



# *The Cursor*



*Monthly Newsletter of the  
Washington Area Computer User Group*

Meeting Location  
OLLI, 4210 Roberts Road,  
Fairfax, VA



Next Meeting:  
August 15, 2009



## Presidential Bits

by Paul Howard, President WACUG, [president@wacug.org](mailto:president@wacug.org)

Last month's meeting was a great success! We kicked off with a presentation from OPCUG's Tom Hady, on strategies for converting photographic slides to digital images that can be manipulated on your computer, and transmitted and saved on media that, hopefully, won't fade with age like photographic dyes often do. His presentation is available on the "recent meetings" page at: <http://www.wacug.org/recmtgs.html>

Our webinar with Gene Barlow of User Group Relations went extremely well, with a presentation on PC backup and restore software, Acronis True Image. Gene "visited" via a Skype Internet connection, using a Power Point presentation from his home office in St. George, Utah. Special pricing on several Acronis products are available with a special form, also on the "recent meeting" web page.

Our August 15<sup>th</sup> meeting will be held at OLLI's TA1 classroom, 4210 Roberts Road in Fairfax, VA. Doors open at 12:30 for meeting new friends in the social room.

### Windows 7 Operating System

Curious about what the upcoming Microsoft Windows 7 operating system will look like? About its new features? About whether you can look forward to using it effortlessly after suffering through or working around the Microsoft Vista operating system?

Then join us on Saturday, August 15th, 2009, as Mark Mabee shares the fun of exploring the Windows 7 "release candidate" and investigating the capabilities of the

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**Plus Bonus Articles in  
the Download Edition**

# Lloyd's Web Sites for August, 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

## *August Sites:*

1. People gift each other with stuff they no longer want — [www.freecycle.org](http://www.freecycle.org)
2. Donate your Hair — [www.locksoflove.org](http://www.locksoflove.org)
3. FBI History: Famous Cases — [www.fbi.gov/libref/historic/famcases/famcases.htm](http://www.fbi.gov/libref/historic/famcases/famcases.htm). The Office of Public and Congressional Affairs has prepared monographs on some of the most frequently requested, closed investigations. The monographs listed have been made available for your use. You may download them for any noncommercial use without obtaining permission from the FBI
4. CNET the premier destination for tech product reviews, news and price comparisons, free software downloads, daily videos, and podcasts [www.cnet.com](http://www.cnet.com)
5. Freedom of Information Center. Source for government information about you — <http://foi.missouri.edu>
6. Scenic Byways. Maps and info on rustic roads, historic highways and other not-to-be-missed routes — [www.byways.org](http://www.byways.org)
7. Easy to remember phone numbers. Enter the digits to find out what they spell — [www.phonespell.com](http://www.phonespell.com)
8. Search this data base for free Legal Forms — Power of attorney, sample contracts, state court documents, etc — [www.findforms.com](http://www.findforms.com)
9. How to Avoid Spyware — <http://electronics.howstuffworks.com/how-to-avoid-spyware.htm>. This HowStuffWorks article explains how spyware works and how to avoid it
10. SPAM Email. This website has information about the Federal Trade Commission's recent law enforcement actions against deceptive commercial email and spammers' responsibilities under the CAN-SPAM law — <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/edcams/spam/index.html>



## 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 4<sup>th</sup> 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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Our Members**

**NCTCUG**

**WACUG**

**OPCUG**



## GNU/Linux SIG

By Geof Goodrum

### Press Release

#### Linux Foundation Introduces Linux-Branded Affinity Visa Platinum® Credit Card

100% of proceeds will go directly to open source community activities and members

SAN FRANCISCO, July 28, 2009 — The Linux Foundation, the nonprofit organization dedicated to accelerating the growth of Linux, today announced it will offer an affinity Visa Platinum credit card for people who want to contribute to advancing the Linux operating system through Linux Foundation initiatives.

“This credit card is in response to requests by individuals who want to get involved and support the Linux Foundation’s community activities,” said Jim Zemlin, executive director at The Linux Foundation. “Some people write code while others work on marketing or defending Linux. The Linux-branded credit card is an easy way for anyone to contribute to the growth of Linux and identify themselves as supporters of the community by carrying Tux in their pocket.”

The Linux Foundation is partnering with CardPartner, Inc. to offer the affinity Linux credit card through UMB Bank. The Linux Foundation will receive \$50 for every activated card as well as a percentage of every purchase made with the credit card. All funds from the Visa card program will go directly towards providing community technical events and travel grants for open source community members in order to accelerate Linux innovation.

The Linux Foundation uses funds from a variety of revenue streams to sustain these important services. Proceeds from the affinity Linux Foundation Visa Card will complement other funding sources such as member dues, events, and Linux.com advertising.

Card members can earn bonus points redeemable towards free merchandise, airline tickets and more at hundreds of online and neighborhood retailers.

Other important card member features include:

- No annual fee
- 0% APR on purchases and balance transfers for the first six months
- Purchase protection
- Zero liability protection for unauthorized purchases
- Emergency cash and card replacement
- Lost/stolen card reporting service
- 24-hour roadside assistance
- Warranty manager service
- Lost luggage replacement

Initially, the Linux Foundation Visa Platinum card is only available to U.S. residents but will expand in the coming months. To apply, please visit <http://www.cardpartner.com/app/the-linux-foundation>. For more information on



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the program please visit: <http://www.linuxfoundation.org/programs/linux-credit-card>.

### About the Linux Foundation

The Linux Foundation is a nonprofit consortium dedicated to fostering the growth of Linux. Founded in 2007, the Linux Foundation sponsors the work of Linux creator Linus Torvalds and is supported by leading Linux and open source companies and developers from around the world. The Linux Foundation promotes, protects and standardizes Linux by hosting important technical and legal workgroups, events and online resources such as [Linux.com](http://Linux.com). For more information, please visit the [Linux Foundation website](http://Linux Foundation website).

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Trademarks: The Linux Foundation and Linux Standard Base are trademarks of The Linux Foundation. Linux is a trademark of Linus Torvalds. Third party marks and brands are the property of their respective holders.

### 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 July 1 – July 29, 2009.

Distribution
<a href="#">antiX MEPIS 8.2</a>
<a href="#">Calculate Linux 9.7 “KDE”</a>
<a href="#">ClarkConnect 5.0</a>
<a href="#">Clonezilla Live 1.2.2-26</a>
<a href="#">CrunchBang Linux 9.04.01</a>
<a href="#">ExTiX 7.0</a>
<a href="#">Kongoni GNU/Linux 1.12.2</a>
<a href="#">Momonga Linux 6</a>
<a href="#">Pardus Linux 2009</a>
<a href="#">Parted Magic 4.3</a>
<a href="#">Sabayon Linux 4.2 “CoreCD”</a>
<a href="#">Sabayon Linux 4.2 “KDE”</a>
<a href="#">Scientific Linux 4.8</a>
<a href="#">sidux 2009-02</a>
<a href="#">SLAMPP Live 2.0</a>
<a href="#">SuperGamer Supreme</a>
<a href="#">SystemRescueCd 1.2.2</a>
<a href="#">Ubuntu 8.04.3</a>

### 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](mailto: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.

### August 2009

GNU CLISP – v2.48. <http://clisp.cons.org/>. Free GNU General Public License source code by Bruno Haible and older version executable packages for Debian and Fedora. GNU CLISP is an ANSI Common Lisp programming language and development environment implementation with an interpreter, compiler, debugger, object system (CLOS, MOP), sockets, fast bignums, arbitrary precision floats, and a foreign language interface that runs on most Unix variants and Win32. This release fixes bugs and includes usable multithreading on most platforms, though still considered experimental.

JavaHMO – v2.4. <http://javahmo.sourceforge.net/>. Free GNU General Public License Java code by Leon Nicholls and the JavaHMO development team. JavaHMO implements a media server on a PC that works with the Home Media Option from [TiVo](#)® and adds new innovative features beyond the existing functionality provided by TiVo’s implementation, including:

- View images in the following formats: BMP, GIF, FlashPix, JPEG, PNG, PNM, TIFF, and WBMP.
- Rotate images.
- Play MP3 files.
- Random/shuffle play.
- View MP3 file tag information.
- Play MP3 streaming stations on the internet.
- Sort items by different criteria.

Linux continues next page

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Linux from previous page

- Organize MP3 files based on their ID3 tags.
- Automatically download Shoutcast playlists of your favorite streaming stations.
- Use the streaming proxy server to significantly improve on the inadequate support TiVo provides for online streaming stations.
- Play your MP3 files and streaming stations using both .m3u and .pls playlist formats.
- View live local weather conditions including current conditions, 5-day forecasts and radar images.
- View local cinema listings.
- Automatically download and view any image on the internet.
- View a real-time image of your PC desktop.
- Play interactive games such as TicTacToe.
- Manual connections from TiVo.
- Platform independent.
- Supports TiVo Beacon API.
- Provides a plugin architecture.
- Organize images files based on their date information.
- View fullscreen images of web pages.
- Audio Jukebox.
- View stock quotes.
- iTunes playlists integration.
- Read email.
- View NNTP images from newsgroups.
- View RSS feeds.
- View NOAA weather alerts.
- Supports ToGo.

JavaHMO requires a TiVo Series 2 digital video recorder with the Home Media Option.

memtester – v4.1.2. <http://pyropus.ca/software/memtester/>. Free GNU General Public License 2 ,C' source code by Charles Cazabon and older version executable packages for Debian and Ubuntu. memtester is a user-space utility for testing the memory subsystem in a computer to determine if it is faulty. It does a good job of finding intermittent

faults and non-deterministic faults. It has many tests to help catch borderline memory. memtester should compile and run on any 32- or 64-bit Unix or Unix-like system.

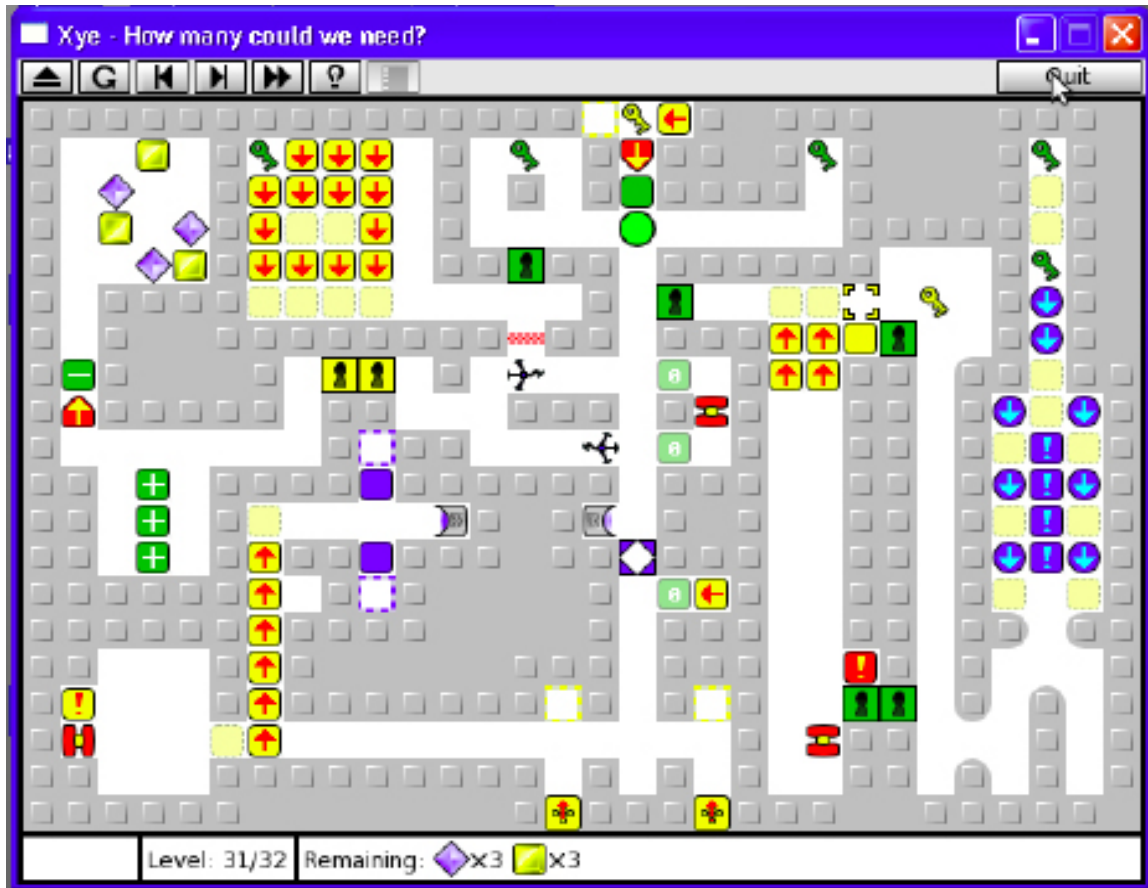
Xye – v0.9.0. <http://xye.sourceforge.net/>. Free zlib/libpng license C++ source code by Vexorian. Xye is a puzzle game in which the objective is to get all the gems in each level. The mission is not as easy as it sounds; there are traps, monsters, and very hard puzzles everywhere. The player can interact with objects in the game in a lot of ways, and some of the objects can also interact with other objects. Changes in this release include: more objects were added; stars and large blocks; many more levels were added; the game user interface was made friendlier by adding GUI buttons to allow users to use the mouse for operations that were previously exclusive to the keyboard; graphics were updated; the editor can now add more kinds of objects to the custom level files; many bugs were fixed. Requires SDL, SDLImage and SDLTTF libraries included with major Linux distributions.

Kernel Source – <http://www.kernel.org/>. 2.6 kernel source code for all platforms (stable 2.6.30).

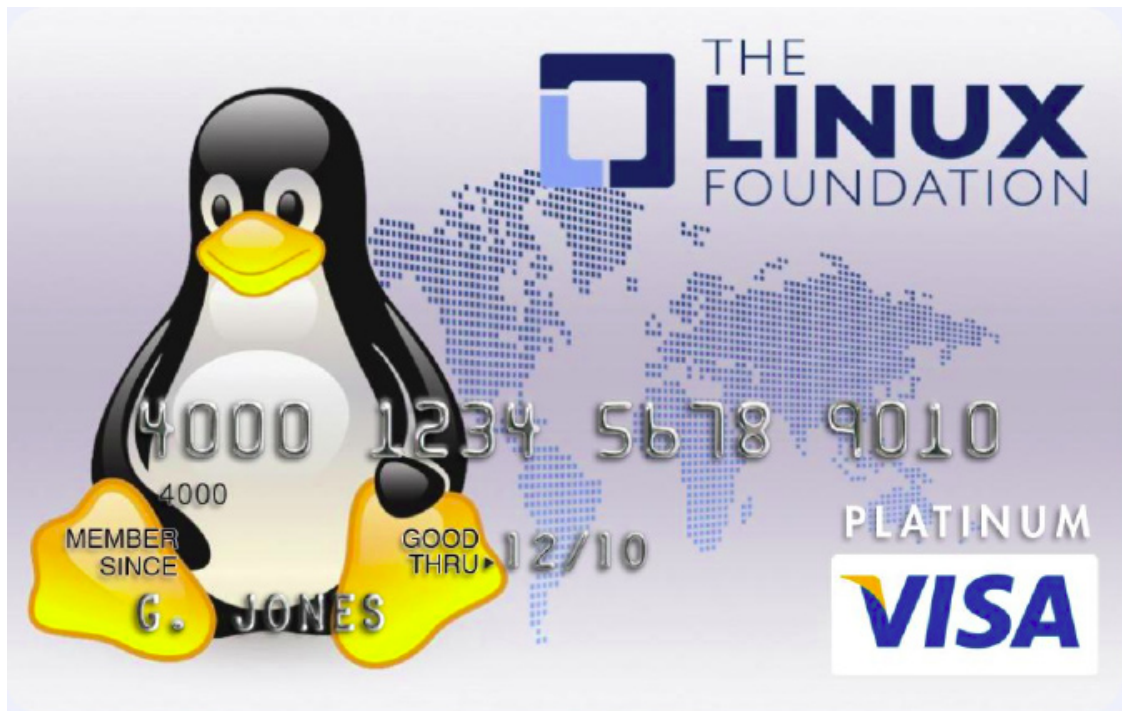


**Screen shots of featured software appears on the following pages**





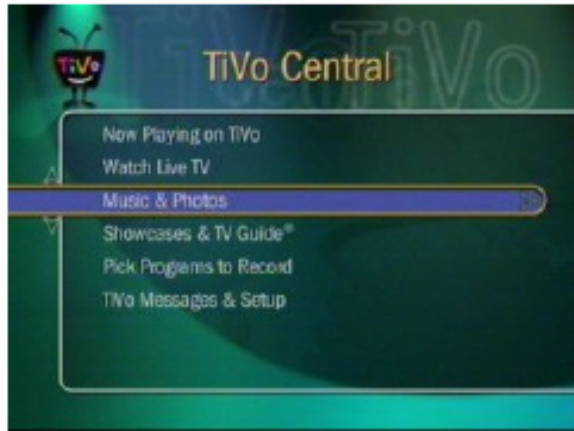
Wind



Linux Foundation Visa

See *Cirtuit Writer* next page

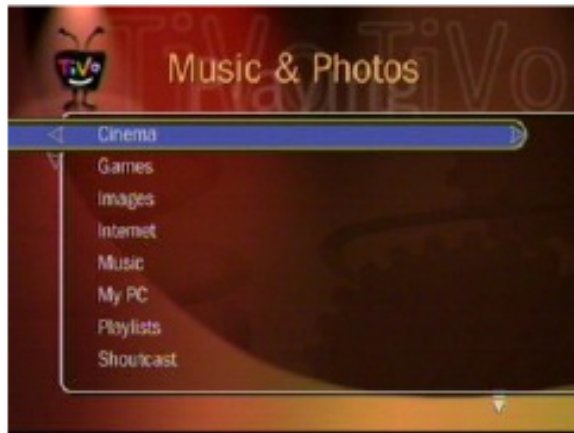
## Music & Photos:



TiVo Central menu.



Menu options without JavaHMO running.



Menu options with JavaHMO running.



Menu options with JavaHMO running.

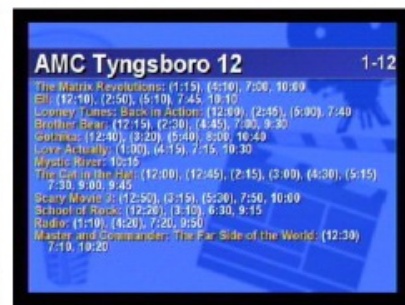
## Cinema theatre listings:



Thumbnail view. A theatre with more than 12 shows is broken into multiple views.



Detailed view. Use rotate to pick a day.



Fullscreen view.

Visit the website <http://javahmo.sourceforge.net/> for additional examples using TiVO

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## PPC Locking HDMI Cable

A Hardware Review by Bob Clyne, Member-at-Large, SEMCO (Southeastern Michigan Computer Organization, Inc.)  
SEMCO Data Bus, June 2009 Issue  
[www.semco.org](http://www.semco.org) / [clyne\(at\)mich.com](mailto:clyne(at)mich.com)

For those of you not familiar with it, HDMI is the current cable standard for carrying digital audio and video signals between pieces of equipment such as TV sets, DVD players, Blu-Ray players, AV receivers etc. Some computers also have a HDMI output so that you can feed the audio and video from the computer to your TV set. HDMI combines both the audio and video signals in one multi-conductor cable, which makes it much more convenient than other types of connections that use separate cables for audio and video. If you would like more information about HDMI, visit <http://www.hdmi.org>.

One of the few problems with HDMI cables is that they are prone to fall out of the sockets. PPC <http://www.ppc-online.com> has a solution to that problem with the PPC Locking HDMI cable.

The cable comes in the ubiquitous heavy plastic blister pack. Manufacturers love this packaging, but consumers hate it. The advantage of this packaging is that it makes the product visible while protecting the contents from damage or tampering. The disadvantage of this packaging is that it is extremely consumer resistant. Getting the product out of the package requires a sturdy cutting implement. A knife will work, but there is considerable risk of injuring yourself or damaging the product due to the force required. A sturdy pair of scissors will also work and gives your hand considerable exercise in the process. The cable is a HDMI Category II cable, which means that it can carry the highest definition signals for which there is a current standard. It is capable of handling not only 1080p signals but also 1440p. The cable has both foil and braided shielding to shield the signal from out-

side interference. The cable appears well made, with a braided outer covering on the cable and a plastic covering over the connectors. The cable is quite flexible.

The locking connectors are what sets the PPC cable apart. The connectors just push onto the HDMI sockets on your equipment. No special sockets or adapters are needed. You may hear a slight click when it seats. Once seated in the socket, the cable is quite resistant to being pulled out. I did not test to see just how much strain they could take, but I pulled fairly hard on the connector and it remained firmly seated in the socket. I think the amount of tension that I applied would be more than would be encountered in normal use.

To remove the cable, you press on the tab on the side of the connector while pulling it out. I found that with some sockets, quite a bit of pressure was required on the release button but you, presumably, won't be removing your HDMI cables every day. One possible problem that I can foresee is if you had a series of HDMI connectors closely spaced in a row, you might not be able to get your fingers between them to press the release button. In this case, you would have to start removing them at one end until you got to the one you wanted to remove. But this is a small price to pay for not having to re-plug cables that have fallen out. There is also the danger that a cable pulling out while live could cause electronic damage to your equipment.

PPC Locking HDMI Cables are available in 3', 6', and 9' lengths for \$48.99, \$59.99, and \$72.99 respectively directly from PPC at <http://connect2ppc.myshopify.com/products/locking-hdmi-jumper-1> and you may find them for lower prices from resellers.



next Microsoft Windows operating system, which is now scheduled to be available October 22, 2009.

Speaker: Mark Mabee, an IT network professional, is a long-time member of the Capital PC User Group. He has been the featured presenter at a number of CPCUG events and has handled technical questions during pre-presentation Q&A sessions at other events.

Note: Those who want to try out the release candidate of Windows 7 must download the code by August 15, 2009: <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-7/download.aspx>

There is no charge for this pre-release Windows operating system. Once the code is downloaded, it may be installed later. You may also get additional product keys after August 15.

### **Learn 30 Session: Skype 4.1**

Bill Walsh will examine some of the basics of this Internet communications service, that allows video chats between two PCs.

Gene Barlow will provide a mini-webinar, answering questions about Acronis True Image Home, presented at the July Meeting



**The 2008 WAC Board of Directors, SIG Leaders and other Volunteers**

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

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**Send article submission and reprint requests to the Editor: [cursor@wacug.org](mailto:cursor@wacug.org)**

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**WAC Membership/Renewal Application**

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Dues are collected on an Annual basis and includes: downloadable links for WACUG Selected Software (formerly DOM), and WAC's monthly newsletter, *The Cursor*, in PDF format

Individual/Corporate/Family Dues: \$25.00  
\$5 annual surcharge for delivery of the Cursor by 1st Class mail

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!*

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

Operating System(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Modem(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Printer(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Other Hardware: \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite Software: \_\_\_\_\_

Connection: (circle one)   Dial-up   or   Broadband

**Circle Your Interests:**   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: • Aug 15 • Sept 19 • Oct 17 • Nov 21 • Dec 12

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

August Meeting will be held at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute Fairfax, VA. Detailed directions were provided in the January Cursor on page 5. ***Please remember, June, July, and August meeting will be at the Fairfax County Government Center.***

FREE ADMISSION  
BRING A FRIEND!

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

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## Vipre Performance

Written by Ted Wirtz, a member of the Orange  
County PC Users' Group, CA  
www.orcopug.org  
twirtz (at) pacbell.net

I recently purchased two copies of Sunbelt Software VIPRE malware protection. I use the term "malware" because VIPRE scans for spyware, viruses and root kits all at the same time. I installed one copy on my older Windows XP computer and one on my new Windows Vista computer.

I needed to make a change because the antivirus provided by my ISP (AT&T) on my WinXP computer was being discontinued. They offered a free upgrade to McAfee Internet protection, but I didn't want that suite. The security programs I was using were Webroot Spy Sweeper, Computer Associates (CA) for virus detection, and Kerio firewall. CA updates were to be shortly discontinued.

On my Vista computer I had Webroot, Trend Antivirus, and COMODO firewall. I started receiving notices that it was time to renew my Trend subscription. It was time to do "something."

Since Kerio firewall has been absorbed into Sunbelt Software, I have periodically received advertisements for Sunbelt products. Recently, they have been touting their new product, VIPRE, so I decided to give it a try. According to their literature it has been designed "from the ground up" to be very fast, yet use minimal computer resources in the process.

I am not sure how often signature updates are generated at Sunbelt, but there seems to be a new update applied every time I turn on the computer. I have also seen a new update applied more than once in a day. The default scheduler wants to check for updates every two hours. That's not to say a new update is created at those intervals, but instead to be sure that if an update for a critical new virus has been created, you will get and apply it in a reasonable period of time. Sunbelt also states that VIPRE is guaranteed to be compatible with Kerio or their current firewall.

Windows Vista

I removed both Trend and Webroot using the REVO Uninstaller. (I have found that REVO does a good job of cleaning up "leftovers" that often still remain after uninstalling a program using the standard Windows Add/Remove module in the Control Panel.) Then I

installed VIPRE, input the Registration key and I was ready to go. I downloaded the most recent update table, and then started a "Deep" scan. VIPRE has two options: "Quick Scan" which scans running processes in memory, the registry, and the file types most likely to become infected. A "Deep Scan" scans all the above but includes every file on the computer, which obviously takes longer than a "quick" scan.

A bit of info about the Vista computer hardware: HP Pavillion Desktop with AMD dual core 5600+ processor (2.8 GHz). 3GB dual channel DDR2 RAM. 500 GB Seagate SATA II hard drive. Nvidia based 7600 series video card. I am also running COMODO firewall. There seem to be no compatibility issues between VIPRE and COMODO.

After the scan was started, I opened up the Vista Resource Monitor to track what was happening. See Figure 1. As can be seen, CPU usage was consistently right at 50%. Looking at the task manager, I could see the load was being shared equally across both cores. I suspect the sharing was controlled by the Vista OS rather than the VIPRE program.

As expected, disk usage was in bursts. Short files were analyzed quickly, generating another disk request, where larger files took longer to analyze, leaving the disk idle periodically. The drive had been defragmented just two days before the tests, so fragmentation should not have been a factor in file access times.

There was no network activity since I had no other applications open at the time. VIPRE used 39% of the 3GB memory.

After scanning was complete, VIPRE reported the following in its scan summary:

Files – 154,335

Processes – 75

Registry – 28,937 entries

Cookies – 556 (15 flagged as tracking cookies)

Quarantined – 1 file, an HP uninstall.exe. Suspected as a ZLOB media codec trojan.

I believe this to be a false positive, since the file has been on the computer since its factory install, and was never flagged by the previous antivirus program. I have submitted the file to Sunbelt for further analysis.

See *Vipre Performance* next page

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*Vipre Performance* from previous page

Scan time was 86 minutes 30 seconds.

## Windows XP

As mentioned previously I also installed VIPRE on my older (about 5 years old) Windows XP computer. I first removed Webroot and the the CA antivirus programs. I then ran CCleaner to remove any "teltales" left behind, then installed VIPRE.

Windows XP computer hardware: ASUS A7N8X-E – Deluxe motherboard. AMD Athlon single core at 1.66 GHz core frequency. 1 GB of dual channel DDR2 RAM. Two Seagate 160GB SATA I hard drives in Raid 1 configuration (Mirrored drives). Mirroring on this machine is a combination of hardware and software. Disk is approximately 3 % fragmented. Nvidia based 7400 series video card. I am also running Kerio firewall.

After running a deep scan, VIPRE reported:

Files – 113,714

Processes – 41

Registry – 31,837 entries

Cookies – 327 (13 flagged as tracking cookies)

No other risks detected.

Scan time was 70 minutes 35 seconds. (As a comparison the last deep scan that I ran using CA antivirus took 2 ½ days!)

Figure 2 from the Windows XP Task Manager shows that CPU usage fluctuated around 37%.

Figure 3 shows that while scanning, CPU usage had little fluctuation. It happened to be just 22 % at the moment I captured this screen, where Figure 2 happened to record 37 % at that moment.

In both systems I was able to perform normal tasks such as Web browsing while scans were running. There was a barely perceptible lag in performance. I also used my word processor on Vista to prepare this document while running a test scan. I could not detect any performance change. On the Vista computer I was able to view video clips with no stuttering or pauses. The videos were not full screen but occupied perhaps 20 to 25 % of the total screen similar to U-Tube clips. I didn't try videos on the Win XP computer. Sunbelt suggests that scanning should be delayed if computation intensive programs are going to be run.

VIPRE has a feature that I personally have not seen in other anti-virus programs. If you put the computer in SLEEP mode, VIPRE will wake up the computer at the time saved in the scheduler, run a scan, and then optionally turn off the computer after completing the scan. There does not seem to be an option to resume sleep, but I suspect that I can make some setting changes in the screen saver to put the computer to sleep after X minutes of inactivity. I haven't tried this yet, because often a screen saver looks for mouse or keyboard activity, and seeing none kicks into the screen saver, even though the CPU and hard drive may be churning.

I have both computers set to scan at 1:00 AM daily. This is the default, and later I may rearrange the schedule to perhaps run only once or twice per week. I will definitely reduce the schedule for the Win XP computer since I don't use it as much as the Vista machine.

In all, I'm quite satisfied with the program, and would recommend it to anyone who is looking for a combined spyware – antivirus program. I like it much better than any of the others I have used over the years, including Norton and McAfee. It may not be a totally fair comparison, because program versions change over time, but at least that is my opinion.

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**Screen shots of Vipre on next two pages...**

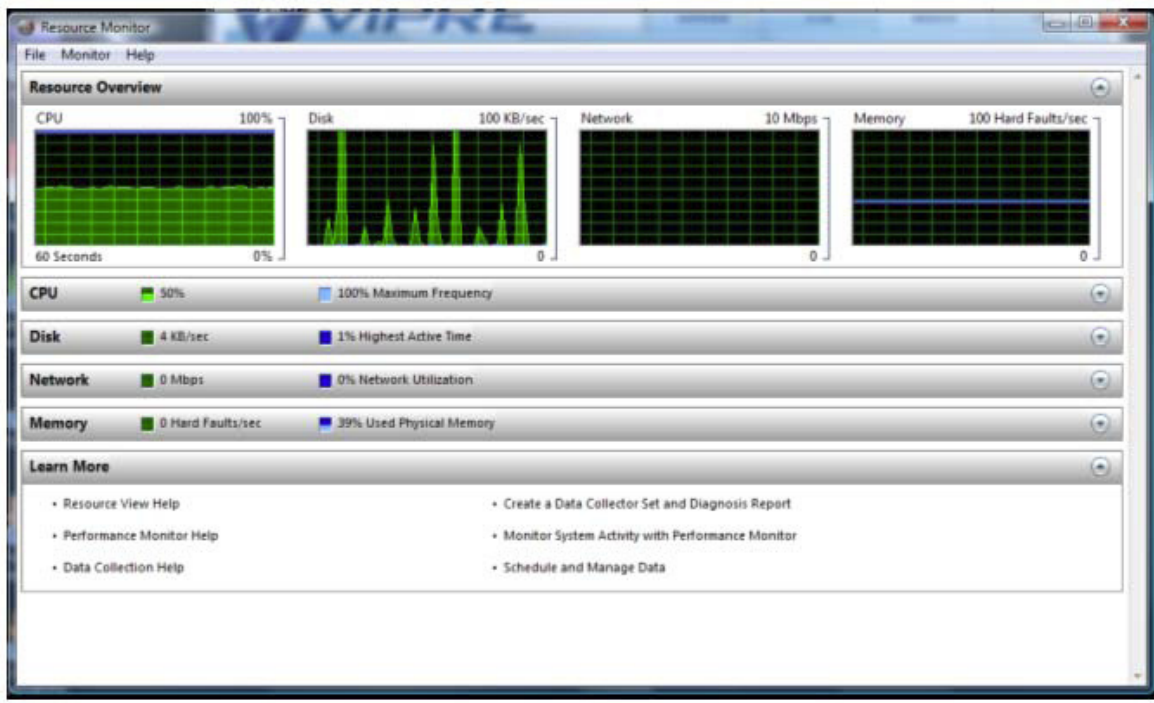


Fig 1

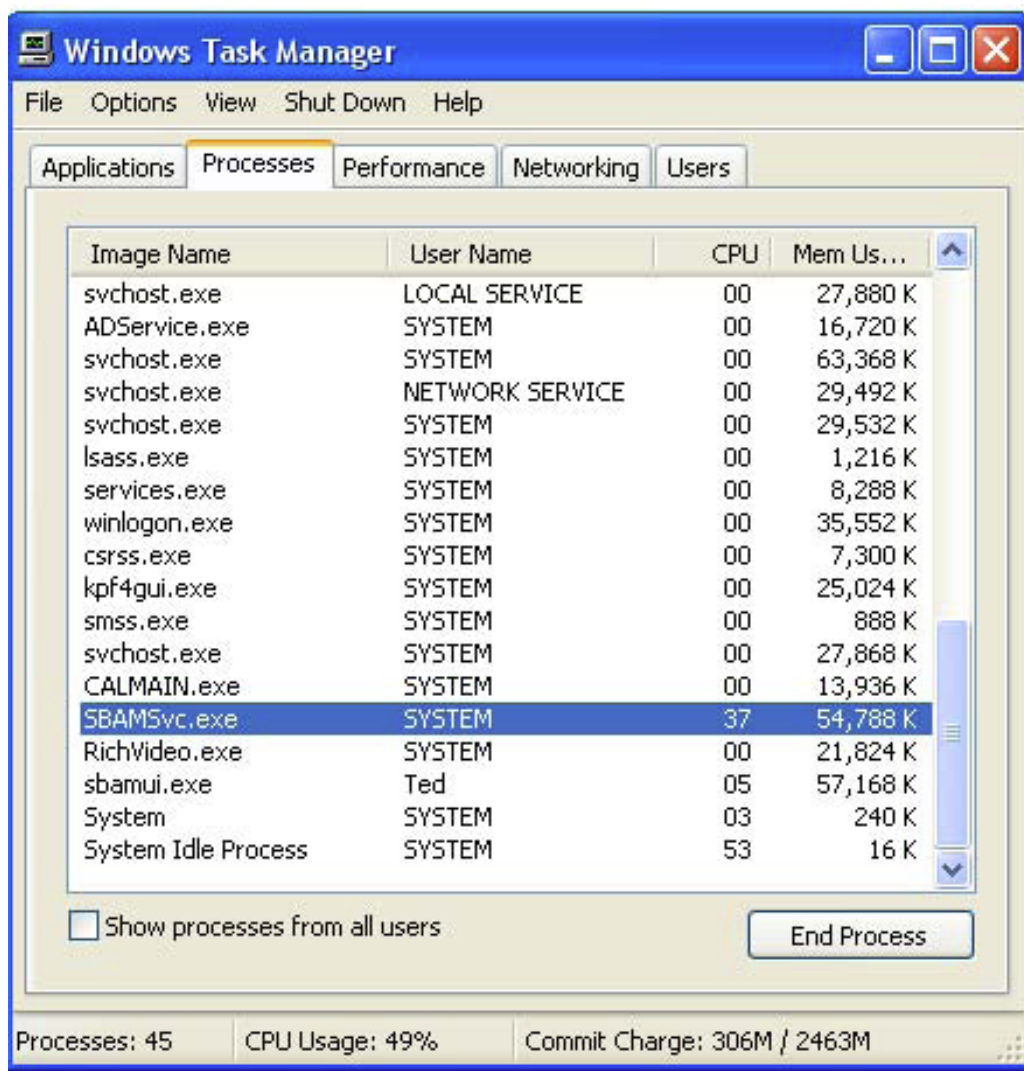


Fig 2

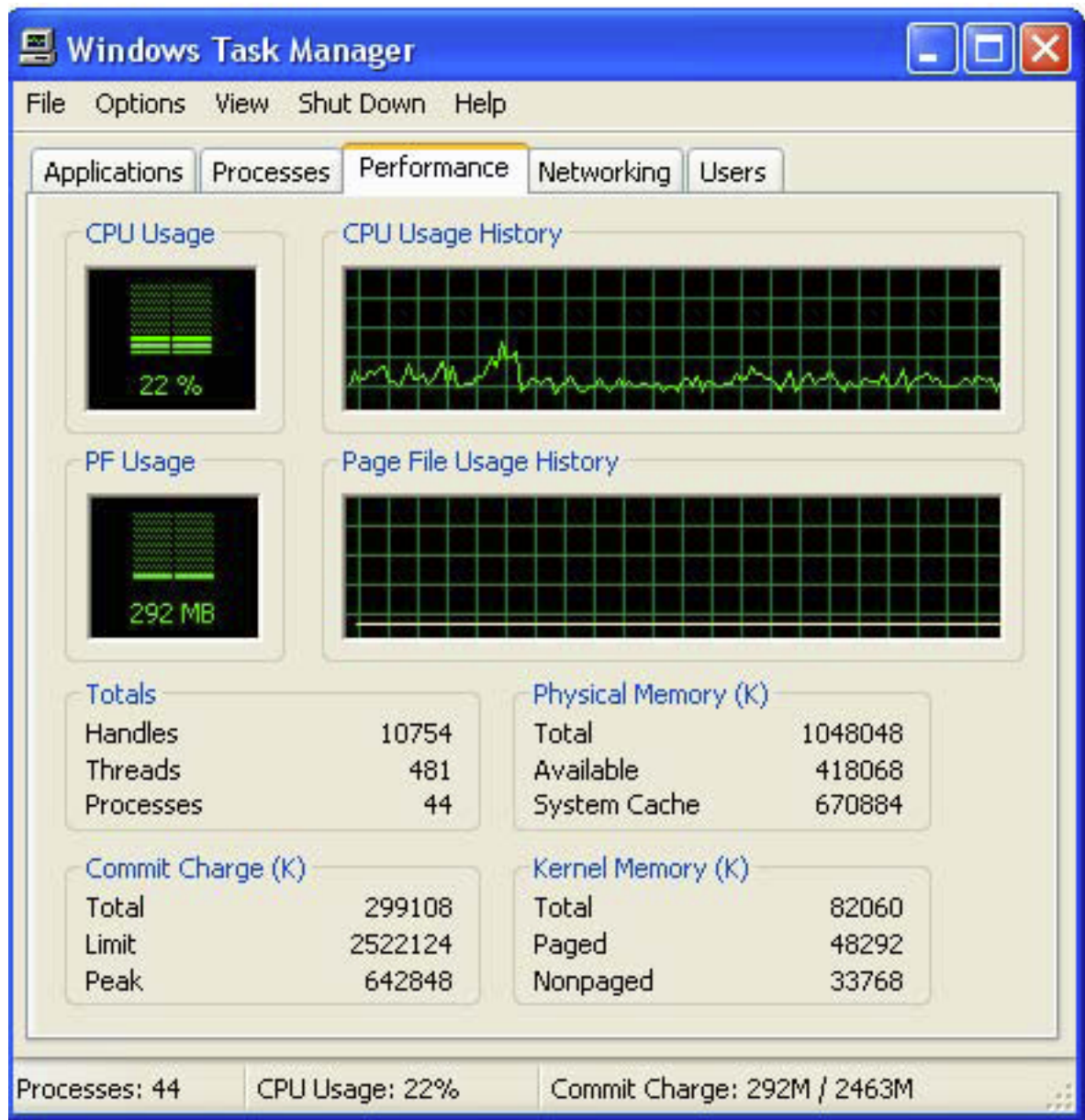


Fig 3