*TC/PC Exists to
Facilitate and Encourage
the Cooperative Exchange of
PC Knowledge and
Information Across
All Levels of Experience*

September 2011

**General Meeting:
Tuesday, September 13, 7PM**

General Meeting

Tuesday, September 13, 2011
at 7:00 PM
Protecting Your PC
From Viruses, Malware, and More
Keith Aleshire

**Location: Summit Place
8505 Flying Cloud Drive
Eden Prairie, MN 55344**

Are you and your computer safe? While you are sleeping you can bet the hackers are busy thinking of new ways to invade your computer and gain access to your precious data. At the next general meeting of the Twin Cities PC Users Group on Tuesday, September 13th, at 7 pm., Keith Aleshire will bring us up to date on the latest viruses, malware threats, and other security concerns, and ways to make sure your data is safe.

Keith Aleshire, president of Strike Twice Computers, will be speaking on a variety of topics, including viruses and how to prevent them. He also will be discussing spyware, insidious rootkit viruses, "scamware" and identity theft.

"We see customers with antivirus programs from Norton, McAfee, Trend Micro, Eset, and others and they still get infected," says Aleshire. "No antivirus program can protect you fully. Part of the problem is human error and clicking on the wrong thing, or not getting your Windows and antivirus up to date."

Virus infections usually come in waves, he notes. New viruses are caused by vulnerabilities in Microsoft Windows or one's browser. "When updates come out from Microsoft to plug those

Last Month's Meeting: The Staples Store
By Sharon Walbran, SQWalbran (at) yahoo.com

At our August meeting we met at the Staples Store in Bloomington. Amanda Kukowski, General Manager, acted as host and tour guide for our group. She explained the technical diagnostics and repair services available at the store. Staples acts as a service rep for most PC manufacturers, Dell, Toshiba, HP, and others, so the technicians are well-versed in diagnosing and repairing most computer problems. They have ready access to each computer manufacturer's parts, so the turn-around time is faster than shipping the computer to the company. The charge for diagnostics is $69 per hour and it is applied towards the labor if you have Staples do the repair. Amanda said some people pay the hourly rate and bring in a list of questions for the technicians to answer. Staples will also set up a new computer you purchase through them so that it is customized to your needs.

Next she focused on the line of tablets they carry, which is extensive, and outlined the advantages and disadvantages of each. She showed us the Blackberry Playbook which she said is very secure. It comes with a 16 Gigabyte hard drive for storage and has a mini HDMI slot. The HP Touchpad (which has since been pulled off the market), Acer's Iconia tablet, and the Motorola Xoom were some of the other tablets available.

In addition to tablets, Staples sells a number of laptop and desktop computers. One thing she noted is that 4 gigabytes of RAM has become standard on new computers. Staples stores offer a 14 -day return policy with no restocking fee.

She was also promoting the latest printer technology from HP and Lexmark which will finally cut costs on ink and improve speed dramatically. The two competitive models are the HP 8500 and the Lexmark Pro 905. HP is touting that the HP 8500 has the lowest blank ink cost of any printer, about 500 pages for $5.00. Both printers retail for about $400.

The store offers additional services, such as in-store computer use at 20 cents per minute and printing services (printing a banner costs $12 per square foot) including online business card design services. They make rebates easy using their online service. Just create an account and enter the numbers off the sales receipt.

Amanda did a great job of showcasing Staples' products and services. Thanks to Jim Grotz for setting up this informative tour.⌨ Back to Page 1

---

security holes, other virus makers create viruses that exploit the holes they may not have known about if Microsoft hadn't announced the updates," he says. "Microsoft comes out with updates the second Tuesday of each month. That's usually a good day to check manually for Windows updates."

Strike Twice has been in business since 1987. The company employs five certified technicians. Strike Twice means "lightning-fast" service and about one-fourth of their business is virus removal. Most customers opt for their same-day service while the rest wait three business days. The company also sells used and new computer hardware and software.

"We use eight different antivirus products worth hundreds of dollars to remove viruses and a lot of manual labor with our proprietary procedures," says Aleshire. "The whole process takes six to 10 hours but we charge two hours for the time we spend 'touching' the computer. Occasionally, we do virus removal at someone's home or office, but we prefer not to do that because it takes longer and we have to charge for all of our time waiting for scans to run."

Mr. Aleshire received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism from the University of Minnesota and graduated Phi Beta Kappa. He has written 10 national computer books for Bantam Books, New Riders Publishing, and QUE. He was a three-term president of the Twin Cities PC Users Group and currently volunteers for SCORE, the small-business consulting arm of the Small Business Administration. He received the SCORE Distinguished Service Award in 2006. Back to Page 1⌨

Radio Tray—a minimalist Internet radio player

By Bill Wayson, Regular Columnist, The Penguins Lair, Channel Islands PCUG, FL, August 2011 issue, The Outer Edge, www.cipcug.org , bwayson (at) gmail.com

I enjoy listening to music and am in the midst of a project to build a home music system that will allow me to play any music I own anywhere in the house using a hand-held computer as a remote control. Thus I ran across Radio Tray, a great little music player. If you use Linux and would like to listen to a wide variety of music while you work on your computer, then you should give Radio Tray a test drive.

Linux provides you a number of excellent music players to choose from. Most of them suffer from one big downside: They tend to be do-it-all media players. They can handle music, both locally stored as well as Internet audio, and video. Some even support displaying still photographs. While these players have their place, they can slow your PC down and are overkill in some instances. Radio Tray takes the opposite approach. It does only one thing, and that is to play Internet radio stations. While it is playing, Radio Tray stays out of your way. It inserts an icon in your system tray and is controlled through its drop-down menu.

Radio Tray is available through the default Ubuntu repositories, but right now only version 0.6.1 is available there. I could not make this version work properly, so I got the latest version, 0.6.4, from the project website at http://radiotray.sourceforge.net, which I recommend you do. Download the DEB file, right-click the downloaded file, and install It through the Ubuntu Software Center.

Once it's installed, start Radio Tray by double-clicking the icon. On first start, you'll be asked if you want Radio Tray to run in the system tray or as an application indicator. I can see no difference between either choice as they both result in an icon in the system tray. Click the icon to raise a menu, which includes preconfigured radio stations and a preferences dialog.

The radio stations are grouped bookmark style by genre (Jazz, Latin, etc.). Peruse the menu, click on a station, and shortly the icon turns blue and you should be hearing music on your PC.

Adding new stations is pretty simple. Click on the icon, select Preferences, Configure Radios .... If you want to add your station to a new group, create it first by clicking the Add Group button. Hierarchies of groups under other groups are supported. Add your new station by clicking the Add button. Name it whatever you want, enter the station URL, and select the group the station ought to appear under.

Groups and stations can be rearranged by selecting the group or station and pressing the Move Group button.

What is missing that would be really nice is some way of selecting some station you've found, such as through your Web browser, and adding it to Radio Tray either through a menu item or a select-and drag operation.

Finding Internet radio stations is also simple. Internet radio stations are simply Internet-accessible URLs that stream audio in a specific format. You point a player to a station URL just as you would point your browser to a Web page. Radio Tray supports PLS (Shoutcast/Icecast), M3U, ASX, WAX and WVX playlist formats. Just search the Web using the phrase "internet radio stations," and you'll be presented with many hits to choose from. When you find a station that looks interesting, right click the station URL and copy the link. You can paste the URL into Radio Tray's add a station dialog as described above.

If you would like to manually add groups and stations to Radio Tray's menu, or just see how the bookmarks are implemented, you can open the file <your_home>/.Local /share/radiotray/bookmarks.xml using any text editor. The file follows standard XML formatting with parts of the file being surrounded by opening and closing tags. The outermost tag is bookmarks. Below this is group, and in each group are the stations identified by bookmark tags. Study the file, noting the tags and their contents, and the structure should become clear to you. Before editing the file, you should first close Radio Tray to avoid conflicts with its use of the file and save a copy of the existing bookmarks.xml file to revert to in case you make a mistake. If your file gets completely corrupted, just delete it. A new file will be created the next time you start Radio Tray.

Radio Tray is a great way to save the location of Internet music, news, and such that you enjoy and to play them while you plug away on your PC. It does this while staying in the background and not presenting you with a lot of extraneous information that you are not interested in at the moment.

Radio Tray shows that in many situations less is more. Enjoy discovering Internet radio.🖳

When Digital Disaster Strikes, Smile!…because you will be OK.

By Gregory West, Member of Sarnia Computer Users' Group (scug.ca) and Port Huron, MI Computer Group (bwcomp.org), For more tips visit his Blog: http:// gregorywest.wordpress.com , Gregory (at) alternatecloud.com

Have you ever deleted photos from a camera or computer by mistake?

A friend of mine called me recently after going through a "catastrophe," as he called his situation. It happened about midway over the Atlantic Ocean, thirty-seven thousand feet up. He was sitting in his seat with not much to do so he decided to check the photos on his digital camera. All these photos were from this trip to Portugal, a trip that involved hiking in the wilderness and visiting old buildings. You can only imagine some of his prized photos.

I think you know where I am going with this…Yes, while looking at the photos, clicking from one to the next, he inadvertently deleted not just a couple of photos, every photo from his trip was gone in one simple click. After checking and double checking he knew it was fruitless to look further; the photos vanished.

When he got home he called and told me about this situation.

"That's no problem," I tried to reassure him. I explained that there is a software recovery program that people use in such cases with much success. The voice at the other end of the line was silent. I knew he didn't think this process was possible. After he recovered every single photo from his vacation he couldn't thank me enough.

However, my tale doesn't end there. I had a similar problem where a new SD (photo storage card in camera) failed to produce 250 pictures and some video clips. After taking a deep breath I remembered the advice I had doled out and quickly downloaded a copy of Recuva, a recovery program that is free and works. Within no time I had all my pictures and video clips stored on my computer thanks to Recuva.

The moral of this story is when you delete photos, music from an MP3 player, or data from your computer, remember that it is possible to recover the data. Don't say it will never happen because you are careful. I am sure it has happened to the best of us.

To avoid a similar "catastrophe" you need to have a recovery software program installed on your computer. One of the best recovery programs around is called: Recuva. As an added bonus this program is free and it comes "highly" recommended.

You can read the reviews here: http://cnet.co/filehelp

How does it work? Recuva scans your drives for the files you need and "recovers them in a flash" (www.piriform.com). Even if the files are partially damaged "Recuva will show you a list of files it has found on the drive, and give you an estimate of the likelihood of success of recovering them." You can't ask for much more.
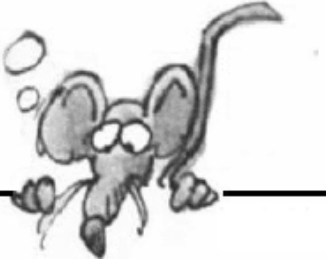
Let's not forget when we delete those important emails. Yes you can recover them too. Recuva says that "The email program doesn't delete the email or emails to the Windows Recycle Bin, but rather empties its own internal trash or Recycle Bin."

I use word processing software every day. And yes I have lost documents that I have spent hours working on and never got them back. That is until I discovered Recuva. They assure us that their software "can intelligently rebuild Word documents from their temporary files."

We all can agree for the most part that weddings, graduations, and other such special events are best remembered with lots of photos. Music downloaded to your MP3 player is a treasure chest to cherish. While those word documents on the hard drive on your computer are from hours of work, you dare not lose them anymore.

To find out more and to get your free copy of Recuva, go to this website:www.piriform.com/download

Here's a comment Greg received on his blog. Recuva is an excellent program, like most of the software from Piriform. However, there is a caveat. Once you realize that you may have inadvertently deleted data, whether it is on your computer, thumb drive, or flash card, it is imperative NOT to use the device! Recovery IS possible, but if your operating system writes over what has been deleted, you may not be able to "recuva" what's been deleted. 2 PC Geeks Computer Repair, Virginia🖳   Back to Page 1

NIBBLERS

By Jeannine Sloan

Firewall Challenge

After some testing to determine which firewalls are best at withstanding a variety of security tests, Matousec revealed that the free Comodo Firewall Pro and Tall Emu's U.S. $40 Online Armor Personal Firewall stopped every attack thrown at them. Read all about the criteria tested and the results:

http://www.matousec.com/projects/firewall-challenge/results.php

Ed A. says "I am going to install Comodo Firewall Pro and so will have an opinion at my session in the Fall."

Contributed by Ed Aubitz

Amazing

Amazing how many people paste copies of pictures into a Word document for storage! It is a BAD practice! Instead open a graphics program, any graphics program, Paint is on all Windows systems so use that. Paste the graphic into Paint and save it using the jpg or tif file extension. Why? Well, the algorithm used by the system to store as a tif does not degrade the image. The algorithm used to store it as a jpg does cause degradation but creates a smaller file on the storage media. Both file types can be viewed and edited in a multitude of photo editing programs, can be attached to email to be sent to someone without Word on their system, and are all-around more versatile.

Hint from your editor.

10 Most Commonly Used Passwords 1.) password 2.) 123456 3.) qwerty

4.) abc123 5.) letmein 6.) monkey 7.) myspace1 8.) password1 9.) link182 10.) your first name
If your password is one of these---CHANGE IT. It is not safe.

Green Gadget Recycling

"We provide an easy, fast, and safe way for you to sell and recycle electronics."
http://www.gazelle.com/

From an article in PCMech ezine

Change the Defaults in Word's Page Setup

Open the **Page Setup** dialogue window (**File** menu, **Page Setup** choice), (Word 2007 click the **Page Layout ribbon** and click the **down arrow** in the bottom right hand corner of the **Page Setup** section**).**

There's a **Default** button at the bottom left corner of the Page Setup dialogue window.

So, go ahead and make your changes, click on the Default button and voila! The changes will affect the active document and any **new** documents you create with the same template.

Condensed from Computer Tips Weekly ezine.

Alt+Tab vs. Win+Tab vs. Alt+Esc

Windows 7 users have alternatives to the Alt+Tab shortcut to switch between applications. Try Win+Tab to engage flip-view. Or try Alt+Escape to skip thumbnails and simply display the next open program.

RAT A RAT is a Remote Access Tool.

Which Browser is The Most Secure?

Do you trust your web browser to warn you before you stumble into a malicious Web site? A recent study of six major browsers indicates that you probably shouldn't. Only one browser succeeded at blocking over 90 percent of malicious links.

Internet Explorer 9 blocked 92 percent of the malicious links. (IE8 scored at 90 percent.)

Only 13 percent of malicious links were blocked by Firefox, Chrome, and Safari.

Opera scored a pathetic 5 percent. Read more:

http://askbobrankin.com/which_browser_is_the_most_secure.html#ixzz1SwxsWYqe

Good Rules When Emailing Anyone

Good document standards to send in email: Plain text messages, pages without scripts, Photos (JPEG files, PNG, GIF and SVG), PDF, SMIL, RDF/XML, N3 and so on. All these can be sent as messages or as attachments to messages. They cannot contain viruses, unless there is a serious bug in the code used to read them. If you don't need anything else, then use plain text.

From Tim Berners-Lee at http://www.w3.org/ website

Online Video Converter & Downloader

Here you will be able to download and convert video from the following websites: *youtube.com, dailymotion.com, megavideo.com, vimeo.com, twitvid.com, veoh.com, video.google.com, blip.tv, break.com, kontraband.com, facebook.com, livevideo.com (liveshows not supported), liveleak.com, stagevu.com. http://benderconverter.com/*

Contributed by Ed Aubitz

File Sharing Services

Dropbox is the leader in file sharing services. It is a simple way to keep all of your files synchronized on multiple devices, your own or other people's. When you set up a Dropbox account, you can add up to ten different devices to it. Devices might include your desktop PC, laptop, smartphone, and other mobile devices. The Dropbox client must be installed on each registered device. Dropbox clients are available for Windows, Mac, Linux, Android, Windows 7 Phone, iPhone and iPad clients.

The file sharing market is getting crowded with competition. Google Docs is morphing into a general file sharing service. Windows Live Mesh and its companion service, SkyDrive, offer 25 GB of free storage. Other competitors include RapidShare, Sharefile, Box.net, and quite a few others. Condensed from ezine found here: http://tinyurl.com/6kcgads

Speed Up Vista or Windows 7

- Disable Any Unneeded Visual Effects:
- Right-click on the Computer icon on your Desktop and select "Properties" from the menu that appears
- Select "Advanced System Settings" from the left pane to view the System Properties Window
- Click the "Advanced" tab along the top of that window, then click "Settings" listed under "Performance". Select "Custom:" options from there.
- In that window uncheck all the options and make sure that only the last 4 options are checked.

Optionally you could only leave the last choices checked

Lastly, log off of your system and log back in for changes to take effect

Turning off the aero effects in Windows 7 is a good start but you get even better results when you turn off many of the other unwanted visual effects.

Back to Page 1

SugarSync – Sweet Synchronization Solution

By Vinny LaBash, Regular Columnist, Sarasota PCUG, Florida, August 2011 issue, Sarasota Monitor, www.spcug.org, labash (at) spcug.org

There was once a time when having a rotary telephone put you in the front lines of innovation. That was long ago and modern communications technology is as far advanced from that day as communicating by smoke signal. If you have any combination of desktop computer, laptop, smart phone, tablet, and whatever, you need some way to coordinate information so that every device you own has the same up-to-date information.

One way to make sure all your files are equally up-to-date is using a popular cloud based utility known as Dropbox. However, there is another lesser known tool that gives you more for less. We're talking about SugarSync which is constantly evolving into a service similar to Dropbox, but with better mobile support, advanced file control, and superior price performance.

When you open your account at www.sugarsync.com, you supply a user name and password and then install the application. As long as you're connected to the Internet, the files you drag into your local Sugarsync folder magically appear on all PCs, laptops, phones, and iPads that also have Sugarsync installed and are attached to the same Sugarsync account. The files also appear online when you sign into the Sugarsync site and specify the same user name and password.

SugarSync sets up your system to start backing up your data as soon as you initiate the program. Don't worry, it won't do anything without your permission, and there is no need to be concerned about your information getting out of control. The interface is clunky compared to the more intuitive IE browser window which is one of few downsides to SugarSync. The developers are probably still concerned about legacy issues, a fear that will probably disappear over time, but may cost them customers before it's eliminated.

Support for mobile devices is nothing less than outstanding. It supports more mobile devices than any other product. If you're using Windows 7 or Symbian, SugarSync is there for you. These platforms may be relatively unimportant in the grand scheme of things today, but if you happen to use one of them SugarSync should be of interest.

SugarSync has a unique design feature for your Pictures folder. Of course synchronizing and viewing pictures from mobile devices is supported, but the process is treated as much more than a casual concession to photo buffs. It does more than backup your pictures. It creates online galleries to share with colleagues and friends. You don't have to back up your photographs to one location and upload them. If you take a picture with your mobile device it's automatically sent to SugarSync and downloaded to your computer. The gallery layout is superb for a web-based product, and the photo viewers are excellent.

Music lovers will appreciate their MP3 files following them like puppy dogs. The computer does not have to be turned on because music files are being streamed from SugarSync. Audiophiles can listen to music no matter where they are.

SugarSync continuously backs up your files in real time, not just once or twice a day. So if you edit a document in the morning, and accidentally delete it in the afternoon you can restore it quickly with no hassles. The program stores the five latest versions of any backed up file so it's not a quandary if you need an earlier version. The downside to this is that five versions of multiple files can take up a lot of storage. The upside is that only the most recent version of a file is counted toward your storage quota.

If you are having trouble thinking of some uses for SugarSync here are some suggestions:

• Inadvertently overwriting a file is no longer a potential disaster as SugarSync keeps a copy of the older file making restoration easy and painless.

• Many people treasure their old photographs. Keeping pictures safely backed up in digital format means storing them as long as necessary with no deterioration in quality.

• Roboform users can synchronize passwords safely and securely.

• You can retrieve files no matter where you are or what device you happen to be using.

• Share folders with family members. Any great vacation pictures, new additions to the family, celebrations, and other memorable events are instantly available.

• Listen to music anywhere.

• Synchronize documents such as invoices across multiple devices. Accountants will love it. Back to Page 1

SugarSync can act as an insurance policy against losing important information. Backups are no longer a hassle or a nuisance.🖳

Review: RoboForm

Program stores websites, login information
By Jim Thornton, Member, Channel Islands PCUG, CA , August 2011 issue, The Outer Edge,
www.cipcug.org , Jasthorn (at) gmail.com

RoboForm is one of my favorite software programs as it helps me very quickly log into secured websites. My listings of these websites include airlines, email, financial, medical, stores, travel, etc., and I currently have more than 50 of these secured websites listed.

The program is very easy to use. For example, first open Internet Explorer, and then click on one of its little toolbars titled RoboForm and a list of several choices appear titled Logins, Identities, and Soft Notes. While I mentioned Internet Explorer, RoboForm also works equally as well with Firefox, Safari, Chrome, and many more browsers. Next,

I click on Logins and then click again on the listed secured website that I want to enter. Next, RoboForm automatically redirects Internet Explorer to the website that I selected and when the login website appears, RoboForm automatically fills in my name and password, and I'm immediately logged into the secured website with unrestricted abilities.

Once you have the program installed, when you go to a new secured website and fill in your user name and password and click on Enter, RoboForm will automatically add the information. Including the website address, to your list of Logins.

If you need a new password, RoboForm will generate a highly secure password. On

the Login list in RoboForm, the secured websites are listed alphabetically and you can easily rename any listing.

Other RoboForm features include SafeNotes, which securely stores other information of your choice. For example, some banks will frequently ask you for your wife's favorite color, your first dog's name, etc., to ensure that you are the secured party attempting to access your bank account, etc. You can securely store this information in SafeNotes.

RoboForm's options under Logins include Edit, New, and Print List. Under Identities are Edit, New, and Fill Empty Fields Only. SafeNotes includes Edit, New, Print to New, and Print Last. Numerous other choices include Fill Forms, Save Forms, Fields — Reset, Sat, and Clear, Profiles — Default, New, Date, Name, Refresh Fields, Explorer, Tools — Edit Identify, Edit Password, Edit SafeNotes, Search Fields, Taskbar Icon, Generate Password, and Sign RoboForm data, and Options — Help.

I've used RoboForm for numerous years in Windows XP, Windows Me, Windows 2000, Windows Vista, and now Windows 7. RoboForm's website is www.roboform.com, and there are three versions of RoboForm available: Desktop, Everywhere, and 2Go.

- Desktop provides high security and restricts the access to RoboForm from only one computer.
- Everywhere allows you to access RoboForm from numerous computers.
- 2Go works using a portable USB drive, so that you can take your RoboForm information and use it on many computers while traveling on business or on vacation.

RoboForm runs in numerous versions of Internet Explorer, including versions 6, 7, 8, and 9 but only on 32-bit versions and not the 64-bit versions. There is a free version of RoboForm that is limited to only 10 logins. For more than 10 logins, the Everywhere version is available for $20 per year, and the Desktop version is $30. The current version, which is version 6.10.2.0, was introduced earlier this year.

When you install RoboForm for the first time, you will be asked to create a master password, which protects all of your secured data in your Logins, Identities, and SafeNotes. This prevents anyone else who has access to your computer from seeing or copying this information. If you prefer, you can eliminate this protection and allow anyone to access all of your important information.⌨

Back to Page 1

Meetings start at 7:00 PM (9:00 AM on Saturday) unless otherwise noted. ***Meets at Edina Executive Plaza.***

September

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
				1	2	3
4	5 Happy Labor Day!!	6	7	8	9	10 Linux on Saturday* 9:00-Noon
11	12	13 General Mtg 7:00 PM Protect-ing Your PC - Keith Aleshire Summit Place 6-7PM PicPerf SIG	14	15	16	17 MS Office (including Access) on Saturday* 9:00—Noon
18	19	20	21	22	23	24

October

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
25	26	27	28	29	30	1 Systems on Saturday/ Word SIG 9:00-Noon
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 Linux on Saturday* 9:00-Noon
9	10	11 General Mtg 7:00 PM Online Auctions with Anne Simpson Summit Place 6-7PM Web SIG	12	13	14	15 MS Office (including Access) on Saturday* 9:00—Noon
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Freebies!

By Dave Bilcik, Program Committee, Southern Tier Personal Computing Club, NY, August 2011 issue, Rare Bits, www.stpcc.org, Dlbilcik (at) yahoo.com

Summer is still here and still hot. Thunderstorms and chances of heat waves are all a part of August's end-game. It gets people to accept autumn more easily.

In last month's Freebie article I told you of DVD Flick and DVD Styler. Two free pieces of software that will allow you to take your finished movie clips and embed them into a DVD that is playable for everyone. What if your clips aren't finished? We have some help for you here as well... think free video editors. This software will allow you to tweak, edit and clip your digital movies so that even Spielberg might get a twinge of jealousy. If not high art, at least edit out the part where you caught Uncle Bob scratching his behind at the family reunion (no one needs to see that). A good Samaritan (Yogesh Mankani) posted, as part of his blog (at http://bit.ly/cjHfMR), a list of 18 different free software packages that you can experiment with. I will only deal with #1 on the list, Windows Movie Maker.

If you have XP as your operating system, you received Windows Movie Maker with your Service Pack 2 (SP2) updates. If you are using Vista (may the Lord have mercy on your soul), download it from http://bit.ly/kXpG92 Or go to http://bit.ly/gT4F8Z if you're running Windows 7. The location gives you a download link and tells you how to find out if Windows Movie Maker is already installed on your system. Mr. Mankani has also kindly included a list of the top 10 free online editing software at http://bit.ly/bICenR, if you don't want to install any software on your PC. All you need is a browser and a broadband connection to the net and you are ready to go.

Speaking of YouTube (subtle transition here), by starting your account today you might avoid the DVD building entirely. Last month I suggested YouTube as a possible source of stock movie clips. If you post your immaculately edited movie to You Tube, just send your friends the web address of your video and let them watch it in their browser. Go to http://www.youtube.com/ to get things started. Even radio shows are posting to You Tube. Check out http://www.youtube.com/user/JRense?blend=6&ob=5 to hear (see?) some alternative radio. You may not agree with it but what a range of topics. YouTube content goes from stupid to sublime so be aware of your filtering options. YouTube is Google owned and operated.

Non-free warning! Do you want your YouTube posted podcast/rants sounding crisp and clear? Invest in a good microphone for your system. Don't depend on small built-in mics in your laptop or cheap gaming headphones. Blue Microphones has some highly rated USB microphones that you can check out at http://www.bluemic.com/desktop/. . They may look a little funky but it is said their sound starts to get close (for the money) to the studio. I might suggest the Blue Yeti. Google "Blue Yeti" as key words, hit the Shopping button at the top of the screen and go from there.

Almost last words... the Barnes & Noble NOOKcolor at $249 is the lowest price tablet disguised as an E-Book reader. You can read and browse as is. When the warranty runs out, root your NOOK and have a full Android tablet plus a well-regarded E-book reader. More details next month if I feel like it.   Back to Page 1

My personal email address is dlbilcik@yahoo.com if you want to send me comments, questions or cash. Please put "Freebies" somewhere on the subject line so I will have some idea about its contents. Tell me about your best free software experience or your our best bargain (...ever!) and I will pass it on.

Product Review: Mikogo 4

By David Green, Treasurer, Danbury Area Computer Society, CT, August 2011 issue, DACS.doc, www.dacs.org, dgreen (at) dacs.org

For about a year now, I have been using Mikogo to provide screen sharing to support my monthly virtual SIG meetings. Some of you may remember that we had started using Dimdim, but had some stability problems. Mikogo 3 has proven to be rock-solid, is full featured, and is free for both private and commercial use, supporting up to 10 participants. (The paid version supports 25 participants.)

Recently I acquired a new notebook running Windows 7 64-bit, installed Mikogo 3, and ran into a conflict with the assistive technology program that I need to use - a full-blown machine lockup. I went to their website and found that the release 4 beta was available. I tried it and it resolved the conflict with my assistive utility. It even fixed the 'flicker' problem I had with version 3 when running on my XP desktop. So I upgraded to version 4 all around.

There are some enhancements in 4, as well as a change in installation. Previously the host of the conference needed to install the mikogo-host.exe and start a session. Participants would then go to the Mikogo web site and 'join a session' by providing a session number and then accepting a small download. This has changed. Participants now have a choice of downloading and installing either mikogo-host.exe (which lets them initiate sessions or become presenter for a session initiated by someone else, or download mikogo-client.exe which lets them participate as a viewer only.

The host version is under 5.3MB in size; I suggest using it and being done with it. It runs 'as is', just creating a configuration file in the same folder where it keeps your preferences.

The host only runs when you request it, it is not a resident service. A user must launch it; it does not provide un-attended remote access as is the case with say Remote Desktop or LogMeIn.

Mikogo 4 supports a 'white board' whereby the presenter or a participant may highlight, box etc. areas of the presenter's screen. This is handy for drawing attention to a portion of the screen such as when asking a question. It supports file transfer.

Anyone running the host version may become the presenter, and remote control may be given to a participant. The entire desktop may be shared, or only a specified application's window. There is a session recording feature that I have not yet tried.

There is a free audio conferencing capability, but the call-in number could be a toll call, so we use the free Skype group calling function instead. Skype to Skype calls are free, and group call supports up to 15 participants.

Problems: I have only run into one problem so far. Some participants have had a problem joining a Mikogo 4 session when they are using the on-the-fly download of version 3. According to the blog this is an intermittent problem. The easy fix is to use version 4 on all machines. Mikogo lists itself as being "cross platform" as it supports Windows and Mac. The Linux community has pointed out that lack of native Linux support means that 'cross platform' is overstated. It is unknown as to whether there will be a native Linux release, but the site says that Mikogo will run within WINE, the Windows environment that runs within Linux.

Discontinued feature: Version 3 had a feature where a presenter could permanently 'reserve' a 9-digit session ID and submit it to the participants well in advance. The problem was that people were using "simple" IDs such as 123-456-789 or 111222-333 and then complaining when "strangers" joined their session. This mechanism has been discontinued. A presenter may truly reserve a session ID by scheduling a session - but it has a finite lifespan. Mikogo will not assign a scheduled ID to an ad-hoc session.

If you have need for screen sharing or provide remote support, whether for a SIG or to support family or clients, give Mikogo 4 a look. The beta version has now expired, and there is a link on the home page for the Mikogo 4 download at www.mikogo.com.⌨   Back to Page 1

Word Tips: Repeating Rows for a Table Footer

When working with longer tables in a document, you may wonder if there were a way to repeat rows at the bottom of a table that spans multiple pages, the same way you can repeat rows at the top of a multi-page table. The short answer is that Word doesn't provide such a capability. If you are willing to experiment a bit, you can try to come up with a workaround that may do the trick for you.

What you want to do is create a document section that contains just your table, and then use the page footers to contain the rows you want repeated from the table. Follow these general steps:

1. Just before the start of your table, insert a continuous section break.
2. Do the same thing just after the end of your table.
3. Select the rows you want repeated at the bottom of the table and copy them to the Clipboard.
4. Choose View | Header and Footer to display the headers and footers of the document. (If you are using Word 2007 or Word 2010 display the Insert tab of the ribbon, click Footer in the Header & Footer group, and then click Edit Footer.)
5. Switch to the footer. (You don't need to do this in Word 2007 and Word 2010, since you are already editing the footer after step 4.)
6. Make sure that the Link to Previous option is turned off for the footer.
7. Select anything that already exists in the footer.
8. Press **CTRL+V** to paste the copied rows into the footer.
9. Use the controls on the Header and Footer toolbar or, in Word 2007 and Word 2010, the Design tab of the ribbon to advance to the next section. (You should be looking at the footer for the section following the section in which the table resides.)
10. Turn off the Link to Previous option for this footer.
11. Delete the table row from this section's footer.
12. Close the Header and Footer toolbar (click Close) or, in Word 2007 and Word 2010, click Close Header and Footer in the Close group.

You are now ready to place the final touches on your workaround. Position the insertion point somewhere in your table, then use the various tabs in the Page Setup dialog box to adjust the relationship between your table and the footer. You'll need to play with the settings on both the Margins and Layout tabs to position the rows in the page footer, and you'll want to make sure that the Apply To drop-down list applies the changes to only the current section (the one with the table in it).⌨

Back to Page 1