

The Cursor





Meeting Location OLLI, 4210 Roberts Road, Fairax, VA



Next Meeting: Oct 17, 2009



Presidential Bits

by Paul Howard, President WACUG, president@wacug.org.

appy Fall! Don't spend all your time leaf-peeping. Remember - you need to get your monthly complement of tech vitamins at our WAC meetings <grin>!

Last month, Chuck Roberts presented the concepts behind home networks, and the need to secure WiFi access to those home networks. In December, we'll be demonstrating how to put the theory into practice, securing wireless routers, and connecting to them with laptops and other home electronic devices. OLLI's Rod Zumbro described connecting BluRay disc players to the Internet, in order to download movies and other content from Netflix on his TV / home theater system. Information from both presentations is available on the web site's "recent meetings" page.

Our next meeting will be on Saturday, October 17th, in TA1, at OLLI, 4210 Roberts Rd, Fairfax, from 12:30 - 3:30 PM. We'll continue with our TV/PC Convergence theme with Geof Goodrum's presentation, a demonstration on watching TV shows and movies for free over the Internet from such sites as Fancast and Hulu. This is a great way to catch up on TV shows you (or your video recorder) might have missed. If you are a member of online video services such as Netflix, you can also watch selected movies on your PC over the Internet.

Digital Photography -Basics in the Camera

At our October meeting, Dan Feighery, who is the OLLI Photography Club coordinator, will discuss digital photography. This presentation will focus on understanding some of the things that will help you make a better digital photograph in the camera, as opposed to fixing it later in a photo editing program. Included will be getting the right exposure, understanding the triangular relationship across the sensitivity of the camera sensor, what can be in focus, and freezing motion.

Other important digital camera basics such as crop factor, digital vs. optics zoom, color temperature, dynamic range, and use of the histogram, in taking the picture will also be covered. Results of a real-world test will show the impact of relatively minor changes in exposure on captured details in black and white elements of an image, as well as how layers can be used in photo

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Plus Bonus Articles in the Download Edition

Lloyd's Web Sites for October, 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

October Sites: 2009

- 1. Never be short of the appropriate aphorism, proverb, thought or saying. www.forbes.com/thoughts
- 2. <u>www.BookFinder.com</u> A search engine that searches over 150 million books for sale new, used, rare, out-of-print, and textbooks.
- 3. Trip Planner on Metro www.wmata.com
- 4. Make a Difference Day Saturday 24 October 2009 www.usaweekend.com/diffday
- 5. The Pulitzer Prizes www.pulitzer.org The Pulitzer Prizes web site contains the complete list of Pulitzer Prize winners from 1917 (the first year the Prizes were awarded) to the present.
- 6. World Leaders published by the Central Intelligence Agency https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/world-leaders-1/index.html
- 7. The Earth Calendar www.earthcalendar.net/index.php "The Earth Calendar is a daybook of holidays and celebrations around the world. For the purpose of this web site a 'holiday' is any day that recognizes a cultural event, and not necessarily a day when businesses are closed."
- 8. Problem-solving guide for auto repair http://repairpal.com
- 9. Forbes 2009 top 100 Powerful Women www.forbes.com/women
- 10. USB Drive that looks like a Key. Choose either 4 GB or 8GB. Cost \$24.99 to \$36.99 www.lacie.com



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

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GNU/Linux SIG

GNU/Linux SIG

By Geof Goodrum, WAC

Press Release: National Coalition of Authors Urge Rejection of Google Book Search Deal

Ability to Track Readers Puts Privacy at Risk

New York (8 Sep 2009) - A coalition of authors and publishers—including best-sellers Michael Chabon, Jonathan Lethem, and technical author Bruce Schneier—is urging a federal judge to reject the proposed settlement in a lawsuit over Google Book Search, arguing that the sweeping agreement to digitize millions of books ignores critical privacy rights for readers and writers.

The group of more than two dozen authors and publishers, represented by the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and the Samuelson Law, Technology, and Public Policy Clinic at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Law (Samuelson clinic), filed an objection to the settlement today. The coalition is concerned that Google's collection of personal identifying information about users who browse, read, and make purchases online at Google Book Search will chill their readership.

"Google Book Search and other digital book projects will redefine the way people read and research," said Lethem, winner of a National Book Critics Circle Award. "Now is the moment to make sure that Google Book Search is as private as the world of physical books. If future readers know that they are leaving a digital trail for others to follow, they may shy away from important intellectual journeys."

The settlement, currently pending approval from a New York federal district court, would end the legal challenges brought by the Authors' Guild over the Google Book Search project. It would give Google the green light to scan and digitize millions of books and allow users to search for and read those books online. However, Google's system could monitor what books users search for, how much of the books they read, and how long they spend on various pages. Google could then combine information about readers' habits and interests with additional information it collects from other Google services, creating a massive "digital dossier" that would be vulnerable to fishing expeditions by law enforcement or civil litigants.

"I believe that the fear of tracking will create a chilling effect on my readers and reduce my readership, and therefore my revenue, from these books," said Schneier, a computer security expert. "Moreover, I write these books in order to participate in the public debate on security issues. Reduced readership negatively impacts my expressive interests as an author."

In the objection filed today, the coalition asks the court to require Google to create a robust privacy policy that gives readers as much privacy in online books as they have in a library or a bookstore and to ensure that the policy is enforceable and overseen by the court on an ongoing basis. The au-

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thors and publishers present a list of privacy protections that would improve the settlement, including limiting tracking of users by requiring a court order or judge-approved warrant before disclosure of the information collected, ensuring user control of personal information stored by Google, and making the system transparent to readers. After much pressure from EFF, ACLU, the Samuelson clinic, and others, Google finally issued a privacy policy for Google Books on September 3, 2009. However, that policy doesn't guarantee that Google will require court approval before disclosing reader information, and it doesn't sufficiently limit Google's retention of that information. It is also changeable by Google at any time.

A hearing on the fairness of the proposed Google Book Search settlement is set for October 7, 2009, in New York.

For today's filing:

http://www.eff.org/files/filenode/authorsguild_v_google/File%20Stamped%20Brf.pdf

For more on this case:

http://www.eff.org/cases/authors-guild-v-google

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Job Opportunity: Linux Systems Administrator

Emergent Space Technologies, Inc.

http://www.emergentspace.com/

6301 Ivy Lane, Ste 700

Greenbelt, MD 20770

301-345-1535

Job Description: System Administrator (SA-090910)

Job Summary

Emergent is seeking applicants experienced in Linux/ Unix and Windows system administration. The selected applicant will administer small/mediumsized networked systems and/or will assist in the administration of larger systems.

Tasks include evaluation, installation, configuration and maintenance of applications and services (e.g. postfix, ntp, nfs, samba, apache, ldap, wikis, issue trackers, etc.), user maintenance, system backups and recoveries, system files maintenance and disaster recovery.

Minimum Requirements

- Candidates must be a U.S. citizen and should be eligible for classified work.
- B.S. in Information Technology, Computer Science or the equivalent.
- Strong communication, teaming, and problem-solving skills.
- Thorough understanding of operating system fundamentals, computer architectures, mass storage, networking and related protocols, UNIX commands and utilities, and common administration tasks.
- Proficiency in at least one higher level scripting language and one programming language.
- Preferred Qualifications
- Experienced in Perl, Python, bash, C, C++, FORTRAN, JAVA
- Knowledgeable in US Government NISPOM/ FIPS requirements
- Comfortable in heterogeneous environment: Windows XP, Linux (RPM based), Mac OSX
- Familiarity with basic networking, RAID, NAS, SAN, real-time Linux kernel extensions, objectoriented programming and design, collaboration and workflow services.
- Awareness of software solutions that may be leveraged.

Resumes

Resumes should be submitted to jobs AT emergentspace DOT com.

Please reference the job number above in your email.

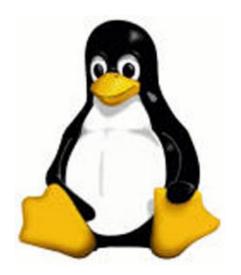
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editing to produce a composite image with proper exposure throughout. Some basic elements of visual design, often useful in composing the picture before snapping the shutter, will be illustrated. Also included will be consideration in choosing a "point and shoot" vs. a digital single lens reflex (DSLR) camera.

November's meeting will offer a comparison of Internet shopping sites, and a presentation about shopping for merchandise bargains on eBay.





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Notices

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed by people assigned to this classification. They are not to be construed as an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills required of personnel so classified. All personnel may be required to perform duties outside of their normal responsibilities from time to time, as needed.

Emergent Space Technologies, Inc. is committed to assuring applicants and employees are treated fairly without regard to race, religion, sex, marital status, disability, national origin, or any other characteristic protected by law.

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 September 3 – September 30, 2009.

Distribution
Absolute Linux 13.0.2
Berry Linux 0.98
Bluewhite64 Linux 13.0
Calculate Linux 9.9
<u>CRUX 2.6</u>
Easy Peasy 1.5
Frugalware Linux 1.1
gNewSense 2.3
GoblinX 3.0 "G:Noblin"

<u>Hymera Open 20090910</u>	
Linux Mint 7 "Xfce"	
Moblin 2.0	
moonOS 3	
Network Security Toolkit 2.11.0	
NuTyX 2009	
Ojuba 3	
Oracle Enterprise Linux 5 Update	4
Parted Magic 4.5	
Puppy Linux 4.3	
SystemRescueCd 1.3.0	
Tiny Core Linux 2.3	
Trisquel GNU/Linux 3.0	
Ultimate Edition 2.3 "Gamers"	
Webconverger 5.5	
Zenwalk Linux 6.2	

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.

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Advanced Bash Scripting Guide – v6.1. http://www.tldp.org/LDP/abs/html/. GNU Free Documentation License user guide by Mendel Cooper. The Advanced Bash Scripting Guide is both a reference and a tutorial on shell scripting. This comprehensive book (the equivalent of 974 print pages) covers almost every aspect of shell scripting. It contains 364 profusely commented illustrative examples, a number of tables, and a cross-linked index/glossary. Not just a shell scripting tutorial, this book also provides an introduction to basic programming techniques, such as sorting and recursion. It is well suited for either individual study or classroom use. It covers Bash, up to and including version 4.0.

Darik's Boot and Nuke – v2.0.0. http://www.dban.org/. Free GNU General Public License boot disk image by Darik Horn. Darik's Boot and Nuke ("DBAN") is a self-contained boot disk that securely wipes the hard disks of most computers. DBAN will automatically and completely delete the contents of any hard disk that it can detect, which makes it an appropriate utility for bulk or emergency data destruction. DBAN is a means of ensuring due diligence in computer recycling, a way of preventing identity theft if you want to sell a computer, and a good way to totally clean a Microsoft Windows installation of viruses and spyware. DBAN prevents or thoroughly hinders all known techniques of hard disk forensic analysis.

NetStats Baseball – v0.9.5. http://sourceforge.net/projects/nsbb/. Free GNU General Public License source code by Marshall Lake. NetStatsBaseball (NSB) is a simulation of professional baseball. Single games may be played as well as whole seasons. Statistics are kept for games, seasons, and lifetime. NSB runs in a client/server environment.

OpenOffice.org – v3.1.1. http://www.openoffice.org/. Free Lesser GNU General Public License v3 source code and executable installer by the OpenOffice.org Community. OpenOffice.org 3 is the leading open-source office software suite for word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, graphics, databases and more. It is available in many languages and works on all common computers. It stores your data in an international open standard format and can also read and write files from other common office software packages. It can be downloaded and used completely free of charge for any purpose.

Kernel Source – http://www.kernel.org/. 2.6 kernel source code for all platforms (stable 2.6.31).



Dozens of PC Utilities Free for the Taking

Written by Ira Wilsker, APCUG Director; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, TX; Radio Talk Show Host Iwilsker (at) apcug.net

WEBSITES:

http://tinyurl.com/95free-utilities

http://openoffice.org

http://www.iobit.com

http://www.defraggler.com

http://www.recuva.com

read a lot of online computer magazines. Most of them are American, but some are foreign, including from such diverse places as England, Germany, and Australia. Recently the Australian magazine PCWorld Australia published an article titled (sic) "95 great free sites and downloads you've probably never heard of" (tinyurl.com/95free-utilities). From the feedback I have received from readers of this column, there is great interest in totally free computer utilities, especially in these pressing economic times.

The article categorizes the free software into 12 categories including productivity software, music utilities, security tools, web enhancers, phone utilities, photo and video managers, social networking, PC performance enhancements, file synchronization, and business applications. In the productivity software category, the first recommendation is one of my personal favorites, OpenOffice (OpenOffice.org), which OpenOffice. was reviewed in this column last year, is a full featured free office suite that can read and write Microsoft Office files such as Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, as well as many other formats. With its frequent updates and enhancements, OpenOffice would be a wise choice for anyone who wants an office suite with "all the bells and whistles" totally free. The menu hierarchy and appear-

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ance are nearly identical to Word, Excel, and other Microsoft Office products providing for a "near zero" learning curve for anyone familiar with Microsoft Office products. Other productivity utilities are displayed including: Flowgram, which can create web-based multimedia presentations; Gubb, which is a personal time manager; PrimoOnline, which helps you create PDFs without software; and "Remember the Milk" which helps you to remember to do anything, and integrates many platforms, including BlackBerry, iPhone, Gmail, and Windows Mobile.

The music utilities category has several programs that I am not familiar with, but appear to be very attractive, and since they are totally free, there is no downside risk in trying them. The one rated as a "BEST BET" by the magazine is Songbird, an open-source downloadable media player that's completely customizable and packed with innovative features. Songbird is both a music player and a Web browser that enables the quick downloading of music. Other utilities listed include "SharePod", which enabled iPod users to change, backup, or share music between iPod users.

The security category includes some utilities that I have written about in the past. The one top rated by PC-World Australia is the excellent and free Avast Antivirus, which utilizes seven different "shields" to protect the computer from attack from different sources and vectors. Avast is one of the most popular free security utilities with tens of millions of devoted users, and would be a good choice for anyone wanting a free antivirus product that is equal to or superior than many of the expensive commercial competitors. Other free security utilities listed are from "a-squared" (previously discussed in this column); "Attack Trace", which can detect if a website is under attack; Comodo EasyVPN Home, which allows the user to create a virtual private network (also recently discussed in my column); a firewall, and a pair of excellent anti-spyware utilities. These utilities would all be worthy of consideration as their quality is generally excellent, and often better than their commercial counterparts.

Most of us use our internet browsers directly as they come from the publisher, unaware that there are tweaks that are available to improve our online experience. There are thousands of plug-ins and add-on's for Firefox, and unknown to many there are also many similar improvements for Internet Explorer. These plug-ins listed in the magazine article include a note taker for Firefox, a news reader which is an improve-

ment over the one integrated with Internet Explorer, a FTP (file transfer) utility for Firefox, a nifty utility "Google Preview" that displays thumbnail images of web pages that appear in Google search results, IE7Pro which adds Firefox-like features to IE7, a mapping utility that automatically displays street maps by clicking on an address, and "Video Download Helper" which is a Firefox plug-in that I use to download videos from the major video sites such as YouTube. The 11 browser enhancements listed may add a lot of enjoyment to the web browsing experience.

Being a typical geek, I like to try and tweak the best performance that my computer is capable of delivering. PCWorld Australia editors and I think alike as we have both written about some the same free performance enhancement utilities. At the top of the magazine's list is one of my personal favorites that I use regularly, Advanced System Care Free, available from www.iobit. com. This is a full featured performance utility that has dozens of tools to enhance PC performance, including a registry cleaner, anti-spyware, internet speed-up tools, and many others. I routinely put this program on almost every computer that I use. Just a few weeks ago I wrote about free utilities from Piriform, including a unique defragmentation utility called Defraggler (www.defraggler.com). This utility, which is on my computer, can quickly defragment files, folders, or an entire hard drive. Recuva (www.recuva.com), also from Piriform, is a file recovery utility that can undelete files on hard drives, flash drives, and other forms of media. I have personally used Recuva to restore some photos accidentally deleted from my digital camera, and it worked fine!

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This article can be read online at tinyurl.com/95free-utilities, where dozens more free utilities can be found. The actual URL of the magazine was much longer (138 characters), so I used the free online utility TinyURL (www.tinyurl.com) to create a much smaller URL that would be easier to enter. I hope that the readers of this column will be more aware that there are some fine free programs out there that are worthy of a chance. I suggest that you try some of them.



Chicago Computer Society makes history with Skype Presentation

By Irene Ganas, a member of the Chicago Computer Society www.ccs.org wsickels (at) sbcglobal.net

Istory was made by the Chicago Computer Society, as its Digital Imagery SIG, hosted by Sanford Kolinek, gave its first Main Presentation at our local meeting by its presenter from two thousand miles away.

As one of the largest member turnouts this year assembled in their seats in Lisle, Sanford passed the popcorn for all to enjoy and Jack Jackson, a long-time member of the Chicago Computer Society who now lives in Utah, presented his slide-show of gorgeous photographs of Goblin Valley and Arches National Park with his live narrative from his home in Utah. Assisting Jack at the meeting were Alvin Reisbeck and Jerry Sass.

Here is how this unique program came about and was done. Jack had mailed me a DVD of his photographs that I took to the February Digital Imagery Meeting for Show-and-Tell. We had a beautiful show but no tell and our members discussed how nice it would have been had we been able to learn more about how to make such wonderful images by being able to ask Jack about his camera, the settings he chose and why, what post-processing he did, etc.

That led to the idea of using Skype at our meeting. Jack mailed several more DVDs to Alvin and Jerry. Jack downloaded the latest Skype from www.skype.com and then Sanford, Jerry and Jack worked out and practiced the details ahead of time which made the evening's presentation run perfectly.

The DVD was run from Jerry's notebook PC on site at the meeting. A small "eyeball" video camera connecting to Jerry's notebook allowed "Utah Jack" to see Jerry and a video cam on Utah Jack's computer allowed Jerry to see Jack. When Jerry's notebook was connected to the projector and sound system at our meeting, all of us at the meeting could see and hear Utah Jack.

Here's the fun part: when the video cam "eyeball" was turned around and passed around, Utah Jack was able to see all the members at the meeting to "Howdy" us, each by name because he could see each of us.

The video cam eyeball was then positioned to "look at" the screen so that Utah Jack could look at the same show that all of us at the meeting were seeing. It was this setup that enabled Jack to present his live running commentary on the slide show. During the show, people asked Jack questions about everything from the technical aspects of his photographs, the music he chose for the show, commented on "his house" and laughed together about it because it was a photograph of an historic log cabin at a park in Utah.

This historic technical event and the hot popcorn compliments of Sanford made the evening one of the most enjoyable meetings of the year.

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Clean Up Your Room/Desktop - Part I

by Ron Hirsch, Contributing Editor, Boca Raton Computer Society, FL www.brcs.org ronhirsch1439 (at) comcast.com

So, does that line ring any bells? If you're a youngster, you've heard your elders tell you to clean up your room very often. And if you're not a youngster, then you use the line yourself on your kids or grandchildren. Well, I have no young kids around anymore, but I often use that line (with a slight change.) I'm constantly telling people to "Clean up your desktop," with "desktop" being their computer screen after the machine has booted up, and before any programs are run.

There are some desktop differences between the differ-

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ent Windows versions. And, some companies such as Dell and Compaq very often install a "special" arrangement on the desktop, mostly to keep their name in front of you. Also, there are programs which generate their own desktop arrangement. But, they all generally respond to the procedures presented below. Once you become an expert in this area, you'll have no problems with the finer points and variations.

Since most of you are using Windows XP, and since I use XP on all my machines, all the activities discussed are based on XP. I have not used Vista, but I would assume it's the same there. One thing I do remember however, is that in Windows 95, desktop icons did not automatically line up in rows and columns. In XP, when you move an icon, it automatically snaps to the nearest position which keeps the rows and columns aligned.

The average computer user, even those who should know better, generally have disaster zones for the desktops. There are icons all over the place, not in any order and not lined up. And, there are many, that when I ask what they are, I'm told "I don't know." And, when I ask to have Windows Explorer or Notepad opened, there's usually a lot of scrambling, to find out where the icon is located.

Many programs, when installed, will place an icon on your desktop. Sometimes they ask you during the install if you want this - and sometimes they don't ask. There is always a tendency for software companies to grab real estate so that they can prominently keep themselves in front of you. Some newer computers running Windows XP/VISTA may even start off with almost nothing on the desktop. If you want to go back to a more conventional appearing desktop, right click on the desktop, and view the various options you have. There is probably a choice to revert to an "old-fashioned" desktop, which I personally prefer. Most people keep their medications in a medicine cabinet, canned goods in the pantry, garden tools in the garage, etc. But when it comes to their computer, they are as disorganized as is humanly possible. They feel intimidated by their computers, and don't wish to antagonize it. So, the thrust of this article is to go back to real basics again, and give you some information on organizing and cleaning up your desktop. If you're already super organized, you can skip this article, accept my apologies. and move on. But 99 out of 100 of you probably don't qualify to get the gold star for desktop organization. Once you do the tasks presented,

you'll probably wonder why you didn't do it sooner. It not only is much easier to work with a good functional desktop, it looks prettier also, and will impress those who see it.

WHY HAVE ICONS ON THE DESKTOP?

Most users are familiar with the primary way to run a program. Click on START>PROGRAMS, and one can navigate to all the programs that are installed on the machine. But, most users generally have several programs that they use often. Having an icon for these programs on the desktop makes it easier to access that program. Just double click on that icon, and the program opens.

WHY SHOULD I BOTHER?

Let's take an extreme analogy. How would you like to have a dictionary where the words were randomly listed, not in any order? It would take lots of time to look up a word. By organizing things, and getting important icons at your fingertips, you can make your life much easier. And, your friends will be asking you to help them, when they see your desktop. Consider the desktop as a presentation area for icons that you often use. Count the icons on your desktop that you really use, and those you don't use. Then list the icons that you use which are not readily available on the desktop and you have to do lots of clicking to reach. You will see why it's a good idea to improve things. Now let's get down to business and fix things up.

OPERATING ON ICONS

The following activities are easy to perform on icons, wherever they may be. There are a few icons that Microsoft does put in places where they take control away from you - you can't readily rename them, or move them off the desktop, although you can always reposition them on the desktop. You may discover some of these in your travels. When you do, you'll just have to skip those icons. While they can be operated on using special protocols, that's outside of the scope of activities for these lessons.

WHAT IS AN ICON

An icon is a representation of a program, or file, or just about anything you want. The icons on your desktop are usually shortcuts to running a program, be it a word processor, spreadsheet, Internet connection, etc. All icons have properties, which define the nature of

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the icon, and details of what it does when used. Right clicking on an icon will bring up a window with the bottom item in the list being "properties." Left click on "properties," and you'll get a window with lots of information about the icon. Try it, and browse around to get a feel for things. The more familiar you become with things on your computer, the more comfortable you'll feel using them.

MOVE AN ICON

Left click on and drag an icon and you can move it manually anywhere you want on your desktop, or into another open folder. The ability to drag an icon around is tied into the choice that was made on how icons are positioned. Before you can engage in changing locations et al on your desktop, you must first check to see how things are set. Right click on the desktop and in XP you will bring up a small box with a list of items in it. The contents of this box will vary, depending upon which version of Windows you are using. The top item is "arrange icons by," and it has a little arrowhead to the left. Click on that arrowhead, and you'll see a variety of items related to arranging icons. Some of these may be checked. The best way to learn what does what is to play around with the checking and unchecking. After a few trials, you will get a good feel for what they all do.

COPYANICON

Copying an icon is similar to moving an icon. As with the standard Windows protocol, do exactly as you would to move, but hold down the CTRL key while you are doing the click and drag operation. If you copy it into the same area, you'll probably see a (2) following the text in the copy. You can't have two icons in the same place, with the same name. So, Windows adds the "(2)" for you. If you move it to another folder, the "(2)" will stay, but you can edit the text as you'd like. See "Rename an Icon" below. Dragging an icon to any folder on your desktop will move the icon into that folder.

DELETE AN ICON

Click once on an icon to highlight it, and then hit the Delete key. Remember, the icons here are generally shortcut icons with the little curly arrow on the lower left corner. Deleting these does not delete anything from your system except the shortcut icon. No programs or data will be deleted, just the icon.

RENAME AN ICON

Click once an icon and then hit the F2 key. This puts you in "edit" mode, and you can type a new name by using the keyboard. If you type in a very long name, all the text you entered may not display when the icon is not selected. But, when you click once on the icon, the extra lines of text should be visible. In general, try to keep the text to a maximum of two lines under the icon. Remember the F2 key. It is the "edit" key for folder names, filenames, icons, and other elements in Windows.

Next month, we'll continue from this point to get a more streamlined desktop for you to work with. But, you must know the various icon manipulation procedures presented above. I won't be repeating the explanation for each step. I'll just say delete, copy, move, (etc.) the icon. So if you've forgotten how to do it, you'll need a copy of this

article handy to remind you.

Remember, you will learn by experimenting and exploring - so don't be afraid to do so.

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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Monthly Circulation: 100

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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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Next WAC Meetings: • Oct 17 • Nov 21 • Dec 12 • Jan 16 • Feb 16
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October 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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Commercial Software Available for Free

By Ira Wilsker

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http://game.giveawayoftheday.com

omputer users often seem to be in the market for additional software. Many users even seem to have an addiction to new software, seeming to have an insatiable urge to try something new. There are many online resources that have enormous libraries of free software to download, such as download.com, MajorGeek, and TUCOWS, but other than some pirate and hacker sites, there are only a few sites where commercial software can legitimately be downloaded free.

One of my personal favorites is dotTech.org, which has proven to be an excellent resource when it comes to legitimately getting free copies of commercial software. New titles appear on an almost daily basis under the "freebies" category (dottech.org/category/freebies), and are usually available for a very limited time or a limited number of downloads. The "freebies" page has an editorial comment at the top that was posted by the founder of dotTech, "Ashraf" says, "I gave up my 'illegal' activities long ago - but I still like freebies. Here you will see posts about how to attain commercial software for free - 100% legit!" Currently, there are 52 commercial software titles available as a free download, but this number is dynamic and changes frequently as old offers expire, and new titles are added. As with bargains anywhere else, the rule is that if you see something you like, get it now, because it may not be there later. Ashraf and the editors of dotTech.org review each software title, and I have found the reviews to be reliable and accurate. There is also an open blog on each listing where users who have downloaded and installed the software have left comments as to the functionality of the software, a feature that I have found useful.

DotTech's selection of software is varied, but seems to favor performance utilities. While many of the software publishers listed on dotTech may not be familiar to Americans, they are mostly European in origin, and generally have a very good to excellent reputation. These lesser known publishers will typically allow their

commercial software to be promoted on dotTech in order to become better known, and to sometimes get leads to sell their other software products. Mostly, the titles available are the latest versions, but in a few cases the free downloads were of a previous but recent version. There are two very good commercial products that I use regularly thanks to dotTech, and I do periodically receive emailed promotions from the publishers about their other wares. These promotions are more sporadic than regular, and not so frequent as to be irritating. Both have unsubscribe links on their promotions, but I have found them often interesting, as their products that they promote are often offered at deep discounts. One recent example was the German software publisher, Ashampoo that sent an email that offered almost all of its products for a flat price of only \$10 each. It should be noted that Ashampoo is not some little software publisher, as it is very popular in Europe, and claims to have over 10 million registered users of its software, with 97 million copies installed. This is precisely the type of company that promotes its software on dotTech.org.

Some of the commercial software that has recently been offered free on dotTech include Ashampoo Office 2008, Ashampoo Internet Accelerator 2, USB Safely Remove 4.1, Comfort Keys Lite, Ashampoo Burning Studio 2010, O&O CleverCache 6 Professional, WinX DVD Ripper Platinum, CyberLink PowerDirector 7 Ultra, Paragon Drive Backup 9.0 Professional, EVEREST Ultimate Edition 4.6, EASEUS Partition Master Pro, and dozens of other titles. The full list can be found online at dottech.org/category/freebies. I subscribe to dotTech's RSS feed (dottech.org/feed) and email alerts (dottech.org/e-mail-reminders) so I can keep up with the latest software giveaways. I routinely download and install the new offerings to satiate my desire to try new software; generally, I have been very satisfied with the offerings and have found them to be generally excellent. For those that I no longer want, they have been easy to uninstall with their integral uninstall function or from Add/Remove Programs. In addition to commercial software, dotTech also has some good software tips and hints, as well as reviews of other software products.

Speaking of giveaways, what may arguably be the most popular software giveaway website is "Give Away of the Day" at www.giveawayoftheday.com. The software on that website must be downloaded and installed by midnight Pacific time (2am Central time), or the in-

See Software for Free next page

Software for Free from previous page

stall feature will fail, but if it is installed by the deadline, a fully registered copy of the software is yours to keep. Every 24 hours, at midnight Pacific Time, a new software title becomes available. Software available on Give Away of the Day has been of all types, including utilities, video and audio editors, security software, and other genres, and is often from major software publishers. It needs to be noted that the software downloaded and registered through Give Away of the Day is not eligible for support, and does not qualify for free upgrades. It should also be noted that during the registration process, which must be done while online, some other utilities may appear on the registration popup that may be installed, and by my choice, I never select them for installation.

Give Away of the Day often has dozens of comments and reviews of that day's software by the time dawn breaks in the U.S., these comments being posted by users mostly in Asia and Europe, where the software has been available for download for several hours. If the software looks interesting, I click on the icon to go to the download page, and review the comments prior to downloading. The reviews are summarized with a "thumbs up" or "thumbs down" rating; if the majority of reviewers likes the software, I will seriously consider downloading it; if the "thumbs down" are in the majority, then I will usually not download it. I also read the reviews and comments to corroborate that the software will install and function on my operating system. I also

find references in the review to competing, often free, competitors to be generally helpful, and a source of other software to try. It is interesting that often the first, and usually the most comprehensive review posted is from Ashraf, the same person that runs dotTech. These reviews list the good and bad features of the program offered, as well as a link to a full review on dotTech.

Give Away of the Day has a sister site, Game Give Away of the Day, which has commercial computer games available for download. Unlike the parent site, new games are not typically available every day, but it is still a worthwhile website for gamers to visit on a frequent basis just to see if something new has been posted.

Both Give Away of the Day and Game Give Away of the Day offer RSS feeds and email alerts to notify those interested of any new offerings. I subscribe to both in order to be informed of those offerings.

These websites have had some great commercial software available at a great price (free), which I use on a regular basis. They are most worthy of a regular visit in order to take advantage of the offerings.

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Examples of Available software is on Bonus Pages 3 and 4...

See Free Software next page

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Don't have Microsoft Office and don't want OpenOffice; so how about Ashampoo Office? Get Ashampoo Office 2008 for free!

POSTED BY ASHRAF ON 2 OCTOBER 2009

9 COMMENTS

Digg submit



I just posted about how you can purchase any Ashampoo software for \$10; now I am posting about how to get yet another Ashampoo title for free; life is grand.

I have a riddle for you guys and gals. What can do word processing, create presentations, process spreadsheets, is 50 MB in size, can be installed onto a USB/flash drive, and is available for free? I will give you three guesses; anyone, anyone? Here is a hint: it starts with A and ends with 8. Ooohh, I think I heard it. Yes the answer is Ashampoo Office 2008!

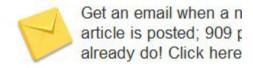
Ashampoo Office 2008 is a productivity suite by Ashampoo which has three major components:

- TextMaker 2008 (word processing; think Microsoft Word or OpenOffice Write).
- Presentations 2008 (create powerpoint presentations; think Microsoft PowerPoint or OpenOffice Impress).
- PlanMaker 2008 (work with spreadsheets; think Microsoft Excel or OpenOffice Calc).

Now the clever user may notice Ashampoo Office is missing components which Microsoft Office and

dotTech [.org]

Ever seen a macho geek?



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