



# The Cursor



## Monthly Newsletter of the Washington Area Computer User Group

**Meeting Location:**  
OLLI, 4210 Roberts Road  
Fairfax, VA



**Next Meeting:**  
December 10, 2011



**Pre-register for the  
December PC Clinic!**

### Presidential Bits

*by Geof Goodrum*

*President, Washington Area Computer User Group  
president(at)wacug.org*

When you are having a bad time with your computer, think about Lorrin Garson's experience as related during the November meeting's Learn 30. A household power failure resulted in two desktop computer's refusing to boot. Lorrin conscientiously keeps backups of his data files (a topic he has presented before), but it took nearly three weeks to negotiate customer support to get warranty replacement of the computers and rebuild his systems. He recounts his story in the briefing slides (PDF) now available on the WAC Recent Meetings page (<http://www.wacug.org/recmtgs.html>).

Dennis Courtney, President of the Capital PC Users Group and Information Technology Architect for Inter-American Development Bank, gave the main November presentation about Cloud Computing. Dennis explained the difference between Software as a Service (SaaS) exemplified by Google Apps, Platform as a Service (PaaS) such as Microsoft's Azure, and Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) such as Amazon's Elastic Compute Cloud. Dennis also compared the "a la carte" pricing structure of cloud services and provided information on free tiers of service that might be of interest to individuals looking to learn more about the cloud or just store some data there. On the other hand, pay careful attention to the Terms of Service! Dennis's presentation (PDF), which is packed with information and useful links, is also available on the Recent Meetings page.

John Kennedy of the Licking County Computer Society will give a live presentation via the web about "Free Software and Alternatives" at the meeting on December 10<sup>th</sup>; see his write-up immediately following. On a similar theme, I have a second chance to demonstrate the newly-released Ubuntu 11.10 GNU/Linux Operating System and applications during the Learn 30 tutorial.

This meeting will also feature our semi-annual PC Clinic for members. If you need help with any PC hardware or software problems, please

### Table of Contents

Lloyd's Web Sites.....	2
Free Software.....	3
2012 Annual Meeting.....	3
Linux News.....	4
ISP Negotiations.....	6
Word Tips.....	7
Excel Tips.....	8
PC Power Options.....	8
Diskeeper 2011.....	9
Micro Center Clinics.....	10

*Only in the Download  
Edition*

Portable Security.....	13
Choosing a Smartphone...	14
Toolbar Opt Out.....	16

*Continued on page 3*

## Lloyd's Web Sites for December 2011

by Lloyd Johnson

Columnist, Washington Area Computer User Group



Visit [www.wacug.org](http://www.wacug.org) for past issues of Web Sites with hyperlinks.

1. Want to watch football games on your computer? — <http://www.vipbox.tv/sports/american-football.html>
2. Make Internet calls for free with Skype. Call friends and family on any phone with Pay As You Go and Pay Monthly subscriptions — <http://www.skype.com/>
3. The Internet Movie Database: "IMDb: The biggest, best, most award-winning movie site on the planet." — <http://www.imdb.com/>
4. Apollo 14 orbited the moon in 1971 and carried about 500 seeds to see if being in space would affect the seeds ability to grow on earth. In 1975, more than 400 seeds were planted on US Federal Lands. NASA located about 70 of these trees and asking for help in locating more trees — [http://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/planetary/lunar/moon\\_tree.html](http://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/planetary/lunar/moon_tree.html)
5. Get Ready for winter weather. Click on Winter weather — <http://www.emergency.cdc.gov/disasters>
6. Deal of the Day. Eclectic mix of freebies and discounts — <http://www.walletpop.com/category/bargain-babe>
7. More than one million books available for free downloading or reading online — <http://digital.library.UPenn.edu/books>
8. Free Birthday treats. Businesses around the country offer free goodies on your special day — <http://www.freebirthdaytreats.com/>
9. If you don't know how to open a certain file type, try — <http://www.openwith.org/>
10. Back Up Your Bookmarks. The Xmarks plug-in supports Firefox, IE and Safari — <http://www.pcworld.com/downloads/file/fid,77294/description.html>

**Editor's Note:** Lloyd has retired from WAC volunteer duties; this is Lloyd's last column in *The Cursor*. Lloyd quickly responded to Paul Howard's January 2006 plea for someone to step into Lu Spriggs' shoes, and began his 5+ year stint as newsletter columnist in March 2006. If you are interested in continuing Lloyd's spirit of volunteerism by contributing a column to the newsletter, please e-mail [editor\(at\)wacug.org](mailto:editor(at)wacug.org).

**THANK YOU, LLOYD!**

### 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  
Working Together for Our  
Members

NCTCUG

WACUG

OPCUG

---

*Continued from page 1*

consider bringing it to the December meeting where our experienced team will help you resolve them. Please follow the PC Clinic guidelines at <http://www.wacug.org/clinic.html> and e-mail your support request to [pcclinic \(at\) wacug.org](mailto:pcclinic@wacug.org) before the meeting.

In other news, I regret to announce that Lloyd Johnson has retired from WAC volunteer activities; please see the Editor's Note below his final web site column in this issue.

The WACUG Board approved a charitable contribution of \$250 to the Friends of OLLI. Given that OLLI allows WACUG to use their facilities for monthly meetings at no charge, and WACUG also benefits from sharing presenters and membership with the OLLI PC Users Group (OPCUG), I hope that you agree that this contribution is well-justified. The formal presentation to the Friends of OLLI will occur at the meeting on January 21st.

I will also make an important announcement about the direction for the user group in 2012 at the December meeting.

See you there!



---

## **December 10: Free Software and Alternatives Webinar**

*by John Kennedy*

*Treasurer, Licking County Computer Society, <http://lccsohio.org/>*

John's presentation will share the many free programs he uses or recommends that take the place of popular "paid" programs. His motto is "try it, you might like it—especially the price!" And if his free software doesn't meet your needs, then he guesses you'll just have to pay the piper.

John comes from a background in teaching. He taught first grade for 25 years and then finished up his teaching career with 10 years teaching computer skills to middle school students. He began his involvement with computers way back in days when Atari rolled out the 400 system, and has been using them ever since. He tried his hand at programming the Atari and decided that administrating/using

computers was his area. His retirement project was to build his own computer. Following retirement he continued working with computers by teaching computer skills to senior citizens and helping out many computer users through the local computer club, the Licking County (Ohio) Computer Society.

First as a teacher and then a retired individual (money limited in both areas), John is known around LCCS and senior citizen computer classes as "Free John." John has made it a point to search out and find many free computer programs that meet his computer needs. He even goes so far as using a free operating system (Linux/Ubuntu) along with Microsoft Windows (which is a paid program, but runs free software).



---

## **Notification of Annual Meeting and 2012 Election of Officers**

The Annual Meeting of the Washington Area Computer User Group (WACUG, Inc) is scheduled for Saturday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012, 1 PM Eastern Time at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute Tallwood Campus, 4210 Roberts Road, Fairfax, Virginia.

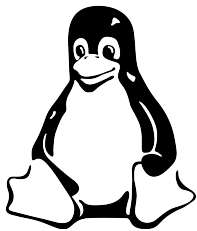
The Annual Meeting includes the 2012 election for one year term of the four Officers of the corporation. The 2012 Board of Directors shall consist of four members in good standing as of the election date, each individually elected by a majority vote of corporation members and not more than ten others as may be elected from time to time by majority vote of the Board. The four Board members elected by vote of the corporation members shall be the President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Candidates for election: Members in good standing wishing to run for office must notify the Nominating Committee Chairperson, Jim Brueggeman <[Director9 \(at\) wacug.org](mailto:Director9@wacug.org)>. Nominations will close at midnight Eastern Time, 11 December 2011. As of publication date, the candidates by office are: President, Geof Goodrum; Vice President, Mel Mikosinski; Treasurer, Paul Howard; Secretary, Bill Walsh.

*Continued on page 4*

*Continued from page 3*

Jim Brueggeman will also serve as an election commissioner for 2012 and will present election results at the Annual Meeting. Ballots listing nominees for each office will be e-mailed to members, with instructions for their return. Paper ballots will also be available on the day of election for members who have not cast a ballot, or any member may make a motion to elect all candidates by acclamation if the elected positions are uncontested. Members wishing to serve in one of the ten Board-elected Director positions should contact Jim.



## Linux and Open Source News

by Geof Goodrum  
*linux (at) wacug.org*

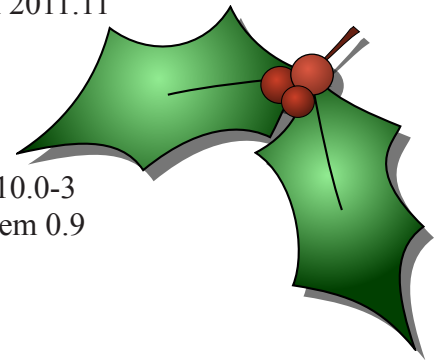
### GNU/Linux Distribution Releases

GNU/Linux distributions are bundled collections of software including a set of applications and an operating system built on the Linux kernel. Some distributions include general applications such as office suites, music players, and web browsers, while others may have specific purposes such as computer system recovery, network firewall, media center, or gaming. Individuals, community projects, or businesses create distributions. While some distributions are commercial and include fee-based technical support, other distributions are freely downloadable or can be ordered on CDs or DVD at low cost.

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 free download distributions do not include official technical support nor printed documentation. 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. 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.

The following list summarizes distribution release announcements from Distrowatch.com for the period November 3 – 26, 2011.

Chakra GNU/Linux 2011.11  
CRUX 2.7.1  
Elastix 2.2  
Fedora 16  
Fuduntu 14.12  
GParted LiveCD 0.10.0-3  
Incognito Live System 0.9  
IPCop 2.0.2  
IPFire 2.11  
Linux Mint 12  
OLPC OS 11.3.0  
openSUSE 12.1  
Parted Magic 2011\_11\_24  
Puppy Linux 5.2.2 “Wary”, “Racy”  
Sabayon Linux 7 “Experimental”  
Tiny Core Linux 4.1  
ZevenOS 4.0



### Featured Linux Software of the Month: December 2011

The software described below can be downloaded at the links provided or copied onto a USB flash drive at the WAC meeting. However, please check the online package management tool included with your GNU/Linux distribution first, as installation is often just a click away.

#### GNOME Photo Frame – v1.4.1.

<http://code.google.com/p/gphotoframe/>. Free GNU General Public License Python code by yendo et al. GNOME Photo Frame is a photo frame gadget for the GNOME desktop. It shows pictures on the desktop from multiple sources; local folders, F-Spot databases, Shotwell databases, Facebook API, Flickr API, Picasa Web Album API, Tumblr API, and RSS.

#### The Legend of Edgar – v0.94.

<http://www.parallelrealities.co.uk/p/legend-of-edgar.html>. Free GNU General Public License C source code and Debian/Ubuntu executable package by Parallel Realities. The Legend of Edgar is a 2D platform game with a persistent world. When Edgar’s father fails to return home after venturing out one dark and stormy night, Edgar fears the worst: he has been captured by the evil sorcerer who lives in a

*Continued on page 5*



fortress beyond the forbidden swamp. In The Legend of Edgar, you take on the role of Edgar as he ventures across the world, battling fearsome creatures and solving puzzles while trying to find and rescue his father. Requires X Window System, and SDL libraries (included in major GNU/Linux distributions).

**Maqetta** – Preview 3. <http://maqetta.org/>. Free Contributors License Agreement HTML5/Ajax code by The Dojo Foundation. Maqetta is a WYSIWYG user interface (UI) design tool for HTML5 (desktop and mobile). Maqetta allows User Experience Designers (UXD) to perform drag/drop assembly of live UI mockups. The user interfaces created by Maqetta are real-life web applications that can be handed off to developers, who can then transform the application incrementally from UI mockup into final shipping application. To help with the designer/developer hand-off, Maqetta includes a "download into ZIP" feature to create a ZIP image that can be imported into a developer tool workspace (e.g., Eclipse IDE). For team development, Maqetta includes web-based review & commenting features with forum-style comments and on-canvas annotations. While this is a preview release, many features are ready for operational use. Requires a recent version of Firefox 4 or later, Apple Safari 5.1 or later, or Google Chrome web browser (IE9 is not currently supported).

**Task Coach** – v1.3.1. <http://www.taskcoach.org/>. Free GNU General Public License Python code by Frank Niessink and Jérôme Laheurte. Task Coach is a simple todo manager to manage personal tasks and todo lists. It grew out of a frustration that well-known task managers, such as those provided with Outlook or Lotus Notes, that do not provide facilities for composite tasks. Often, tasks and other things to do consist of several activities. Task Coach is designed to deal with composite tasks. See screenshot (older version) below.

**Kernel Source** – v3.1.3. <http://www.kernel.org/>. Free GNU General Public License source code for all platforms by the Linux community.

The screenshot shows the Task Coach application window. The title bar reads "Task Coach - /home/frank/taskcoach0\_71/TODOTask". The menu bar includes File, Edit, View, Task, Effort, Category, Note, and Help. The toolbar contains icons for file operations and task management. The main window is divided into three panes: Categories, Tasks, and Effort.

**Categories Pane:** A tree view showing categories: Bug (Crash, Data loss, Translation), Feature, Publicity, Settings, and UI.

**Tasks Pane:** A table of tasks with columns: Subject, Categories, Start date, and Due date.

Subject	Categories	Start date	Due date
Add Task Coach to directory.fsf.org	Publicity	2007-02-04	
Improve reminders	Feature, UI	2007-02-03	
Postpone reminders (snooze)		2007-02-03	
Show missed reminders		2007-02-28	
New screenshots	Publicity	2007-04-01	2007-04-01
Publish new screenshots		2007-04-01	2007-04-01
Create new screenshots		2007-04-01	2007-04-01
Update translations for release 0.62	Feature, UI	2007-04-01	
Make viewer layout persistent	Feature, Settings, UI		
Don't save microseconds in task file	Bug	2007-02-23	

**Effort Pane:** A table of effort details with columns: Period, Task, Time spent, and Revenue.

Period	Task	Time spent	Revenue
2008-06-12 13:58 - 13:58	New screenshots -> Publish new screenshots -> on taskcoach.org	0:00:02	0.00
2008-06-12 13:58 - 13:58	New screenshots -> Publish new screenshots -> on Sourceforge	0:00:03	0.00
2008-06-12 13:32 - 13:32	Add Task Coach to directory.fsf.org	0:00:01	0.00
2007-04-15 21:49 - 21:50	New screenshots -> Publish new screenshots -> on Freshmeat	0:00:33	0.00
2007-04-01 09:45 - 11:30	New screenshots -> Create new screenshots	1:45:00	0.00
2007-03-31 12:00 - 16:30	Drag and drop in TreeListCtrl causes a hard crash	4:30:00	0.00
2007-03-29 20:00 - 21:40	Don't save microseconds in task file	1:40:00	0.00
2007-02-25 15:19 - 17:30	Improve reminders	2:11:00	0.00
2007-02-25 12:45 - 15:23	Improve reminders	2:38:00	0.00

At the bottom, a status bar shows: "Tasks: 1 selected, 14 visible, 14 total" and "Status: 5 over due, 1 inactive, 3 completed".

---

## ISP Negotiations – Speeds/Features/Software Myths vs. Realities

by Gabe Goldberg

Trapped! It's easy to feel that way when the relationship with your ISP (Internet Service Provider) turns sour. Too often, people slavishly accept whatever service they get, meekly pay bills, and don't comparison shop or even measure connection speeds. So they don't know whether they're getting what they're paying for, let alone whether they can talk their way into something better.

Utility bills are so nasty and convoluted that it's easy to ignore them—especially when they're auto-paid by credit card or bank draft. But that lets companies bury changes to rates and terms of service, hardly ever in consumers' favor, deep in the small print. So check bills and tiny-type messages every month, and especially carefully after moving or changing services, since orders/options/fees are too-frequently botched!

If service or bundle bills creep upward as they often do, call a few times a year to ask about specials—sometimes they're not advertised. You may have to extend a contract to win a bargain, but if you'd have stayed anyway, it's a winning tradeoff.

Watch the market for changes in services, prices, and bundles. When you see new features such as FiOS enhancements offered, call and demand them. Emphasize that as a long-time customer you should get the same deal as new subscribers! When considering FiOS, remember that it depends on your electricity for operation. Battery backup will carry it for a few hours but that may not be adequate for telephone, alarm system, or health communication. FiOS is strongly marketed to include phone but it needn't; you can retain reliable copper phone service while using Internet and cable via FiOS.

Focus on what matters. For most people, after a certain point, increased Internet speed may not matter as much as other enhancements such as more premium TV channels, online backup storage, or a DVR. Aim requests to optimize YOUR total package, not simply get connection speed bragging rights.

Especially when establishing Internet service, but even after-the-fact, consider separating connectivity from email hosting to allow ISP (s)hopping without having to change email address. Fully sliced, Internet services may involve multiple fees: connectivity, email/Web hosting, and domain registration. But the total won't necessarily exceed that of a services bundle, and splitting enhances flexibility and negotiating clout, letting you tell your ISP that your email address doesn't tie you to them.

Even using your ISP's email service doesn't mean you're trapped by monthly bills. Though AOL has offered free email service for years, even allowing accessing it with standard email software and some free Web email services, many people still feel obligated to pay for it. That's like feeling stranded on a stalled escalator when you can just walk off.

Internet connection speeds are quoted in squishy terms, such as, "Up to xxx megabits/second up and down." Nobody complains when actual speeds exceed the promised "up to" rating (as mine routinely do!), but not enough people gripe when speeds are far below claimed service quality. So test connection speed occasionally using websites like speedtest.net and dslreports.com, keep records (or let test sites do that), and politely ping your ISP if it falls short of what it advertises.

Check and cite reviews, BBB ratings, or blog posts indicating that the ISP isn't fulfilling promises. Compare notes with neighbors and other customers elsewhere; if there's a pattern of dissatisfaction, don't be snowed by customer support claiming that you're alone complaining. Investigate whether your city/county has an agency handling Internet complaints and mention that you'll consult it for advice and action.

You're a stronger negotiator if you know and cite available competitive ISPs. If you're a cable customer with FiOS available, tell your ISP that you're being courted by the other vendor and wonder why you should remain. And WiMAX offerings <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wimax>> are proliferating, often adding a third service choice competing with the traditional cozy ISP duopoly (cable and telco).

*Continued on page 7*

*Continued from page 6*

Keep detailed notes on interactions with your ISP, noting date/time and contact person. Always request ticket/incident numbers for follow-up and proof of patterns. Log problems, outages, and slowdowns for later reference even if you don't report them all.

If you're not getting satisfaction from first-level support, escalate firmly but politely, emphasizing that you simply want to resolve issues, but not taking problems personally or blaming anyone. On a more positive note, request personal contact info from helpful people. When available, it's pleasant being able to contact them directly rather than having to go through usual screening or taking pot luck with random staffers.

If a conversation feels rigidly scripted, try asking questions "off the record" or "person-to-person" or "as one IT professional to another" to try to get off-script and have an actual human conversation. It won't always work but when it does, results can improve.

Besides billing, speed, and reliability issues, technology itself is a fruitful haggling area. Cellular companies are introducing MiFi <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MiFi>, a nifty gadget that uses cellular broadband to create a small/local/personal wireless hotspot. These are often offered under special promotions but you don't need these to play let's-make-a-deal with a hungry ISP. A similar technology allows tethering a computer to a cell phone, using it as a modem. Some companies disable this or charge extra for it, but it's worth asking (demanding?) for it as a service plan addition.

If you've had a connection for a while, you may not have the current generation of modem (and router, if it's all one unit). Companies sometimes provide this gear at no cost, so it can't hurt to ask for a free technology refresh—especially if speed or reliability aren't what they should be. Separate from replacing hardware, occasionally ensure that you're running current software versions in telecom equipment by noting model numbers and visiting manufacturer Web sites for upgrades.

Finally, for emergencies, unless you check—perhaps with a special high-gain antenna—you never know what public hotspots or open networks are within range.

*This article appeared originally on the slickdeals.net Web site, <<http://slickdeals.net/>>. © Gabriel Goldberg 2010. Permission is granted for reprinting and distribution by non-profit organizations with text reproduced unchanged and this paragraph included. Please email [slickdeals@gabegold.com](mailto:slickdeals@gabegold.com) when you use it.*



## Word Tips: Converting Forms to Regular Documents

*by Allen Wyatt*

As you are working with forms in Word, there may be times when you want to convert the responses to your form back to regular text. (There are many times when regular text is much easier to work with than answers in forms.) To do the conversion, follow these steps:

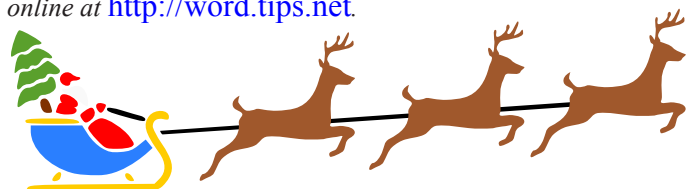
1. Unprotect the form. (The way you unprotect a form varies by version of Word and has been covered in other WordTips.)
2. Select the whole document either by pressing Ctrl+A or by choosing Select All from the Edit menu.
3. Press Ctrl+Shift+F9.

Now all the fields in the document have been changed to unlinked, regular text. You can now edit the document as you normally would.

The caveat here, of course, is that all of your fields are changed to regular text. Thus, if you had other fields in the document (such as fields for dates or sequential numbers), these are also changed to regular text by this process.

*WordTips is your source for cost-effective Microsoft Word training. (Microsoft Word is the most popular word processing software in the world.) This tip (1338) applies to Microsoft Word versions: 97 | 2000 | 2002 | 2003 | 2007*

*Copyright © 2011 by Sharon Parq Associates, Inc. Reprinted by permission. Thousands of free Microsoft Word tips can be found online at <http://word.tips.net>.*





## Excel Tips: Specifying the Behavior of the Enter Key

by Allen Wyatt

When you type information into a cell, it is normal to press the Enter key at the end of your entry. Excel allows you to specify exactly what should happen after you press Enter. Basically, you can specify that nothing happen (the cell into which you entered information remains the currently selected cell) or that a different, adjacent cell is automatically selected.

To make your specification, follow these steps:

1. Choose Options from the Tools menu. Excel displays the Options dialog box.
2. Make sure the Edit tab is selected. (See Figure 1.)

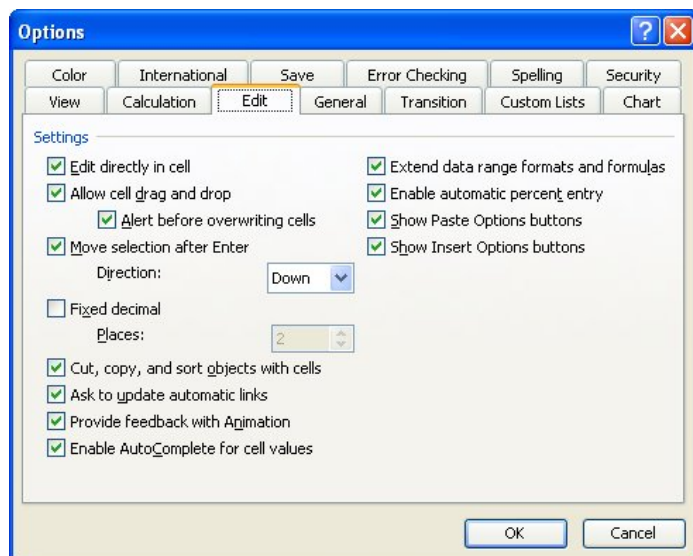


Figure 1. The Edit tab of the Options dialog box.

3. Either select or clear the Move Selection After Enter check box, depending on whether you want the selection to move or not when pressing Enter.
4. If you select the Move Selection After Enter check box, use the Direction drop-down list to specify the direction of the cell that should be selected.
5. Click on OK.

ExcelTips is your source for cost-effective Microsoft Excel training. This tip (2975) applies to Microsoft Excel versions: 97 | 2000 | 2002 | 2003

You can find a version of this tip for the ribbon interface of Excel (Excel 2007 and later) here: *Specifying the Behavior of the Enter Key*

([http://excelribbon.tips.net/T008848\\_Specifying\\_the\\_Behavior\\_of\\_the\\_Enter\\_Key.html](http://excelribbon.tips.net/T008848_Specifying_the_Behavior_of_the_Enter_Key.html)).

Copyright © 2011 by Sharon Parq Associates, Inc. Reprinted by permission. Thousands of free Microsoft Excel tips can be found online at <http://excel.tips.net>.



## Shut down, Sleep, Hibernate—Which one, when and why?

by Phil Sorrentino

President, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

November 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor

[www.spcug.org](http://www.spcug.org)

president (at) spcug.org

Shut-down is pretty straight forward, it removes power from your computer and ensures that the next time the power is turned on, the computer will go through the normal “boot up” process. Sleep and Hibernate are different and are “Powered Down” modes. The reason for using one of these powered down modes will differ depending on the type of computer, desktop or laptop, and the need to quickly get back to the operating mode after a pause in operation. Power usage, though always important, is mostly a consideration when using a laptop. How much operating time, before the batteries must be recharged, can be a big consideration for a laptop user. It can determine how useful the computer may be on a long flight, or how many movies the kids can watch on a cross-country road trip. Even with desktops, the increased cost of electricity can become a key factor for customers who are under pressure to manage their total cost of ownership (purchase price plus operating expenses).

The hardware that makes up today’s laptops has gotten quite efficient and the Windows Operating System software’s ability to manage that hardware’s power usage has constantly been improved. One of the biggest improvements since the early 1990’s has been the addition of these power down modes, to help provide longer battery life.

*Continued on page 9*



Improvements in battery technology has greatly increased battery capacity as well as battery lifetime. Besides improvements in battery technology, the Operating System control over the hardware can also improve the battery life. A job for the Operating System is to make the system as efficient as possible while still maintaining an acceptable user experience when turning the system on and off. (With the advent of Solid State Devices, in place of disk drives, we will eventually get to a very fast on and off experience. You can actually have it now, but it is very costly. By the way, try a tablet PC and see how fast it turns on and off; no moving parts in a tablet PC.)

The Windows 7 power management goals are simple:

- 1) make turning a computer off/on as reliable, simple, and fast as turning a TV off/on, and
- 2) maximize the battery usage if on battery, and reduce the energy consumption if on A/C power.

The first goal involves changing the model for what “off” and “on” really mean. By now, most everyone knows that turning a TV off doesn’t really turn it off. It is still available to receive the remote control signal, so that it can come back on quickly. To the degree possible, “off” is really “sleep” in Windows. When a PC goes into the sleep mode, the system state is saved in RAM; part of that 2 or 3 Gigabytes typically available in modern PCs. This arrangement creates the best balance between speed of resuming operation, and lowest power usage.

Currently, Windows 7 defines three power-down modes:

Sleep – a power-saving state that allows a computer to quickly resume full-power operation (typically within several seconds) when you want to start working again. Putting your computer into the sleep state is like pausing a DVD player—the computer immediately stops what it’s doing and is ready to start again when you want to resume working.

Hibernate – a power-saving state designed primarily for laptops. While sleep puts your work and settings in memory and draws a small amount of power, Hibernation puts your open documents and programs on your hard disk, and then turns off your computer. Of all the power-saving states in Windows,

hibernation uses the least amount of power. On a laptop, use hibernation when you know that you won’t use your laptop for an extended period and won’t have an opportunity to charge the battery during that time.

Hybrid Sleep – is designed primarily for desktop computers, is a combination of sleep and hibernate—it puts any open documents and programs (the system state) into memory and onto your hard disk (so nothing can be lost if power goes out), and then puts your computer into a low-power state so that you can quickly resume your work.

That way, if a power failure occurs, Windows can restore your work from your hard disk. Normally, when the user returns and “wakes” the machine, the system state is just restored from RAM, and the responsiveness to the user is fast. However, if for some reason power is lost (for example, if the PC is unplugged to move it - like you might move your TV), the system can still resume from the system state previously saved to disk with all context and data intact. (When Hybrid Sleep is turned on, putting your computer into sleep automatically puts your computer into Hybrid Sleep. Hybrid Sleep is typically turned on by default on desktop computers.) While Hybrid Sleep can be used on a laptop computer, it isn’t as applicable. A desktop is vulnerable to power loss, while a laptop can, of course, run on its internal battery. So, although there is a lot going on to produce and provide the power down modes, there really isn’t much to think about. For desktops, let it go into, or select, sleep (which should be hybrid sleep) and for laptops take advantage of hibernate (your battery will thank you).



---

## Review: Diskeeper 2011

by George Harding

Treasurer, Tucson Computer Society, AZ

November 2011 issue, eJournal

[www.aztcs.org](http://www.aztcs.org)

[georgehardingsbd \(at\) earthlink.net](mailto:georgehardingsbd@earthlink.net)

One of the essential parts of your computer, the hard disk, is also one that can cause the computer to be

Continued on page 10

unable to boot. The Windows operating system provides tools to keep your hard disk in good health. Fragmentation of files is one of the consequences of efficient space utilization. File deletion leaves portions of disk space available for use by another file, but only if the new file is the same or smaller size as the deleted file. If larger, a portion of the new file is stored in the deleted file's space, the balance somewhere else. This splitting of a file may result in a file being cut into several pieces. It takes longer to retrieve a file in this condition, than if it is stored as one contiguous piece.

Fragmentation can be reduced or eliminated by a special program that rearranges files so that each occupies only one spot on the disk. This produces more efficient file retrieval. The defragmenter in Windows can be operated whenever desired. In Windows 7, it is run every day at a specified time that can be changed by the operator. In earlier versions of Windows, though, the defragmenter must be run manually, requiring you to remember to do so.

Diskkeeper uses a different approach. Its IntelliWrite feature prevents fragmentation before it occurs. When a file is saved, this technology prevents fragmentation from occurring. In the rare event that a file is fragmented, the Instant Defrag feature fixes it in the background. These operations occur without any noticeable degradation of performance. Boot-time defragmentation is a feature that can be used to defrag those files that are being used by Windows and cannot be changed while Windows is running. Instead, they are operated on before Windows starts. This may add a bit to start-up time.

You can, if you wish, manually defragment your disk, but Diskkeeper does a more efficient job, so let it do its job.

Sold in different editions with prices to match, the lowest price is about \$40, certainly reasonable for such a sophisticated program.

About: Diskkeeper 2011

Vendor: Diskkeeper

[www.diskkeeper.com](http://www.diskkeeper.com)

Price: \$40 and up

Requires: Works with WIN XP/Vista/7

---

## Micro Center® In Store Clinics

*by Neal Grotenstein*

*Vendor Liaison, Washington Area Computer User Group*

*This information is provided solely for the benefit of WACUG members and reproduced with the permission of Micro Electronics, Inc. WACUG does not receive compensation nor consideration for this material, and does not endorse nor sponsor any commercial enterprise.*

Micro Center stores host free events called "In Store Clinics." The clinics cover a wide range of topics. All Micro Center store locations follow the same schedule of topics.

A link for store locations is at the top center of the home page, [www.microcenter.com](http://www.microcenter.com). For those in the Washington, D.C. area, the only store in Virginia is in the Pan Am Plaza at 3089 Nutley Street, Fairfax, VA 22031, phone (703) 204-8400, and the only store in Maryland is in the Federal Plaza at 1776 E. Jefferson #203, Rockville, MD 20852, phone (301) 692-2130.

Micro Center Clinics are held on most weekends, except during holidays. The same topic is usually presented on both Saturday and Sunday. Topics may change and clinics may be cancelled without notice. Please verify the schedule with the store before leaving and register online for e-mail updates ([http://www.microcenter.com/instore\\_clinic/sign\\_up.html](http://www.microcenter.com/instore_clinic/sign_up.html)).

Signing up in advance reserves a seat, recommended as space is limited. This can only be done at a store, either at the Tech Support or Customer Support area.

### January 2012 Schedule

Start Time is 2pm local unless otherwise stated.

Windows 7 Basics: Saturday, Jan. 7; Sunday, Jan. 8.

Linux Basics featuring Ubuntu: Saturday, Jan. 14; Sunday, Jan. 15.

System Performance: Saturday, Jan. 21; Sunday, Jan. 22.

HDD, RAID, and SSO: Saturday, Jan. 28; Sunday, Jan. 29.

Notes from previous clinics are available online at [http://www.microcenter.com/understand\\_tech/index.html](http://www.microcenter.com/understand_tech/index.html).

---

# *The Cursor*

Copyright © 2011

Monthly Circulation: 60

---

## The 2011 WACUG Board of Directors and Volunteers

**President, Linux Support, Newsletter Editor:**..... Geof Goodrum, 703-370-7649, director1(at)wacug.org  
**Vice President, Internet Services, Coordinator:**..... Paul Howard, 703-860-9246, director2(at)wacug.org  
**Secretary, Meeting Setup:**..... Bill Walsh, 703-241-8141, director14(at)wacug.org  
**Treasurer:**..... Bob Rott, director11(at)wacug.org  
**Director, Membership Chair:**..... Mel Mikosinski, 703-978-9158, director4(at)wacug.org  
**Director, Registered Agent:**..... Jorn Dakin, 703-534-8691, director9(at)wacug.org  
**Director, APCUG Liaison:**..... Gabe Goldberg, director10(at)wacug.org  
**Director, Windows Support:**..... Jim Brueggeman, 703-450-1384, director8(at)wacug.org  
**Director, Vendor Liaison:**..... Neal Grotenstein, director12(at)wacug.org  
**Internet Columnist, Newsletter Editor:**..... Lloyd Johnson, netcolumn(at)wacug.org

---

*The Cursor* is the official publication of the Washington Area Computer User Group (WACUG), a Virginia membership corporation. WACUG is a tax exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions are encouraged and are tax deductible.

All material is Copyright © 2011 by the Washington Area Computer User Group unless otherwise specified. Products or brand names mentioned may be trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners. The contents of articles herein are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the Washington Area Computer User Group, the Board of Directors, or its members.

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

**E-mail membership inquiries and address changes to [membership\(at\)wacug.org](mailto:membership(at)wacug.org)**

**E-mail article submission and reprint requests to [cursor\(at\)wacug.org](mailto:cursor(at)wacug.org)**

---

## WAC Membership Application / Renewal

Dues are collected on an Annual basis and include download access to WAC's monthly newsletter, *The Cursor*, in PDF format.

### **Annual Dues: \$25.00**

Make checks payable to WAC. Please do not send cash by 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**

**Thank you for joining WAC!**

Name:

E-mail:

Phone No.:

Street:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Windows	MacOS	Linux/Unix
---------	-------	------------

Word Processing	Spreadsheet	Database
-----------------	-------------	----------

Photography	Video	Graphics
-------------	-------	----------

Genealogy	Finance	Music
-----------	---------	-------

Programming	Publishing	Hardware
-------------	------------	----------

Other:

Next WAC Meetings: Dec 10 · Jan 21 · Feb 18 · Mar 17 · Apr 21  
Call (703) 370-7649 for the latest meeting information or visit our web site at  
<http://www.wacug.org/>

Meeting Location  
Osher Lifelong Learning  
Institute (OLLI)  
4210 Roberts Road  
Fairfax, VA 22032

FREE ADMISSION  
BRING A FRIEND!

Service Desks open at  
12:30 PM

Meeting starts at  
1:00 PM



LABEL

TEMP-RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

POSTAGE  
CLASS  
FIRST  
AFFIX



Washington Area Computer User Group  
30 Fendall Avenue  
Alexandria VA 22304-6300



---

## LPS - Free Utility from the Defense Department to Secure Your PC

by *Ira Wilsker*

I have written a lot of columns about computer security, and the threats that many of us face when using our computers. While we may be subject to a variety of threats at home or in our offices, including hackers, crackers, viruses, worms, Trojans, and other varieties of malware, the threat landscape can substantially increased when using a public WiFi or other network, or even allowing someone else to use our computers. With the U.S. Military using thousands of computers, and the potential security risks that could occur if the content on these computers was compromised, the ATPSI (Anti Tamper Software Protection Initiative) Technology Office at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, has developed and publicly released a free utility that can be used to safely allow a computer to connect to the internet or other network, including a VPN (Virtual Private Network), but also make it virtually impossible for hackers and malware to access anything on the computer's hard drive when this utility is used.

This product, which is explicitly licensed for free public use, is "Lightweight Portable Security (LPS)". What this product does is create a bootable CD or USB flash drive that contains a form of the Linux operating system that will run on almost any Intel based computer, including almost all PC's (even if they have AMD chipsets), and many Mac's. LPS does not install anything on the computer, and does not require administrative privileges. Once the computer is booted with the LPS system, the internet can be accessed normally, but the hard drive is inaccessible, making it impossible to read any data from the hard drive, and impossible for any type of malware to infect the hard drive. According to the ATPSI, "LPS-Public is a safer, general-purpose solution for using web-based applications."

The basic LPS software, which is frequently updated, can be downloaded directly from the ATSPI as an ISO file which can be burned directly to a blank CD or installed on a bootable USB flash drive; it is also available as a compressed ZIP file, which can be uncompressed and then installed. The basic ISO file

(uncompressed) is a large 137 MB file. For those who may desire some additional functionality, a 317 MB deluxe version (also free), contains a fully functional version of OpenOffice (a powerful free competitor to Microsoft Office that can read and write Microsoft Office and other file formats), and Acrobat Reader to read PDF files. If downloaded to a Windows 7 computer, it is extremely easy to create the bootable CD; insert a blank CD into the drive, and then simply right click on the downloaded ISO file (either the basic or deluxe version), and select "Burn". Windows 7 will then create the bootable CD. If using an older Windows computer there are many ISO burning utilities available, many of which are free, including UltraISO, ISO Maker, K3b, CDBurnerXP, Easy CD Creator, ImgBurn, CDBurn, Nero Burning ROM, Roxio Creator, and others. Any of the major free software download websites will have a selection of free ISO burners. Note that burning an ISO file to a CD is not the same thing as burning other files to a CD, and the ISO option must be selected in order for the bootable CD to be properly created. For those who may need precise, detailed instructions on creating an LPS CD, instructions are available online (as a PDF file) at [spi.dod.mil/docs/lps\\_quick\\_start.pdf](http://spi.dod.mil/docs/lps_quick_start.pdf).

In order to create a bootable USB flash drive, first create the CD as instructed above, but then do not boot from the CD. Insert an empty USB flash drive into the computer (if you use a used flash drive, all data may be lost if it is reformatted), and then using Windows Explorer (or other file manager), open the CD, and locate the directory "InstallToUSB". Run the file "USBInstall.bat", and then follow the on-screen instructions to install LPS on the flash drive. If a computer supports booting from a flash drive, this USB drive can now be used to boot LPS (detailed instructions online at [spi.dod.mil/liposeUSB.htm](http://spi.dod.mil/liposeUSB.htm)).

Once the PC or MAC is booted from the LPS CD or flash drive, the web can be accessed as normal using the built in and fully functional Firefox browser. This is especially useful if the user is accessing the internet via a public access wireless network, such as those at coffee shops, airports, hotels, restaurants, or elsewhere; it is locations such as these that are a hacker's paradise since it is easy to penetrate the open access networks and then break into a

*Continued on page 14*

connected computer. Since the computer's hard drive is not mounted by LPS (making it effectively non-functional), it is virtually impossible for malware from any source to burrow its way into the computer's hard drive and contaminate or otherwise compromise the computer. Since the hard drive is inaccessible, any files that the user may want to intentionally save must be saved to another USB flash drive (not the one used to boot the computer into LPS), or other data storage device. If the deluxe version of LPS is installed, the OpenOffice can be used to create or read word processing files (docs), spreadsheets, presentations (including PowerPoint), and other office documents, while the Acrobat Reader can display PDF files. One tip - since the hard drive is effectively isolated and inaccessible when LPS is loaded, it may be better to save any created files or documents to a free online cloud storage service such as Google Docs or Microsoft's SkyDrive service.

I have heard of numerous cases where a users' children, grandchildren, neighbors, friends, and others have accessed the users' computers, and proceeded to load them with unwanted software, viruses, spyware, and other forms of malware. If instead of allowing others to boot the computer normally, the users were to boot the computer into LPS, nothing could be written to the hard drive, thus sparing the computers from the evils and threats that others could wreak on the computers.

Once the LPS CD or flash drive is removed, and the computer rebooted, it will boot normally as it did before, as if LPS had never been used. There is even a "Start" button on the LPS menu that will exit LPS and boot the computer normally. Since LPS leaves nothing on the hard drive, there is nothing that it can do to influence or otherwise hamper subsequent normal use of the computer.

For those who may use computers in high risk environments, or who may have less than responsible users (children and grandchildren) use the computer, the free Lightweight Portable Security (LPS) may be a good alternative to a compromised or corrupted computer.

---

## Choosing a Smartphone

*by Sandy Berger*

*CompuKISS, [www.compukiss.com](http://www.compukiss.com)*

*sandy (at) compukiss.com*

There are so many different smartphones available today that choosing between them can be difficult. Each phone and each operating system has many different pluses and minuses. So today, I'll give you a brief rundown of what you can expect in a smartphone.

Windows Mobile cell phones are just coming of age and they may well be a good choice in the future. However, right now the choice will probably come down to choosing between the Apple iPhone and one of the many Android phones that are now available.

The Android operating system is upgraded several times a year and new Android phones are released all the time. Apple, however only releases a new iPhone and a big update to their iOS operating system once a year. The new iPhone and iOS updates were released in October. The new Android phones running Gingerbread, the most current Android operating system, will be on the market this month (November 2011). So today we will talk about Apple and Android, and do a quick comparison of the current phones and operating systems for each.

Since it is so new, I haven't yet been able to review the new iPhone 4S. However, I have reviewed previous iPhones. I have also installed Apple's new iOS 5 operating system on my iPad, so I have been able to take an in-depth look at most of the new features that will be on the new iPhone. Now I am ready to make my list of the benefits of each.

There is no doubt that that the camera on the new iPhone is superior to almost all the Android phone cameras. The retinoid screen on the iPhone is superior to most Android phones. The exception is the Samsung line of phones with AMOLED screens that rival the clarity and crispness of the iPhone screen.

Apple's new iCloud service will automatically backup your iPhone to Apple's servers and let you sync your iPhone, iPad, and Mac computer. While using iCloud is easier than some of the Android syncing and backup solutions, there were things that I

*Continued on page 15*

didn't like about iCloud. For instance, you can't actually see your data in the Cloud as you can with solutions like Amazon's or Google's online storage.

One of Apple's biggest features is iTunes and the iTunes store. iTunes makes getting music and video on your iPhone easier than any Android application that I've seen. At this time, both the Android Marketplace and the iTunes App Store have hundreds of thousands of apps. The iTunes App Store, however, makes it easier to find the apps that you want. Also because of Apple's stricter app reviews, Apple's apps are more secure. However, the Android Marketplace has a higher percentage of free apps.

Some of the new features on Apple new iPhone are already available on Android phones. The most prominent of these is the Notification Center that Apple just added. This is a feature of Android that has been around for a long time and that I love. Now in either operating system, you can just swipe your finger down from the top of the phone to see all of your alerts, notifications, incoming messages, and incoming email.

The most unique feature of the new iPhone is Siri, a personal assistant who will answer verbal questions that you ask. This would, no doubt, be very useful, entertaining, and truly state-of-the-art.

Android phones also have voice capabilities. They use Google's Voice Search. Most screens that popup a keypad for text entry, also have a small microphone. Just press the microphone and speak. It is amazingly accurate and you can use it for everything from entering email text to searching to navigating to a point on the map. Probably not as sophisticated as Apple's Siri, but it works well.

My biggest disappointment with the new iPhone is that it is a 3G phone. It does not take advantage of the faster 4G network. Right now the fastest phone for data will be the Android 4G phones that run on a 4G LTE network. If Verizon currently has a 4G LTE network in your area, you may want to consider a 4G Android phone rather than the iPhone 4S.

Android phones also have some things that I love that are not available on iPhones. The first of these is the fact that you can get a larger screen size on an Android. All iPhones currently have a 3.5-inch

screen. Several good Android phones have 4.3-inch screens. My aging eyes really like the larger screens.

I also like the four buttons on the bottom of the Android screen. These are very, very useful. There is a Back Key, a Menu Key, a Home Key, and a Search Key. They are always available. They do not change when the screen changes. The iPhone has just one button. Some will argue that this makes the phone easier to use. Yet, this is not always the case. In some applications it is impossible to go back a screen. In others there is an on-screen back button but the location of this button varies with each application. With Android, you can always go back to the previous screen with just one press.

The Android operating system also is more customizable. With Apple, you are restricted to small square apps. With Android you can use many different resizable widgets as well as the standard apps. All of this gives you many different customization options, but also adds to the complexity of the phone. With the iPhone you don't get so many choices. This makes it a bit more restrictive, but also makes it easier to use.

One other difference is that most Android phones have user-replaceable batteries, while an iPhone battery must be replaced by Apple at a greater cost. While this might not be important to the average user it may make a difference to a heavy-duty user.

Well, there are just a few of the pluses and minuses you will have to assess when you buy a new smartphone. Don't worry though; it is hard to make a bad decision as almost all the smartphones on the market today are both capable and useful.



---

## Say No Thank You to New Toolbar—Opt Out During the Installation Process

by Leo Notenboom

Ask-Leo.com

Article Source: <http://articlesbyleo.com/>

Have you ever had a new toolbar suddenly “appear” in your browser? Although it might not seem like you agreed to install it, the likelihood is that you did.

One of the most frustrating strategies companies use to deploy more toolbars relies on your not paying close attention when installing software or other programs on your computer.

For example, let’s say you’re installing an update to the popular Java runtime, which is software used by some websites to provide rich functionality beyond just displaying static pages.

The update consists of the normal installation program, and then proceeds to ask you the normal installation things, including agreeing to the software license.

Then another screen comes up and without reading it you’re about to click Next.

Wait!

In doing so you would have been asking to have the Yahoo! toolbar installed.

Nothing against Yahoo, Java or Sun here, but this can be very annoying. It’s not that the Yahoo toolbar is bad. It’s actually a fine toolbar. The annoying part is this:

- The offer appears during an update—you’d already made your selection when you initially installed the program, there’s no need to ask again.
- It defaults to “Yes”. Anything optional, particularly anything totally unrelated to what is being installed, should default to off.
- They’re “sneaking it in”. OK, this is really subjective, but you can’t help but feel like this might be an attempt to sneak the installation in, during a process where people are usually just hitting Next repeatedly to get the install over with.

This installation is not the only case. During installation of many software packages—both initial installs and updates—the option to install a toolbar will often be selected by default. You have to click a box to opt out. This choice typically comes during the middle of the process when you’re conditioned to hitting “next” just get it over with. If you’re not paying attention once you’re done suddenly a new toolbar will “appear.” A toolbar you didn’t realize you had actually agreed to.

Typically, installers include this option to earn profit. It’s a way for those offering free software to recoup some of the cost. But this habit certainly shows up in paid for software as well.

This tactic is a perfect example of why it is important to pay attention during installations and updates. Read each step before clicking next or you might find you’re about to “ask” for something you didn’t really want at all.

Get more free tech help and advice from Leo Notenboom by visiting <http://ask-leo.com>. With over 30 years of industry experience, including an 18 year career as a software engineer with Microsoft, Leo gives real answers to real questions from ordinary computer users at Ask Leo! Subscribe to Leo’s weekly newsletter now and receive a free ebook: “Internet Safety - Keeping Your Computer Safe on the Internet”, a collection of steps, tools and concepts you need to know to keep your computer and your information safe.

