



The Cursor



Monthly Newsletter of the
Washington Area Computer User Group

Meeting Location:
Fairfax County
Government Center



Next Meeting:
January 21, 2006



Presidential Bits

January 2006 Meeting

By Paul Howard

At a well-attended December meeting, members had the opportunity to observe the assembly of a high end PC, in the conclusion of the Intel “Build Your Own Computer” seminar series. With the Intel slides, video camera close-ups, and in person squints into the inner reaches of the case, the group followed Jim Bruggeman’s adventure in putting together his new system. A shipping glitch left out the system’s power supply, so we were unable to see the “lights blink” by the conclusion of the meeting. The missing parts were rushed to Jim via FedX, and were in hand by Wednesday following the meeting. We’re all waiting for Jim to relate the rest of the process, particularly about the time involved in setting up the two 320 gigabyte hard drives in a mirrored RAID configuration. Jim commented on the need for the assembly kit to include a set of skinny fingers for attaching the case leads to the motherboard.

Lu Spriggs has advised that health and family issues prevent him from continuing with his long-running web sites column in the Cursor. Lu

has been a WAC stalwart for many years. We’ve missed his wise counsel at board meetings recently, and his sharing session of news clippings, bargain announcements, and other discoveries at our general meetings. I’ll particularly miss Lu’s columns, because they provided me with an entry into a more active role in WAC, when I volunteered to “webize” his columns into a presence on the group’s web site.

We hope Lu’s example of service to the group will encourage others – won’t you demonstrate a program, or give a presentation? Write an article for the Cursor – and work into providing a regular column. Bring a friend to meetings, and talk to others about the advantages of WAC membership. Volunteer for service on the board of directors to help manage the group’s activities and set the future direction of the organization. Consider making a tax-deductible donation.

January’s meeting will feature a continuation of the “Home Networking” topic started at the November meeting. Emails have been flying between Chuck Roberts and Geof Goodrum, in preparation for this meeting at the Fairfax County Gov-

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Notice of Election of WACUG Officers

As mentioned in the December issue of *The Cursor*, January is the month new officers are elected to lead the organization for the next year.

Assuming you are a member in good standing (dues paid for 2006) you received a ballot via E-mail in December. That ballot was *not* a replacement for the actual election, but it serves as an *absentee ballot* for members who are unable to attend the January meeting where the actual election takes place.

This notice is to remind members that if they did not receive the E-mail ballot, the actual election will take place during the meeting in January. If you have not paid your dues for 2006, you may not participate in the election. However, it is possible to pay your 2006 dues at the meeting *prior* to the election which will enable you to participate.

The WACUG Board of Directors wish you and your family all the best for 2006!

Smart Computing Tips

Windows Malicious Software Removal Tool – Microsoft now offers a way to root out major worms and system infections (updated with the latest definitions every month). At the Microsoft Web site (www.microsoft.com), type KB890830 in the Search box to get a link to the Windows Malicious Software Removal Tool download page. You can scan your PC from the Web or via a downloadable version of the tool, but keep in mind that neither promises the kind of protection/detection of a memory-resident antivirus shield.

Cable or DSL?– There is no definitive winner when it comes to choosing between DSL and cable. The choice varies depending on where you live and what services the providers are offering in your area. In choosing how to connect to the Internet, the primary considerations are price and bandwidth, which is usually equated with download speed, or the rate at which data travels from the Internet to your PC. Upload speed is the rate at which keystrokes or other data originating with your computer travel to Web sites. Other considerations include the convenience of having an always-on connection and whether you need to share your bandwidth with others. Cable is generally easier to install and sometimes faster than DSL, but DSL often provides a more stable Internet experience, both speed-wise and uptime-wise. Although the price is comparable between DSL and cable, you might find that cable is cheaper if you already subscribe to cable television. Ask what “bundling” deals are available with each service option and whether free trials are available and then give one or both a try. If you aren’t happy with the service you end up choosing, you can always switch.

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NCTCUG

Visit our “sister” user group. The National Capital Technology and Computer User’s Group meets the first and fourth Wednesday of the month. They meet in Carlin Hall in Arlington at 5711 South 4th Street. Visit their web site for more information, a map and directions:

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

Meetings start at 7:00 PM



GNU/Linux SIG

By Geof Goodrum

Announcement: New Open Source Magazine

Received by e-mail on December 30:

I would like to tell you about a new Open Source magazine. O3 Magazine (www.o3magazine.com) is a free monthly publication distributed in pdf format which covers various topics each issue including security, web technology, networking, and several others.

We help fill a gap that has existed for quite some time in the Open Source world by providing information on enterprise grade solutions which can be used by both large and small businesses alike. We also post listings for Open Source events and recent software releases.

This month's issue focuses on rapid web development and Ruby on Rails.

I would like to invite you to take a look at our magazine and ask that you pass on news of our publication to the members of your users group.

We also offer an RSS feed and mailing list for updates, so please feel free to subscribe to either if you like

the magazine.

We always welcome constructive feedback, so I look forward to hearing from you and the members of your group.

Regards,

James Hollingshead

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James Hollingshead
Executive Editor
o3 Magazine
www.o3magazine.com
james@o3magazine.com
(740) 707-5876

Dell Battery Recall

Do you have a Dell laptop or battery pack purchased between October 5, 2004 and October 13, 2005? Check the following list of Dell computer models to see whether you are affected by a battery pack recall.

- Latitude D410, D505, D510, D600, D610, D800, D810
- Inspiron 510M, 600M, 6000, 8600, 9200, 9300, XPS Gen 2
- Precision M20, M70

More information, including how to check the model of your battery pack, is online at <https://www.dell-batteryprogram.com/Default.aspx>

Something Rotten in the State of Massachusetts

Mr. Peter Quinn, Director of the Information Technology Division and Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the State of Massachusetts, introduced a policy that would require all state government executive offices to use non-proprietary formats for office documents beginning in 2007. A key statement in the policy is "Open formats for data files ensure that government

records remain independent of underlying systems and applications thereby preserving their accessibility over very long periods of time." The chosen format for office documents was the Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards (OASIS) OpenDocument format (ODF), which is used by OpenOffice.org 2.x, Koffice and Abiword, among other office application suites.

Microsoft has their own proprietary format, Office XML, which will be introduced in MS Office 12. Although invited to support OpenDocument format development from the beginning and include ODF support in MS Office without charge, Microsoft has so far refused to do so. Therefore, Microsoft Office software could not be used under this policy.

Microsoft protested the policy. Politicians got involved. The Massachusetts legislature held hearings and sponsored actions to delay and question the policy. An article in the Boston Globe questioned whether Mr Quinn received proper authorization to attend IT conferences. The paper later printed an article admitting that the travel was authorized. In December, Microsoft submitted their Office XML format as a standard to the Ecma International technical standards body (TC45), which led some politicians to believe Microsoft Office software would be acceptable under the policy, but questions remain as to whether Microsoft would allow other software to use the Office XML format without restriction.

On Christmas Eve, Mr. Quinn notified his staff by e-mail that he would resign effective January 12, 2006.

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His e-mail reportedly includes the following statement:

“Over the last several months, we have been through some very difficult and tumultuous times. Many of these events have been very disruptive and harmful to my personal well being, my family and many of my closest friends. This is a burden I will no longer carry....I have become a lightning rod with regard to any IT initiative. Even the smallest initiatives are being mitigated or stopped by some of the most unlikely and often uninformed parties. The last thing I can let happen is my presence be the major contributing factor in marginalizing the good work of ITD and the entire IT community.”

It appears that Mr. Quinn was targeted and worn down by special interests intent upon discrediting his work and continuing vendor lock-in without regard to the best interests of the citizens of Massachusetts. Why are politicians resisting well-founded decisions by experts in the field? Why is a major newspaper publishing articles without confirming claims with those involved?

Fortunately, the policy is still scheduled to take effect in 2007, but it is at risk. The Free Software Foundation's campaign to support ODF has a web site at <http://www.fsf.org/campaigns/odf.html> that includes links to the policy and related material. One of the attorneys who has OASIS as a client covers the issue at <http://www.consortium-info.org/newsblog/>. Brian Jones, Program Manager for Microsoft Office, discusses the Office XML standard's effort in his blog at http://blogs.msdn.com/brian_jones/de-

[fault.aspx](#).

Matt Miszewski, CIO of Wisconsin and president of the National Association of State CIOs said “Peter has left an indelible mark on public sector IT. His resignation sets in stone the need for change in the area of open source, open standards and, of course, open formats. If the enemies of true change think it sets those efforts back, simply wait.”

McAfee VirusScan is Security Software?

This is not a Linux article per se, but a reminder of why I prefer Linux and Open Source software over Microsoft Windows and commercial software. While setting up the new WAC Dell laptop, I registered and configured the bundled McAfee VirusScan antivirus software for MS Windows XP Home.

I was appalled that software designed to keep the system secure managed to violate numerous recommendations from computer security specialists; software installation and antivirus signature updates require MS Internet Explorer with ActiveX scripting enabled and popup blocking disabled, all known vectors for system infections. On top of that, McAfee recommends disabling Microsoft's Windows Security Center in favor of the McAfee SecurityCenter to prevent multiple system security warnings. To a degree, this is a product lock-in and promotion strategy as McAfee's SecurityCenter constantly suggests adding other McAfee products such as McAfee Privacy Service and Personal Firewall Plus (additional cost) and makes going back to the Microsoft utility more difficult.

If McAfee does not follow secure practices with their own products,

can you really trust them to keep your system safe?

Just so I don't pick on McAfee alone, multiple Symantec products for Microsoft Windows and Apple Macintosh systems, including versions of Norton Antivirus, Norton SystemWorks, and Norton Internet Security, include an RAR archive decompression library that is vulnerable to multiple buffer overflow attacks. As of December 30, Symantec has not issued a patch. More information is available at <http://www.securityfocus.com/bid/15971/info>.

Transcode for DVD Audio Extraction

While describing the October 2005 Linux CD of the Month, I explained that the Transcode software on that disc interested me because I wanted to extract the audio soundtrack from concert video DVDs so that I could listen to them on a portable music player (I use my Linux-based Sharp Zaurus handheld). I found instructions on the transcode web site at http://www.transcoding.org/cgi-bin/transcode?Command_Examples/Audio_Only_Processing. However, it still required some trial and error to figure out.

Transcode is a free, Open Source command line utility suite that manipulates and converts a wide-variety of video and audio file formats. In the following example, I use transcode utilities extract the soundtrack from my Sade Lovers Live concert video DVD to standard MP3 audio files.

I first used transcode's tprobe utility with options to read from my

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DVD drive (-i /dev/dvd) and sample the first 10 MB of each file on the DVD (-H 10):

```
tcprobe -i /dev/dvd -H 10
```

which returned the following information (edited for space):

```
(dvd_reader.c) DVD title 1/9: 1 chapter(s), 1 angle(s), title set 1
```

```
no audio track: use "null" import module for audio
```

The output tells me that this is a summary of the first of nine title sections on the DVD, which contains only one chapter (DVD title 1/9: 1 chapter(s), ...). Furthermore, no audio tracks were found. It is a reasonable guess that this is the initial lead-in on the disc. The DVD package lists twenty-two songs on the disc, so I need to find a title section with at least twenty-two chapters. I add the title option (-T #, # being the title number) to the tcprobe command and repeatedly execute it incrementing the title number from two through nine until:

```
tcprobe -i /dev/dvd -T 8 -H 10
```

returned the following (edited):

```
(dvd_reader.c) ac3 drc 48kHz 2Ch
(dvd_reader.c) ac3 drc 48kHz 6Ch
(dvd_reader.c) -- Unspecified Subs --
(dvd_reader.c) DVD title 8/9: 22 chapter(s), 1 angle(s), title set 4
(dvd_reader.c) title playback time: 01:56:20.20 6981 sec
(dvd_reader.c) [Chapter 01] 00:00:00.000 , block from 0
```

to 164144

...

```
(dvd_reader.c) [Chapter 22] 01:52:01.200 , block from 2776919 to 2893819
audio track: -a 0 [0] -e 48000,16,2 [48000,16,2] -n 0x2000 [0x2000]
audio track: -a 1 [0] -e 48000,16,2 [48000,16,2] -n 0x2000 [0x2000]
```

Bingo! DVD title eight contains twenty-two chapters with a running time of nearly two hours ("title playback time: 01:56:20.20"). The "ac3 drc 48kHz 2Ch" line at the top indicates a two channel AC3 audio track (the second line describes a six channel surround sound track), which corresponds to the "audio track: -a 0 [0]" line near the bottom ("audio track: -a 1 [0]" corresponds to the six channel track). I am ignoring the six channel audio, as I only want two channel (stereo) for my music player.

To extract each chapter's audio track, I run the transcode command, identifying the audio-only input (-p /dev/dvd), the DVD title and chapter (-T 8,1), the audio channel to extract (-a 0), audio pass-through (-y raw), and the audio-only output file (-m filename):

```
transcode -p /dev/dvd -T 8,1 -a 0 -y raw -m Sade-Lovers_Live-01-Cherish_the_Day.mp3
```

The -T option accepts a chapter range (e.g., -T 8,1-5) to extract multiple chapters to a single MP3 file and -1 (e.g., -T 8,-1) to extract all chapters (twenty-two, in this example) to a single file. Extracting all chapters created a single 112MB MP3 file and took twenty-four minutes on my Athlon-XP 2500 processor system.

This is a single, practical example of what transcode utilities can do. More information and examples are available from the Transcode web pages at <http://www.transcoding.org/>.

Mercury Theatre Online

I just finished reading "The War of the Worlds Murder" by Max Allan Collins, a very nicely written whodunit set within the context of Orson Welles' famous 1938 Mercury Theatre on the Air radio dramatization of H.G. Wells' "The War of the Worlds." More about the author and his works can be found at the web site created by his son Nate at <http://www.maxallancollins.com/>.

It has been over thirty years since I heard a recording of that radio broadcast, so when I finished the book I went online to see whether the Alexandria Public Library had an audio recording. They did (on cassette), but then I wondered if the recording itself was available online. Better than that, Kim Scarborough encoded audio recordings of productions by Mercury Theatre on the Air and its successor, Campbell Playhouse, as well as other related material in RealAudio and MP3 format, and created a web site for them. The recordings can be downloaded directly, but the audience is encouraged to use BitTorrent peer-to-peer downloads for faster delivery. Those willing to buy items for Kim from the linked Amazon.com wishlist can even request a copy of the collected recordings on DVD-ROM.

To experience the Golden Age of Radio in high-tech fashion, visit the web site at <http://www.mercurytheatre.com/>.

[atre.info/](#).

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, Knoppix) on CD-R. Note: download versions of commercial distributions do not include official technical support or printed documentation.

Discs are available only 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!

January 2006

Clamav – v0.87.1. Free GNU General Public License source code and packages for Debian, Fedora Core 4, SUSE and Mandriva. Clam AntiVirus is a GPL antivirus toolkit for UNIX. The main purpose of this software is the integration with mail servers to filter out e-mail viruses before delivery. However, it can also be used standalone. ClamAV provides a flexible and scalable multi-threaded daemon, a command line scanner and a virus database that is kept up to date.

ClamTK – v2.12. Free Perl License source code and packages for Fedora Core 4, Debian and SUSE 10.0 by phenom. ClamTk is a GUI front-end for ClamAV (AntiVirus) using Gtk2-perl.

It is designed to be an easy-to-use,

point and click virus scanner.

Firefox – v1.5. Free Mozilla Public License source code and executable by the Mozilla Foundation. Firefox is an advanced web browser featuring pop-up ad blocking, fast page loading, an intuitive interface, plugin feature extensions and themes, and integrated search. This release provides automatic browser updates and single-click removal of private data such as cookies, browsing history, passwords and form data.

SDLjump – v0.91. Free GNU General Public License C source code by Juan Pedro Bolívar Puente. SDLjump is a clone of the simple yet addictive game Xjump, adding new features like multi-player, unlimited frames per second, smooth floor falling, themable graphics, etc. The goal in this game is to jump to the next floor so you don't fall down. As you go upper in the Falling Tower the floors will fall faster. Try to survive longer than anyone. It might seem too simple, but once you've tried you'll realize how addictive this is. To make the multi-player games last longer, you can choose to have more than one life, but the final result will be divided by the number of lives consumed.

GNU/Linux Distribution Updates - Security and bug fix monthly updates for Fedora Core 4.

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

Job Opportunity

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- The nature of the team's dynamic

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mics will require an individual that is able to work closely in a collaborative role with other team members

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EOE/M/F/V/D

Keeping Up

by Paul Howard

Linda and I took a mini-vacation in Colonial Williamsburg after Thanksgiving. One of the benefits of staying at the Woodlands Hotel on the property is free high speed internet - plug in the laptop, and experience the joy of a fast connection. Don't forget to bring a network cable - better yet, bring two. While vacationing in Ocean City in the spring, my cable died, and I thought it was the hotel's connection - suspect the least expensive part of the hookup first. While I've been blessed with a good dial up connection (48K or better) at home, I'm eagerly awaiting Verizon's FIOS service for internet and TV.

I experienced a strange glitch in Williamsburg while surfing the net. I couldn't open Adobe Acrobat documents with any of the three browsers I have loaded on the laptop. I could read Acrobat files with Acrobat Reader, but no luck via browser plug-ins. I downloaded a Reader update, still no joy. Finally, I uninstalled the Reader program, and downloaded the complete latest version. This fixed the glitch - Reader popped up with all browsers. Thank heavens for the high speed connection though - what once was a three or four megabyte download has ballooned to twenty megs!

Ever notice how there's always more to learn with computers? I was trying to get a banner ad image for our web site from an O'Reilly Publishing web page, as part of one of their user group offers. Tried multiple browsers, couldn't see the banners on the page. I sent email to Marsee Henon, the user group rep, thinking there might be a problem with the link, but she replied it worked

fine for her. I emailed the link to Bill Walsh, and he sent me back one of the banners as proof that the page worked. I finally delved into Norton's Internet Security Program, which provides firewall and other services, notably "ad blocking." I unchecked the "ad blocking" option, sent the browser to the page in question, and there appeared a web page full of banners of all sizes. Among other techniques, the blocking software looks at the path name for pages, images, etc. If "ads" happens to be in path, the image, page, etc. won't make it through the blocking software!

When I upgraded from a 17" CRT monitor to a 19" LCD flat panel, I lost the convenience of a place to put coffee mugs full of pens and pencils, and other assorted desktop detritus. The top of the monitor had a six inch flat band on top that made for a convenient shelf. Cyberguys.com to the rescue, with their so-called LCD monitor shelf, \$23 plus shipping. Two clamp-on metal poles support an 11.5" deep by 20" wide shelf - much better than the top of the old monitor. I got rid of lots of desktop clutter. Ask for their catalog - lots of useful stuff for computer enthusiasts - and a few toys, too <grin>!

TiVo Schmeevo - My Kingdom for an S-Video Cable

After lots of accolades from user group friends Geof Goodrum, Chuck Roberts, and Bill Walsh, I thought it time to give the TiVo digital video TV recorder a whirl. Yet another black and silver box to add to your tower of home theater gear. So much better than a VCR, because it records on a hard drive,

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and uses Linux for its operating system. The first generation boxes were hackable, at least to the extent of installing additional or larger drives. The device hooks to a phone line or internet connection to download TV program information, software upgrades, etc. Subscribing to the programming service is the revenue stream for TiVo, given that the boxes generally feature \$150 rebates.

To be truthful - one of the challenges was trying to figure out why my VCR was hooked up the way it was - that's as baffling as any of the TiVo stuff <groan>. I spent most of an afternoon crawling on my belly like a reptile, trying to get TiVo hooked up - it's like a plumbing project, always yet another trip to the store - for the S-video cables I thought I had, turned out they were all coax. And extra audio cables, too. Insufficient inputs on the TV required purchase of a \$39 switch, so I can share an input between the VCR and TiVo (and two spares, for later additions). I also discovered that S-video connectors are a flawed system - the slightest tug on a cable, and it pops out of the jack. I ultimately used some sleeving and cable ties to bundle the wires together and managed to eliminate the tendency of the S-video connectors from pulling out of the jacks.

I took twenty minutes trying to figure out which button on the remote to push to start the TiVo set up process - that would be the "select" button, and it told you that in the third paragraph of the on-screen directions - but not in the ----ing manual. (Believe it or not - I was trying to read the manual.) Oh, that cutesy TiVo logo on the top of

the remote control? That's a button too - the TiVo button, of course - that does wonderful blinking stuff as well.

At first, I thought the cable that TiVo gives you to hook up to the phone jack and splits to two jacks shorted the phone line so the phone was constantly off hook, thus preventing the TiVo from calling the mothership and downloading all the latest Dept. of Homeland Security software into the TiVo, checking on your subversive viewing habits - they know you watch PBS, and they're going to make sure you're not gonna march in the next anti-war rally. Oh, yeah, and you can't use your phone, either !! Wouldn't want you setting up none of them pinko meetings <grin>. I unplugged the phone connection after each of its first two programming calls, and was concerned that the TiVo box might have a defective modem that was not releasing the line after one of its calls. After calling up the mothership on the second morning, the box no longer held up the phone line, but released it at the conclusion of the programming call.

Geez, I'm going to buy one of those two-headed, 500 watt xenon job lights that Sears sells, so I can see in back of the TV, VCR, and the TiVo. There's a 15 digit number on the back of the bleeping TiVo unit that you need in order to sign up for the programming service, and it's in about 4 point type. The tiny type makes it especially handy to read on your belly, trying to hold the flashlight, dial in the bifocals, and scream the numbers to the wife, as she graciously writes them down. My wife is a wonderful woman, or perhaps I just didn't catch her muttering "Why didn't you write these

numbers down before you started hooking up all the wires?"



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ernment Center, Room 2/3. This session will feature the creation of a network on-site, with both wired and wireless segments. Discussion will include file sharing, resource sharing with printers, and security. An extensive series of handout materials is available on the web site on the recent meeting page. We suggest you download these and bring them along to the meeting. <http://www.wacug.org/recmtgs.html>

January's meeting will also include our usual Q&A session, where we attempt to help members and guests with problems. We'll also be completing our annual election process for group officers at this meeting. If time permits, I'll narrate a Power-Point presentation from Microsoft about their software validation program - Windows Genuine Advantage.



Computer Networking

by Chuck Roberts

This is part two of the topic of networking computers. After this session, you should be able to connect your computers at home into a network so you may share files and printers to all your computers even if you don't have a broadband connection to the Internet.

For the November meeting I told you about the history of how computer networks developed and evolved over time. This month we will work through the nuts and bolts of building the network and connecting multiple computers together into a network. In fact, we will do this "live" meaning the actual components required will be provided so we can actually connect multiple computers together and share files and a high speed connection to the Internet (if the connection is working in the Fairfax County Government Center on meeting day).

Our network will contain network segments for both wired computers and wireless computers. If you have a computer to bring and connect to our network, please feel free to do so. I'll bring a switch for the wired computers, and a few ethernet patch cables. USB NICs are not very expensive and they will also work if your computer doesn't have an ethernet port built-in. I also plan to bring a wireless router that will serve the wireless computing crowd if you want to bring your new laptop with a built-in wireless connection.

Besides that, Paul, Geof and I will have laptop computers we can use to demonstrate and show what we're doing, but bring your own so you can experience the session with us.

This will be helpful as we setup file sharing and printing so you may see first hand how to "share" folders, drives and printers — and also how **NOT** to share these things.

If you get an opportunity, I highly recommend that you download the handouts. They are all in the PDF file format. All the handouts (from the November meeting and for the January meeting) are on the web site. Some of these files are quite large so it will take a while to download them through a dial-up connection. However, they include a lot of information.

Part 1 is from the November meeting.

Part 2, Appendix part 1 and Appendix part 2 are for the January meeting. The Appendix files include photos of some of the hardware details which are important to note for correct installation.

The text is 18 point so it is easy to read. I noted how much trouble Paul was having with his Tivo installation so I tried to make the information easy to read.

In Part 2 for the January meeting, I have tried to follow a logical approach of covering the hardware for a wired network first. Then moving to the hardware for a wireless installation. And finally, the software required for networking is discussed.

The format for the January meeting is to have a quick review, then to discuss the wired network. As the discussion covers the hardware, we will begin to construct the wired segment of our network. Again the Appendix has some important information as to which ports to use and etc.

Then we'll discuss the wireless

components required for the wireless segment: what to use, and how to connect it. This will include the wireless router.

Then we'll address the software requirements. What Windows software components are required and how to configure them.

Next we'll proceed to get all computers connected for access to the Internet (if available).

Now we're really to the good stuff that's lots of fun! Like, we'll get all the computers to join a local workgroup, then we'll set up some folders for the workgroup to "share".

Then we'll look at restricting access by **NOT** sharing a folder to see how that works.

I believe at this point we should discuss and demonstrate Wireless Security. Geof still has a paper on the WAC web site that covers this for reference, but we'll ask Geof to teach us about this again using the equipment in the meeting room.

Some of the last things we'll cover will be some diagnostic tools you may use *if* (read as 'when') you have a problem with your network. The tools and utilities we will have available are not all the tools you may possibly need, but they are free and demonstrate a lot about networking.

I believe networking is a topic most members will find interesting and useful. After all, almost all of us have an old outdated computer sitting around the house. Now you no longer have to find a way to dispose of it. You can simply add it to your network as a storage device known in the world of networks as a file server.



Informative Tech

News

By Bob Elgines; CRCC Editor;
elginesz@rraz.net

More Free Spyware - There is another one out there like Spybot called SpyBlaster which can be downloaded at : www.java-coolsoftware.com . There is a slight catch, you will need to manually update, unless you pay \$10 for an automatically update subscription. This unlike Spybot will prevent installation of spyware.

PCI Express vs AGP-8X Graphic Cards - Are they here to stay? The PCI-Express cards are about the same speed and higher in price. So don't run out and change your Mother Board to accommodate the PCI-Express. The only difference right now is the Bandwidth, but there are not programs out there to use this advantage. It's main use would be used in Gaming.

Windows 2000 Info! - Microsoft released an update containing a collection of previous patches. The final service pack for Windows 2000 is SP4, which was released in March, 2003. Support for Windows 2000 will end in 2010.

What is "Windows XP N"? - Windows XP N is a version without the MS Media Player. Windows XP Home (the standard version) sells for the same price.

What is "Windows XP Media"? - Basically the standard home version with all of the latest photo, music, and movie enhancement pack. This includes such things as Plus!Photo Story, Media player, Movie Maker, etc. These items can be download from Microsoft for free in most cases.

New Microsoft Windows Software - Microsoft's new operating system called "Longhorn" has been officially named "Windows Vista", and is set to be released to the public in 2006. The three new goals are summarized as Clear (new methods), Confident (better security) and Connected (seamless) by Microsoft developers.

New WD Hard Drive - Western Digital released a new high-class series of Caviar drives and announced a new high capacity drive of 400 GB SATA (Serial). This drive has a speed of 7200 rpm, 16 MB of cache, and a transfer rate of 150 MBps. The WD Caviar SE16 400 GB is priced at approximately \$280 with a three year warranty.

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.



Cursor by E-mail

Chuck Roberts, *Cursor Editor*

Fellow WACUG members. Once again the Post Office is raising the Postal Rates which directly impacts us as a, not for profit organization.

I have made an effort to improve the value of the Cursor when viewed online as a PDF file. All the hyperlinks are active and some color is included in almost every issue.

I invite you to try the online version of *The Cursor* by signing-up using the list at the Disk of the Month table.

All you need to do is add your name and E-mail address to the list. There are options to receive *The Cursor* only by E-mail or in addition to snail-mail .

If you like the E-mail version, you might be able to print your own hardcopy and then stop receiving a snail-mail copy in the mail.

The files are usually about 300Kb in PDF format so it doesn't take too long for them to download.

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Remember to use the User Group Discount code, DSUG to save up to 30% off the list price of books from O'Reilly Publishing. Simply enter DSUG as your discount code during the check-out process to get your discount.

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The Cursor provides news, commentary and product information to members of the Washington Area Computer User Group.

**Send membership inquiries and address changes to: membership@wacug.org
Send article submission and reprint requests to the Editor: cursor@wacug.org**

2006 WAC Membership/Renewal Application

2006 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.

Individual/Corporate/Family Dues: \$25.00

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

**Washington Area Computer User Group
30 Fendall Ave.
Alexandria, VA 22304-6300**

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

Name: _____
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Membership Survey: Help us to help you by completing this survey.
 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: Photo Printing Investing Games
 Digital Photography Internet Access Education Music
 Graphics/Animation Genealogy Video Finance
 Programming Language(s) _____
 Hardware Upgrades/Repair List others below

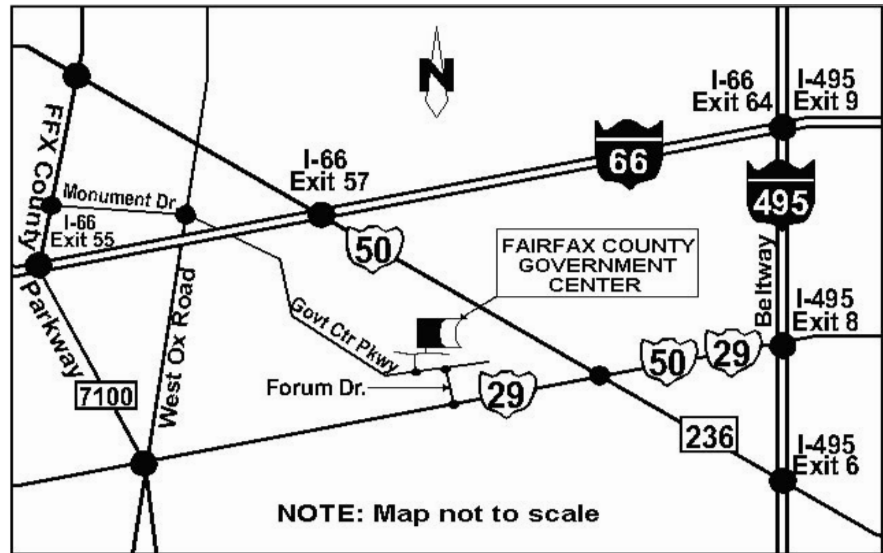
Next WAC Meetings: • Jan 21 • Feb 11 • Mar 25 • Apr 15 • May 20

Call (703) 370-7649 for the latest meeting information or Visit our Web Site at:
<http://www.wacug.org>

January Meeting will be held at the Fairfax County Government Center

Through Front Entrance to the Left Hallway, Past the Elevators to:
Conference Room 2/3

Service Desks Open at 12:30
Meeting Starts at 1:00 PM
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