



The Cursor

*Monthly Newsletter of the
Washington Area Computer User Group*



Meeting Location
OLLI, 4210 Roberts Road,
Fairfax, VA



Next Meeting:
April 18, 2009



Presidential Bits

by Paul Howard

Our March meeting featured a presentation by Chuck Roberts, with highlights of the latest from Adobe Photoshop Elements, version 7, which he's been reviewing for us since version 2 of the program. Chuck also presented features of the Photoshop Lightroom product, and introduced us to some of the techniques of HDR – high dynamic range photography. Copies of Chuck's presentation materials will be available on the "recent meetings" page of the web site.

April's meeting will be held jointly with OPCUG at OLLI, 4210 Roberts Rd. in Fairfax, on Saturday, April 18th, from 12:30 to 3:30 PM. Take advantage of the "gathering" portion of the meeting, from 12:30 to 1 PM to make new friends among the members of WACUG and OPCUG – and grab a snack or a drink while you're at it in the social room, adjacent to the classroom.

Our primary meeting topic will revolve around Internet browser software, introducing choices such as Opera, Chrome, and Firefox, with tips on how to get the best user experience and performance from these choices by Bill Walsh and Geof Goodrum. One of the benefits of

the alternatives to Internet Explorer are in the security arena, since the creators of malware seek to exploit weaknesses in the browser with the most users. Firefox, from Mozilla, a force in the open source software movement, offers users choices from many add-ons to enhance browser functionality, appearance, and additional tools for computer users.

Our "Learn 30" session will offer some basics of spreadsheet creation and use, with an introductory presentation by Mel Mikosinski. Mel will use Excel 2003 under Windows XP, and a few examples under Vista and Excel 2007.



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**Plus Bonus Articles in
the Download Edition**

Lloyd's Web Sites for April, 2009

by Lloyd Johnson, WACUG Member

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

April Sites:

1. National Geographic Photography Photo of the day and more
<http://photography.nationalgeographic.com/photography>
2. A good to do list – www.rememberthemilk.com
3. Royal Site of Great Briton – www.royal.gov.uk
4. Picasa – <http://picasa.google.com>. Using Picasa and Picasa Web Albums together, you can now take photos from your computer to the web and back again in quick, simple steps. With Picasa you can find, organize, edit and print the photos on your computer. Then Picasa Web Albums helps you to share those photos online with family, friends and the world.
5. HubbleSite – <http://hubblesite.org>. Public education site from the Space Telescope Science Institute, featuring a showcase gallery of images, the latest news, technical facts and figures, and more. Related site: [Official Site: Hubble Space Telescope](#).
6. Answers.com – www.answers.com. Answers.com is a free “one-stop shop” with instant information on over 4 million topics.
7. Recovery.gov – <http://www.recovery.gov>. Recovery.gov is a website that lets you, the taxpayer, figure out where the money from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (signed by President Barack Obama on February 17, 2009), is going.
8. Presidential Tax Returns – www.taxhistory.org/www/website.nsf/Web/PresidentialTaxReturns?OpenDocument. Individual income tax returns - including those of public figures - are private information, protected by law from unauthorized disclosure. The Tax History Project at Tax Analysts has compiled an archive of presidential tax returns.
9. State Department Travel Fact Sheet – <http://travel.state.gov>.
10. Answers to Washington Post Sunday magazine 12 differences between photos. www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/artsandliving/magazine/second-glance/030809_answers.html. Change the date to the Sunday you want the 12 photo differences. Note an underscore between 9 and answers.



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

**Washington Area User
Group Partners
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NCTCUG

WACUG

OPCUG



GNU/Linux SIG

By Geof Goodrum, WAC

GNU/Linux Distribution Releases

GNU/Linux distributions are complete GNU/Linux operating system and application software collections. Many are freely downloadable or can be ordered on CDs or DVD at low cost. DistroWatch.com lists the following distribution release announcements for the period March 5 – April 1, 2009.

Distribution		
Absolute Linux 12.2.2		
Bluewhite64	Linux	12.2
“LiveDVD”		
CentOS 5.3		
Frugalware Linux 1.0		
Greenie Linux 4I R3		
Igelle PC/Desktop 0.6.0		
K-DEMar 4.8		
OpenGEU 8.10		
Parsix GNU/Linux 2.0		
PC/OS 2009v2a		
PCLinuxOS 2009.1		
Puppy Linux 4.2		
Scientific Linux 5.3		
Scientific Linux 5.3 “Live CD/DVD”		
SUSE Linux Enterprise 11		
Tiny Core Linux 1.2		
UTUTO 2009		
Vyatta 5.0.2		
Zenwalk Linux 6.0		
Zenwalk Linux 6.0 “GNOME”		

Linux Software of the Month

The software described below is downloadable at the links provided or may be requested on CD, or copied onto a USB flash drive at the WAC meeting. In addition, WAC can provide CD-R and DVD±R media for any downloadable GNU/Linux operating system distribution (e.g. Fedora, Mandriva, Ubuntu, Debian, Knoppix). Please note that download versions of commercial distributions do not include official technical support nor printed documentation.

Discs are available **only by pre-order**. Contact Geof Goodrum by e-mail (linux@wacug.org) at least 48 hours before meeting day to order or for more information. Single CD-R discs are available with a \$3 donation; GNU/Linux distributions on multiple CD-Rs or single DVD±R are available with a \$6 donation.

April 2009

aria2 – v1.3.0. <http://aria2.sourceforge.net/>. Free GNU General Public License C++ source code by Tatsuhiro Tsujikawa. aria2 is a utility for downloading files. The supported protocols are HTTP(S), FTP, BitTorrent, and Metalink. It has a powerful segmented downloading ability, downloading a file from multiple sources and multiple protocols and utilizing your download bandwidth to the maximum. It supports downloading a file from HTTP(S)/FTP and BitTorrent at the same time, while the data downloaded from HTTP(S)/FTP is uploaded to the BitTorrent swarm. Using Metalink's chunk checksums, aria2 automatically validates chunks of data while downloading a file like BitTorrent.

FreeCol – v0.8.1. [http://www.free-](http://www.free-col.org/)

[col.org/](http://www.free-col.org/). Free GNU General Public License Java source code and platform independent executable installer by The FreeCol Team. FreeCol is a turn-based strategy game based on the old MicroProse game Colonization, and similar to Civilization. The objective of the game is to create an independent nation. You start with only a few colonists defying the stormy seas in their search for new land. Will you guide them on the Colonization of a New World? FreeCol requires a minimum screen resolution of 1024x768 and Java Virtual Machine version 1.5.0 or above.

gipfel – v0.2.9. <http://www.ecademix.com/JohannesHofmann/gipfel.html>. Free GNU General Public License source code and executable packages for openSUSE and Fedora 10 by Johannes Hofmann. gipfel is a tool to find the names of mountains or points of interest on a picture. It uses a database containing names and GPS data. With the given viewpoint (the point from which the picture was taken) and two known mountains on the picture, it can compute all parameters needed to compute the positions of other mountains on the picture. gipfel can also generate (stitch) panorama images.

LiVES – v0.9.9.7. <http://lives.sourceforge.net/>. Free GNU General Public License source code and executable packages for Fedora, Mandriva, SuSE and Debian by salsaman and others. LiVES is a simple to use yet powerful video effects, editing, conversion, and playback system aimed at the digital video artist and VJ. It uses commonly available tools (Mplayer, ImageMagick, and GTK+), so it works on most Unix-like systems. It runs

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under Linux, BSD, Mac OS X/Darwin, IRIX, and openMosix. It can handle almost all types of video, and is fully extendable through plugins and the included plugin builder tool. LiVES requires: x86 800MHz+ (recommended) or PPC (spec unknown) or amd64 (any); 2GHz+ Pentium/AMD for real time effects; 256MB+ memory for encoding (recommended 512 MB+); 5 - 10+ GB disk space as a minimum (more is better); GNU/Linux 2.x, BSD, or openMosix (also compiles under IRIX).



Game View Orders Report Colopedia Debug

Score: 30 | Gold: 0 | Tax: 0% | Year: 1592

10 Plymouth

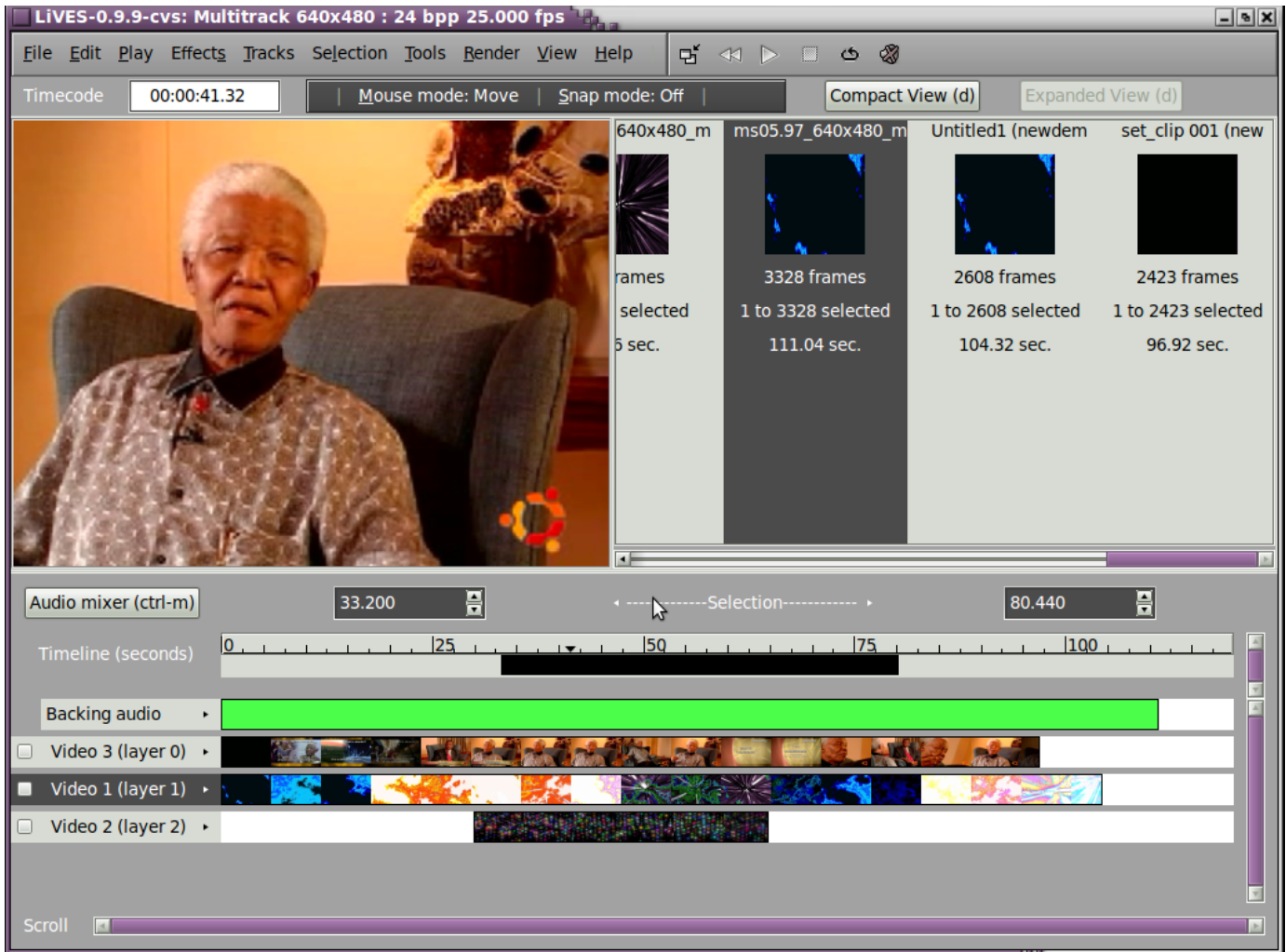
5 Roanoke

5 Isabella

Pioneer (Free Colonist)
Moves: 0/1
100

The screenshot shows the PeakVisor application running on a Windows desktop. The main view is a 3D perspective rendering of a mountain range, specifically the Zugspitze area in the Alps. The mountains are covered in snow and partially forested. Numerous peaks and ridges are identified with yellow labels and thin yellow leader lines pointing to them. Labels include names like "KOPF", "MARBIOHLERSPITZE", "TORKOPF", "SCHÖNENALMOCH", "STENKARSPITZE", "WIRCHLSPITZ", "BAERALPKOPF", "SÜDLICHE UNDERSPITZE", "JUREN", "WEICHELKOPF", "RAFFELSPITZE", "SULZLEINAMSPITZE", "LAICHNEIFLECKSPITZE", "HOCHKARSPITZE", "GROSSKARSPITZE", "WOERNER", "DEUTSCHES STEIGBACH", "SCHUTTEBACH", "ROSSEKOPF", "HOFMEIER", "KAISERBERG", "WEISSKARNKOPF", "SCHNEEFELD", "REITERBERG", "HUEHNERBERG", "SCHNELSKOPF", "GROSSE WANDKAPPE", "GRANITKOPF", "BRUNNEN", "SCHWARZER BERG", "FALKENWAND", "DEISSKOPF", "RISSEKOPF", "RIMELSBERG", "BLANKENSTEIN", "SONNER", "ZUGSPITZE (2963m, distance 75.08km)", "GROSSE RIFFELWANDSPITZE", "GRAMMERBERG", "STRASER", "PFETTERKOPF", "SCHOTTELKARSPITZE", "SOHNENSPITZ", "WETERSTEINWAND", "HUNDSTALLKOPFE", "LEUTASCHER GROTTOSSPITZE", "HOCHWAN", "SCHAFFREUTER", "KARCHEITERSPITZE", "PLEISENSPITZE", "OESTLICHE KARVENDELSPITZE", "VODELKARSPITZE", "SCHLICHTENKARSPITZEN", "BLAUER SCHWAMP", "TROGENKOEPL", "MARKERSCHTEN", "FERMERSKOPF", "PLATTSPIZEN", "GALDENSTANGENKOPF", "FELDERHARRUZ", "WEITERSWANDECK", "SENISKOPF", "WETTERSPIZEN", "HOCHBLASSEN", "GRASKOEPL", "HOELLENTALSPITZEN", "SCHOTTELKOPF", "SCHNEEFERNERKOPF", "ALPSPIITZE". In the bottom-left corner, there is a software control panel titled "PeakVisor". It has a menu bar with "File", "Projection", "Distortion", "Option", and "Help". Below the menu is a circular compass rose with "North", "South", "East", and "West" markings; a needle points towards North-North-East. To the right of the compass are several sliders and input fields: "Focal Length in 35mm" (set to 76.68), "Nick (deg.)" (-4.13), "Tilt (deg.)" (1.39), "Visibility" (0.035), "Track Width" (200), "k0" (0), "k1" (0), and "x0" (0). At the bottom of this panel are two input fields for "Latitude" (47.6527) and "Longitude" (11.925), followed by a "Height" field (1810.85) and a red button labeled "comp".

Livesmt screenshot



Keeping Up

by Paul Howard (WACUG)

Members of our local consortium of user groups - NCTCUG, OPCUG, and WACUG - are looking into the technology of providing remotely hosted meetings, sometimes called "webinars" to the members of the groups. There are several approaches and possibilities in this arena.

Consider: "one on one" of the tech help or instruction variety, where one person can access another's computer, and perform various functions, as if they were sitting physically at the remote keyboard and screen; a variation, where a presentation is made remotely, and a group sitting together observes the presentation projected on a screen; and a "Web meeting" where folks at multiple locations can all participate, or observe a presentation, because of the use of central server.

While everyone loves a "live" demonstration, the economics of getting speakers from vendors to small user groups are such that this use of technology may expand the number of "outside" speakers we're able to attract to our meetings. To learn more, check out these articles that have appeared in the APCUG newsletter:

<http://reports.apcug.org/2008q4/6.htm>

<http://reports.apcug.org/2008q4/10.htm>

<http://reports.apcug.org/2009q1/6.htm>

DTV Converter Box Adventures

In spite of the joys of Verizon's FiOS TV service, with digital video recording, and TiVo, another digital video recorder, there are times at our house when we're trying to re-

cord three or four programs at the same time for later viewing. That requires resorting to "old" technology - the once ubiquitous VCR, of which I still have three.

The digital television "revolution" with the conversion from analog to digital TV signals by the over-the air broadcasters, has vastly complicated the flexibility of VCR recording. The ease of looking up a "VCR+" recording code in the TV listings and using it to program the VCR to record goes away when you need a DTV converter box to translate the digital signal for your analog VCR. Now what - the converter box puts out an RF signal on CH 3 (or 4), and you have to change the channel received with the converter's remote control - which means you've got to be home to change channels if the programs to be recorded are on different channels. The VCR just gets set up to record channel 3 for the entire length of the multiple programs you want to record.

Well, there are alternatives - Jan Chance-Sampson, a user group colleague, tipped me off to a DTV converter box that offered programmability. The Zinwell ZAT-970A Digital Converter Box is available from Solid Signal, the source I've use for a number of years for off-air TV supplies - antennas, amplifiers, etc. This converter box has eight programmable time slots for solving the VCR dilemma noted above. The user programs converter box time slots and channels for received programs output on channel 3 to the VCR, which is programmed to record channel 3 at the appropriate times.

Obviously, there's some pain, 'cause you have to program two devices, instead of one, but you're able to have the converter box automati-

cally switch between channel 7 at 8PM, to 4 at 9PM, to channel 9 at 10 o'clock. The VCR records channel 3 for the full three hour span, and you've captured multiple programs without having to be home to switch the converter box with the remote control.

When the Zinwell box arrived from Solid Signal early on a Saturday morning via FedEx, I immediately began hooking it up. I encountered a minor glitch - I had a six outlet surge protector of the type that covers your duplex receptacle, because it plugs into both AC outlets at the same time. The outlets were full, and I'd acquired a Tripplite Isobar Home Theater Surge Protector previously to provide more outlets, with better protection - but hadn't gotten around to shifting everything around. So, I unplugged all the gear from the older surge protector, plugged the Isobar into the old unit, and plugged everything into the Isobar.

Hooked up the antenna to the Zinwell's input, the Zinwell's RF output to the VCR's input, and took the remote to the couch (of course) to try 'er out! Push the power button - multiple times - nothing - mutter, mutter! Blasted cheap electronics with no pilot light! Pull the batteries out of the remote - cheapa___ no brand AAA batteries, mutter. Test them with the old reliable Radio Shack battery tester - hmmm, they're fine. Put 'em back in, nothing substitute new batteries. Still nothing - heavily steaming ears !!

Walk back over to the Zinwell, sitting on the table next to the TV. What's that - the Zinwell's wall wart - power supply - that I didn't have space for in the old surge protector

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is sitting next to the converter box. Draw a two inch red "X" on center of forehead. Smack "X" with palm of hand, hard - several times. Plug in the wall wart. What's that glowing red light on the front of the Zinwell? How come there's still no evidence of a signal from the VCR? Point the remote control at the box, push "power" - oops, the Zinwell light changes from red to green. Gulp! Up pops the menu, run through the channel scan, setup procedure - hot damn, summer in the city! A great picture on lots of channels. Tell me - why does the fickle finger of fate always point squarely at my nose?

http://www.solidsignal.com/prod_display.asp?PROD=ZAT-970A



XP Utilities

Written by Warner Mach, Editor
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newsletter of the Southeast
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I have discovered that Windows XP is chock full of various utilities to solve various kinds of problems. Some of the utilities that I have occasion to use in recent months:

(1) Windows Task Manager

You bring up the Windows Task Manager by holding down cntl-alt-delete. Some of the useful features are: (a) Go to the applications tab. This shows the running tasks and is useful for ending a task that refuses to go away. (b) Go to process tab. This shows all the miscellaneous tasks in the system and shows the CPU time that each is using. This can frequently be useful when you

are not sure what the system is doing. (c) Go to performance tab. This shows the use of resources. Especially useful is the dynamic graph of CPU usage.

(2) Event Viewer

The Event Viewer has a log of recent events, including events at power up and power down. This was of value to me when I was attempting to learn about certain messages that were appearing at power down time. Under the 'application' and 'system' tabs the logs are listed. To get more detailed information on a particular problem, double-click on the 'type' portion of a particular entry. This will give some keyword search hints that can be typed into Google. You bring up the Event Viewer by going to start=>run and typing

'Eventvwr.msc' into the box => OK.

(3) System Configuration Utility

The tab that was useful to me was the 'startup' tab. These are tasks that automatically come up at startup. By unchecking groups of entries (and saying 'apply' and then rebooting) I was able to zero in on one particular entry that was causing a problem. You bring up the System Configuration Utility by going to start=>run and typing 'msconfig' into the box => OK.

(4) Check Disk

This utility checks the space usage on the disk. It also checks the control block chains to be sure that they are correct. Go to start=>all programs=>accessories=>command prompt and type in 'chkdsk.' If the program detects bad command chains and you want to correct the situation then type in 'chkdsk /F' . This command may require a reboot during which it runs stand-alone.

Useful Resources

There is a useful list of utilities, with examples and explanations at:

<http://tinyurl.com/9um8or>.

There is also information about the Microsoft '906569' update at:

<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/906569>.

This update "... adds the tools tab to the System Configuration Utilities in Windows XP Service pack 2." But even if you don't want to do this, there is a list of useful utilities with an explanation of their function.

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Computer & Internet Tips and Tricks

Written by Gregory West, Editor,
Sarnia Computer Users' Group,
Canada

From the SCUG Report, February
2009 Issue
www.scug.ca
editor (at) scug.ca

As Editor for the Sarnia Computer Users' Group, I do a lot of online research fointeresting websites and also free software. I a m also fortunate to have people who send me their online gems. Here I share some of these amazing finds with you.

Remember: The programs you are about to see are FREE and legal and for you to download and use. Try out programs, or simply take a

See *Tips & Tricks* next page

sneak peek at what they can do for you; the choice is yours. So, happy clicking and email me with what you think about these programs: editor@scug.ca

Gimme Back Those Deleted or Lost Files - File Recovery Program

Website: www.recuva.com

Runs on Microsoft Windows 98, 2000, 2003, XP and Vista

We have all done it. You have too, come on, admit it. Yes when you accidentally delete a file from your computer, the Recycle Bin, digital camera memory card, USB stick, or even songs from your MP3 player, this program will help you to recover those lost files. It is a good program to have on your computer for those times when you least expect it and you DELETE in error.

ATTENTION ALL eBay USERS – A Must Have eBay Desktop

Website: <http://desktop.ebay.com>

Runs on Windows XP/Vista or MacOS X 10.4/10.5

This desktop application puts you in total control of your eBay bargaining with an eagleeye live gatekeeper of your bid or bidders. Never miss an eBay bargain again.

This is WEB 3.0 at its best. “EBay’s slick new app does more than simply recreate the auction site on the desktop -- it makes the whole experience thoroughly interactive and much more engaging” (wired.com).

Catch Thieves in the Act, Live and Recorded Video Security System Using Your Webcam

Website: www.yawcam.com

Works on Windows 2000/XP/Vista

This security webcam software for windows is simple and easy to use and includes most of the usual security camera features such as: Video streaming, Image snapshots, motion detection, and Online Web Forum for help.

The software program is very easy to work with and after a short time you can set your webcam to catch a thief stealing your stuff. The video or pictures are sent immediately to the Internet (where you designate for safe keeping). The program senses motion in a room. You can have the program set so that it will record a video of the thief in action, or email you a photo, or upload (FTP) the live video to a website.

Real nice to be able to hand over a full video of the thieves in your house. If you are away, say in Florida, you can easily email the Police the video or photo of the live crime scene with full video and photos of the bad guys.

Windows Live Family Safety

Website Download: get.live.com

Website Information: <http://tinyurl.com/24k8fo>

We are all worried about young children using the Internet these days. This program puts you in control of your computer and Internet browsing experience. You are in charge of your children’s online Internet surfing habits. You can also monitor Windows Live Messenger contacts and block who they talk to online. As well, you can also block Internet websites too. This is a must have for any family with a computer connected to the Internet.

NOTE: “Windows Live Family Safety is a Web service that’s free to people who use Microsoft Windows XP. If you use Windows Vista—the operating system installed

on many new computers—you can use the built-in family safety tools.” (Microsoft.com)

Connect to your Home Computer While Away with Logmein

Website: www.logmein.com

While away from home, wouldn’t it be nice to access files and programs from your home computer. Now you can. You can easily connect to your PC with a software program called logmein. This program is also used by large corporations to connect to offsite PCs. This program will also allow a friend to fix your computer even though they are thousands of miles from your PC. It is easy to set up and easy to operate. Give it a test drive...You will love it.

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Preventive Computer Maintenance

Written by Stuart Rabinowitz,
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The single most important maintenance item that should be done on a regular basis is **BACKUP YOUR DATA**. What the schedule is depends on much data you can afford to lose. Try daily/weekly to an external hard drive and monthly to a CD/DVD, or use a backup application. Make sure that your software is updated; primarily the operating system and your primary browser.

Use utility software: get a sense of how your computer operates when it's operating correctly. For the Mac use 'Activity Monitor' or 'Tech Tools'. On the PC (in the control panel) administrative tools/performance. You can also check your internet connection speed at: <http://reviews.cnet.com/internet-speedtest/?tag=ont.int.band>

For the PC users – do regular spyware/virus scans. Make sure the definitions are up to date. Primarily for PC users – Defragment your hard drive (this may take a while). Mac users do not really need to do this since OS X (10.3 +) does it automatically.

Free up some space on your hard drive (PC users can use disk cleanup; Mac users can use CacheOutX). Clean out old files that you don't use, after you've backed them up. Uninstall those programs that you don't use. Apple recommends that you have at least 10% free, a bit more for PCs, this will improve vir-

tual memory and may improve disk performance.

Clean the Hardware — to clean the monitor and keyboard use a dry microfiber cloth (be sure the computer is turned off) and gently (don't press hard) wipe the monitor, unplug the keyboard and wipe. If there are hard to clean areas, spray the cloth lightly with a vinegar/water solution and then wipe. For an optical mouse wipe the bulb gently. You'll need to open a mechanical mouse to clean the rollers. Use a cotton swab with isopropyl alcohol.

If your computer case is easy to open (i.e. not an iMac or Mac Mini), then open it up (after shutting down and unplugging it) and use compressed air to blow out the dust. Do not use a vacuum since it may create a static charge that could damage the electronics. After closing the case you can clean out the fan in the back.

You'll also probably want to have the following tools:

Screwdrivers – standard, phillips, and torx in different sizes (especially the small ones)

Nutdrivers – 1/4" and 3/16"

Pliers, part grabbers, and tweezers

Compressed air

Microfiber cleaning cloths

Antistatic strap – especially if you want to put your hands inside the computer

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DesktopZoom

A review by Bonnie Snyder,
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One evening while surfing the Web, I stumbled across a free screen magnifier called DesktopZoom. I downloaded it and put it through its paces. And, I was quite impressed with it. There are those freeware programs that "you get what you pay for," and then there are those that give you a whole lot more value. DesktopZoom is definitely in the latter category.

When you first load DesktopZoom, it comes up with a settings screen, with two tab areas; in the top area, the default is 3) Entire desktop and in the bottom tab area, the Mouse is the default tab. You can type in a numerical size for the mouse pointer and then select a shape and color for the mouse pointer. The "Big Mouse" option is selected by default (if you unselect it, you don't get a mouse pointer at all ... not good). Other options on the Mouse tab include selecting a Crosshair, selecting a thin red Rectangle which helps you focus on the working area of your application (don't use the Crosshair and the Rectangle together because the Rectangle won't move if you do), and another default selection: Hide real mouse (recommended).

Moving from left to right on the tabs, the first tab is for Zoom. The Zoom selection area has two input boxes for the size of the magnification. Default is 3000/1000. You'll have to fiddle around with the numbers to find the best for you. There are three checkboxes, the first

See *DesktopZoom* page 10

is to hide the configuration screen when the program is running (it is not checked, but I would recommend that you check it). The second is for No screen changes when not zoomed (it is not checked, but I would recommend that you check it). The third is Stop zoom if mouse in right bottom corner (I checked it because I find it a convenient option).

The next lower tab is for Keys. These key combinations are for increasing or decreasing the magnification on the fly. By default, the Mouse Wheel option, a radio button, With Ctrl-key, in a combo box, is checked. There are three other key combinations you can select from. If you prefer to use the arrow keys instead of the mouse, you can select the Arrows radio button with Without Key selected in the combo box (there are three other key combinations to select from in the combo box). Finally, the Alt-Keys are selected by default in a checkbox with six possible settings for on the fly changes (Zoom in and out; Zoom on or off; tracking and crosshair – each option has a character to press with the Alt-Key to accomplish its task).

The Mouse tab comes next (we've

already covered that); then comes the Color tab. There are three checkboxes: the first is for Grey shades (it has a combo box/edit box with seven choices of shades of grey including an option to type in a number of your preference); the second is for Invert Colors, and the third (checked by default) is for Smoothing. You can have all three boxes checked if you wish. Finally, it has an edit box for Show original screen (you can type in a numeric percentage ... 0 is the default). This one makes me crazy ... what it does is show the original screen as a kind of background of the magnified screen. But, it was probably included because somebody needed that feature!

Then we move on to the Tracking tab. The first Tracking option has a combo box from which you can choose three tracking items: None, Caret, Caret + Menu; the default being Caret + Menu. Next addresses specifically Track MsWord Caret (checkbox checked by default). Then you get to select the Tracking delay time by typing a number in an edit box (30 is the default). Another check box comes next for allowing display of a Thumbnail with your choice of ratio (in an edit box). The Thumbnail is similar to a histogram

in an art program; it displays the entire screen in miniature in the bottom right area of the screen. Finally, there is a combo box for choosing View. The options in this combo box include Follow the mouse, Static – changes when hitting the border and Static – Jump to mouse. The default is Static – changes when hitting the border. You'll just have to check these out yourself to see which works best for you. For the present, I am using the default. And then, the final lower tab is for Speech. I have noticed that people with low vision will experience visual fatigue with long documents to read. The addition of speech in DesktopZoom is an excellent option when the eyes are ready to give out (or put you to sleep). The Speech option picks up on any SAPI5.0 voices you might already have on your computer as well as any premium voices you have acquired. You can turn the speech on only when you want it and you can control volume and speed in this tab.

There is more, but I really ought to leave some of the mystery so you can enjoy setting the program up. DesktopZoom has many really good features. My biggest complaint is that it does slow down movement on the screen. Ah well, nothing is perfect. Give DesktopZoom a try if you feel the need for some screen enlargement to help you read your computer monitor. Just Google DesktopZoom and you'll be taken to a site for download.

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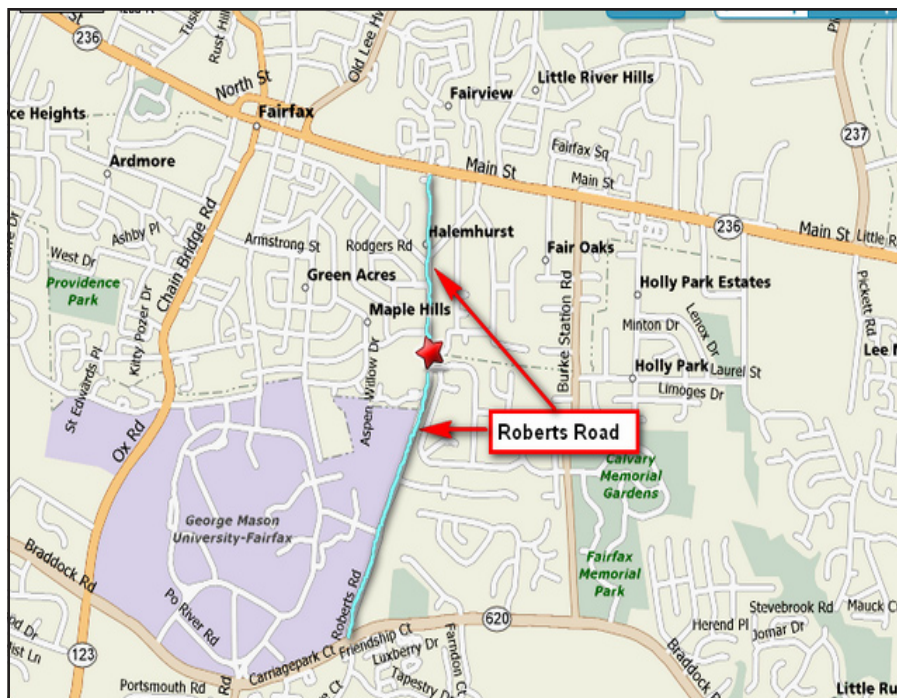
Hardware Upgrades/Repair List others below

Next WAC Meetings: • April 18 • May 9 • Jun 20 • Jul 18 • Aug 15

Call (703) 370-7649 for the latest meeting information or Visit our Web Site at:
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April Meeting will be held at the *Osher Lifelong Learning Institute* Fairfax, VA. Detailed directions were provided in the January Cursor on page 5
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File Management – Part Two

Written by Ron Hirsch,
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This month's lesson picks up where we left off last month. We're now going to do some file operations on the special file we created for the exercise.

1. First, we're going to set up a new folder, and prepare to move testfile.txt into it that folder. In the left hand listing, click once on the My Documents folder. Go to the menu at the top of the Explorer window, and click on >NEW>FOLDER. Now you will see a new folder named "New Folder" directly below My Documents. It should be highlighted. If not, click once on it, and then click on the F2 key. This puts you in "edit" mode, and you can change the name of the folder. Change it to "Files for name" (type in your name, without the quotes). After typing that in, hit the enter key. Now you have a new folder which is a personalized place for you to store your documents.
2. Next we're going to move the testfile.txt document to the new folder. One simple way to do this is to drag it from its present folder to its new home. Get the listing of all the folders on C: in the left hand window. Then double click on My Documents. The new folder we just created should be showing in the listing on the left, and also in the right hand section listing the contents of My Documents. Click on "testfile.txt" to select it, and

then drag it onto the new folder which you just personalized with your name. The file has now been moved. To confirm that, double click on your new folder, and it should open and list the contents

Depending upon what Windows version you are using, and what file manager you are using the dragging protocol may be slightly different. Generally in Windows, dragging moves the file, if you're dragging to any folder on the same drive. Dragging to a different drive, copies the file. And holding the CTRL key down while dragging, always copies the file, and using the Shift key always moves the files, irrespective of the target location. To be sure that you move or copy as you want to do, hold the SHIFT key down and drag to move, and the CTRL key down and drag to copy. This will work under any circumstance. Windows does give you a "hint" about this. If you drag and see a small + sign in next to the moving mouse cursor, the process you are doing is copying. If there's no + sign, then you are moving.

3. Next, we're going to copy this file to a floppy disk. Insert a floppy into the drive A. Left click on testfile.txt in the new folder to select it. Now, hold down the CTRL key while dragging the file to drive A. To confirm that you have copied to file, double click on drive A on the left hand listing of Explorer. It should show the file listed there. Then go back to the original folder for your documents, to see that it is still there also. If it is - you've succeeded. If your system does

not have a floppy disk drive, or another hard drive, copy to a flash drive. If you have none, just skip this step

4. Since this isn't a file that you want to keep, let's delete it. Click on it once to select it on, wherever it was copied to. Then hit the delete key and OK. Repeat the process for the other location also.

NOTE: During these activities, you probably have noticed small "+" and "-" signs on certain of the listings in Windows Explorer (or any file manager). The "+" sign indicates that there are subfolders within the folder listed. To expand the listing to show them, click on the "+" sign. The "-" sign indicates that the folder has subfolders, and they are already shown. To collapse that listing, click on the "-" sign. Clicking toggles the situation back and forth. : Windows Explorer is not "Internet Explorer", so don't get confused here.

With any of these file managers, or Windows Explorer, the best way to learn is to "browse around", and play with things. Click on various menu items, practice copying and moving files, and be inquisitive. And, REMEMBER, all the things you learn in these exercises apply to all the programs you'll be using on your Windows computer.

Computer learning can be likened to taking piano lessons - you can't learn to play if you don't practice. Maybe someday we'll be able to get a "chip" that we can plug into our brains to acquire all sorts of capabilities without the time consuming old-fashioned learning process. But for now, we have to rely on present techniques which take time and effort. But, in the long

File Management continues next page

run, the effort is well worth it

Learning to manage your files is a very important activity for all computer users to learn. So, how about getting started on that right now. Remember, you don't always have to be doing a formal lesson. Start exploring and investigate all the areas where you haven't been before. Instead of surfing the Internet, surf your own computer. You'll find lots of exciting things. And remember, any time you want to get help on something, just press the F1 key, and a help window should pop up.

This concludes the brief learning experience of file management. Remember, you've only scratched the surface here. This is similar to learning chess. Many people think that when they have learned to move the pieces, that they know how to play chess - but they are a long way from being a "chess player." name of the game is practice. This lesson is just a start towards a better understanding of that marvelous machine you have at your fingertips.

If you find this material useful, you may want to download this article in PDF format, from our web site www.brcs.org. This allows readers to keep the material either as a PDF file, and/or print it out, and place it in a loose leaf notebook for future reference.

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Moving on to Vista – Part 14

by Neil Stahfest, Librarian, Tacoma Area PC User Group, Washington
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One of the features that I liked about previous versions of Windows was the *Search* feature. Just click on the "Start" button, Click on "Search" and enter the file name that you want to find. If you have multiple hard drives, you can specify which ones to search. Its easy and simple.

Vista is different. Vista has a totally new search feature that is in some ways easier to use, fast and very sophisticated. It doesn't just try to match file names. It looks inside files and reads and searches the contents of text files, your Windows Contacts and Calendar as well as any Microsoft Office files (documents, spreadsheets and PowerPoint files). To do this Vista automatically maintains an index file which contains all this information for the file linked to your personal user folder. To keep the index file from becoming too large and to speed up the search process, it does not maintain a list of files located in your Windows system folder, contents of application file folders or on a local computer network (information usually only useful to computer programmers). When you start searching for a file or word, it only has to check this index file to find what you want. The results are displayed almost as fast as you can type the search name.

To use the most basic features of Vista's search engine, click on the "Start" button. When the "Start Menu" appears, a "Start Search" box appears directly above the

"Start Button". As you start to type a folder or file name, a list of folders and files appears above the box. As you type more letters, the list of names becomes more specific. If you don't see what you are looking for, at the bottom of the list is an option to search for the file name on the Internet (assuming that you have an Internet connection of course). When you do this, the Internet search uses your default Internet search engine whether it be Microsoft, Google, Yahoo, etc.

The Search Results window does not show the name of every file match found. Using some form of artificial intelligence Vista limits itself to the 20 most likely matches. It shows them under file group headings such as "Programs", "Files" and "Communications".

An interesting aspect of this feature is that you can point and click on a program listed in the Search Results window and actually run it. Document or spreadsheet files can also be accessed this way. Printing at the file name activates the default file program, such as Microsoft Word.

Using this feature of Vista's search function moves it beyond just a way to locate files and folders. It becomes a way to quickly locate files and then take action to use them. To prepare this column I simply went to my desktop, clicked on the Start Button, entered "vista.rtf" in the Search Box and then clicked on the file name to open it with my word processing program. How simple is that! No need to open a series of folders to burrow down to my Vista column files.

In most cases, doing the above steps will locate the information

See *Moving on to Vista* next page

you are looking for. But suppose it doesn't. Windows will tell you that the information can't be located and suggest that you use some of the advanced search features. We'll address advanced search features next month.

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My PayPal Account's Been Hacked

Written by Steve Bass, a former 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 at dirt cheap prices. <http://snipurl.com/annoy2>

This column originally appeared in Bass's TechBite newsletter. Subscribe to Bass's free weekly newsletter and read Bass's blog at www.snurl.com/techbiteblog. Contents copyright 2009, TechBite, LLC.

The e-mail from PayPal said I'd sent \$400 to a gaming firm in Germany. It's a dopey phishing expedition, I thought, and authentic-looking, for sure, but nothing to worry about.

The trouble was that when I logged on to PayPal, I really did have a \$400 withdrawal. It was clear that someone had my password.

Quick Password Tips

Here are the three essential things you need to know about password security:

- Use a password generator, a program that will create a long, complicated password.
- Don't ever use dictionary words, even if you stick in symbols, like bill\$gate\$. They're very easy to break using simple hacker programs. (LOL -- Thanks, Rod.)
- Use a different password for every important site. Using the same password on every site, especially critical ones, such as banking, is risky. Imagine using your one password on an unsavory, and possibly unscrupulous site. With that golden password, and a few guesses on your login name — stevebass, steve_bass, sbass — and they're in like Flynn.

Who's Got My Password?

I contacted PayPal (888/221-1161), supplied the details, and they opened up a case. My account is frozen and I don't doubt PayPal will credit me for the loss. (As I started editing this newsletter, PayPal reversed the charges.) PayPal is investigating, but I don't think they'll ever find out how someone got into my account, though it was clear the person had my password. The rep said I probably fell for a well-crafted e-mail spoof.

That's a blow to my ego. I see myself as suspicious — verging on paranoid — when it comes to phishing e-mails. What better prize than bragging rights to hacking a PC World guy, right? So I'm as vigilant as my dog is when I try to get her to take a pill wrapped in peanut butter. (Hey, you can't fool me, pal, she probably thinks...)

If an e-mail — suspicious or not

— refers to any of my important accounts and provides a link to click, I ignore the offer. It's safer to manually type the URL into my browser's address field. And yes, I'll cover phishing hassles — and ways to guard against it — in a future newsletter.

Password: z24x680uBS4!44

I'm also careful with my passwords and, at least until now, thought they were super stealthy. For example, on PayPal I used four numbers, a symbol, and three letters. According to Microsoft's Password Checker, my standard password pattern —1600%wtf — is strong. But it could be better.

Microsoft says that the most effective passwords are 14 characters and have a combination of upper and lower case letters, numbers, and a symbol or two. For example, z24x-680uBS4!44 is strong enough for them to call it "best."

Test your passwords on Microsoft's site and see how well they stand up. Then browse Microsoft's excellent Strong passwords: How to create and use them. I promise you'll learn something. <http://tinyurl.com/2e7tmw>

Use Microsoft's Password checker to test your password's strength. You might be surprised.

<http://tinyurl.com/ypc3dc>

Generating Strong Passwords

Creating a strong password is easy, provided you don't try to think one up on your own. There are dozens of Web sites that'll create passwords, but I don't use any of them. The last thing I'll do is trust someone online watching me create new passwords. Instead, download Password Gen-

See *PayPal Hacked* next page

erator, a freebie, and crank out all sorts of 14-character passwords.

<http://tinyurl.com/4j8e8>

Keeping Track of Your Passwords

I just looked and counted roughly 220 sites I use that require a password.

Some site passwords, however, are immaterial. For instance, I use a simple-to-remember word for spots I rarely visit, places such as newspapers that force you to register and log in just to read articles, or tech sites with forum messages.

However, ever since the PayPal fiasco, I've changed every significant password on my system to a 14-digit gorilla.

Remembering all those passwords is a PITA, so you ought to consider using a password management tool. There are lots available. Many people like KeePass, a freebie; others swear by LargeSoft's \$30 Password Manager. I anticipate easily 100 e-mails — no make that 200 — kvetching that I haven't mentioned your favorite. But as far as I'm concerned, RoboForm is the best one around, and I've used it since it was first introduced.

RoboForm, The Master at Passwords

RoboForm is a \$30 program with more features for password management, privacy, and password identification than any other program I know. You provide RoboForm with all the vitals you might need to complete a site's form — name, address, phone numbers, and even credit card numbers. When you click the Fill Forms button, the program does just that. I've created multiple identities, each with different info. For instance, I have one with MasterCard info, another

with VISA accounts. I have another identify I call "anonymous" that I use to fill in forms on sites that I'll never visit again.

Enter data into RoboForm's Identity card and fill in online forms.

Click a Web site from the RoboForm Passcard screen, and RoboForm transports your Web browser to the site, logging you in if necessary. Need an industrial-strength password? RoboForm will generate one for you. And don't worry about security: RoboForm is itself password-protected. The program will also safely send an encrypted password through e-mail to another RoboForm user. (I was recently discussing with my wife the fact that neither of us can function without it.)

BTW, RoboForm foils keyloggers (programs that watch keystrokes) because instead of typing, RoboForm inserts characters into form fields.

Here's a summary of RoboForm's features (<http://www.roboform.com/features.html>), a comprehensive FAQ (<http://www.roboform.com/faq.html>) with answers to your most technical RoboForm questions and a way to compare the free and Pro versions (<http://www.roboform.com/why-pro.html>).

If you need portability, RoboForm-2Go gives you the same protection when you carry your passwords on a flash drive and use it outside the office. Both the RoboForm program and your password files reside on a USB key, so you can take them from one computer to another. The tool costs \$40, but if you buy it at the same time you get RoboForm, the price drops to \$20. If you dig around, you'll occasionally find discounts. (Google RoboForm dis-

count.)

Siber Systems offers a 30-day trial of both products. They work in all versions of Windows and support IE and Firefox, but not Google Chrome, Opera, or a few other browsers. Take a look at the compatibility list. <http://www.roboform.com/browsers.html>

There's lots more to say about password management, but I'm almost out of space. So while you're hot on the topic, read Bitmill's smart series of Password Security 101 articles. They're less basic than you might imagine. <http://www.thebitmill.com/articles/>

Screen shots of websites and applications mentioned in this article are appear on the next page.

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How to create and use Strong Passwords

Generating Strong Passwords

Password checker

Your online accounts, computer files, and personal information are more secure when you use strong passwords to help protect them.

Test the strength of your passwords: Enter a password in the text box to have Password Checker help determine its strength as you type.

Password:

Strength: **BEST**

Note: Password Checker can help you to gauge the strength of your password. It is for personal reference only. Password Checker does not guarantee the security of the password itself.

Password Generator XP

Copyright © 2001 - 2004 Mac Software <http://www.securesoftpro.com>

General

- ☒ Upper case letters [A - Z]
- ☒ Lower case letters [a - z]
- ☒ Numerals [0 - 9]
- ☒ Exclude dubious symbols

Length:

Advanced

- ☒ Special symbols [!@, ., #, \$, ...]
- ☐ Other (your symbols)
- ☐ Pronouncing: Any Normal

pa.VXw4BQ3a0
cLYkRHvs3aa/w/q
2+2013)adDyEL
L9qu29-dGA8z5
pW/gb7Gyb/*038b
khvF*=2aq3U4T9

Bill Williams - Identity Editor

Identity Edit View Action Tools Help

Summary Person Business Address Credit Card Bank Account Authentication

Title

Name

Job Title

Phone x321 Country Code

Home Tel x888 National Prefix

Work Tel x321

Cell Tel Pager

Fax

Email

Yahoo ID MSN ID

AOL Name ICQ No

Protected(AES) My Identity United States 31.10.2005 14:41

Enter data into RoboForm's Identity card and fill in online forms.

Hotmail - Bill - Passcard Editor

Passcard Edit View Action Tools Help

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CDRomShop
Citymarket
CNN
Download
Hotmail - Bill
Hotmail - Jenny
Lycos
Microsoft

login

passwd

loginoptions

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Click a Web site from the RoboForm Passcard screen, and RoboForm transports your Web browser to the site, logging you in if necessary...