



The Cursor



Monthly Newsletter of the
Washington Area Computer User Group

Meeting Location:
Fairfax County
Government Center



Next Meeting:
May 20 , 2006



Presidential Bits

May 20, 2006 Meeting

By Paul Howard

April's meeting featured Bill Walsh's demonstration of Cybercorder 2000. More information, including discount information for this interesting PC audio recording program, are available at:

<http://www.wacug.org/recmtgs.html> Other topics included headphones for noisy environments (see Kurt DeSoto's article in this issue of the Cursor), and keeping your PC security software up to date and doing its job.



Gnucash and Celtia.

Geof will also demonstrate and discuss Knoppix as a Live CD OS. Knoppix is a bootable CD with a collection of GNU/Linux software, automatic hardware detection, and support for many graphics cards, sound cards, SCSI and USB devices and other peripherals. Knoppix can be used as a Linux demo, educational CD, rescue system, or adapted and used as a platform for commercial software product demos. It is not necessary to install anything on a hard disk. Due to on-the-fly decompression, the CD can have up to 2 GB of executable software installed on it.

If time permits, Geof will also show video highlights from the APCUG 2006 Conference and the 2006 International Consumer Electronics Show.

Wanna be a star? WAC is always looking for articles for the Cursor and presenters for our meetings. Your suggestions for topics for meetings or newsletter articles, or improvements in any of our operations, are welcome - please contact any board member or myself.



Table of Contents

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Lloyd's Web Sites | 2 |
| GNU/Linux..... | 3 |
| Screen shots..... | 4 |
| DIY Project-Sound Advice | 5 |
| Keeping Up | 6 |
| Tech News..... | 7 |
| The New, The Best, and The Worst..... | 9 |

At the May 20th WAC meeting, Geof Goodrum will demo Fedora Core 5 as an installed OS and several popular desktop applications for it. Besides being noted for stability and security, GNU/Linux also offers its users a wide choice of software, including desktop environments, office applications, games, graphics and sound editors, image managers and e-mail clients. Geof will provide some background on Open Source software and GNU/Linux distributions, then demonstrate the KDE and Gnome desktop environments and several popular applications such as OpenOffice.org, Kword, Scribus, the GIMP, ImageMagick,

Lloyd's Web Sites for May, 2006

by Lloyd Johnson, WAC member

<http://www.wacug.org> is the URI for the Washington Area Computer User Group. Visit it for past issues of Web sites with Hyperlinks.

1. Get a human to answer the phone. — This URL is a group of people dedicated to speed up the process to talk with a real person. You may want to participate. www.gethuman.com
2. Skylines of some of the world's great cities — Click on top 15 skylines www.diserio.com
3. From Bill Bales "Lowest Gas Price"—this site is updated daily <http://autos.msn.com/everyday/gasstations.aspx>
4. A collection of videos, photos and other files people has uploaded—some are really funny and may require downloading. <http://youtube.com/index>
5. Fly a Russian fighter over Moscow and other strange adventure vacations. www.incredible-adventures.com
6. Note to self-Remember the Milk. You can actually publish your tasks as a news Feed. www.rememberthemilk.com
7. Book finder site is good for tracking down new and used copies of everything — From best sellers to rarities. www.bookfinder.com
8. Restrooms when you are on the go. Where to Stop and where to go.

www.wheretostopwheretogo.com

9. Brain Aerobics. www.happyneuron.com
10. Guide to planets and satellites, meteor showers and celestial events. www.skypub.com



Happy Memorial Day!

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

Linux CD of the Month

In addition to the CD-R discs described below, WACUG can provide any downloadable GNU/Linux operating system distribution (e.g. Fedora Core, Mandriva, 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 are available with a \$3 donation; GNU/Linux distributions on two or three discs are available for a \$6 donation per set. All executable programs are for Intel x86 compatible Linux distributions unless stated otherwise. Your requests and suggestions are always welcome!

May 2006

Chess Training Tools – v1.2.14. Free GNU General Public License Java code by Dietrich Kappe. Chess Training Tools includes a chess visualization trainer that teaches chess visualization by drilling you on the color of a particular square, and also on your ability to tell if two squares are the same color, if two (or three) squares are on the

same diagonal, if two squares are a knight move apart, or if two squares are two knight moves apart. It includes a weak chess program (called Vince) that lets you lag the display by several ply, hide all pieces or all pawns, and block out quadrants of the board. Furthermore, it includes an opening memorization trainer.

Numerical Python – v2.6. Free GNU General Public License Python code by Jay Miller and Travis Oliphant. The fundamental package needed for scientific computing with Python is called NumPy. This package contains a powerful N-dimensional array object, sophisticated (broadcasting) functions, basic linear algebra functions, basic Fourier transforms, sophisticated random number capabilities, and tools for integrating Fortran code. NumPy derives from the old Numeric code base and can be used as a replacement for Numeric. It also adds the features introduced by numarray and can also be used to replace numarray.

pdftk – v1.12. Free GNU General Public License Java code by Sid Steward. Pdftk is a simple, command line tool for doing everyday things with PDF documents. Use it to merge PDF documents, split PDF pages into a new document, decrypt input as necessary (password required), encrypt output as desired, fill PDF forms with FDF data or flatten forms, apply a background watermark, report on PDF metrics, update PDF metadata, attach files to PDF pages or the PDF document, unpack PDF attachments, burst a PDF document into single pages, decompress and re-compress page streams, and repair corrupted PDF files (where possible).

PyGame – v1.7.1. Free GNU Lesser General Public License by Pete Shinners. Pygame is a set of Python modules designed for writing games. It is written on top of the excellent SDL library. This allows

you to create fully featured games and multimedia programs in the python language. Pygame is highly portable and runs on nearly every platform and operating system.

Trip on the Funny Boat – v1.1. Free GNU General Public License Python code and Creative Commons License music, sound and graphics by Olli Etuaho and Pekka Kujan-suu. Trip on the Funny Boat is side scrolling arcade shooter game on a steamboat equipped with a cannon and the ability to jump. The player will need to take advantage of waves to defeat the enemies and dodge hazards. The game participated in the second PyWeek competition held in April 2006, and placed first in the team category. Requires Python 2.4, PyGame 1.7 and Numeric 24.2.

GNU/Linux Distribution Updates - Security and bug fix monthly updates for Fedora Core 5.

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



Screen shots on page 4



Chess Training Tool Screen shot



Trip on the Funny Boat Screen shot



Sound Advice DIY Noise-Canceling Headphones for Under \$15

By Kurt DeSoto, WACUG
Member

I thoroughly enjoyed Bill Walsh's oral presentation at the April WACUG meeting on the Cybercorder 2000 program for recording Internet streaming audio programs and Internet radio broadcasts (<http://wacug.org/recmtgs.html>) There are now countless Internet sites that provide either free or subscription-based access to live (and archived) audio recordings of their programs. Unfortunately, I miss quite a few live broadcasts because of other commitments or timing problems. Cybercorder 2000 can now come to the rescue! (<http://skyhawktech.com/>) It is like a TIVO for Internet audio. Thanks for the tip, Bill.

But I still need to listen to the recordings, and the same commitments or timing problems exist. So I have to create a CD or download the audio files to an mp3 player to listen to them while I commute to

work on the subway or bus, wait in the airport, run on the treadmill, or walk the dog. See my article about downloading files using my preferred technique – minidisc recorders -- at http://www.fcba.org/includes/news_items/news_items_more.php?section_id=1&id=23

These environments are extremely noisy, though, and I usually can't crank up the volume sufficiently to hear the recordings clearly (without possibly damaging my ears). And I don't want to pay the high cost for noise-canceling headphones that will get beat up in my briefcase or gym locker (or by my dog). Moreover, such headphones usually require battery power, resulting in more hassle or cost.

An article in *Make* magazine (www.makezine.com) resolved my dilemma. On page 56 of Volume 5, Tim Anderson advised readers to buy a cheap set of industrial earmuffs (like the ones worn by personnel on airport tarmacs, jackhammer operators, and employees in noisy plants) and then insert into the cups of the earmuffs a cheap pair of small, over-the-ear headphones (like those distributed on airplanes to watch

in-flight movies). Or I can use earbuds as I normally would and then just put the earmuffs over my ears. The earmuffs block outside noise (including my yapping dog or wife), and I am able to hear the recordings more easily, at a lower volume, and enjoyably (especially classical music). My eardrums thank me. My wife does not.

Mr. Anderson recommends Peltor H10A earmuffs from www.mcmaster.com (search for " earmuffs" and find SKU # 9206T2) that offer 30 dB protection, but there are other brands offered by the company (as well as other companies). They run as low as about \$15 or as high as \$23 from McMaster. Then use any headphones that you already have lying around the house or office. They might not look as slim or snazzy as Bose or Sony noise-canceling headphones, but \$15 bucks beats 300 bucks or more any day.

Last, the headphones will work with your Cybercorder 2000 files as well as any other files or players you might have. Tim Anderson enjoys audio books. I enjoy the college lectures on CD I order from the Teaching Company out Chantilly <www.teach12.com>

And when my wife says she told me to do something for her, I can honestly say I didn't hear her.

Mr. DeSoto is an attorney at the law firm of Wiley Rein & Fielding LLP. He writes a column entitled "Computers for Communications Practitioners" for the Federal Communications Bar Association. http://www.fcba.org/newsletters/computers_for.shtml



Keeping Up

by Paul Howard (WAC President)

When I was growing up, my folks had a book of “The Best Cartoons from The New Yorker Magazine.” A number of those cartoons featured a guy with a long beard, flowing robes, (looking like a biblical prophet) and carrying a sign that read “The End is Near.” Fast forward to 2006, and the guy carrying the sign is wearing Dockers, a pocket protector, and looks hauntingly like Bill Gates. On July 11th, Microsoft ends the support of Windows 98, SE, and ME, thus no more bug fixes and security updates. So, if yours is a Pentium I, II, or AMD K6 vintage machine, it really is time for a new computer running XP or Linux. Details from Microsoft: <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/support/endofsupport.msp>

The good news about upgrading is the computer you’ll get today is probably five times as fast as your old one, with ten times the hard drive capacity, and four to eight times the RAM. It will include a multi-function optical drive that will read and write DVDs and CDs, a 17 inch, flat screen CRT, and cost 40% of what you paid back in the day. It’s time !!

Based on sales figures, more laptops are being sold now than desktop systems, so they’re certainly a factor in an upgrade decision. I acquired a personal laptop about two years ago, and used one at work for the last two years before I retired. I love being able to keep up with email using a laptop on vacation — some would argue that it’s not vacation if you’re going to drag your digital life along. However, unless you plan to spend north of two grand, your

laptop will probably be heavy or underpowered.

My work laptop had a quality case, with sufficient room to serve as a briefcase, and a nice shoulder strap — but... I was getting neck and back pain from carrying it to and from work, and wound up buying a rolling case for it. Some of the other considerations about using a laptop as a primary computer include hard drive speed. Laptops generally use drives with lower speeds than desktop systems because lower rotational speed equates to longer battery life. RPM matters! I’ve found the drive speed on my laptop, 5400 rpm vs. 7200 on my desktop systems, highly frustrating.

If your laptop is your primary system, and you use it for traveling frequently, you’ll probably want to avoid disconnecting all your cables every time you move the computer, so you’ll need to invest in a port replicator or docking station (\$100 – \$300), and extra power supply (\$90 and up). Laptop batteries are expensive (\$130 and up), and have a limitation to how many times they can be recharged, generally about 500 charge cycles. You can lengthen battery life, if your laptop is left mostly in one place, by popping out the battery and running off the power supply / charger. However, you then need to remember to replace and recharge the battery before you “go portable.”

Another serious consideration with laptops is the data contained in them. If you use a laptop as your primary computer, and carry it on vacation, what will the computer reveal if it’s stolen or lost? Is your financial life on the computer — access to banking, brokerage, retirement, and credit card accounts,

or Quicken / Money files? Data like this needs to be left secured at home, or locked down with encryption — and the encryption key must not be on a Post It note stuck to the case. This week Aetna Insurance revealed that a laptop stolen from an employee’s car contained the names, addresses, and Social Security numbers of 38,000 customers. Several user group members and I have been notified of similar data thefts affecting our personal information. Fortunately, with these notices have come several years’ coverage from credit reporting agencies for identity theft problems. You really need to protect the data on a laptop!



TechNews

By Sue Crane, Vice President & Editor, Big Bear Computer Club, California

BREAKING NEWS!!

Microsoft will release Vista in two versions. The volume-license business version will ship in November 2006, but the consumer version will not be available until 2007 — too late for the holidays. Some MS partners feel this move will take a huge bite out of 2006 holiday sales, but others say they are not surprised.

Sun Microsystems recently released the beta software for Java Platform Standard Edition 6.0, code-named Mustang. The update should make it easier to use scripting languages such as PHP or Ruby to write Java applications and improve diagnostics to spot bugs. Last year, Sun modified the license around Java to allow developers to see the source code. Sun also changed its development practices so that outsiders can see and contribute to Java development. The completed software will be available in the fall.

Microsoft Office 12 (Office 2007) will offer new features, including an all-new user interface and new XML-based file formats, but no significant price increase. Office Standard will sell for \$399, while Office Professional will sell for \$499. Microsoft released an initial beta of Office 2007 in November 2005, with a second beta planned for this spring. The company is replacing its Student and Teacher edition with a \$149 Home and Student edition that can be used by all home users and removing the Outlook and including OneNote. The Student and Teacher edition and the home version of Office can be used on up to 3 PCs in a home, but cannot be

upgraded. The ProPlus version will include Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Access and Publisher plus the Office Communicator, InfoPath and server-based content management and forms management capabilities. Many of the new capabilities will be included in SharePoint Portal Server, which has been expanded to handle forms management, spreadsheet hosting and content rights management. The “Core CAL(client access license)” combines licenses for Windows Server, Exchange Server, Office SharePoint Portal Server and Systems Management Server. The new “Enterprise CAL” includes those licenses, as well as Microsoft Operations Manager, Microsoft Office Live Communications Server and rights-management and security products. Microsoft is also using the SharePoint brand for a new Web site development program. Microsoft Office SharePoint Designer 2007, like Microsoft’s Expression Web Designer software is based in part on FrontPage. Office 12 is scheduled for release in fall 2006.

Nearly one-third of American Internet users go online just for fun rather than to check e-mail, read news or use a search engine according to **Deborah Fallows**, senior research fellow at the nonpartisan Pew Internet & American Life Project, which examines the social impact of the Internet. A survey of 1,931 Internet users found 30 percent of respondents said they went online “for no particular reason” on the previous day. The survey also showed that 34 percent of online men were surfing for fun on an average day, compared with 26 percent of women. The Survey said that sending or receiving e-mail ranked highest with 52 percent of Internet users saying they did this on a typical day. Using a search en-

gine ranked second with 38 percent, while reading news online was third with 31 percent.

Lego has picked 100 lucky fans who will be the first members of the public to get their hands on [Mindstorms NXT, the latest generation of the company’s programmable robot toys](#). Last year [some Lego fans figured out a way to hack](#) the development tools on a company Web site. Instead of going after them with lawyers, Lego responded by saying, “That’s terrific.” The 100 Lego fans named last week have a chance to help develop the product by road-testing it and then share their impressions with Mindstorm executives. The 2006 version—which is expected to be publicly available in August 2006—gives users the ability to build and program robots that incorporate visual, sound and touch-sensitive sensors that can be controlled wirelessly using Bluetooth devices. Mindstorms director Soren Lund hopes many of the developer-program members will create attractive and impressive robots that Lego will be able to showcase on the Mindstorms NXT Web site when the product officially launches this summer.

The organizers of **RoboCup**, an international robot world’s World Cup of soccer held annually, plan to have a new category this year named the “RoboCup Citizen Eco-Be League,” which will feature the tiny Eco-Be robots, which measure less than one square inch. Citizen is releasing a developer kit so teams can create their own Eco-Be robots. This year’s competition will be held from June 14-20 in Bremen, Germany, and will feature separate competitions for robots in various size categories as well as humanoid

See *Tech News* page 8

Tech News from page 7

and 4-legged leagues.

What's Your "Brain Age"?

If millions of Japanese are to be believed, it is the secret to a happy and healthy old age as millions of them take up Nintendo's brain training. Players have to complete puzzles as quickly and accurately as possible, including reading literary classics aloud, doing simple arithmetic, drawing, and responding rapidly to deceptively easy teasers using voice-recognition software. The player's "brain age" is then determined. The first in the English-language series of games, *Brain Age*, is due for its US release on April 17, followed by *Big Brain Academy* in May. *Brain Training for Adults*, a package of cerebral workouts aimed at the over-45s, is said to improve mental agility and even slow the onset of dementia and Alzheimer's disease and also proves addictive to over-45s anxious to ward-off old age.

When Daniel Hickey's doctor suggested he have a microchip implanted under his skin to provide instant access to his computerized medical record, the 77-year-old retired naval officer immediately agreed. "If you're unconscious and end up in the emergency room, they won't know anything about you," Hickey said. "With this, they can find out everything they need to know right away and treat you better." Some doctors are welcoming the technology as an exciting innovation that will speed care and prevent errors. But the concept alarms privacy advocates. They worry the devices could make it easier for unauthorized snoops to invade medical records. **VeriChip Corp.** is selling kits containing scanners and the large-bore needles used to insert the chips, and

recommending that doctors charge patients about \$200 each. At an academic computing conference in Pisa, Italy, researchers plan to demonstrate how it is possible to infect a tiny portion of memory in an RFID chip with a virus.

Started by Westinghouse in 1942, **STS** is the oldest, and generally most prestigious, national science competition for high school students. Intel took over the competition in 1998 as part of its overall effort to promote science education, for which it spends \$100 million annually.⁴⁰ Students make the finals, plucked from 300 semifinalists and more than 1,500 total entrants. Shannon Babb, 18, won top honors, which included a \$100,000 scholarship, for her research and remediation work on pollution. Yi Sun, 17, won a \$75,000 scholarship for his discovery of new geometric properties. Yuan "Chelsea" Zhang, 17, came in third place to win a \$50,000 scholarship. Zhang, from Rockville, Md., studied the plaque buildup of arteries that leads to heart disease. Students taking fourth, fifth and sixth places get \$25,000, while those ranking 7th through 10th receive \$20,000. The remaining 30 finalists receive \$5,000, and every finalist gets an Intel Centrino notebook computer.

Intel's new Core microarchitecture takes advantage of similarities to fuse certain types of x86 instructions into more manageable chunks. 3 new chips—code-named Merom (a notebook chip), Conroe (for desktops) and Woodcrest for servers—are based on the Core microarchitecture. Intel has said all 3 chips will deliver significant performance increases compared with current chips—as much as an 80 percent improvement in the case

of Woodcrest—while consuming less power. One way the new architecture makes this happen is through macro-ops fusion and micro-ops fusion. When the Pentium M chip that is the model for the Core architecture—was introduced in 2003, it used a technique called micro-ops fusion to glue pieces taken from the same instruction back together, reducing the overall amount of work the processor needs to complete a task. The new chips will also be able to combine separate large instructions that usually appear in pairs into a single instruction, known as macro-ops fusion, which increases performance, but also reduces the amount of power used by the chip. Merom is scheduled for the second half of the year. It's really a major change in clock and in the amount of time it takes to execute a sequence.

Google Desktop 3 is a free, downloadable program that includes an option to let users search across multiple computers for files. The application automatically stores copies of files, for up to a month, on Google servers. From there, copies are transferred to the user's other computers for archiving. The data is encrypted in transmission and while stored on Google servers. The Electronic Frontier Foundation has urged consumers to boycott the software, warning that Google could be forced to turn over the data to the government.

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.



The New, the Best, and the Worst

Collected by Pim Borman, Website
Editor, SW Indiana PC Users
Group, Inc.

Talking Turk-ey

If you've ever earned some pocket money stuffing envelopes, the advent of e-mail may have put you out of business. But the Internet giveth what it taketh away.

Much of the unanticipated success of the Internet is due to the contributions made by selfless volunteers. Businesses then realized the importance of the Internet to advertise themselves, and Wile E. Coyote would now be able to order his Road Runner catchers from www.acme.com (there actually is such a Web site). Nevertheless, volunteers expect to derive some form of satisfaction from their efforts, and the equivalent of envelope stuffing for free does not draw many aficionados.

The Internet would not be more than a large flea market were it not for the powerful search engines capable of retrieving information almost instantly. The retrieval algorithms depend on vast indexes maintained by constantly culling millions of Web sites world wide. Only computer-readable text is indexable. Yet, there are many other types of valuable information on the Web that are not computer-readable, such as hand-written documents and graphical images. It is almost impossible for a computer to distinguish a picture of Picabo Street in her ski outfit from Mother Teresa in her nun's habit. A human can distinguish them at a glance. Hand-written documents must be retyped, as many genealogy indexers know. Thus there is a great need for indexing graphics

and hand-written information that requires human input. There are many other instances where human input is required, such as rating the validity of computer-generated keywords describing search targets, or retrieving numbers from scanned documents, such as transfer deeds.

Amazon, with its interest in computer searching with its A9.com search engine, has established a program that enlists human help for such tasks. The program is called Mechanical Turk, after a mechanical chess-playing automaton in 1769 that defeated nearly every opponent it faced. It featured a life-sized wooden mannequin, adorned with a fur-trimmed robe and a turban, seated behind a cabinet. It confounded such brilliant challengers as Benjamin Franklin and Napoleon Bonaparte. What they did not know was the secret behind the Mechanical Turk: a human chess master cleverly concealed inside.

Amazon has set up a Web site (<http://www.mturk.com/mturk/welcome>) as a link between programmers looking for "artificial, artificial intelligence," and paid volunteers providing human inputs to perform the requested tasks, referred to as HITS. These are typically of a simple, repetitive nature and pay a minimal amount, a penny or so, for each input. For instance, I saw a HIT listed to look up deed records on a Web site and find the transfer taxes. The volunteers that complete such tasks are rated on their proficiency and accuracy and build up a reputation that qualifies them for somewhat more challenging and higher-paying HITS.

It is an interesting concept that may catch on as it is further refined. (Mentioned in Bill Machrone's column in PC Magazine, February 17,

2006).

Oldie Tribulations

I own a 6-year old former dream machine, once briefly the envy of friends and relatives, a Dell desktop with a 600MHz Pentium III processor and a 20GB hard drive. Over the years I added another 20GB hard drive, upped the RAM to 256 MB, and upgraded from Windows 98SE2 to Windows ME. Lately I have been using this computer to evaluate a variety of Linux distributions that I installed on the second drive in separate partitions.

Recently I took advantage of a special offer to update my version of Xandros (Linux) Desktop Open Circulation to the DeLuxe Edition. I wanted to install it in a clean 10 GB partition, but as a result of the many installations of different operating systems, the second hard drive could not be repartitioned any longer because of a faulty partition table. I could read and write to the disk, but neither Partition Magic nor any other disk software was able to repartition the drive, or even to reformat it. It was time for drastic measures.

I discarded the faulty slave drive, bought a new Western Digital 80GB hard drive, installed it as the master, and relegated the original 20GB master drive to slave status. All I needed to do was reinstall Windows ME and then repartition the disk to make room for Xandros and Linspire, my favorite Linux distributions. Easier said than done, as it turned out. I'll try to summarize the lessons I (re-)learned.

- Windows ME only upgrades from Windows 98, not from DOS.

See *The New, The Best, ...* page 10

- Read the manual about the proper location of the itty-bitty jumpers that determine if a drive is the master or the slave. Don't just go by the markings on the drives. Apparently all drives are different.
- Re-use the old IDE cable if the new cable doesn't reach both drives.
- Even the most recent BIOS version for this computer available from Dell (dated 2000) is not able to recognize more than 32 GB of the 80 GB drive.
- Believe it when it says on the box that the drive requires Windows XP or better.
- The special software, provided by Western Digital, to reach and repartition all 80 GB on an old computer must be used before installing the operating system.
- After using the special WD software to set up the hard drive, don't use Partition Magic 8.0 to further repartition the drive. You won't be able to re-boot and will have to start all over again.
- The computer won't boot any longer from the old hard drive, reinstalled as the master. In computing too, you can't go home again.
- After protecting the system with a ZoneAlarm firewall and F-prot antivirus you think it is safe to go online to update Windows ME and install Internet Explorer 6.0. You'll still receive half a dozen instances of a spy program called Alexa, courtesy of Microsoft. AdAware will identify and remove it for you.

- All's well that ends well. The computer now has 20GB of Windows ME, 30 GB of Linspire 5.0, and 30 GB of Xandros DeLuxe Edition, complete with boot manager.

Maybe I should just have bought one of those cheapy Dell computers. But removing all the junk programs they come with might have been just as frustrating. I'll hold out for a system using the 64-bit AMD chip. That excludes Dell, which uses Intel only. Linux has long since run on 64-bit processors, and Windows Vista is just getting around to it. Now is not the time; later this year, maybe. I might have a local dealer built one to order.

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.



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**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: _____
 Street: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: () - _____

E-mail: _____
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

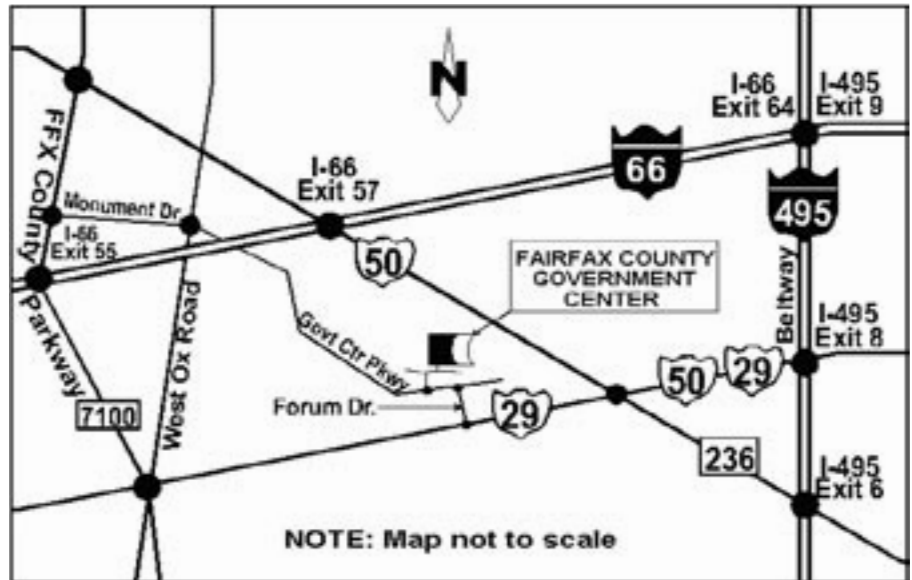
Next WAC Meetings: • May 20 • Jun 17 • Jul 15 • Aug 19 • Sep 16

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

<Month> Meeting will be held at the Fairfax County Government Center

Through Front Entrance to the Left Hallway, Past the Elevators to:
Conference Room 4/5

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