter (www.scotsnewsletter.com),

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PCI Express: Say Goodbye to AGP and PCI Slots

By Timothy Everingham, TUGNET

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Those of you who have been around personal computers for a while might remember plug in cards slots referred to as ISA, EISA, Microchannel, and VESA Local Bus. ISA, EISA, and Microchannel were replaced by PCI. VESA Local bus was primarily for video cards, which was replaced by PCI, then AGP slots. It was a fun time during these card slot transitions because many times you could not use the plug in cards from your old machine in your new computer or motherboard or if you did it could slow down the entire system. Well guess what, its time to do it all over again. Intel has come up with a new slot standard PCI Express, which will start to show up in computers/motherboards this spring.

PCI came out in 1992. Today these slots and its data bus technology are used for things not envisioned when it was under development over 12 years ago. PCI has its limitations and the PCI pro slots never became popular. The limitations are coming to the forefront in delivering multimedia content and Gigabit Ethernet. Of course getting higher frame rates at

higher resolution and quality for video games also is an issue. PCI has been evolving over time increasing its speed to five times the original, but it has reached its limits of development. Many say that stretching out the AGP to 8x speed might be pushing at its limit too.

First let us look at the current PCI architecture you will find on most motherboards. The CPU/Microprocessor communicates with the first of two data bridges, normally referred to as the Memory Bridge or Northbridge. The Northbridge not only communicates with the CPU; but also communicates to the AGP port, which is where your main graphics card is (usually the only graphics card). It also communicates with your RAM. The fourth thing it communicates with is the second data bridge, known as the Input/Output (I/O) Bridge or Southbridge. The Southbridge also communicates to your plug in slots/cards, drive controllers, and USB, Firewire/1394, parallel, serial, game, keyboard and mouse ports. The theoretical speed limit of the Southbridge communication to I/O including the PCI slots

is 133 MB/second. All of the communications in the system are parallel with none of the data having any priority over any other. Blocks of data have to be sent one at a time and cannot be done concurrently. Therefore the data is transferred from one section of the motherboard to the next section based on the order received, not the importance or whether a piece of data arriving by a certain time to its destination is critical.

PCI Express, instead of using a parallel bus architecture, uses serial networking typology with only two wires for each direc-

tion. At higher speeds, it allows concurrent transfer of data while having a similar look and the same type of Northbridge/Southbridge architecture as currently in desktops and laptops.

However, in servers the Southbridge is eliminated producing greater data throughput. The PCI slots initially have a 250 MB/second throughput, but the scalable width technology (increasing the number of wire pairs) enables slots and cards to communicate at 32 times that speed in later implementations using longer slots. But the typology can also use network switching type technology, giving data priority and quality of service functions. Hot plug/swap of components is a native part of the architecture.

The PCI Express Graphics Port, replacing the AGP Port, will have

a 4GB/second transfer rate in its initial configuration, double that of the current 8x AGP ports. For laptops units there will be a new plug-in card to replace PCMCIA called ExpressCard. It will come in two forms, one that more looks like a PCMCIA card referred to at the 34 module form factor (34 x 75 x 5 mm) and a more oversized L looking card called the 54



module form factor (54 x 75 x 5 mm). This new architecture is compatible with existing operating systems. Also the new PCI Express slot is capable of being placed

alongside current type PCI slots so a choice can be made which type of card can be used in a motherboard just like was done with ISA slots and current PCI slots. The standard PCI Express slots being put in motherboards this spring (1x) will be a lot shorter than the standard PCI slots.

All of this will mean that a lot of issues having to do with multimedia on desktop and laptop computers will have been solved. It also opens wider use of Gigabit Ethernet on local area networks. It also enables the prospects of new motherboard form factors and computer case designs. As the transition from ISA to PCI was an interesting transition with computer buyers having to do more research and planning on their purchases, the move from PCI to PCI Express will do the same.

However, as was with the previous transition, the performance and capability increases of computers will be profound. Further information on PCI Express can be found at www.express-lane.org.

Timothy Everingham is CEO of Timothy Everingham Consulting in Azusa, California. He is also Vice Chair of the Los Angeles Chapter of ACM SIGGRAPH and is also on the Management Information Systems Program Advisory Board of California State University, Fullerton. In addition he is the Vice President of the Windows Media Users' Group of Los Angeles. He is also part-time press in the areas of high technology, computers, video, audio, and entertainment/media and has had articles published throughout the United States and Canada plus Australia, England, & Japan. Further information can be found at <http://home.earthlink.net/~teveringham>

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The Cursor has a new look this month. Tell us what you think about the

- **appearance,**
 - **content / articles**
 - **ease of reading**
-

Monitor from page 2

if your monitor can do higher resolutions, if your video card can't, then you won't be able to use them.

Why should you care about resolution? By using higher resolutions, you can fit more on your screen. A Web page viewed at 640x480 displays very little information. By boosting your resolution to 800x600 or 1024x768, you can fit more pixels on the screen, thus increasing your viewing area.

Another feature to check before buying a monitor is its refresh rate. Although many makers claim their monitors are able to display higher resolutions, these are often delivered at a rate lower than 72Hz, meaning that your eyes will see flicker. This is hard on your eyes and will make your eyes tire quicker than a higher refresh rate.

In today's world, the hot item is a "flat panel" LCD monitor; but, just because it's hot and the salesmen are pushing it, doesn't mean you should buy it. Although many of us lust after a flat panel, there are drawbacks:

* Small type often doesn't look good on one. If you're considering one, be sure to look at some small type faces in the store before you buy it. If a salesperson is handy, get them to start Wordpad (or Word) and make the type nine- or 10 point. Be sure to check around the edges of the LCD to see if the image blurs on either side.

* Often, an LCD is "fixed" to a certain resolution, such as 1024x768. Be sure that you like the way icons and type appears on screen before

buying. If the type is too small (or too large), try another resolution. If the type appears jagged or blurry, then the LCD might look best at one resolution.

* Color is not rendered sharply by less expensive flat panels. If it's a bargain basement flat panel, the color on a normal CRT probably will be better.

The availability of these flat panels mean that the CRT monitors -- the old style larger monitors -- are getting less expensive. About a year ago, I purchased a 21-inch Sony (almost top of the line) for less than \$500 off the Internet. It has beautiful color, is capable of rendering higher resolutions at a high refresh rate.

The push to flat panels also has opened up a huge market for used monitors since many people are replacing the older CRTs with this new style of monitor. Because of this, I've found used 17-inch

monitors for less than \$80 and 19-inch monitors for about \$125.

Bottom line: A good rule of thumb for monitors is at least a 1024x768 resolution at 72Hz, no dot

pitch larger than 26 and no smaller than 17 inches.

Unless you've got a space problem (CRTs are much larger than flat panel monitors), I'd stick with CRT monitors rather than a flat panel, which will cost less in the future as manufactures ramp up production of them. You can bet on that.

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RSS: News Summaries on Demand

by Geof Goodrum

Rich Site Summary or Really Simple Syndication (RSS) is receiving a lot of attention recently as a solution to problems with e-mail newsletters and keeping track of favorite web sites. RSS allows web sites and news services to post summaries of their articles in a standard format that can be quickly extracted and presented to users. It also allows web sites to provide links to articles on other sites automatically.

Web sites that support RSS (and there are more all the time) usually can be identified by a small orange button labeled XML or RSS (<http://www.cnet.com/> has one near the bottom), but is sometimes a simple text link marked "feed." The link is to a summary about site content written in eXtensible Markup Language (XML). While XML is formatted plain text, it is not very easy to read directly. Therefore, here is a new class of software called newsfeed readers to collect and display this information (some examples are included on the January 2004 WAC GNU/Linux CD of the Month). I use the basic function RSS Reader plug-in for the Mozilla Firefox web browser (<http://jfs.moo.jp/moz/rssreader.html>), but there is a plug-in for

Continues. See RSS on page 10



WAC's WebBoard

by Geof Goodrum

As mentioned at the February meeting, WAC now has a free online message service as a benefit for our members and guests. The Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG) administers an O'Reilly WebBoard service for its member user groups. Each user group can request a WebBoard after entering a written agreement with APCUG. The user group has responsibility to manage message conference areas within the WebBoard.

In January, WAC requested a WebBoard for evaluation. We are now ready to make it available to our members and the public. As of this writing, WAC's WebBoard (named "The Washington Area Computer User Group Exchange") supports three conferences; WACbiz, WACmembers, and WACnews. WACbiz and WACmembers are private conferences, which means that only registered WebBoard users explicitly added by the WAC conference administrators can read and post messages to them. WACbiz is for the exclusive use of the Board of Directors and members involved in volunteer projects for WAC. WACmembers will be the messaging area accessible by WAC members only. The WACnews conference is a public read-only message conference where authorized WAC moderators post announcements about WAC meetings, changes to the web site, and other WAC-related news items for the public.

WAC's WebBoard is accessible with a web browser at <http://webboard.apcug.org:8080/~wacug/>.

You may try out the system by clicking the "Guest" button, but this limits access to reading public conferences (only WACnews at this time). First time users wishing to access private conferences and post messages need to click on the "New User" button and complete a user registration form. The WebBoard system will send an e-mail with a temporary password to the registered e-mail address. Return to the web site above and enter your User ID and password in the fields provided. If you want to access the members-only conference (WACmembers), please send a request with your real name and User ID by e-mail to either Paul Howard (plhoward@verizon.net) or me (ggoodrum@bigfoot.com). Note that you must be a member in good-standing for us to grant access to the private conferences.

You should edit your user profile the first time you enter the WebBoard (instructions are provided in the e-mail you receive). This allows you to change your password and registration information. The WebBoard also allows you to subscribe to mailing lists for each conference, receiving messages posted to conferences by e-mail as they are posted (non-digest) or as a single daily collection (digest and ZIPped digest). **Members and non-members who wish to receive WAC meeting announcements by e-mail must create a user account and subscribe to the WACnews conference mailing list, as meeting announcements will no longer be sent out by personal e-mail.** The conference name is identified in the e-mail's "From" field, so you can have

your e-mail client filter them into separate folders if you wish. The WebBoard also allows you to post messages to conferences by e-mail, or access conferences with a newsreader program. Information on these and other options is available by clicking on the "Help" button once you are logged into the WebBoard.

Although we are not currently moderating messages posted to the WACmembers conference, we will be monitoring them for inappropriate content. We trust that our members have good judgement and will use the service to share information on computer-related issues such as technical help and tips, news, advice on purchases and where to find good deals. While it is possible to post active web links in your messages, we block embedded images and other file attachments. WAC disclaims any responsibility for availability of the service, content and suitability for use. Before using the WebBoard, review the APCUG Terms of Service at http://www.apcug.org/apcug/mail_web_agree.htm.

We will present an introductory tutorial for the WebBoard system at the March general meeting. However, if you need assistance or forget your password, please contact Paul or myself. We would also appreciate your comments and suggestions as we work to improve the service!

See page 10 for WAC meeting schedule for remainder of the year!

GNU/Linux SIG

by Geof Goodrum

XFree86, Apache and the GNU GPL

A change in the terms of the Open Source licenses for the XFree86 X-Window environment and the Apache web server used by GNU/Linux distributions has created some controversy.

The XFree86 Project, Inc. announced that version 4.4 (released 29 February 2004)

of this critical open source component (provides the basic functions

that support video card graphic modes, monitors and input devices) would have a new Open Source license requiring that credit be given to the XFree86 Project and contributors in the end-user documentation or software binaries. While still an open source license, the particular terms of the version 1.1 XFree86 Project License meant it was no longer compatible with the GNU General Public License under which most of the GNU/Linux operating system is based and would be difficult to implement. As a result, Mandrakesoft, Red Hat, Inc., Debian, and Gentoo announced they would not include XFree86 4.4 software in their GNU/Linux distributions. There is considerable discussion that developers will use the 4.3 version of XFree86 under the XFree86 1.0 license to create a new development "fork." Forks in open source code development are unfortunate because they



divide the developer effort and can create incompatibilities. The XFree86 Project met with the Free Software Foundation (FSF, creator of the GNU GPL) in an effort to work out the issue. The XFree86 Project decided not to apply the new license to the client-side software libraries so desktop environments such as KDE and Gnome are not affected, but it is not clear that this has satisfied the vendors.

More information about the XFree86 licenses and their differences is available at <http://www.xfree86.org/legal/licenses.html>.

At the same time, the Apache Software Foundation released version 2.0 of the Apache License in an attempt to make their previous 1.1 license more compatible with other Open Source licenses such as the GNU GPL. However, the Apache License 2.0 has patent termination cases that the GNU GPL does not require, so FSF deems that this license is also incompatible with the GPL. The two parties are still discussing the issue; more information is available at <http://www.apache.org/licenses/GPL-compatibility>.

Linux CD of the Month

In addition to the CD-R discs described below, I can provide any downloadable GNU/Linux operating system distribution (e.g. Fedora Core, Mandrake, Debian) on CD-R. **Note:** download versions of commercial distributions do not include official technical support or printed documentation.

Beginning in 2004, each disc will contain incremental monthly updates for major GNU/Linux distributions instead of cumulative set of updates for one distribution. This will help distribute security patches quickly and, on average, leave more room for other software. If your distribution is not included, please request it.

Discs are available only to WAC members by pre-order. Contact me by phone (703-370-7649) or e-mail (ggoodrum@bigfoot.com) at least 48 hours before meeting day to order or for more information. Single discs cost \$4 each; GNU/Linux distributions on two or three discs cost \$6 per set. All executable programs are for Intel x86 compatible Linux distributions unless stated otherwise. Your requests and suggestions are always welcome!

March 2004

Linuxconf - v1.32r1. Free GNU General Public License source code. Linuxconf is a sophisticated administrative tool. It is both an activator and a configurator, and can manage quite a few system tasks. It has some unique features, like configuration versioning and multiple machine management. It supports multiples languages (French, German, Italian, etc.) and can be administered from ncurses (text), Web, command line, or X (GNOME or wxxt) user interfaces.

netPanzer - v0.1.5. Free GNU General Public License source code and executable packages for. netPanzer is an online multiplayer tactical warfare game designed for FAST ACTION combat. Gameplay concentrates on the core - no resource management is needed. The game is based

on quick tactical action and unit management in real-time. Battles progress quickly and constantly as destroyed players respawn with a set of new units. Players can join or leave multiplayer games at any time.

Procmail Email Sanitizer v1.141. Free GNU General Public License. The Sanitizer is a tool for preventing attacks on your computer's security via email messages. It has proven to be very effective against the Microsoft Outlook email worms that have gotten so much attention in the popular press and that have caused so much trouble. The Sanitizer's intended audience is administrators of mail systems. It is not generally intended for end users, unless they administer their own mail systems rather than simply telling their mail program to retrieve messages from a mail server administered by someone else.

Screem - v0.8.2. Free GNU General Public License source code and executable packages for SCREAM is a GNOME website / tag based html editor (ie not WYSIWYG) which aims not only to aid in creating web pages, but also to provide useful site maintenance facilities as well, including automatic link updating, and site upload facilities.

GNU/Linux Distribution

Updates - Security and bug fix monthly updates.

Kernel Source - The latest versions of 2.4 and 2.6 kernel source code for all platforms.

RSS from page 7

Microsoft Outlook (<http://www.newsgator.com/>) as well as many standalone readers. Lockergnome.com Chris Pirillo, creator of lockergnome.com and a leader in e-mail newsletter publishing, started a lot of discussion on the subject last year by stating that RSS will replace e-mail newsletters. RSS is not subject to spam, viruses or accumulating unread messages like e-mail, and (at least for the moment) is free of advertising. RSS is a user-controlled service (i.e. RSS is a selective pull instead of bulk push like e-mail or the old PointCast

service). An RSS feed usually lists a story headline, perhaps a brief summary (usually a few lines), and links to the entire story. More recently, a form of RSS has emerged called Atom that has a richer feature set for additional capabilities. Either way, the user sees a summary of all recently updated content from newsfeeds of interest, and can select links to read more without having to wade through many web sites or lengthy newsletters.

If you visit more than a couple of web sites regularly that support newsfeeds, you will probably benefit from a feed reader. Give it a try!

2004 WAC Meeting Schedule

Date	Location
March 20	Fairfax County Government Center
April 17	Fairfax County Government Center
May 15	Fairfax County Government Center
June 19	Fairfax County Government Center
July 10	Fairfax County Government Center
August 21	Fairfax County Government Center
September 18.....	Fairfax County Government Center
October 16	TBD
November 20.....	Fairfax County Government Center
December 18	Fairfax County Government Center

The WAC Board of Directors, SIG Leaders and other Volunteers

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2004 Dues are for the Calendar Year and include Disk Library Discounts, and WAC's monthly newsletter, *The Cursor*, by 1st Class mail to your home.

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Remit payment in person at the WAC Membership table on meeting day, or by mail to:

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30 Fendall Ave.
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Make checks payable to WAC. Please do not send cash by mail. *Thank you for joining WAC!*
 Complete if you name and address do not appear on the reverse side. Include E-mail Address

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 List the computer systems you own / use (in order of preference)

Operating System(s): _____

Modem(s): _____

Printer(s): _____

Other Hardware: _____

Favorite Software: _____

Connection: (circle one) Dial-up or Broadband

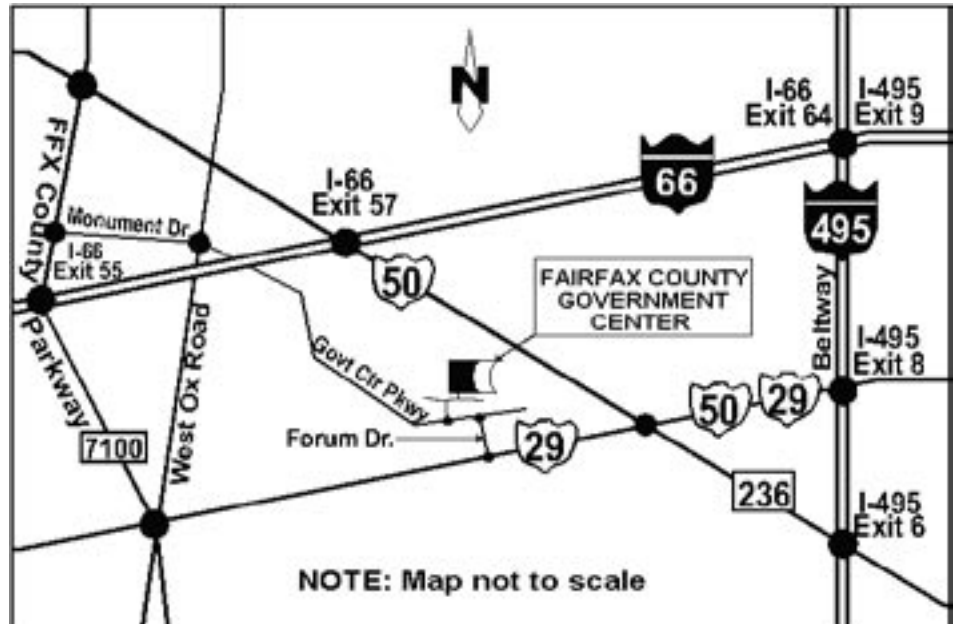
Circle Your Interests: Word Processing Databases Spreadsheets
 Telecommunications Internet Access Education Music
 Graphics/Animation Games Video Finance
 Programming Language(s) _____
 Hardware Upgrades/Repair List others below

Next WAC Meetings: • March 20 • April 17 • May 15 • June 19 • July 10
Call (703) 370-7649 for the latest meeting information or Visit our Web Site at:
<http://www.wacug.org>

Meetings are held at the
Fairfax County
Government Center

Through Front Entrance to
the Left Hallway, Past the
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