



The Cursor



Monthly Newsletter of the
Washington Area Computer Users Group

Meeting Location:
Micro Center in the
Pan AM Shopping Center



Next Meeting:
July 17, 2004



Presidential Bits

By Paul Howard

July Meeting

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### July's Meeting features Microsoft's Digital Image Suite and Slide Scanning

WACUG members Margie and Robert Lawrence will discuss their use of Microsoft's Digital Image Suite, and their results in scanning slides, creating digital images from the family slide collection. Digital Image Suite software combines the capabilities of a photo and image editing package and an organizational tool for keeping track of the proliferation of images that the digital photography user soon acquires.

This month's meeting will be held at Micro Center in Fairfax, located in the Pan Am Shopping Center at the corner of Rt. 29 and Nutley Street. This meeting will take place in the training area on the east side of the store. Go thru the double wood and glass doors at the front of the store,

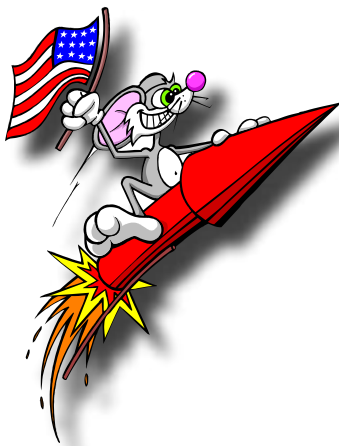
adjacent to the checkout and customer service areas. Proceed down the corridor, turn right, and proceed approximately 100 feet to the meeting room on the left. Alternatively, go to the rear of the store, down the corridor to the rest rooms and corridor on the left. Turn left at the next corridor, and make a right into the meeting room, approximately 40 feet on the right.

### Successful PC Clinic Points to Virus and Malware Protection

June's PC Clinic meeting proved quite successful, with help and solutions found for three members who brought their systems to the Clinic seeking assistance. A hard drive was configured and files transferred from a flaky drive in one instance. The other two systems were suffering from virus or trojan horse malware. New member Scott Hanak was instrumental in finding solutions to these problems, and is a welcome addition to the WAC team.

The continuing profusion of virus attacks makes the use of anti-virus

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## Lu Spriggs Web Sites for July 2004

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1. <http://www.alzheimers.org/unraveling/index.htm/> Go to this site to order a free copy of the 64 page booklet on Alzheimers Disease including AD research plus Q.& A.
  2. <http://RepairClinic.com/> Tips from Chris Hall about Household Appliances: repair or replace?
  3. <http://www.Froogle.com/> New

search engine operated by Google for on-web shopping.

4. <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/> This web site offers an excellent and comprehensive guide for drivers education, as well as 40-hour parent/teen drivers guide.
5. <http://www.HouseValues.com/> Check out the market value of your own home, or perhaps another house you might consider buying at this site.
6. <http://www.lawyers.com/> “If you don’t have a will, the state will make one for you” says Alan Kopit of this free online attorney database and legal Web site.
7. <http://www.pbskids.org/arthur/> This Web site has Arthur who entertains kids with original games and great offline activities.
8. <http://www.earthlink.net/earthlinktoolbar/> For Internet

Explorer 5.0 users, the Earthlink toolbar is a free download. Win 95 or newer.

9. <http://www.xmradio.com/index.jsp/> XM radio has a monthly fee of \$9.95, but it can entertain you in your car or at the office or home. Music, no commercials, weather, traffic reports, and more.
10. <http://www.iolo.com/> System Mechanic—at \$50 street price, can help you find useless, but temporary files. Free, 30 day trial, 5.4 MByte download, 18:30 min. CNET Editors Pick.

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



## TECH NEWS

By Sue Crane, Editor  
Bearly Bytes, Newsletter of the Big Bear Computer Club

**G**et your DDR SDRAM now! With back-to-school demand for more PCs due to pick up during the month of July, computer memory prices are expected to rise again. After an unexpected spike in April, prices have fallen about 24% to around \$4.80 for 256 megabytes of DDR SDRAM from a peak of \$6.30.

Hewlett-Packard Co. will replace memory modules in up to

900,000 HP notebooks with an “industry-wide” design flaw that can cause system lockups. The problem is tied to the interaction of DRAM and Intel chipsets. HP’s replacement program will send the customer a kit containing a screwdriver and instructions for replacing the faulty modules. The customer can then ship the DRAM to HP and receive a new module free. HP appears to be the only computer manufacturer taking action. A representative from Dell Computer Corp. said the company is “looking into it.”

Computer trade show Comdex, once the biggest event on the

tech calendar, has been canceled this year, making room for the growing interest in shows emphasizing consumer electronics and specialist IT gear.

Personal computer makers have been eager to revolutionize the way people watch movies, listen to music and record their favorite TV shows. Last month Intel launched new core logic and motherboards, along with a new socket format for the Pentium IV, targeting the high-performance desktop PC market. The

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## GNU/Linux SIG

By Geof Goodrum

### New Software Releases

## 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](mailto: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!

**Abiword** - v2.0.7. Free GNU General Public License source code and executables for Red Hat 9, Fedora Core 1 and SUSE 9.1 by AbiSource. AbiWord™ is a free word processing program similar to Microsoft® Word. It is suitable for typing papers, letters, reports, memos, and so forth. Includes plug-ins and clip art.

**Aklabeth** - v1.0. Free GNU General Public License source code by Paul Robson. Aklabeth is a twenty year old game, written by Richard Garriott, author of the Ultima series. Aklabeth is "Ultima 0." It consists of an overworld map and 3D dungeons, all done with line graphics (this was originally written for the Apple II) and bashing monsters and completing quests (usually involving killing something). It is quite basic but harmless fun. This is a port of the original source code, so apart from dungeon layouts should be identical.

**Eclipse** - v3. Free Common

Public License Java source code and executable by the Eclipse.org consortium. Eclipse is an open, extensible Integrated Development Environment (IDE) supported by IBM. Eclipse includes a full-featured editor and toolkit to make coding software, web sites, etc. easier. Requires Java 2 Software Development Kit 1.4.1 or later.

**OpenOffice.org** - v1.1.2. Free GNU General Public License/Sun Industry Standards Source License source code and executable by the OpenOffice.org project. A complete Microsoft Office compatible office applications suite, including word processor, spreadsheet, graphic editor and presentation manager. OOo also includes tools to integrate commercial and Open Source database managers. OpenOffice.org 1.1.2 introduces the FontOOo Autopilot, which downloads and installs fonts; numerous bugs are also fixed.

**GNU/Linux Distribution Updates** - Security and bug fix monthly updates for Fedora Core 1 and Mandrake 10.

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



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software absolutely essential for anyone using the internet and/or email. Virus definitions need to be regularly updated - most major programs now perform that chore automatically when the user goes on-line, if you're using a current version. Don't leave this to chance - if you're not sure you have what you need, or how to configure or operate your AV program, get in touch with a WAC officer and ask for help. In the same vein, anti-spyware and firewall programs are a worthwhile investment in computer security. There are commercial and freeware products available in

all these categories — don't go unprotected !! We'll try to place a web page with links to resources for computer protection on the WAC web site over the next several weeks.

### **Worthwhile Laptop Accessory**

As laptops become more popular and affordable for many users, the new purchaser often discovers that their new pride and joy is missing something that they'd find useful. Frequently left out are 3.5" drives. These old standbys are becoming less needed with the advent of solid state "keychain drives"- also known as "thumb" "jump" "flash" or "mobile" drives, depending on

the manufacturer. However, as we've discovered at a number of recent user group meetings, although many computers have USB ports, lots of older systems utilizing Win 95 / 98 don't have the necessary software drivers installed, and the keychain drives won't work. Being able to exchange files with 3.5" drives still comes in handy. Iomega is offering a great solution for new laptop owners - a combination 3.5" drive and a multislot 7 in 1 flash memory card reader with a USB interface.



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## **Linus Makes a Move**

By Geof Goodrum

**L**inus Torvalds, creator of the Linux operating system kernel, has moved to Portland, Oregon from Silicon Valley to continue his work at the Open Source Development Lab (<http://www.osdl.org/>). OSDL, founded in 2000, is an independent, non-profit state-of-the-art lab that grants Open Source development projects access to high-end enterprise computing environments (mainframes, storage area networks, supercomputing clusters) that might otherwise be out of their reach. OSDL is supported by leading technology companies including IBM, Sun, Hewlett Packard, Intel, AMD, Nokia, Toshiba and NEC to develop Open Source projects. OSDL



hired Linus as an OSDL Fellow in June 2003 to work full-time directing Linux kernel development and also help set priorities and direction for the Lab's different industry initiatives.



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new technology gives PCs more powerful sound and graphics, a speedier link for peripherals and memory, and an ability to run a wireless data network, turning the PCs into home entertainment devices. The inclusion of Wi-Fi access point technology allows new PCs with the chipset to become wireless gateways for other mobile devices. Intel was unable to ramp up the Wi-Fi technology in time for the launch, but Intel spokesman Dan Snyder said Intel will announce the technology now and provide availability later throughout the year.

Sun Microsystems has designed 3-D interface software to compete with the PC desktop and file folders. Sun's "Project Look-

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## GNU/Linux SIG

By Geof Goodrum

### Whither IE?

Users of Microsoft's Internet Explorer (IE), Outlook, or Outlook Express (OE) software, BEWARE! The U.S. Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) issued Vulnerability Note VU#323070 (<http://www.kb.cert.org/vuls/id/323070>) that points out serious problems in Microsoft's security model affecting this software. The CERT recommends applying a patch, using only plain-text e-mail, ignoring web links in messages, disabling protocol handlers in the key registry, keeping anti-virus software updated, increasing security settings in IE and/or using another browser. CERT notes that several of these changes could reduce functionality or create "unintended consequences." For example, IE may not work properly with many web sites when set to the recommended security settings. Even doing the above does not fix the problems; the flaws still exist and can be triggered if other software uses the underlying components of IE or Outlook.

Also consider that in mid-June a trojan horse program was discovered on several major web sites running Microsoft's Internet Information Server (IIS). Someone used a flaw in IIS to install the Download.ject trojan horse on the web sites. When someone running Windows98 or later visited the web site using IE, the trojan horse directed IE to download and install soft-

ware from another web site onto the user's PC without any notice to the user (this is known as a cross-zone scripting exploit). The installed software displayed pop-up ads on the user's PC, but the initial concern was that it could relay a user's online account passwords, credit card numbers and other personal information to a malicious hacker/phisher/identity thief.

As the CERT recommends, disable features of Microsoft's software that make it so vulnerable to attacks. Set IE to use the high security setting for the Internet zone, disabling support for ActiveX and Javascript. This will break access to Microsoft's site (including Windows Update), too, so you may want to add Microsoft's web site to the list for the Trusted (?) security zone.

The vulnerabilities in IE, Outlook, OE and IIS demonstrate once again that Microsoft's claim about proprietary, closed source software being inherently more secure than Open Source software is completely without merit.

As the CERT recommends, use an alternative browser and e-mail client. Once you've locked up or removed IE, Outlook and Outlook Express, replace Microsoft's products with Open Source software. The recently released Mozilla 1.7 browser and e-mail client is free, has no built-in ads, blocks pop-up advertising, filters junk e-mail, is standards compliant, and is faster and much more secure than IE and Outlook Express. You might also want to

check out the Mozilla Project's standalone Thunderbird e-mail client and Firefox web browser, both of which exceed Mozilla in customization through the use of optional software extensions. To download or find out more about these products, visit <http://www.mozilla.org/>.

Of course, this still leaves you with an Operating System that has a flawed security model vulnerable to further "backdoor" attacks. Now that you've seen how good Open Source software can be, take the next step and replace Windows entirely with GNU/Linux. Since you can continue to use Linux versions of Mozilla/Thunderbird/Firefox, the transition will be that much easier.

### Beyond Software

The philosophy of sharing creative works is not just limited to Open Source software. A company by the name of Magnatune (<http://magnatune.com>), "the open music record label," aspires to be to music what shareware is to software - a try before you buy approach. Through the web site, you can listen to numerous artists from the musical genres of Classical, Electronica, Jazz & Blues, Metal & Punk, New Age, Rock, World, and Others either as downloadable MP3s or through genre-based streaming radio stations. If you hear something you like, buy the artist's album right then using a credit card or PayPal and download it in your choice of a variety of digital formats. You also get to choose how much

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you pay for an album, from \$5 to \$18 (\$8 recommended). The artists receive 50% of the payment (much more than most record labels) and the artists retain the rights to their work (most record labels own the rights). You can also license music for commercial use through the site. The founder of Magnatune wrote a very interesting article about the business model and web site design in the February 2004 issue of Linux Journal, which is available online at <http://linuxjournal.com/article.php?sid=7220>.

Magnatune is a supporter of Cre-

ative Commons (<http://creativecommons.org/>), a community effort to help authors, filmmakers, musicians, webmasters, photographers and other creators share their works as public domain or under a license “with some rights reserved.” In its first year, over 1 million works were released under a Creative Commons license. The web site states the single goal of Creative Commons is “to build a layer of reasonable, flexible copyright in the face of increasingly restrictive default rules.” There are two Macromedia Flash animations on the web site that explain the concept as well as two comic-book type scenarios. The web site allows the creator

to specify the permissions and restrictions on their work, then generates an appropriate license in a Common Deed understandable by anyone, a Legal Code for lawyers and machine readable code for indexing Internet searches of the creator’s web site.

I highly encourage you to check out these web sites. The spirit of collaboration and community developed over the Internet by the Open Source software movement is definitely catching on in other areas of creativity.



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ing Glass”, is a 3D interface allowing documents or images to be turned sideways and spun around so that notations can be made on the back. Sun is initially planning to use the technology on desktop machines running Linux or Sun’s Solaris operating system. Sun president and COO Jonathan Schwartz says Project Looking Glass reflects a swing in software development back toward desktop machines instead of running programs on centralized servers.

Meanwhile the digital home has become a reality! At the Samsung Tower Palace in Seoul, \$1 million-plus apartments are outfitted with Internet-enabled ovens, security cameras and wall-mounted flat-panel displays. The

company has tests under way in Canada, Australia and Europe, and it recently struck deals with two U.S.-based home builders to conduct digital home trials in the U.S. Wiring homes in the U.S. will cost from \$2,000 to \$10,000.

The Virtual Doctor Will See You Now. Some health care providers are offering e-mail medical advice and “e-visits”. So how do you get doctors who don’t want to use e-mail because they are too busy, worried about privacy, and not being paid for it to buy into the program? Pay them, of course! In August, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Massachusetts will start paying primary care physicians for ‘Web visits’ with their patients. Blue Cross will be

expanding a pilot program that pays doctors to respond to patient e-mails. Watch for the program in your area...

From truckers in the U.S. and Canada to Yak farmers in the mountains of Nepal, more people are jumping in with wireless technology. Yak farmers are taking advantage of a wi-fi network set up in a remote region to keep in touch with their families where there are no phones or other communication. And at networked farms of the future, farmers sit in their pickups with a laptop, drive robot tractors and even feed the hogs remotely. Two Georgia farmers are already using the technology: One uses

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## Comdex is History

**Comdex was inflated, owners were arrogant, and since 1998, it was clear the show was destined to fall into the bit bucket.**

Byline: by Steve Bass, PC World;  
Author, PC Annoyances.

In a downward spiral for the last five years, Comdex is finally kaput. The show owners declared it dead when they cancelled the November, 2004 event. Many of you have been attending Comdex since close to forever, and most of you knew the show was destined to fall into the bit bucket.

Good riddance. In the last few years, the show's become an empty shell of its previous life. So much so that room prices on the Strip were as low as \$50 a night during Comdex week in 2003.

The problem was I couldn't not attend. Even though I didn't enjoy myself and couldn't find lots of really nifty products to write about, I still drove in from Pasadena and stayed for two nights. Call it nostalgia. Or maybe I was just hoping there would be one more chance that Comdex would get back on its feet.

But nope, it's really over.

### Dig Into the Files

I dug around and found some of Comdex the missives I sent in the last few years.

December, 1998: Comdex is toast. It's fading rapidly and while it'll always be with us, it's never going to be "bigger than ever."

I polled lots of people and all agreed. The attendance was dismally low. Softbank's claim of 250K attendees was a lie. It was based on registrations--not attendees--something made lots easier because the normal \$100 "Exhibits Only" fee was waived when you registered on Soft-

**"It's bad. In 1998, the Lotus exhibit consisted of a bus in the parking lot with a box of Winchell's donuts on the table..."**

bank's Internet site.

My best sources are the cabbies, and all emphatically said 60- to 90K tops. And it was easy to see. I never had to wait more than five minutes for a cab. Ever. Even at 5:00pm. Parties weren't well attended. In fact, for the first time ever, there was actually walking-around room at the exclusive Spencer party.

Iomega was back promoting their Klik gizmo. But wait, weren't they doing that last year? And Castlewood was pushing their 2.2GB ultra SCSI removable storage disk that wouldn't ship until next summer.

The quality of the show was also disappointing. The Sands was filled mostly with OEM stuff--lots of system boards, drives, memory checking devices, and other boring equipment. Joe Bo-

hannon nailed the entire Sands Convention Center in five hours, something that ordinarily takes a day and a half.

I couldn't even find anything very inspirational.

For instance, Creative Labs had a second generation Live sound card. Wow. Sure, there were some booths with interesting things--wireless networking was cool, as was HP's Jornada, their oddly named sub-notebook--and I found a few products to write about. But overall, I could've done just as well surfing the web.

Why has Comdex slowed down? Simple: Games went to E3, anything about the Web went to Internet World, and e-commerce apps also needed their own specialized trade shows.

Worse, it appears Softbank's jacked up the price on everything. That's happened before, but my hunch is vendors aren't going to take it much longer. (That happened to the Food Show when Pepsi and Coke pulled out, literally destroying the event. And Deere, the largest exhibitor of the Machinery Show, left the show high and dry when told they'd be charged double--the new policy put them into both agriculture and machinery.)

At Comdex, the newly remodeled Las Vegas Convention center was missing Intel, IBM, and other

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big vendors. The Lotus exhibit consisted of a bus in the parking lot with a box of Winchell's donuts on the table. One of the Lotus reps said this is their last Comdex.

On the exhibit floor, the Japanese companies were slugging it out, with Sony and Samsung making lots of noise, each trying to impress the other. Phillips created a small, loud city, and Microsoft was in their corner with more vendors than spectators.

Me? At \$329 a day for the hotel room and the five days lost... I dunno. It may also be my last Comdex.

*October, 2000:* Comdex is struggling. That's because most other trade shows specialize while Comdex tried to cater to everyone. Funny, in the past Comdex charged an outrageous \$100 for admission just to the exhibit floor. This year they're offering a free exhibits pass. (Too bad the hotels haven't caught on to this trick...) This is my last Comdex, for sure.

*December, 2001:* The Comdex mood this year was all business, with somber overtones. Journalists clustered around in small groups, talking about layoffs, and concerned with the dozens of freelancers gone missing. Lots of PR people didn't make it to Comdex; many of those who did were kvetching about having to share sleeping rooms with colleagues.

I don't know that I'll be back

next year. While the exhibit floor didn't have the sizzling array of products I saw at previous Comdexes, like last year, the place to be was the evening press events: Showstoppers, Digital/mobile Focus, and Silicon Northwest.

*December, 2003:* Sleeping rooms are under \$60. The show floor at the Convention center has lots of curtains and barriers to make it look as if there are lots of vendors. The aisles are narrow so it feels crowded. There are practically no big vendors, except for Microsoft, and even their exhibit is small.

I've said it every year, but this time I really mean it. This is definitely the last Comdex I'm going to attend. (And I'll see some of you at the Consumer Electronics Show in January, 2005!)

Steve Bass is a Contributing Editor with PC World, a 23 year veteran of PIBMUG, and a founding member of APCUG. He's also the author of PC Annoyances: How to Fix the Most Annoying Things about Your Personal Computer, O'Reilly Press. It's available on Amazon for \$7.98 at <http://snurl.com/annoyances>.

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.



## NCTCUG

Visit our "sister" user group. The National Capital Tandy Computer User Group meets the first and fourth Wednesday of the month. They meet in Carlin Hall in Arlington at 5711 South 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Visit their web site for more information, a map and directions:

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



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# WAC PC DOM for July 2004

By Jim Brueggeman

## StartupStar

**Free to try - \$19.00 to buy**

**startupstar.exe**

**1.2MB**

This program allows you to choose what happens when you start your system. It manages all programs that are launched at Windows startup. You can create, edit, remove and change the locations of entries. You have the ability to deactivate entries, so you can test your new settings without removing the old. The backup system ensures that you can always undo changes.

## East-Tec Eraser 2004

**Free to try - \$49.95 to buy**

**esteraser.exe**

**3MB**

Protect your data and privacy and remove all evidence of your computer and online activity with East-Tec Eraser 2004. Eraser goes beyond U.S. Department of Defense standards for the permanent erasure of digital information and easily removes every trace of sensitive data from your computer. Completely destroy information stored without your knowledge or approval including Internet history, Web pages and pictures from sites visited on the Internet, unwanted cookies, chatroom conversations, deleted e-mail messages, temporary files, the Windows swap file, the Recycle Bin, previously deleted files, valuable corporate trade secrets, business plans, personal

files, photos or confidential letters. East-Tec Eraser 2004 offers full support for popular browsers, for peer-to-peer applications, and for other popular programs such as Windows Media Player, RealPlayer, Yahoo Messenger and ICQ. It includes support for custom privacy needs, user-defined erasure methods, command-line parameters, integration with Windows Explorer and password protection. The Scheduler functionality allows users a better management of the system resources while keeping the computer secure and cleaned out of sensitive information. You can also protect the Restore Points from being deleted and choose the level of password protection that best suits your needs.

## InsideCAT Lite Edition

**Free**

**Insidecat222lite.exe**

**1.3 MB**

This program catalogs all your disks, including CD-ROMs, floppies, DVD-ROMs and ZIPs, and it has support for compressed files. It stores all the data about files and folders, in order to make it possible to work with it without having the disk inserted.

It organizes your catalogs in collections and sub-collections. Compressed file support is available for 14 different formats including ZIP, RAR, CAB, ACE, JAR, ARJ, LZH, LHA, ARC, ZOO, PAK, TAR, GZIP and EXE. It allows extractions on all formats and provides search functions, four text searches, four configurable printing functions and four database export-

ing functions.

## MaxLister

**Free**

**Mlist.zip**

**259K**

MaxLister creates lists of any directory you specify and save it in one of four ways. Files can be saved in MXL, collapsed text, folders only text, and folders and files text format. MaxLister also includes tabs for quick access to browsing, searching, saving and more.

## Visual-CD

**Free**

**viscd130.exe**

**2.2MB**

This utility catalogs data CDs, removable disks, hard drives and folders. You can then explore the catalogs without the physical data. Upon insertion of media, the program will allow you to find and open files and folders with Internet Explorer, for example.

## Windows commander

**Free to try - \$28.00 to buy**

**tcmd.exe**

**1.3 MB**

Windows Commander is a very useful file manager that integrates many features. It is a great Windows Explorer replacement that includes FTP capabilities. It also includes a compression tool that allows you to compress/decompress ZIP, ARJ, UC, ACE, LHA and much more.

## EazyExit

**Free**

**ezsetup.exe**

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## 855K

This program gives you complete control over your shutdown options. It resides in the system tray and uses little memory. It hides the shutdown option from the Start menu, disables the option from the task manager, and incorporates password protection to prevent unauthorized users from exiting Windows. You can log off, restart, shutdown, standby, or hibernate your computer with a single click.

### Paint Shop Pro

Free to try - \$99.95 to buy

psp800ev.exe

53.9 MB

This graphics editor includes 11 categories of image effects, 3-layer support, adjustable cropping, flexible painting and retouching brushes, and selection tools. It provides digital camera support and screen capture support.



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wireless video to monitor vegetable packing; another uses a wireless network equipped with GPS to monitor irrigation systems. Robotic tractor technology has also proven useful in insect control. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) hopes to reduce fatigue-related accidents by enticing drivers with free Wi-Fi hotspots so they'll

stop more often and check their e-mail. Meanwhile, the whole city of Chaska, Minnesota will soon be blanketed by a Wi-Fi hot-spot and city officials plan to offer wireless Internet access as a municipal service for about \$16/month for home users, creating a "connected community." The manager of arena operations for the Charlotte Bobcats is including Wi-Fi wireless in the design of a new \$265 million arena. He says, "Some people will think this is the geeky thing, the nerdy thing. But they were probably saying that 10 years ago when other people were going to Web sites and using e-mail." Other sports teams are following suit; Giants CIO Bill Schlough says: "It's like walking into Starbucks -- except our Wi-Fi is free!"

Game developer Respond sign has created a first-of-its-kind game geared toward helping the player lose weight through exercise and diet. The game, titled "Yourself! Fitness", is designed for the Xbox and features a virtual personal trainer who guides the player through a customized set of exercises and diets; players advance to the next level when certain fitness goals are met. Next year the Xbox Live version will allow players to use a wireless headset to chat with each other during their workouts

"The Effect of File Sharing on Record Sales," released by Harvard Business School professor Felix Oberholzer-Gee and his co-author Koleman Strumpf, of the University of North Carolina caused a ruckus in the music in-

dustry. The team concluded Internet music piracy not only doesn't hurt legitimate CD sales, it may even boost sales. The researchers contend that most downloading is done over peer-to-peer networks by teens and college kids, groups that are "money-poor but time-rich," and wouldn't have bought the songs they downloaded, anyway. The team also claims illegal downloading may actually help the industry with an older crowd who download a song or two and then, if they like what they hear, go out and buy the music.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that a federal law designed to restrict Internet pornography violated Americans' rights to freedom of speech and upheld an injunction excluding prosecutors from filing criminal cases under the Child Online Protection Act, or COPA, until a full trial takes place. COPA restricts the use of sexually explicit material deemed "harmful to minors" on commercial Web sites. But the law isn't dead: COPA now goes back to a Philadelphia appeals court for a full trial.

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Next WAC Meetings: • Aug 21 • Sept 18 • Oct 16 • Nov 20 • Dec 18

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Service Desks Open at 12:30  
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