PATACS Posts

Newsletter of the Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society

Fairfax Meeting: June 16th

The Public Library Today: Interface and Edifice

Presented by Sam Clay
Director, Fairfax County Public Library

In the 21st century the public library provides an online interface with its community, while retaining its value as a place. We attract and serve all...preschool kids, retired people, ESL, entrepreneurs and more. Digital technology helps us be everywhere our users are. But, public libraries are not new to the digital world. Our catalog has been computerized for almost two decades. Computers began by empowering our staff and now they empower our customers. You can browse our catalog from your iPhone, search online consumer and health information from your home and download eBooks and eAudiobooks to whatever device you own. The future of the public library is in flux, but we remain essential to our communities—both virtual and real.

Speaker: Edwin S. Clay, III has been the Director of the Fairfax County Public Library (FCPL) since 1982. In this position, he manages all aspects of this 23-branch system, which has a budget of more than $29 million, more than 400 employees and more than 2.5 million books and materials.

Learn 30: Smartphone for Seniors

PATACS member Steve Auerbach will illuminate the Smartphone for seniors and other reluctant adopters. This is technology that threatens to overtake PCs in sales and use in a few short years. We'll learn about its suprisingly broad capabilities, frustrations with using these devices, apps, and, dare we say it—games!

About Steve: "I wrote my first computer program in 1962. I was working at Macy's in New York at the "World's Largest Store." From there I spent seven years with IBM, three years with Arthur D. Little and the balance of my working life running Auerbach Business Systems, Inc. building accounting applications for a mini-computer."

PC CLINIC: Group Experts to Help

June's Fairfax meeting will include our PC Clinic, in the Social Room Annex, where we try to help members of PATACS and OPCUG with their particular hardware and software problems. You must be a member to utilize these hands-on troubleshooting services.

At our clinic, user group experts can help with virus and spyware removal, hardware and software installations, including operating systems. You must contact us in advance to discuss your computer's symptoms, or advise what hardware or software you'd like help installing or troubleshooting. You must bring

your laptop & power supply, or system unit—tower / desktop; monitors, keyboards, & mice are available. Please refer to the clinic ground rules, http://www.patacs.org/clinicpat.html, which provide an email address and phone number for contacting us in advance of the meeting so we can arrange the necessary expertise or special tools to help us help you with your system.

Arlington Meeting: June 27th

Join PATACS members for the Internet Special Interest Group (SIG), PC troubleshooting, discussing and demonstrating the latest Tech Toys, and general Q&A.

Useful Bits & Pieces

by Lorrin R. Garson
Columnist, Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society, newslettercolumnist(at)patacs.org

Windows® Firewall

We tend to take Microsoft's Windows Firewall for granted. When a new computer arrives with Windows, Windows Firewall is turned on by default and we don't give it a second thought... or perhaps even a first thought. For the safety of your computer and your information, it is essential that Windows Firewall, or a third party firewall, be turned on. How do you know Windows Firewall is on (Windows 7)? Start → [select] Control Panel [displayed as Category] → [left click] Review your computer's status [under System and Security] → [left-click] Security. The first item displayed will be "Network firewall" and you should see the message "Windows Firewall is actively protecting your computer" followed by the word "On."

But there is much more to this critical application and it is called Windows Firewall with Advanced Security. Under some circumstances it may be prudent to make changes in Windows Firewall. With Administrator privilege, you can access this application (Windows 7) by:

Start → [key] Windows Firewall → [left-click] Windows Firewall with Advanced Security

However, before making changes or additions, be sure to understand what you are doing and take careful notes so you can undo your changes.

- See http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-vista/Firewall-frequently-asked-questions for FAQs at Microsoft.

- See http://www.iopus.com/guides/free-firewall.htm for several third party firewalls.

- See http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/network/bb545423.aspx for detailed information about Windows Firewall with Advanced Security.

- See http://www.sphinx-soft.com/Vista/index.html for a third party application (Sphinx's Windows 7 Firewall Control) to help you manage Windows Firewall.

Ultrabooks™ Have Arrived

First we had computers that filled large rooms (mainframes and supercomputers), followed by machines the size of filing cabinets (minicomputers). Then came desktop PCs and "luggables," laptops, all-in-ones, netbooks, tablets... and we shouldn't forget workstations, servers, PDAs, microprocessors in cars and toothbrushes, etc. Now a new class of laptops called Ultrabooks has hit the market. Most computer manufacturers are expected to have products in this class in 2012 and Ultrabooks are already available from Acer, Asus, Lenovo, Toshiba and HP. The term "Ultrabook" is trademarked by Intel and they have fairly precisely defined what this means, namely: (1) Startup less than 7 seconds from hibernate, (2) minimum 8 hours on a battery charge, (3) less than 0.82 in (21 mm) thick, (4) firmware to support Intel's Anti-Theft Technology and (5) using an Intel processor (of course!). Small, light, powerful, long time on the battery—what's not to like? Well, they aren't inexpensive with current prices hovering around $1,000. The February 2012 issue of PCWorld (pp. 77-82) has a nice article on several Ultrabooks.

Alternatives to Adobe Reader X

PDF files are certainly ubiquitous, but which reader do you use to view them? Adobe Reader is the most commonly used, but over the years it has become rather controversial as being slow, bloated, the frequent target of hackers, and requiring frequent patches. There are free alternatives you may wish to consider. I've used Foxit Reader for several years and find it preferable to Adobe Reader.

- Adobe Reader X: http://www.adobe.com/products/reader.html

- Foxit Reader: http://foxitsoftware.com/Secure_PDF_Reader/

- Nitro PDF Reader: http://www.nitroreader.com/

- Perfect PDF 7 Reader: http://www.soft-xpansion.com/index.php?p=pdftech/pdfqr

Windows Magnifier

There are occasions when it is difficult to adequately see something on your computer monitor. One way to magnify either the whole screen or just a segment is to use the Windows Magnifier. To invoke this utility (Windows 7), (a) key the "Windows" key and "+" simultaneously or (b) left-click on the "Start" icon on the task bar, key "magnify" and left-click on "magnify" when the term appears. At this point, you should see an area on your monitor magnified or the entire displayed enlarged.

But how do you exit the Magnifier? After the invoking the utility a magnifying glass icon will appear somewhere on the screen. Left-click on this magnifying glass icon, which will generate an easily identifiable small pane, then left-click on the typical "X" to exit. Under some circumstances the small pane appears rather than the magnifying glass.

Tinker with the small pane to change various parameters of this tool. It's a very useful utility although a bit tricky to use and exit. It takes a little practice and you can do no harm.

CORRECTION: I accidentally eliminated superscripts while importing The Bits & Pieces article into the May 2012 issue of The Cursor. Under "What's IPv6?", "...(or 232) unique addresses" should read "...(or 2^{32}) unique addresses" and "...(or 3.4028... x 1038) IP addresses" should read "...(or 3.4028... x 10^{38}) IP addresses".

My apologies for any confusion this may have caused. - Geof Goodrum, Ed.

Linux and Open Source News
by Geof Goodrum
linux(at)patacs.org

Featured Linux Software of the Month: July 2012

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

Celestia – v1.6.1. http://www.shatters.net/celestia/. Free GNU General Public License source code and executable by the Celestia Development Team, and packages for Fedora, Mandriva, Debian, and Ubuntu. Celestia is a free real-time space simulation that lets you experience our universe in three dimensions. Unlike most planetarium software, Celestia doesn't confine you to the surface of the Earth. You can travel throughout the solar system, to any of over 100,000 stars, or even beyond the galaxy. All travel in Celestia is seamless; the exponential zoom feature lets you explore space across a huge range of scales, from galaxy clusters down to spacecraft only a few meters across. A 'point-and-goto' interface makes it simple to navigate through the universe to the object you want to visit. Requires X Window System, OpenGL, and GTK+2.6 (included in most GNU/Linux distributions).

FontForge – v20110222.
http://fontforge.sourceforge.net/. Free BSD License source code by George Williams and Debian and Fedora packages. FontForge is an outline font editor that lets you create your own Postscript, TrueType, OpenType, CID-keyed, multi-master, CFF, SVG and bitmap (BDF, FON, NFNT) fonts, or edit existing ones. It also lets you convert one format to another, and has support for many Macintosh font formats.

GIMP – v2.8. http://www.gimp.org/. Free GNU General Public License source code by The GIMP Development Team and packages for Fedora 17 and Debian Wheezy. GIMP is an acronym for GNU Image Manipulation Program. It can be used as a simple paint program, an expert quality photo retouching program, an online batch processing system, a mass production image renderer, an image format converter, etc.

GIMP is expandable and extensible. It is designed to be augmented with plug-ins and extensions to do just about anything. The advanced scripting interface allows everything from the simplest task to the most complex image manipulation procedures to be easily scripted.
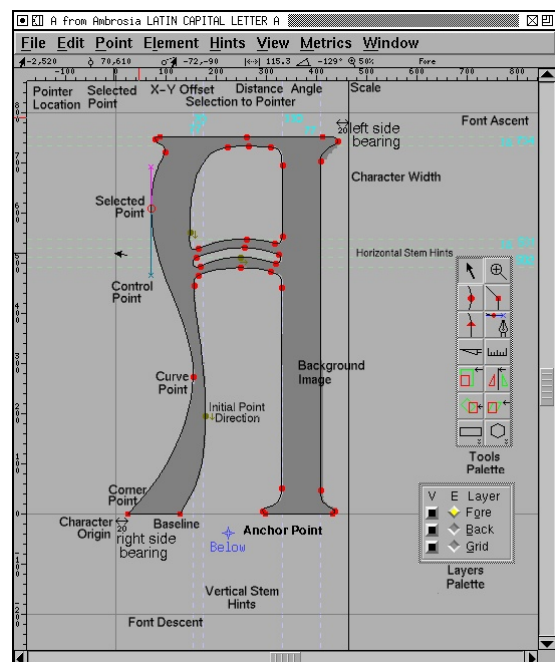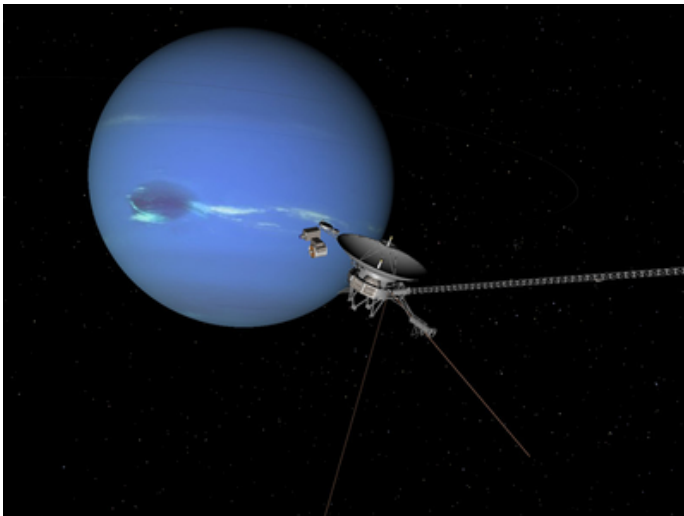
This release introduces Single Window Mode, Multi-column Dock Windows, more screen real-estate for dockable dialogs, separate save and export functions, layer groups, Cairo rendering of tools, on-canvas text editing, simple math calculations within size entries, and many other minor changes.

Gutenprint – v5.2.8. http://gimp-print.sourceforge.net/. Free GNU General Public License source code by the Gutenprint Developers. Gutenprint (formerly Gimp-Print) is a collection of printer drivers for Unix/Linux that currently supports over 1,400 printers. It emphasizes quality and flexibility, offering a wide variety of options to meet most printing needs. It includes a CUPS driver, an IJS-based Ghostscript driver, Foomatic data, an enhanced Print plugin for The GIMP, and other printer maintenance utilities. It can be used equally well for fast printing of text or critical printing of high quality graphics and photographs. This release features an extensive rewrite of the Canon driver, with support for many newer printers and updates for many existing printers. Support for some printers determined to be non-functional in earlier releases has been dropped. Support for some Epson printers has been added, and some bugs have been fixed.

Kernel Source – v3.4.2. http://www.kernel.org/. Free GNU General Public License source code for all platforms by the Linux community.

Below: Celestia view of Voyager 2 passing Neptune
Right: FontForge character editing

Parted Magic

by Dick Maybach
April 2012 issue, BUG Bytes, Brookdale Computer Users'
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Although modern operating systems are robust, sometimes they need maintenance, either to repair problems or because we want to make changes. And many times the things we want to do are not possible within the operating system, either because the tools aren't available or because the operations can't take place while the system is live. One solution is to use a live-CD, which is an operating system that boots directly from a CD-ROM or a USB memory stick and doesn't use the hard disk at all. This has the advantage that you can perform any operation you like on the dormant hard disk. The situation is similar to doing an autopsy. Doing the same thing in an operating system that is running from the hard disk is like trying to operate on a patient who is awake. My current favorite maintenance tool is Parted Magic, http://www.partedmagic.com. which is small enough (187 Mbytes) to fit comfortably on a CD-ROM or a USB memory stick. See the Web page for instructions on how to create either.

Parted Magic requires a computer with at least an Intel PII compatible processor and 175MB of RAM, although it will run much faster if there are 400 MB or more. You will have problems if your computer has peripherals that need proprietary drivers, for example, some wireless keyboards and mice. As it boots, you will be asked a couple of questions, but I've found that accepting the defaults works, then you will see the screen below.
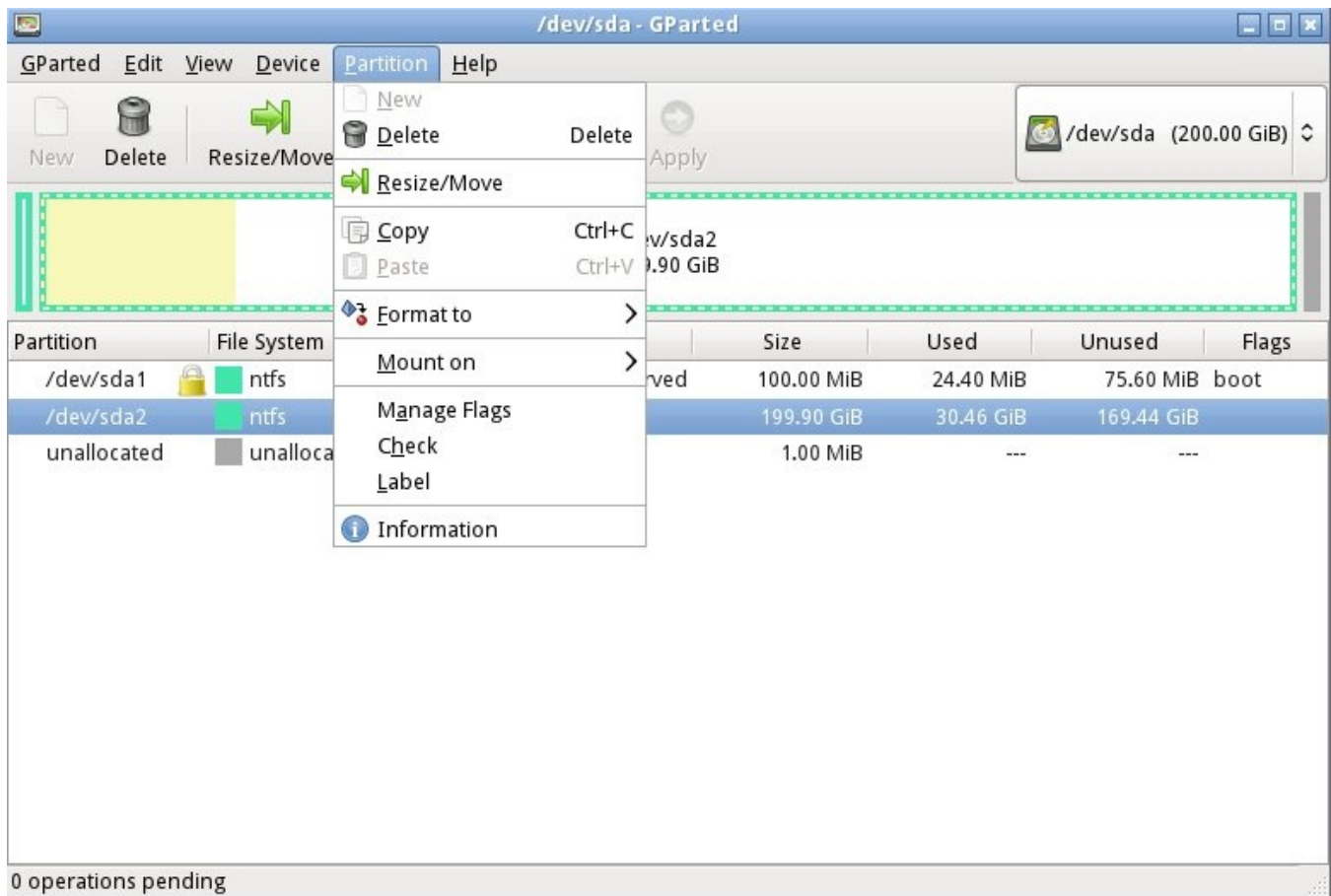
A few tools appear as desktop icons, but most are in menus that you can access through the start button in the lower left corner. To its right are icons to mount devices, use the command line, get help, and switch between desktops. At the far right of the menu bar are icons for the network status, sound volume, and clock. The display on the right of the main screen shows the load on the PC, CPU and RAM usage, as well as the programs that are using the most processor and RAM resources. Two of the tools on the desktop are particularly useful: the File Manager and the Partition Editor (GParted). The screenshot below shows the latter in operation.

Here we've selected an NTFS partition, which (among other things) we could resize. GParted can operate on Microsoft, Apple, and Linux partitions. Other partition tools allow you to create a file containing an image of an entire partition or to clone a disk, copy everything on a disk to different one (usually done when you

want to replace your hard disk with a larger one). An important tool that few people use is one that securely erases a hard disk. You should always do this before disposing of a PC, since deleting files and even partitions does not really remove the information. A determined person, with a lot a time could recover your passwords and other sensitive data. (See the next paragraph.)

There are many tools to recover deleted files, rescue files from damaged disks, and replace boot loaders and boot records, but only for Linux and Microsoft file systems. Some of these are quite specialized, and it will take some study to determine the best one for each case. Many are called from the command-line, which means further study before you can use them effectively. Since all the documentation is on-line, using Parted Magic requires Internet access. Be careful, especially when trying to correct serious problems; the safe approach here is to clone the disk and perform the surgery on the

copy. There is also a virus detector, but it detects only; it can't disinfect files.
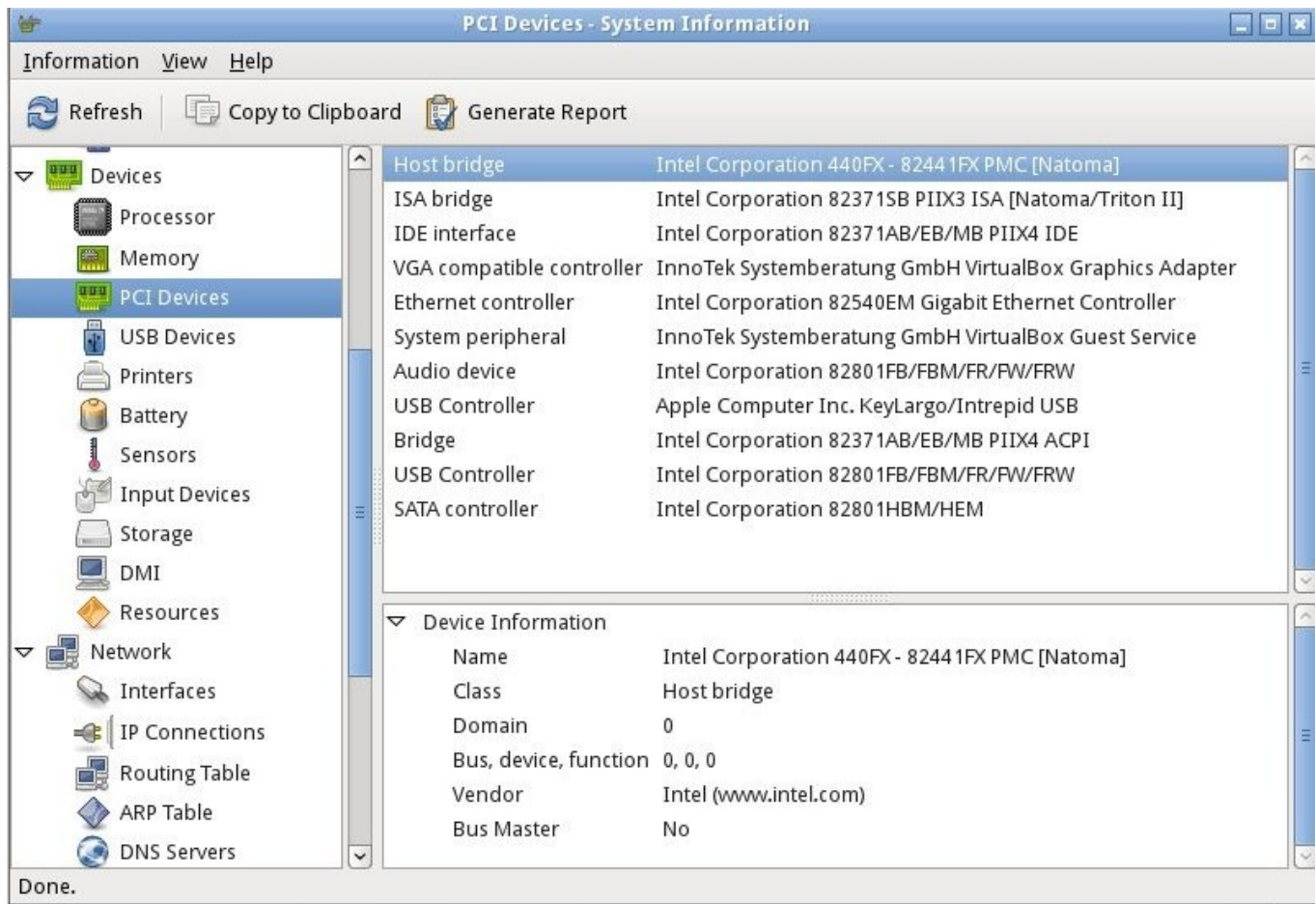
An important program is chntpw, which resets Windows passwords. It's not uncommon for people to forget their passwords, which locks them out of their own PCs; I've done this myself. The safe way to use this is to remove the password completely, and then log back into Windows to set a new one. Note that some of the upper-end Windows versions include the ability to encrypt files and folders and resetting their passwords will render these unreadable. If you need only to recover a few files, you needn't reset the password. All of Windows' files are accessible from Parted Magic, unless they've been encrypted; just copy them onto a different medium. (Keep this in mind before you leave your laptop alone.) A similar program, cmospwd, recovers CMOS setup passwords, which can be helpful for dealing with used PCs. By the way, you don't need special tools to reset Linux

passwords, which you can do from the command line with standard commands.

Also included are programs to identify, benchmark, and test the hardware, including comprehensive RAM and disk tests. The screenshot below shows the peripheral devices (top) and details on the Host bridge (bottom). You can learn a lot about your PC just by poking about (and, of course, searching the Internet for what the terms mean).

I recently gave my 10- and 11-year-old grandchildren netbooks. The computers came with Windows 7 installed, but I wanted to install Linux, because there are many educational programs for it and because it's much more resistant to malware. (My 9 year-old grandson, at the advice of one of his friends, installed a free game on his mother's laptop, and it took her a lot of effort to remove the free virus that was included. I'd like him to survive to see 10.) The

netbooks had 350-GByte hard disks, so there was plenty of room for both Windows and Linux. It would have easy to replace Windows with Linux, but the genes I inherited from my Scotch grandmother wouldn't let me delete the Windows I had paid for. Since the netbooks have no CD/DVD drive, I installed Parted Magic on a USB memory stick and used GParted to reduce the Windows partition to 100 GBytes, leaving 200 GBytes for Linux; the remaining 50 GBytes is for a recovery partition. After configuring Windows and installing Linux, I made images of both partitions using the command-line program fsarchiver. (There are several partition imaging tools available, but this one was the best for my use, because it could handle both NTFS and Linux file systems.)

For another example, a friend's son, by downloading pirated songs, infected his folks' PC to the extent that it wouldn't boot. Booting Parted Magic and using the ClamAV anti-virus tool I identified the infected song files, but Windows was hopelessly corrupted. I was able to move all the user data onto an external disk, so after the PC was restored to its as-delivered state, I could restore the data (minus the infected songs), thus converting a disaster into a nuisance.

If you're reading this, you probably serve as the computer support person for your friends and family. Parted Magic provides many tools to help you do this, but it's up to you to learn how to use them.

FBI: Hundreds of Thousands of Computers May Lose Internet on July 9

by Ira Wilsker

WEBSITES:
http://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2011/november/malware_110911
https://forms.fbi.gov/check-to-see-if-your-computer-is-using-rogue-DNS
http://www.dcwg.org
http://www.dcwg.org/detect **DETECT IF COMPUTER IS AT RISK**
http://news.yahoo.com/hundreds-thousands-may-lose-internet-july-181324701--finance.html
https://www.techsupportalert.com/content/how-check-if-your-computer-has-been-infected-wide-spread-dns-hack.htm
http://www.techsupportalert.com/content/how-change-dns-server.htm
http://www.techsupportalert.com/content/how-find-best-dns-server.htm
http://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/2011/november/malware_110911/DNS-changer-malware.pdf
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domain_Name_System
https://code.google.com/p/namebench **FIND FASTEST FREE DNS**
https://use.opendns.com **HOW TO RESET DNS ON ANY OPERATING SYSTEM**
https://developers.google.com/speed/public-dns/docs/using **HOW TO RESET DNS ON ANY OPERATING SYSTEM**

In case you have not heard the news, on July 9, 2012, hundreds of thousands of computers will lose access to the Internet. This is not some hoax or urban legend, but a fact announced by the FBI. Following the arrest of an Estonian hacker group which had made millions of dollars from a fraud scheme that infected millions of computers worldwide with a "DNS Changer" malware that redirected legitimate commercial transactions to a series of scam websites. These cyber crooks created a sham company called "Rove Digital" to receive the revenues of the scam. DNS is an acronym for a Domain Name Server, which serves somewhat like an Internet phone book,

which converts web addresses, also known as domain names (such as www.theexaminer.com), into an IP (Internet Protocol) address (theexaminer.com is really 50.116.108.205). By changing the Domain Name Server accessed by an infected computer, it is like replacing an authentic phonebook with a purloined one that has the correct names, but intentionally different phone numbers. Dialing a correct phone number will intentionally connect you to someone who pretends to be the person whom you called, and that person is a crook; this is what the DNS Changer malware does to an infected computer. As many as 500,000 American computers may have been infected by this DNS Changer malware, as were an estimated 4 million other computers around the world. In addition to modifying the computer's DNS, the malware also made the infected computers vulnerable to a variety of other malware. The rogue servers were hosted in Estonia, New York, and Chicago.

This scam was very lucrative to the Estonian hackers who made an estimated $14 million in illicit fees. According to the FBI, this cyber-gang started infecting computers with the DNS Changer malware in 2007, successfully infiltrating millions of computers owned by individuals, businesses, schools and colleges, and government agencies, including NASA. The malware was able to penetrate many of the antivirus products in use, and prevented the installed antivirus and operating system software from updating, which would have likely enabled the antivirus software to detect and kill the DNS Changer. Since the security software would not be updated, there would be no protection from the thousands of new viruses, worms, and Trojans that appear every day, which allowed those computers to become infected with countless additional malware programs and other threats. According to the FBI, "They were organized and operating as a traditional business but profiting illegally as the result of the malware. There was a level of complexity here that we haven't seen before." Since DNS Changer redirected the unsuspecting victims to rogue Internet servers, the crooks were able to

manipulate the destination of the web connections. In one example of how this scam worked, the FBI said, "When users of infected computers clicked on the link for the official website of iTunes, for example, they were instead taken to a website for a business unaffiliated with Apple Inc. that purported to sell Apple software. Not only did the cyber thieves make money from these schemes, they deprived legitimate website operators and advertisers of substantial revenue." The FBI announced the arrest of the "Rove Digital" Estonian hackers on November 9, 2011.

Since there are likely millions of computers still infected with the DNS Changer malware, the sudden shutdown of those rogue servers would have prevented the victims from accessing many of their favorite websites. In order to allow the infected computers to continue to access the Internet, but actually reach their intended websites. the FBI arranged for the rogue servers to be temporarily replaced with legitimate servers, such that the victims' Internet access is not disrupted. It is these temporary replacement Internet servers that will be shut down on July 9, meaning that anyone who still has a computer infected with DNS Changer as of that date may lose Internet access.

In order for users around the world to determine if their computers are infected with the DNS Changer malware, a consortium of academic, governmental, and private organizations created the DNS Changer Working Group (DCWG), which initially administered the servers that replaced the illicit Rove Digital servers. The DCWG consists of representatives from Georgia Tech, Internet Systems Consortium, Mandiant, National Cyber-Forensics and Training Alliance, Neustar, Spamhaus, Team Cymru, Trend Micro, and the University of Alabama at Birmingham. The website for the DCWG, www.dcwg.org, is hosted at the Georgia Institute of Technology, under a research grant provided by the Office of Naval Research. The DCWG provides a quick method for users to determine whether or not their computers are infected with the DNS Changer malware. According to the DCWG, there

are still 350,000 computers infected by the DNS Changer malware that are using the clean servers maintained by the DCWG that replaced the Rove Digital servers.

In order to quickly and safely test if a computer has been hijacked by the DNS Changer malware, the DCWG has created 11 international servers which will report back to the user if his computer is indeed hijacked by DNS Changer; in the U.S. the link for this test is www.dns-ok.us. The test can be run from any browser, and nothing is downloaded or installed on the computer during the test; it is simply a test to see if the computer is connecting to a correct IP address. The results are almost instantaneous, with a "DNS Changer Check Up" result displayed in an IP graphic; if it is green, the user is possibly free of the DNS Changer malware, but the green graphic does not certainly prove that the computer is clean. When the green display appears, it also says, "Your computer appears to be looking up IP addresses correctly! Had your computer been infected with DNS changer malware you would have seen a red background. Please note, however, that if your ISP is redirecting DNS traffic for its customers you would have reached this site even though you are infected." If the display is red, then it is likely that the computer is one of the many that have been compromised by DNS Changer.

For the computer that is "red", it will be necessary to clean the DNS Changer malware and then reset your DNS. Most of the current anti-spyware products such as the free versions of SuperAntiSpyware (www.superantispyware.com) and the free version of MalwareBytes (malwarebytes.org/products/malwarebytes_free) can detect and remove the DNS Changer malware, but it will still be necessary to reset your DNS in order for the Internet to properly function on your computer.

Almost all ISP's (Internet Service Providers) offer telephone support that will help the user reset the DNS to the ISP's preferred DNS server. Gizmo's TechSupportAlert has instructions and links on how to find the best DNS server for you (techsupportalert.com/content/how-find-best-dns-server.htm), as well as detailed instructions on how to change or reset the DNS settings on your computer (techsupportalert.com/content/how-change-dns-server.htm).

Google has a free DNS utility "Namebench" at code.google.com/p/namebench that can help the user find the fastest free DNS, with instructions on how to change your DNS at developers.google.com/speed/public-dns/docs/using. Another excellent DNS service, OpenDNS, has simple but detailed instructions on how to change your DNS at use.opendns.com. If you use Google's Namebench to find the best combination of DNS for your computer and connection, you can use those DNS on your computer by following the instructions given on Google or OpenDNS on how to change your DNS settings; while the default DNS listed on the Google and OpenDNS instructions are excellent and totally adequate, there may be some performance improvement by using the DNS recommended by Namebench. You can always change them again later.

If you enjoy or depend on the Internet, it is imperative that you go to www.dcwg.org/detect and see if your browser is connecting to a legitimate DNS. If the results are "green" you are likely (but not certainly) safe from the DNS Changer Trojan, and can probably continue to use the Internet after July 9. If you are "red" you must clean your computer of the DNS Changer malware and reset your DNS as instructed above. Regardless of "green" or "red" results, it is always a good practice to periodically scan your computer with a good third-party utility such as SuperAntiSpyware or MalwareBytes to verify that nothing slipped by your security software. Failure to check your computer prior to July 9 may mean no Internet for you on July 10.

Are you ready for some Windows 8 on your desktop?

by Barney Babin
Cajun Clickers Computer Club (LA) member and instructor for XP, Vista Workshop and Windows 7
April 2012 issue, Cajun Clickers Computer News
www.clickers.org
ccnewsletter (at) cox.net

Now that Windows 8 Consumer Preview is a reality, you can download it and "play" with the latest and greatest from Microsoft. Just remember, this is a beta version; so everything that you see, or don't see, is subject to change when all of the customer feedback is analyzed by the Microsoft folks. Also, vendors have not developed many drivers for the beta version; so the goodies that you normally use, including printers, may be inoperable in one way or another.

With that said, you can still get a feel for what is coming—and it is definitely a change. If you are currently using a Smartphone, Tablet, or play games on Xbox, then you're going to feel much more comfortable with the new Metro dashboard than someone who has never seen such a thing before. Basically, everything you associate with a computer is changing, including the Start Menu, how you shut down your computer, etc.

The following are my observations from downloading, installing, and using Windows 8 Consumer Preview since its release. It is by no means an in-depth look at all of the options. http://tinyurl.com/7rnql5l

First, go to and download the Windows 8 Consumer Preview Setup, which will verify that your computer and the associated programs on your computer are compatible with Windows 8.

Once this process is accomplished, you are offered the option of downloading either the 3.8gb ISO file (will require much time for such a large download) that allows you to burn a DVD of the program, or you can download a file that runs from a bootable USB drive that has a minimum size of 4 GB, which will be optioned for boot during the process. This option allows folks without a DVD player to load the system from a bootable USB drive.

Once you do this, install the system – but not on your main system by updating to Windows 8! Remember, this is a prerelease and many things will change before the Windows 8 final edition is released. You can make a separate partition on your hard drive and install it there, or run it in a virtual machine on your existing operating system. If you choose the separate partition option, which was my choice, you will be dual booting to either the native system on your computer or to Windows 8, which gives you full processor and RAM capabilities in Windows 8 and, in my opinion, makes your testing phase more realistic. (Ed Walker says, see how to dual boot Win7 & Win8: http://goo.gl/UUFfg)

The installation procedure gives you a choice of which system is declared default. If you change your mind later, you can easily change the default system by going to the start menu in Windows 7 and typing `msconfig`. This will bring up the msconfig window. Go to the boot tab, highlight the operating system that you wish to be default and then click the "Set as Default" button. You will see the Default OS designation move to that operating system. If you look on the middle right of this tab you will see the default timeout delay time of 30 seconds, which you can change to a lower time if you desire. Close the window. The next time you restart your computer the default program will be highlighted and will activate after the timeout period, unless you press the Enter key to speed up the process.

The first and most start ling thing you notice is the Metro UI has the word Start at the top left corner, there is no taskbar with its normal start

button on the left hand side, and no desktop or icons—just rectangles with Apps listed in them.

Since there is no start menu on the desktop, there must be no convenient way to search your computer, right?

But wait, there is an unbelievably cool way. In the Start or Metro location, without clicking anywhere with the mouse, just start typing what you would like to do or search on your keyboard; and Voilà, you are switched to the app window and the choices from your search are shown! But, there are also other ways to get there (and depressing the Windows logo key on the keyboard is no longer an option). You can depress the Windows Logo key+F and the Start sidebar on the right side of the screen appears. If you're a mouser, move your mouse to the extreme bottom right side of the screen; and a similar looking sidebar, called the "Charm" will appear with the search logo at the very top. The Charm area also has your system settings that allow you to tailor Windows 8 to your liking.

Notice on the start page that one of the apps listed is the Desktop, which looks almost like the classic Windows 7 desktop, but still has the start button missing because you are now in Windows 8 environment. All of your Windows 7 functions, keyboard shortcuts, etc., work just fine here and most of the keyboard shortcuts also work fine on the start page, or any other page in Windows 8. When you are at the desktop, just depress the Windows Logo key on the keyboard to toggle back to the Start page. You can also move your mouse to the bottom left corner of the screen and a start screen thumbnail will appear. Left click here and you will go back to the start page. You can also click the Start icon in the Charm area on the right.

If you right-click on an unused area of the start page, a bar at the bottom has an icon that allows you to view all of your installed items plus what you see on the start page. This is the best way to find items (Apps) in Windows 8 without using search.

So, how do you shut down Windows 8 since there is no start button to click? The easiest way is to depress CTRL-ALT-DEL, look on the bottom right for the power logo, right click and choose your option. You can also move the mouse to the right side of the screen, access the charm area, click settings, and the power icon will be in the area at the bottom. Click it, and you will be offered sleep, shutdown, or restart.
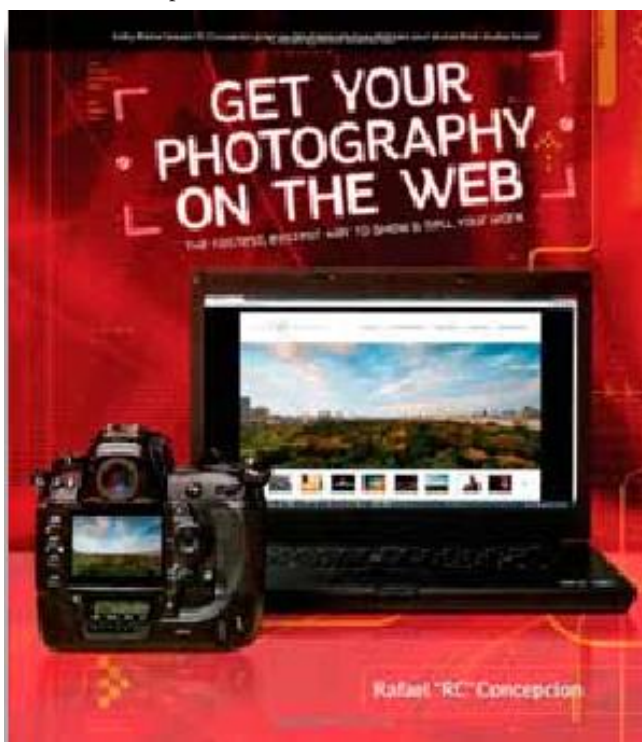
While this is by no means an in-depth article, you will now be able to navigate in Windows 8, install the programs you need, and shut down or restart the system to gracefully exit Windows 8.

Go forth and conquer!

Get Your Photography on the Web

Book Review by Donna Kamper
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April 2012 issue, TCS eJournal
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The only reason you need this book is if you're looking for a quick, inexpensive and easy way for people to see your photos on the Internet. If you prefer time-consuming, difficult and costly you

need to keep looking. This book was a complete revelation to me and inspired me to revamp our long-neglected (cob)web site kamper.com. Instead of working in HTML and Dreamweaver, I simply downloaded and installed a free program—WordPress. Following the guidelines in the book, I literally had my new site up and running in minutes.

Completely finished? No! No website is ever "finished," they're always (read: should be) in transition. But was it ready for viewing? Yes. Get Your Photography on the Web targets photographers who want to showcase their work. While WordPress is primarily a blogging software, as the author, Raphael (RC) Concepción shows you, it can be so much more.

With this book, an Internet connection and basic computer skills you can literally create a showcase website in a matter of hours for next to no cost – totally free, if you don't want a domain name and in less than an hour if you have all your ducks in a row ahead of time. And RC tells you exactly what those ducks are and how to line them up.

He quickly discusses that all-important "Getting a Domain Name," and then moves into hosting. He recommends GoDaddy.com and walks you through the procedure. As with most Kelby Training books, this is done very clearly with screen-shots on the outside margins and brief descriptive text to the inside.

Since our website has been active since 1992, hosted locally through dakotacom.net (with whom we're incredibly pleased), I skipped this chapter. However, from reading I did outside this book I discovered a WordPress site must be hosted on servers supporting PHP and MySQL. So if you have your own domain and are thinking about revamping it using WordPress, check that first.

What good is a website without content? The next chapters are "Getting Your Images Ready," which encompasses a lot more than retouching. Color Space, Sharpening, Size, Watermarks, Copyright—all in 27 pages.

Then we really start to rock, setting up your first pages and adding content. More than images, even slide shows, right off the bat! Then RC moves us into how to get our site looking the way we want it to. After all, it's important that it be the proper frame for our work. To that end, he introduces us to Themes and Plugins.

It turns out WordPress is a bit of a blank slate, ready for anyone to write over it. "Themes" are overlays, if you will, for the basic WordPress installation. By changing the Theme the entire look of a site can change just by clicking "Activate."

If a global rework isn't sufficient there are Plugins, little applets that nestle inside your WordPress installation ready to spring to action. These can do anything from popping out an image in a shadowbox to creating custom menus for your site navigation. There are literally hundreds of these, and the list keeps growing. Oh, and they're all free. See my WordPress note at end of this review.*

The more I read the more I was inspired by what could be done. Then I discovered WordPress can be used for more than blogging. That's when I really snapped to attention. Blogging is not for me. I was never a diarist, I never kept a journal, and I will not keep to a blogging schedule.

But WordPress is so plastic, so malleable, so pliable that it can be used as a content management system (CMS), meaning it can hold static pages that don't change regularly if at all, and pages with other content. In fact, with a little judicious juggling and a friendly Plugin, it's even possible to run an e-store right out of my website. Oh really!?

All those years of writing materials for front-of-class instruction have left me with manuals and workbooks. Coupling that with Camtasia's on-screen recording, and I just may create a little business niche for myself. All I have to do is get it done.

This is a great book. Clearly written, visually-assisted step-by-step instructions and an

attainable result. What's not to like. Now, back to my WordPress Dashboard. There are edits to be made!

About: Get Your Photography on the Web
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*What's this about free? WordPress is Open Source Software, as are its Themes and Plugins. These are created by users and uploaded for people to use. WordPress itself is free for the download. Thousands of Themes are also freely available, and there are also multiple sites devoted to custom or for-pay Themes. As of the writing of this review there are 19,064 free Plugins available at WordPress.org.

There are two WordPress sites: WordPress.org is where you download the WordPress software, its Themes and Plugins and learn how to use the software. WordPress.com is a free hosting service begun by some of the original WordPress developers. It's "a hosted version of the open source package where you can start a blog in seconds without any technical knowledge." [http://en.WordPress.com/about/] It is "financially supported via paid upgrades, "VIP" services and advertising." [Wikipedia.com]

Micro Center® In Store Clinics
by Neal Grotenstein

Vendor Liaison, Potomac Area Technology and Computer Society

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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. 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).

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.

July 2012 Schedule

Start Time is 2pm local unless otherwise stated.

July 7 & July 8: HDD, RAID, and SSD

July 14 & July 15: Data Recovery

July 21 & July 22: Backups and Archiving

Notes from previous clinics are available online at http://www.microcenter.com/understand_tech/index.html.

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http://www.patacs.org/arlingtonmeetings.html

General Meeting
1st Wednesday (7/4*, 8/1), 7 p.m. ET
*check online for holiday update!

Internet Special Interest Group (SIG)
4th Wednesday (6/25, 7/23), 7 p.m. ET

Board of Directors
3rd Monday (7/16), 7 p.m. ET

Fairfax Meetings
(with OLLI PC User Group)

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI)
4210 Roberts Road, Fairfax VA 22032
http://www.patacs.org/fairfaxmeetings.html

General Meeting
3rd Saturday (6/16, 7/21), 12:30 p.m. ET

Online-Only Webinar using Skype™
http://www.patacs.org/webinarpat.html

2nd Wednesday (7/11, 8/8), 7-9 p.m. ET

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