

New Style



Newsletter of the LaCrosse PC Users' Group

volume 20 number 11

Holiday 2000

This Month: Dec. 13 in the Overholt

Come at 6:45 for cookies and Kool-Aide. A representative of Office Max will be demonstrating digital cameras and Palm computing devices. Review my "Not Ready for Prime Time" article in the 1999 Holiday issue if you haven't already. In it I question the practicality and desirability of digital cameras as a group.

I'll be making my annual appearance so you'll have the opportunity to tell me how you could do a better newsletter, and I'll invite you to do so.

A Terrible Precedent

Yahoo wants to be looked upon as a full service site. As part of this effort, Yahoo offers online auctions. Among the material you can bid on is memorabilia from WWII. Specifically, you can get stuff formerly owned by the Nazis. Therein lies the problem. Under French law, you can't own this stuff, you can't even possess pictures featuring the swastika. It is illegal for French citizens to view these web pages.

So, what's an online site to do? According to the French government, within six months Yahoo is to block access to pages featuring Nazi items from surfers residing in France. Should Yahoo fail to do so they can be fined 13 million dollars per day.

This marks the first time a government has tried to control the content of a web site, as opposed to controlling access. This is a very significant difference. Instead of merely oppressing their own citizens, the French are

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President's Report

Marian Havlik

December Christmas Goodies Meeting

We're looking forward to seeing all of our members at our Christmas Goodies meeting, Wednesday, December 13. We will have a Hospitality Hour starting at 6:45 pm, so be sure to come a bit earlier than usual to get better acquainted with other computer users. We'll also have some other surprises.

Office Max will demonstrate digital cameras, a subject that should be of great interest to LCPC members. They will also show us some "Palm" type appliances.

Each member attending the December meeting will be given 2 pieces of paper. If you are a paid member, one paper will be the ballot to elect 4 board members. Nominations were started at the October meeting, and will be open again before voting.

Anyone who attends the December meeting can tell us what they'd like to see for future programs on the second piece of paper.

Accomplishments

As the year 2000 comes to a close, I've reflected on the changes that have occurred within LCPC over the past 2 years. One of my favorite sayings is "What did you learn new about your computer today?" The computer world changes daily, and we must keep pace with the it. Email

has replaced the phone for nearly all LCPC business matters.

Another big LCPC change is that nearly all members now receive the newsletter by email, one week prior to a meeting. The newsletter is a downloadable .pdf file that can be read by using Adobe Acrobat. Some hard copies of the newsletter are exchanged with other computer groups. After a meeting the newsletter has been posted on the website maintained by Chuck Whalen, and more recently has been added to our new web site maintained by Shane Lambert at lcpconline.com

Thanks to the marvelous equipment we have access to at Gundersen Lutheran's Overholt Auditorium, it is simple to use a

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Bill Brockmiller



Member E-mail addresses

Please check over your e-mail address carefully for accuracy. If it isn't right let us know!

The LCPC Home Page:

<http://www.lcponline.com>

Robin Alexander—

robin_alexander@uwlax.edu

Don Atkinson/Carol Frank—

deapublish@aol.com

Barb Barghahn—vannilee@aol.com

Keith Barghahn—xhawk@aol.com

John Benton—bentjohn@means.net

Kevin Blum—kevin@acslax.com

May Borgedahl—borgie@fflax.net

Ernesto Brauer—ebrauer@execpc.com

or ebrauer@gundluth.org

Bill Brockmiller—

web4web@charter.net or

web4web@earthlink.net

Lita Bower—minipux@aol.com

Shirley Bryhn—shirlbuns@aol.com

La Vonne Buchner—LB54650@aol.com

Ken Buckley—kcbucone@aol.com

Dick & Shirley Dahlby—ddahlby@cs.com

Lisa Doherty—doherty@wi.freei.net

David Donskey—dondav@mwt.net

Joseph Doucet—josdoucet@aol.com

Ralph Dupae—rdrboats.msn.com

George Frisch—gfrisch@means.net

Alvin and Monica Fritz—

almfritz@aol.com or

almfritz@juno.com

Kathy Gallagher—kgalla1019@aol.com

Darrell Garner—dvgdablur@aol.com

Dennis Graves—taa_8105@hotmail.com

Bob Gueggenbuehl—rguggen@aol.com

Bob Hansen—rjhansen@aol.com

Dr. Earl Heartt—ww5@earthlink.net

Marian Havlik—havlikme@aol.com

Chris Hornbeck—

chrismh@centurytel.net

Chuck Hosler—cmhosler@charter.net

John Kuschel—

johnk@reinhartfoodservice.com

or bigescape@aol.com

Shane Lambert—shane@couleeweb.net

Mike Larson—mikew1007@aol.com

Membership and Treasurers Report

Gary Stelzig, Treasurer

The club checking balance as of 11/13/2000 is \$584.98. October transactions include: \$165 deposit for 5 renewals and 3 new members, \$12.66 for photocopies, \$4.83 for 200 Hello stickers, \$48.08 for Tribune Ad, and \$25.00 for registering LCPC web address.

At or after our October meeting two new member joined our club: They are: Lita Bower and Shirley Bryhn. After our September meeting, John Benton mailed me his check. Info on these new members are in this newsletter.

Welcome new members.

Renewal payments were received from Darrel Garner, May Borgedahl, Paul Pfaff, Arlene Wiese, and George Frisch. Thank You. George paid in an extra \$5, which I still owe him. Renewals due in December include: Bill Brockmiller and Ted and Jean Latham.

Past due includes John Kuschel.

Only members paid thru December can vote for officers at our December meeting. These paid members include: Alexander, Atkinson&Frank, Barghahn, Benton, Blum, Borgedahl, Bower, Brauer, Bryhn, Bucher, Buckley, Dalby, Doherty, Donskey, Doucet, Dupae, Frisch, Fritz, Gallagher, Garner, Graves, Guggenbuehl, Havlik, Heartt, Hornbeck, Hosler Lambert, Larson, Madson, Mullenbach, Pfaff, Pluntz, Schaettle, Shie, Stelzig, Stolpa, Storlie, Whalen, Wheat Wiese, and Wolfe.

Total membership is 44 which includes the 1 past due and two due in December.

Ted & Jean Latham—

tedjeanlatham@centuryinter.net

Paul Pfaff—pop1635@juno.com

Robert & Mary Pluntz—rpluntz@aol.com

Petter Schaettle—n9xvy@fflax.net

Paul Shie—

paulshie@reinhartfoodservice.com

Gary Stelzig—gstelzig0@aol.com

Delaine Stolpa—das439@aol.com

Jack Storlie—jstorlie@centurytel.net

Chuck Whalen—cw@centurytel.net

Jim and Sandy Wheat—swheat@fflax.net

Arlene Wiese—awiese@fflax.net

Leon Wolfe—wolfie@centuryinter.net

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computer for a presentation at any meeting. We no longer need extra cards in a computer to hook up to a TV as we did not so many years ago, or a separate LCD projector. I've been reading the Digital Viking newsletter from the Twin Cities, one of our regular exchange newsletters. I especially realized how fortunate we are to have Overholt for a meeting site when I read that the Twin Cities computer group had to raise \$5,000 to purchase a computer projector.

The past few months members have had an email reminder from Arlene Wiese 3 days prior to each meeting. Now Arlene will post her reminder to our new listserver so all members will automatically receive the reminder. Arlene will continue to notify potential members by regular email. That seems to be a very effective way to publicize our group.

We had great publicity in the La Crosse Tribune, July 2000. Email makes it so much easier for potential members to ask for additional LCPC info. I've answered over 30 inquiries about the group since July. Many of the people who expressed an interest in the group have become members.

At one time LCPC thought we may have outlived our usefulness as a group. But it seems as though we're needed more than ever since there are more and more new computer users. Recently there was an article about older people becoming the biggest users of computers.

I want to thank the board, and all of those who have helped me during my 2 terms as President of LCPC. I could not have done it without your support. Most months things have gone smoothly. I especially acknowledge Don Atkinson and Carol Frank for all of their timely work on the newsletter and related publicity. Don will be taking a vacation day to attend our December meeting, so you can tell him in person how much you've enjoyed the newsletter.

I have enjoyed serving as the LCPC President. Thank you all!

Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year.

October 2000 meeting

We welcome the three new members who joined in October. There were also several new faces at the October meeting.

For our October program, member Bill Brockmeyer told us what we need to consider when we purchase our next computer. Bill gave us plenty to think about. I espe-

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cially liked his recommendation that we purchase computer components that are "in the middle of the train" to get the best value for the money we spend. His recommendation not only applies to desktop computers, but to laptops as well (even though we did not discuss my personal favorite, laptops, as such).

Listserver

The new LCPC listserver has been up and running since the day after our October meeting. Our new website (lcpconline.com) and listserver is hosted by member Shane Lambert. The website, and past newsletters, are accessible by anyone, however the listserver is available only to members.

Access to the collective wisdom of our members, through our new listserver, is another benefit of LCPC membership. At \$20.00 per year which includes 11 newsletters, our members really get their money's worth.

Use of the listserver has increased right along since it has been available. We encourage any member who has a question, problem, or comment to take advantage of the listserver. The default reply goes to all members, because that way everyone learns. Eventually topics covered by the listserv emails will be in an archive that can be searched by topic or date. Again, this feature will be available to members only.

Marian Havlik and her computers

Recently I looked over my bio that was in the January 1998 newsletter, and decided to update it. It was really interesting to see how things have changed.

I've been an LCPC member since December 1986. Although a nurse by training (until 1987), I've had a biological consulting business since 1977. We do research on rivers. Our projects for state, federal and private agencies vary from one day to 11 weeks, from Wisconsin to Nebraska, Kentucky, Ohio, Illinois, Minnesota, and Missouri. Projects result in lengthy written reports, and presentations at meetings.

I found out what a \$13,000 word processor could do in 1982 at WWTC. Since I got arthritis in my fingers very young, I was thrilled with the idea that I wouldn't have to type a manuscript over if editors wanted it changed (which they always do). So, I made up my mind to get a computer as soon as I could.

It didn't take long to know I wanted an IBM, not a Mac. I got an AT & T 6300 in July 1985. \$4,000 for a computer, 9 pin printer, and Lotus Symphony software. It had 640K memory and 2 floppies. Microage told me how to save a file, turn it off and on, and I figured out most of the rest on my own. I wondered how I'd ever fill up a floppy disk.

Silly girl. After several years of use by grandchildren, we took my first computer to Goodwill in 1998.

In December 1986, after I loused up my program disk, I got a used 5 meg hard drive for \$400. I upgraded software regularly until 1993 (Lotus no longer upgrades Symphony). Except that Symphony didn't have all the whistles and bells of some things released after that, I loved it because I easily created text and tables in the same document, and can tell exactly when I changed a file, and exactly how big the file is (something you still can't easily do with newer software). I created simple graphs, and then exported them to Harvard Graphics for a nicer picture or slide. One of my favorite files has a report, tables, graphs and a database in 100,000 bytes.

In May 1992 I got a new desktop (486-66 that's had some upgrades).

That's an antique now, but I still use it occasionally. Two weeks after the new computer, I found out I was going to be gone a month, and realized I couldn't survive without a laptop. So laptops have been my PC of choice since then. I've had several IBM's, a Toshiba, and have been using a Compaq Presario 1622 since March 1998. Some have been better than others, and I've liked different things about each. I prefer the IBM mouse to the touch pad, but like the textured case of the Compaq although it is heavy to lug through an airport (I never travel without a laptop). I'd love to get a lightweight Sony Vaio.

Although I've forced myself to learn MSOffice, I'm not really thrilled with any of the current word processors for reports. I prefer to work on a report in Symphony (much easier on the eyes), and then import it to something else, if I have to, but you lose formatting.

Many groups that I'm involved with require meeting abstracts and manuscripts to be in MSWord, thus I use it more now. Since 1996 I've given slide presentations at meetings using my laptop. I really like that (cheaper than slides, and you can make changes at the last minute). In 2000 I learned how to manipulate slides and photos in PowerPoint, and have been working more with Excel. Using spreadsheets since 1987 really taught me the basics.

Meet our New Members

by Gary Stelzig Membership/Treasurer

Lita Bower: I have a Compaq Presario 5240, 64MB ram.

For software, I have a stitchery software, card/drawing software, lots of kid programs for the grandkids I do daycare for, genealogy, photo software and records for my daycare business. Lita spends a lot time on these projects - see her web sites as listed below.

She asks, What files can I delete as useless garbage? Where to find and then put the CTL3D.DLL file my computer claims is missing!

I want to thank you for the discussion on cd burners. It was my first question and it was answered before I could ask! Bought one and used it already but of course not for the reason I wanted it. But I better SOON!!! I am probably 90% self taught but that doesn't mean I know much. And scared to death of DOS. I had a computer for about four years. See some of my accomplishments:

Pux's Page: <http://pages.ivillage.com/pux4/>

My PhotoPoint Album

<http://albums.photopoint.com/j/AlbumList?u=89621>

Shirley Bryhn: I am a retired UWL employee using a Compaq Presario with Windows 95 and HP deskjet printer with a Scanjet 5s (which is currently unplugged because when plugged in, it goofs up our print job when on line). I joined the club after attending a meeting this fall. I was very impressed with all the computer "doogie housers." I am self taught, from Wang, PC Write, Word and then Word Perfect, the University finally got someone who I felt was competent to answer questions at the end of my employment.

I never grew up with computers, hated them at first and now they have become a way of life for me.

John Benton: John is the president of Executive Information Development Company. His company specializes in management consulting, staff development, organizational goal setting, training, computer applications analysis, systems intergration and computer applications development for professionals.

He is the author of "30 Years with Computers (and other narrow opinions)"

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New Computer Considerations

Carol Frank, Secretary

At the October 25 meeting the new domain and site LCPCOnline was announced. Jack Storlie's laptop was used to connect to the Internet and view the new site developed by Shane Lambert. It is an attractive, easy to use site and also has some cartoons found by Shane on it.

Shane also announced that the list serve is ready to go. Marian, a long time listserv user gave some courtesy rules. Most importantly, don't write anything that you would not say face to face.

The APCUG CD full of software goodies was handed out. Items of interest on it is WIN ZIP8, and an offline browser. This program downloads all the pages of a site and lets you explore it without using up precious online time.

There were also nominations for the board. The election will be during the December meeting. Current nominees are Carol Frank, Kevin Blum and Chuck Whalen. Marian Havlik and Gary Stelzig declined to run again. More nominees are needed!

Shane announced a new virus. He found out about this when the YWCA called him early in the morning about their computers acting up. Unofficially it is called "Let's play a game". It is a Java Script virus and perhaps comes in JPG files. A firewall doesn't help. The best thing to do is to turn off Java Script but many websites need Java to run. One feature of this virus is that it would turn off your computer several times and then won't let it turn on again. (for more details ask about it on our new listserv!)

Ralph Dupae reported an unusual form of theft. The JPEG file of a rare photograph that he was selling on Ebay was removed by a hacker. This was to prevent any other interested parties in seeing it and bidding for it. However, this thief was outbid anyway. Ralph kept his pictures on MSN, which led to a discussion about the security problems with MSN. Naturally, this would-be thief was untracable due to a fake address.

A newcomer had a problem with e-mails with MS Works files that he can't open. Shane explained that different versions of MS Works are not always compatible. MS Works isn't supported anymore and you can't upgrade from Works to MS Office. The best

thing is to tell the sender to save the file in 4.0 version or as a txt file.

Paul Pfaff had replaced his BJC Canon printer with a Canon S400 printer. It can print from Windows programs but didn't work very well with DOS. Shane explained that most new printers don't work very well with DOS. He suggest going into Printer Properties options to set printer into DOS mode. This should work for most printers.

Marian passed on a trick she learned from Darrell Garner. To clean inkjet printer rollers, dampen the bottom of sheet of paper with rubbing alcohol, set to print and hold the paper from completely going through. This does a good job.

LaVonne Buchner had downloaded some picture files and now can't find them for viewing. Marian suggests that if LaVonne is using AOL to to press ALT, File—Open. This should get the download list, find the picture name and click on it to open. Or use a graphics program to view the pictures.

Marian explained the "Play and figure it out" method of learning software. Click on every menu and bring up the functions and just explore what they do.

Passing out the gift CDs



Paul Pfaff asks if there is a publication listing all of the error messages and what do they mean? Shane said that he haven't found a good comprehensive list yet. Not even Microsoft knows all of their error messages.

There was also a discussion about software training CDs. The library is a great source for these along with videos and books. Check it out before spending money!

The presentation was by Bill Brockmiller titled "What do I want for my next computer?" Bill's night job is building, upgrading and repairing computers. He considers himself to be a Jack of all Trades with computers. Last October Bill gave a presentation on custom building computers. Some things have changed since then but the basic principles still stay the same.

These principals are:

1. What do you want the computer for now? Try to anticipate future needs. What applications? Games? How often would they be used? Sales people often oversell unnecessary features.
2. Chip loyalty, can the sockets accept other chips? Different manufacturers now use different sockets. What you get now can affect what you can use for upgrading in the future.
3. Storage, the best way to determine your needs is to discuss this with other people with similar interests.

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Bill recommends spending money when you have to. When starting out new get something slightly more than you need. Make sure there is someone to help you with the learning process. (*Belonging to LCPC is a good place for help*)

Since most people tend to understate their needs or have a change of interests, leave room for upgrading.

1. Have empty drive bays for add ons.
External devices are slower and more expensive.
2. Avoid all-in-one motherboards. Built in video cards and modems limit growth room and not always easy to turn off in order to use a new one.
3. 128 mg is good for most purposes using Windows 98 or 2000. More is only necessary for high end graphics, 3-D graphics, and games.

Storage and backup options have changed in a year. Last year writable CDs were not cost effective compared to tapes and ZIP drives. Now the costs of CDWs and CDRWs and the CD disks have dropped considerably but not the costs of tapes and ZIP disks. New motherboards now allow booting from CDs.

ZIP disks are used for backing up critical files, graphics and audio files. Robin

Alexander suggests that for the very casual user ZIP could be used for backup.

Marian had some questions about DVD-ROM. Bill recommend staying with CDRW for now. A DVD-ROM writer can cost \$3,500. A DVD-ROM is best for some software that would normally come on several CDs. That way the installer wouldn't have to spend a lot of time changing CDs during long installs. A DV-ROM holds 3 gigs and costs \$85.

Jack Storlie had a question about the term "close to disc". When a CDRW "closes a disc" that disc can't be written anymore but another CD reader on another machine can now read it. This has to be done if you want to share files with another person. CDs are now 50-75 cents apiece (*much less in bulk and on sale -ed.*), it is economically feasible to do this occasionally.

Jack says that a strategy he uses is to buy a midrange computer about every two years. He is ahead money and powerwise than if he bought top of the line every four to five years.

Buying or building a computer can be more satisfactory if the guidelines listed above are followed.

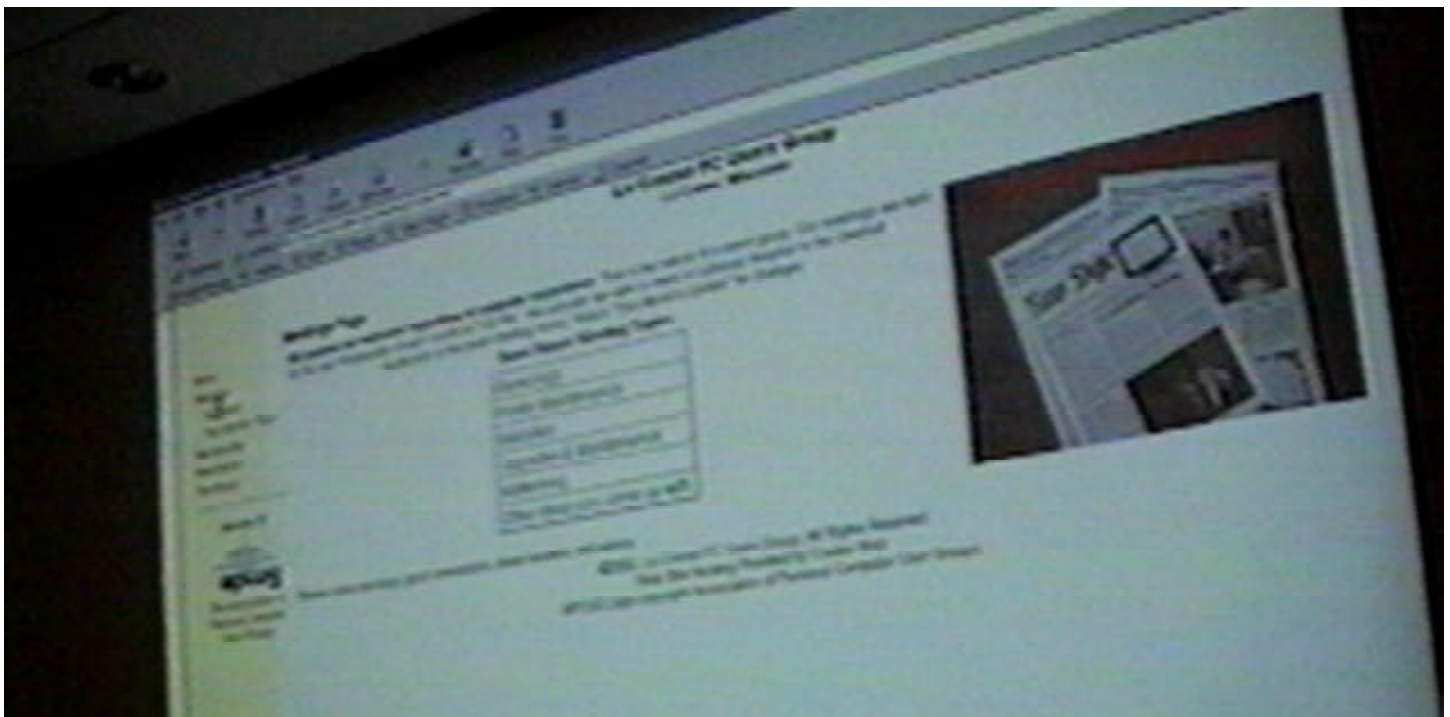
"A Terrible Precedent" Continued from page 1

making Yahoo responsible for who views their content. Even if Yahoo could produce software to block French ISPs (Internet Service Providers) from visiting the banned pages there remains the problem of French citizens using international ISPs.

The expected outcome is that Yahoo will remove the pages in order to comply, so no one will have access to them. If this happens we can expect an onslaught from various countries on all kinds of sites to make certain that their citizens and, ultimately, everyone are unable to access sites that the government finds objectionable. Repressive regimes will demand the removal of sites promoting civil rights, Arab countries will try to get rid of sites featuring pictures of women who are immodestly dressed. For that matter, the French may try to ban cooking sites featuring nouvelle cuisine.

What can *you* do? Darned if I know. Considering our own Congress' efforts to stifle free speech in the last few years (the unconstitutional "Communications Decency Act") writing them may be tantamount to hiring the fox to watch the chickens.

Our new website



De Lorme's Street Atlas

Don Atkinson

A review copy of this program has been provided courtesy of the manufacturer.

I would like to thank Jack Storlie for his incredible generosity in providing his laptop for us to use during our trip to Las Vegas the first week in October.

I'm certain we've all had the experience of carefully planning a route in a strange city only to find we've missed a turn along the way and have no clear idea of how to get from our current location to our destination. Even with a city map in hand it can take some time, parked, to determine where you are.

I had visions of using this program as an interactive navigation tool on our trip. It didn't work out that way, mainly because a laptop is too big and clumsy to conveniently manipulate on the move. It is necessary to pull over, but the level of detail available in this program made moving around and changing routes simple and straightforward.

My main complaint with this program is installation. I installed it three times on the Cyrix200, and once on each of the following: Aptiva133, Athlon750, and Jack's Pentium(?) laptop. Following the default settings it flat out would not run on the Aptiva or the first two installs to the Cyrix. On the third install to the Cyrix it ran but none of the street or highway names came up on screen, although they appeared on printouts. The Athlon and Jack's laptop installs worked fine the first time around.

During installation you can choose to install up to 250 Meg of point of interest data onto your hard drive. If you wish, you can selectively install certain types of data, or certain states. I discourage you from trying this, I attempted it on Jack's machine and calculate it would have taken over a day to do the selective install, based on the progress it was making when I canceled the process.

The points of interest are extensive, but far from complete. They include lodging, schools, cultural and historic sites, natural landmarks, and eating establishments, many listing the kind of food served. Unfortunately, the database does not seem to be searchable, so you can't look for a nearby Chinese restaurant in a strange city, maybe the next version will have this feature.

Searches go quite well, apparently the program ignores street, avenue, road, etc. and focuses on the street's name. It happily found

Avon St, Ave, and Blvd. This is a huge advantage over other programs that not only require you to know the proper name, but also remember the preference of the program for abbreviation (find Ave but not Avenue). However, if you look for LaCrosse, you'll come up dry, the program demands La Crosse. Say, why don't we have a referendum sometime so we can decide once and for all how to spell our beloved city's name?

For trip routing you can either type in a location or click on the map. Hit the appropriate button and the program calculates the quickest, shortest, most scenic, or "preferred" route. If there's someplace you'd like to stop along the way enter that as a waypoint and the program includes it in your route.

This last Thanksgiving was held at the new home of one of my brothers-in-law. We've never been there but he sent street directions (transcript available upon request). Faced with the probability of ending up in the Gobi desert if we followed his instructions, I brought up the area in Street Atlas, calculated my own route and printed out a map. Arriving on the scene I found I had an easier route because a street that didn't cross the railroad tracks on the map did so in reality.

On Thanksgiving evening I had to choose which route to take, a longer course on I-35 and I-90 or a shorter route over a twisting WPA vintage road. We don't own a laptop with a CD drive so instead of using Street Atlas I had to try to use Rand McNally Trip Planner (see Competitors, below). It couldn't give me the answer. When we got home, Street Atlas told me what I needed to know in a few seconds.

Street Atlas allows you to put in and read GPS coordinates for your location.

Like every other program of this type that I've looked at, Street Atlas has its share of errors, omissions, outdated information and imaginary roads.

On the whole, I found Street Atlas easy and intuitive to use, very comprehensive and a worthwhile addition to your collection of programs.

Competitors

Street Wizard from Adept Software

This program was included in our pack of stuff from APCUG at last year's Comdex. Since we didn't have a computer with us we

had to wait to get home to use the program. Indicated landmarks are sparse. For example, there are no Las Vegas strip hotels marked on the map. The worst feature of this program is it's ludicrous routing subroutine. I have no clue how they set the parameters for this function, it follows no rhyme or reason, it will tell you to backtrack, it will divert you from a direct route and send you on a roundabout path on local roads. The search function is not nearly as bad, but you should still ignore this program.

Rand McNally Trip Planner and Street Finder

I played with this program for half an hour at my brother-in-law's on Thanksgiving, comments are based on that experience. With the Rand McNally name you'd expect this program to be a superior product, rather than the waste of electrons that it is. It seems to me that a program of this type should have a short learning curve to perform basic functions, but Rand McNally's bare menu bar makes you work to do many things.

The routing function is unbelievably bad. After selecting your start and end points and telling it to calculate the route, *it goes to the Internet!* I didn't have time to check configuration, so I don't know if there's a setting for it to do internal routing, without an online connection. But with the Internet connection the routing must be really good, right? Wrong.

I selected a route from Faribault to Albert Lea, straight down I-35. It came back with "no information available". You may be offered these programs as an incentive to join a motor club, you'd do better with a tune up, new battery, 5W-30 oil, and copy of DeLorme. Avoid these programs.

Precision Mapping from Just Softworks, Inc.

I got this program way back in 1996 and have been quite happy with it. The current version is several generations newer, but I've never felt compelled to upgrade. There is a large hot button menu that allows you to customize your maps but no routing function in the version I have (version 2). One feature that I like that I haven't seen in other programs is the ability to draw your own routes freehand and the program calculates distances for you. If the ten dollar difference in price is important to you, this program is a worthy alternative to Street Atlas.

from *The Digital Viking*, newsletter of the Twin Cities PC User Group, July 2000

Memo to Members

From:Luann Veness

To:TC/PC Members

Date:July 2000

Re: Rights

July. What a great All-American month! I hope you are all as proud to be Americans as I am, and further; that you are grateful for all the blessings we have here in America. I look around the Twin Cities, see all the multicultural groups among us, and think how our grandparents must have felt years ago as they immigrated to the United States and to Minnesota.

Changes

Our world, as we know it, and the society in which we live will never be the same with this dynamic new mix of people. Not only as people physically migrate, but also as they communicate via the Internet.

The world is getting smaller and smaller thanks to the technology and fore-sight of computer geniuses. Barriers are breaking down and understanding is commencing. Small nations are experiencing the benefits of larger giants as they introduce the Internet to their countries. The Internet is an equalizer for everyone.

Why discuss this?

Why do I introduce these comments to my Membership Memo? A couple of reasons:

This past month the ruling against Microsoft was announced. I have been a strong defender of Microsoft and the things the company has brought to my life for a long time. I do demo's for the company and I have their T-shirts. One of my doctors even accused me of having a framed portrait of Bill Gates in my living room as I discussed computers during a routine physical exam. Why should I be this supportive of Gates and his company?

Well, my life was saved because of the technology made possible by computers. My continuing dialogue with peers and doctors is made possible with my personal computer and the operating system. I now teach dozens of people each week how to add dimension and fulfillment to their lives with their

PC. Perhaps this explosion of technology would have happened without Microsoft, we will never know.

Why Microsoft?

Yes, Apple and other operating systems have been in this picture, but Gates and Microsoft pushed the envelopes hard enough (perhaps in greed, perhaps in dedication to a dream) to make the personal computer a reality for millions. Without this push for success, who knows how long or if ever; this overwhelming popularity of the PC might have been attained?

Benefits of progress

I see families reunited and communicating via Email, small businesses established for pennies with an Internet page, research done for innumerable things that would have taken months before the PC and Internet made them possible. The competition between Netscape and Windows Internet Explorer actually fueled the development of web browsers and accelerated the interest in domains of all kinds, not hindered it.

Evidence

I recently had an opportunity to drive by the new Seagate plant in Shakopee. Another incredible physical evidence of the benefits that the demand for PC's has brought. Jobs and more jobs, to say nothing of all the 401 K plans that will provide secure support for people in their retirement. We know the stock market breathes each breath on what the technology sector does. What does this tell me?

Some one took a chance

Whether with "ethical" business practices or ruthless methods, I think the benefits to millions of people are worth considering. As evidenced by the obvious employment and revenue benefits along with the intangible benefits, we have someone with vision and optimism, someone who wants to improve lives and show how his ideas can work. Yes, the American dream.

Again, I do not know if all the methods were right or wrong. I only know that when criminals are not punished because of excuses for their past and we are supposed to overlook politicians in high office who break laws

for their own gain-not the good of others-it seems to me they should reconsider the Gates verdict.

No one writes about the millions of dollars that Microsoft gives away. Countless libraries, public agencies and senior centers have been recipients of Gates' generosity.

Ted Turner; who has an empire of influence much larger than Gates, gives money to other countries and receives accolades. Gates gives millions to ordinary Americans and not a word of credit is given. No one says Turner has to divest himself when he has more control over people's minds and pocketbooks than Gates will ever have.

Special people

To recognize "Special People", one of the Editorial topics for July, I want to give my heartfelt thanks to those special people who volunteer to help computer beginners. Thanks, SPECIAL PEOPLE, you are great!

Future

Well, there are more geniuses out there in garages today. My fourteen-year-old grandson, who writes gaming code and has three web pages, might be one of them. I hope that when these kids make their mark on the world, that there is not a vindictive governmental agency to squelch their spirit and talent.

Now, till next month (if I am still welcome on the board after using my constitutional rights to express my views) Thanks for listening to one person's perspective. Be well, stay cool!

new members continued from page 3

which is humorously written and an informational book for the general reader. He was a science teacher for three years, and worked for IBM and Control Data Corp for fourteen years.

His experience includes working with engineering, research & development, manufacturing, financial, medical and other service organizations. John has a BS degree in Physics and a MS in General Sciences. He began his independent consulting services in 1975. He has developed and presented seminars and formal training sessions in professional and personal development. You can contract John at 507-894-9321 or BENTJOHN@means.net. (Perhaps John give all some tips on how to improve).

BUGS AND VIRUSES: Which files are safe to open?

by Scott Spanbauer, contributing editor,
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If you were stung by the I Love You virus, you experienced one of the worst effects a virus can have: inconvenience. Whether the virus is pernicious or benign, cleaning it off your system takes time. Many viruses are capable of destroying data on your computer or stealing it from your PC, but most do neither and are written merely to prove the existence of flaws in the operating system or e-mail software they infect.

Of course, much of the flawed software comes from Microsoft, which has triggered more than one Gates basher to call for a boycott of Windows, Internet Explorer, and Outlook as a way to ensure security. Whatever the merits of this approach, the issue is not that simple, and just switching to Linux, Eudora, or Opera won't protect you from every Internet security threat that's lurking out there.

Viruses can use various means to insinuate themselves into your computer—through a floppy disk, a program copied from a different PC, or software downloaded from AOL or the Internet. Alternatively, they may be introduced via a macro or other script file that runs within a standard application such as Microsoft Word, Outlook, Netscape Navigator, or Eudora. Ordinarily, you have to take some action to start a program, macro, or script running on your computer, but many viruses trigger the application automatically. Recently e-mail viruses have turned up that launch as soon as you view the message they are embedded in—no other action is required on your part.

Although the situation may sound hopeless, it is not. You can still use the software of your choice, and you can still open e-mail attachments. Here are several basic rules that can help you protect yourself from viruses.

Use antivirus software

I generally dislike installing utilities on my computer because they conflict with other programs and the operating system itself, and they make troubleshooting much more difficult. Antivirus programs are among the worst offenders, but just the same, most people should install one and keep that program

updated. Doing so will protect you from the vast majority of viruses. Skip this step at your peril. (Look for a feature on viruses and antivirus programs in December 2000's *PC World*.)

Update your software

In the last couple of years, software makers have become increasingly responsive to reports of security flaws in their software. The whole issue has moved out of the realm of obscure discussions buried in Usenet newsgroups and onto the pages of the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and of course, *PC World's* Bugs and Fixes column. These days, software vendors often post security fixes to their Web sites before a real-world threat has even materialized.

To update Netscape Navigator, select Help, Software Updates. To update Internet Explorer or Windows 98, 2000, or the new Millennium Edition (Me), choose Start, Windows Update, or cruise directly to windowsupdate.microsoft.com. This Microsoft site will determine what software versions you are currently running and will assist you in downloading and installing required updates.

Understand and use security settings

Most applications that host macro code or scripting languages have security settings that let you control when and how the scripts run. Know what those settings are and make sure they meet your security needs. In Internet Explorer, choose Tools, Internet Options, click the Security tab, and then select the Internet zone. Click the Custom Level button to browse security options, or click the Default Level button to make sure security is set to Medium. To find Netscape Navigator's security settings, choose Edit, Preferences, and then select Advanced in the Category window. Don't forget your application's macro security settings. In Word, Excel, or Outlook 2000, choose Tools, Macro, Security, and make sure your setting is at least Medium. If your Word files don't rely much on macros, choose High.

Another important security setting in Windows Explorer relates to file extensions that have been hidden on such file types as .vbs

(Visual Basic script). Several Outlook e-mail attacks have tricked users into launching .vbs attachments by giving them names such as filename.jpg.vbs. Since the .vbs extension disappears, the file looks like a nonexecutable, nonscriptable .jpg image file that is safe to open. To protect yourself from this trick, open an Explorer window, choose Tools, Folder Options or View, Folder Options (depending on your version of Windows), select the View tab, remove the check from "Hide file extensions for known file types," and then click OK.

Don't launch executable or scriptable files. Executable or scriptable file types include those with .exe, .com, .bat, .xls, .doc, and .vbs extensions. Your best bet is to scan all downloaded files for viruses before running them. If an arriving e-mail contains a Word (.doc) document, assume the document will infect your system. Don't open it until your antivirus software has scanned it and declared it virus-free. Just because the document comes from your boss or your mother doesn't mean it's safe. If you want to view the contents of a file without triggering any macros it may include, open it in Notepad or Quick View. Regrettably, the Quick View utility is not included in Windows 2000 or in Windows Me, but you can buy a third-party copy of Quick View Plus 6 from Jasc Software for \$49 downloaded or \$59 boxed.

The major shareware sites scan programs for viruses before posting them for download, and of course legitimate software vendors ensure that the applications they post to their Web sites are free of viruses. Software posted to pirate (so-called "warez") sites or newsgroups may be infected, however, and the pirated applications floating through such file-sharing systems as Napster and Gnutella must also be considered virus hazards.

Product Information

Quick View Plus 6 \$ \$49 for download,
 \$59 for boxed version

Jasc Software

800/622-2793

www.jasc.com/product

This article is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer Users Groups (APCUG), an international organization to which your user group belongs.

NEVER RETYPE something that's been typed before or....

How to use Copy/Cut & Paste

by Coco Johnston

If you are new to computers, and you don't know how to move blocks of text or graphics from one document to another, or from one place in a document to another, you need to read on. The great thing about PCs is that you NEVER have to retype something that's already been typed.

When you get information (or a joke or story) in an email, and you want to send it to someone else without all those previous addresses attached to it, this is a solution to that problem. If you have a photo or picture in one place on your computer or a Web site, this trick will move it anywhere else (into a document or a new email message).

It's called CUT & PASTE or COPY & PASTE. The difference between cutting something and copying something is quite simple. CUT means to remove it from where it is. COPY means to leave the original where it is and make a copy of it for transport to another location. PASTE is what you do when you place it in a new location.

Four simple steps will move text (or graphics) from one place to another.

Highlight the text you want to move

Cut or Copy the highlighted text

Place the cursor in the new location where you want the text

Paste the text in its new location

There are four ways to copy & paste or cut & paste. All four do the same thing, but they were developed by people who are accustomed to using the computer in different ways.

Keyboard method (you never have to fight that mouse)

Highlight: with your cursor at the beginning of the text, hold down the Shift key, and tap the right arrow key until you have highlighted the text you want (you can also arrow back, up, and down to highlight in any direction)

To Copy: hold down the Control key and tap the letter C (called Ctrl + C)

To Cut: hold down the Control key and tap the letter X (called Ctrl + X)

Place your cursor where you want the text to appear (this may involve opening another document)

To Paste: hold down the Control key and tap the letter V (called Ctrl + V)

Quick recap:

Highlight: Shift + arrow

Copy: Ctrl + C; or Cut: Ctrl + X

Place cursor where you want the text to appear

Paste: Ctrl + V

Mouse method (you never have to touch that keyboard)

Highlight: place cursor at the beginning of text; click and drag the mouse to highlight the text

Copy or Cut: right-click (a menu drops down) and left-click on your choice

Place cursor where you want the text

Paste: right-click (a menu drops down); left-click on Paste

Menu bar method (the menu bar is the line of words across the top of your screen)

Highlight: use either method above to highlight (to highlight the whole document, click Edit in your menu bar, and click Select All)

Copy or Cut: select Copy or Cut from the Edit menu in the menu bar at the top of the page

Place the cursor where you want the text to go

Paste: select Paste from the Edit menu

Icon method

Highlight: drag mouse or use Shift + arrows to highlight

To Copy: click on the Copy icon (2 pieces of paper) in your toolbar

To Cut: click Cut icon (scissors) in toolbar

Place your cursor where you want the text to go

To Paste: click on the Paste icon (clipboard) in your toolbar

When you cut or copy something, it is placed in a holding area called the "clip-

board." You can't see the clipboard, but your data is there. It will stay there UNTIL you

1. copy or cut something else

2. turn off your computer

You can paste what's on your clipboard over and over, as long as you don't copy or cut something else on top of it. The clipboard that comes with Windows 95 will hold only one selected item at a time.

You can copy or cut and paste large blocks of text, graphics, all or part of the text of an email, text on a Web page, graphics on Web pages, tables, and just about anything else a computer has on it. There IS a limit to how much material the clipboard can hold, but if you exceed it, you can possibly do it in several steps.

There is NO reason that a forwarded email has to have hundreds of names and headers included with the message. The only reason I can think of for leaving the names on is to show where the message has been. With COPY & PASTE, you can send your friends ONLY the message and not the email addresses of everyone in the Universe. This also will help cut down on spam (junk email). (NOTE: you cannot CUT text from an email or a Web page; you can only HIGHLIGHT/COPY/PASTE.)

One last tip: if you want to move a small amount of text or a picture just a short distance within the document you are in, simply highlight it and click and drag it with your mouse. This works best when the phrase or picture is being moved only within the area you can see on your screen.

Coco is the newsletter editor of *The F1 Key*, a publication of the F1 Computer Users' Club in Shell Knob, MO.

This article is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an International organization to which this user group belongs.

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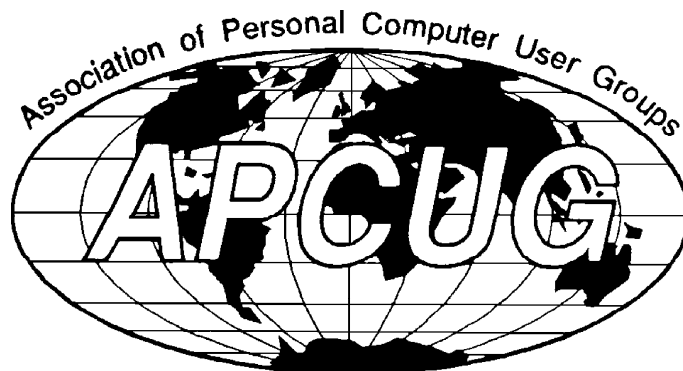
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General meetings are held the last Wednesday of each month in the Lutheran Hospital, in the Overholt Auditorium. The combined November-December meeting is held the second Wednesday in December. Meetings begin around 7:00 PM. Everyone is welcome, attend a meeting or two with no obligation to join.

Dues are \$20 for one year following payment. Membership entitles you to attend meetings, tap into the corporate wisdom, receive special user group discounts from publishers and others, receive (and contribute to) this newsletter. You may also obtain software provided by publishers for review of the product. Unsigned articles are by the editor. Other user groups are welcome to reprint with proper credit.

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