

PPCUG

NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE PRINCETON PC USERS GROUP

Monday May 14, 2001

UPGRADE YOUR PC!

***TOM CANAVAN & PAUL KURIVCHACK WILL SHOW YOU THE INNER WORKINGS
OF YOUR PC, EXPLAIN A SIMM FROM A DIMM
AND HOW TO REPLACE ANYTHING INSIDE THE METAL CASE.***

At

Lawrence Library

Meeting Rooms 1 & 2

US Route 1 South & Darrah Lane, Lawrenceville, NJ

☆☆

*Meetings of an organization at any of the facilities of the Mercer County Library System
in No Way implies endorsement of its programs*

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Digital Photo by: Ed Weiss

President Paul Kurivchack raffleing the TechSmith prizes at the April General Meeting.



About PPCUG

General Meetings

Second Monday of the month at the Lawrenceville Library.

Route 1 and Darrah Lane.

7:00-7:45 PM: Social Time / Tech Corner

7:45 PM: Meeting Comes to Order

8 PM: Featured Presentation

For information about upcoming meetings or joining PPCUG call 908-218-0778 to leave a message.

Board Meetings

For Meeting Location, Date and Time, call 908-218-0778

Board meetings are open to All.

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<http://www.ppcug-nj.org>

Annual Dues Rates

Normal dues rate is \$30 per year.

New Members Only: after February, the rate is \$2.50 per month times the number of months remaining in the year.

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Coming Events

June 11, 2001 - Linux SIG at Lawrence Library (Monday)

**June 12, 2001- Joint Meeting of PPCUG & PMUG (Tuesday)
Streaming Video - Doug Dixon**

Doug Dixon, of Sarnoff Corporation will talk about about major streaming media formats and the desktop tools for producing your own streaming media files.

This presentation will be held at Princeton University,

July 9, 2001 - Comcast Cable Internet Services

August 13, 2001 - To Be Announced

September 10, 2001 - Geneology - John Konvalinka



Presidents Message

by Paul Kurivchack

It has been another busy month for me. Doing the presentation on SnagIt at the April general meeting, attending two other user group meetings, going to Intergalactic 14 User Group Leaders meeting last Saturday, working my real day job at MTV, then doing my Microsoft gig all this week for OfficeXP, along with getting prepared for TCF parcel pickup this weekend, and lastly, getting the newsletter out. And you all think you're busy. Yea, right

Let me start with a report from the Intergalactic 14 User Group Leaders Conference. This year the attendance was quite a bit lower than the previous two years, but the meetings I attended were very worthwhile and much more organized. One of the major reasons for attending a meeting like this is to meet other user group leaders, and to share our successes and failures, present new ideas for programs and just try to work together. Working together is becoming a major issue for many smaller groups, ours included. The need to combine groups together for joint presentations, such as our June meeting with PMUG on streaming video, install fests for Linux, or even a community service project such as Project PC Renew (Recycle old PC's for community agencies) can decrease the amount of work for all while allowing us to expand our friendships and have better programs. While not all ideas are good for all groups, just getting new ideas can point a group into a new direction such as our Linux SIG. Why did PC user groups form? To share ideas and knowledge with each other, something that is lacking in the commodity based environment. Intergalactic 14 turned out to be about sharing. Sharing ideas, resources to keep the PC user groups going.

Microsoft will be introducing a new version of Office later this month, OfficeXP. While I have not had time to install it yet, I will by the time of our general meeting, I can tell you that it looks quite interesting from the presentations I attended. One thing is good, Microsoft finally realized that increasing the number of features may sound great on the box or on a comparison sheet, but features unto themselves when the customer has little time to master them all is a waste. OfficeXP is aiming to be a very simple product to use with some neat features. As I test the product over the coming weeks, I'll keep you all informed of the good and the bad.

For those unable, to attend the April meeting and my SnagIt demo, I wrote a short review of the product for this month's newsletter and will have some extra special discount coupons and eval disks at Mays meeting.

I look forward to seeing you all there.

Windows Tips: For People in a Hurry

By: Vic Laurie - PPCUG

If today's ever-accelerating pace of life and 24/7 paradigm has you looking for ways to save time, here are a few methods to cut down on the time spent waiting for your computer. Some of these tips have been given before, but in all the hurry, people seem to forget them.

Let's Get Started

Do you hate waiting for your computer to boot up? Here are a few ways to get going a little faster. (If you always leave your computer on or use the "Hibernate" power setting, don't waste time on this section. Go on to the next)

Tweak your BIOS- BIOS settings vary widely among computers but all contain a setup utility that allows for changes. Normally a menu is brought up by holding down a key after you turn on the computer. In many systems, it is the **Delete** key but on others, it one of the Function keys like **F2**. Check your own system for the proper key to use. One setting establishes the order in which drives are accessed at boot-up. In many computers the sequence is A: drive, then C: drive. This allows for using a diskette for booting before the C: drive is accessed. If you never use the A: drive to boot, change the sequence to C: drive, then A: drive. You can still use an emergency boot disk if the C: drive won't work for some reason. Many newer BIOSes have a feature called **QuickBoot** (or **Quick Post**). Enabling this will bypass some boot-up tests. Also it is usually possible to turn off the boot-up memory test. All of these changes will save a few seconds and can be used if you don't need diagnostic tests every time you boot. Don't do anything unless you know how to get the original settings back.

Tweak your Network Card- If you have a network interface card and are using TCP/IP (for DSL WinPoet or whatever) there is a 30-60 second delay at boot-up while the card finds its IP address. Give your card a permanent dummy IP address and remove this delay. (See last month for a discussion of IP addresses <http://pages.zdnet.com/hampsi/Articles/Name.htm>.) If you have a local area network or a DSL connection, this may already be assigned so check this out first. Go to **Control Panel | Network**. Find the TCP/IP setting for your Ethernet card. (Fig. 1) Click on Properties. (Fig. 2) Change the setting from "Obtain IP address automatically" to "Specify an IP address." In the IP Address, enter a dummy address from one of the blocks reserved for private addresses like 192.168.0.1 (the 192.168.x.x block is specifically reserved for local use) or from another reserved series 10.x.x.x (Verizon DSL uses 10.255.255.10.) Check your own DSL service or your LAN setup information for an appropriate dummy address. It shouldn't matter but I never make assumptions about such things. In the Subnet Mask enter 255.255.255.0. The technically minded can read about address allocation for private networks at <http://www.cis.ohio-state.edu/cgi-bin/rfc/rfc1918.html>.



Figure 1

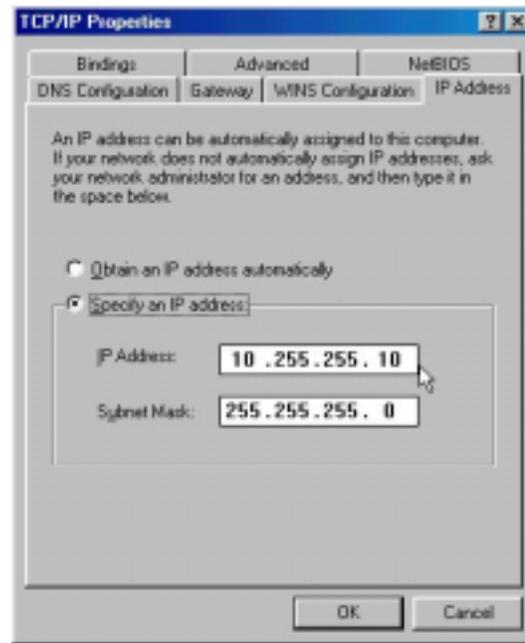


Figure 2

Tweak the System- When Windows 98 boots up, it wastes time scanning for new floppy drives. You can pick up a few seconds by turning this off. Right-click **My Computer** and choose **Properties** from the context menu. Select the **Performance | File System**, click the **Floppy Disk** tab and uncheck the option "Search

SnagIt 5.0- Advance Screen Capture

Software Review

By: Paul Kurivchack - PPCUG

For many of us, doing screen capture was just Alt/Print Screen. It gets the job done, but it still leaves a lot to be desired. Only the full screen or the active window can be captured, nothing else. If you need to edit the capture, then you need to paste the captured image into an editing application, make your changes, then save or just copy and pasted. Too many steps, too much trouble and no control. Well, there is a better way. Use Tech-Smith Corporations SnagIt, the Advanced Screen Capture application.

SnagIt provides the tools to capture Windows screens as images, text files or as video (with or without audio) and is the only product that can do all three operations from one program. SnagIt is not only for technical writers creating software manuals or help files, but also for anyone who needs to print or save screen information. Some examples for the everyday user are: error messages for tech support, long web pages (using the auto-scroll feature) or to create records of the window explorer screen before and after software installs (record the system folder to track DLL's for size and date information).

SnagIt will run on Windows 95B, 98, Me, NT4.0, 2000. A 400 MHz processor is recommended for optimum performance but it will operate down to a 90 MHz Pentium processor. 64 MB RAM and 10 MB hard drive space are the memory requirements. If you want to do audio, then a windows-supported sound card with microphone or the mail output feature, a 32-bit MAPI mail client.

TechSmith created an easy to use interface that fully displays the operation you are performing. First, select what capture func-



tion you wish to perform. Will it be an Image Capture, a Text Capture or Video Capture? Image Capture captures the screen as a graphical image such as BMP, PCX, TIF, JPG, GIF or PNG files and can be pasted directly into a document or edited in any graphical editing program such as Paint, Corel, etc. Text Capture is exactly that. Capture the image as a TXT file that is fully editable in word processing or spreadsheet applications. Video Capture allows you to create a AVI video file of all actions occurring on the screen. Create "How To" videos for yourself on

those once and awhile procedures. A great way to remember how to perform an operation on your PC.

Once the decision of what to capture, now define input. Each capture type will display the appropriate options under each of the Input/Output/Filters/Options menu. Will it be the full screen, the window or just an active window, a region or object such as an icon? Do you want to include the cursor or not. Does the page extend past the bottom of the active screen? If so turn on the Auto-Scroll feature (this is one of the coolest features within SnagIt). These options are all selected from the Input menu.

Next is deciding what to do with the capture screen. Do you want it as clipboard item, make it into a file, saved to the SnagIt Catalog or to a user defined location, send it directly to the printer or out as e-mail. You can select any or all of the output options, all simultaneously. A very impressive feature.

Lastly is the Filters option. Here is where color corrections, color conversions (convert color screens to monochrome, half-tone or a variety of creative outputs, image enhancements such as watermarks, borders or annotations can be automatically added.

After you have captured and saved the screen, there are two additional programs within SnagIt. One is SnagIt Studio that allows additional annotation with arrows, call outs and a variety of clipart functions. The other application is the Catalog application. Here is a catalog viewer for not only the SnagIt files but also any other image files you may have. View, sort and catalog all your images. One of the most powerful features of the Catalog is the batch file converter. Convert one to a hundred JPG files all to BMP at one time. Colorize them, add watermarks, borders and a bunch more options. Never again, convert image files to another format one at a time. Set up the batch and let it go.

Do not become afraid of SnagIt and its many features, all the controls are easy to find and use. One of the beauties of a program like SnagIt is, if you do not like the captured screen, just delete it and try again. Practice with the Preview feature turned on so you can see instantly what the captured screen looks like. If in doubt about a feature or action, go to the help files. It will take you through each step of the operation.

SnagIt is a very easy to use application that everyone should have as part of his or her toolbox of utility applications. At a MSRP of \$39.95, full technical support whether you register the product or not, and free upgrades for the next version, Tech-Smith makes it easy. Visit them at: <http://www.techsmith.com> for additional information.

For many of our members who were unable to attend the April general meeting where I demonstrated SnagIt, I will have available some evaluation copies of SnagIt and Camtasia along with special User Group pricing.

for new floppy disk drives every time your computer starts.” Also, if you have one of the utilities like TweakUI or X-Setup, suppress the Windows start-up logo to shave a few more seconds off. Other start-up tweaks are available from these utilities.

More advanced users may be interested in a free tool for analyzing boot problems. It is Boot-log Analyzer at <http://www.vision4.dial.pipex.com/>. It will tell you how long each of the boot-up steps takes, allowing you to pinpoint a trouble spot.

Delete Unneeded Programs from Start-Up

Here is the real time saver. Most people have at least a few programs that get loaded at start-up that they do not need or do not even know about. I have mentioned this several times before and I mention it again because cleaning up here is a very important, yet constantly overlooked, way of speeding up your system. This will speed things not just at start-up but also during system operation in general. Details are at http://www.ppcug-nj.org/articles/vic_laurie/fits_and_starts.html and http://www.ppcug-nj.org/articles/vic_laurie/resources.html. In a nutshell, the procedure is to go MSConfig and remove the unwanted programs. (See the PowerPoint presentation at <http://pages.zdnet.com/hampsi/computers/id8.html>). Note that we are not talking about removing them from your hard drive or uninstalling them, only keeping them from running at start-up. They will still be there for anytime you want them.

Get Me Out of Here

Sometimes it's not booting that's slow but getting out. Exiting Windows involves first going to Start (try explaining the logic of [that](#) to beginners) and then two more steps. To turn the process into one step, make a shortcut on your desktop. Right-click on an open spot on the desktop. In the context menu, choose **New | Shortcut**. In the command line, enter

```
c:\windows\rundll32.exe user.exe,exitwindows
```

Give the shortcut whatever name you desire. Now one double-click and you're out. There are other versions of a fast exit shortcut but this one has worked for me on a variety of systems. A similar shortcut that will do a reboot is

```
c:\windows\rundll.exe user.exe,exitwindowsexec
```

A family of similar commands that some people recommend is discussed at <http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/q234/2/16.asp> and <http://www.freespeech.org/Khephra/a/shtrstrt.htm>. The commands are in the form

```
rundll32.exe shell32.dll,SHExitWindowsEx n
```

(NB: the SHExitWindowsEx part of this command is case sensitive.) The exit code *n* is one, or a sum of a combination, of the following numbers:

- 0 – LOGOFF (no code at all works the same)
- 1 - SHUTDOWN
- 2 - REBOOT
- 4 - FORCE
- 8 – POWEROFF

I prefer the commands with User.exe but I have sometimes used the Logoff version of this command on my system. It provides a quick way to partially reboot. This can be useful when installing new software, for example. It is much faster than the more complete reboot given above with User.exe or the one with

exit	code	2	here.
------	------	---	-------

CAVEAT: Please note that Advanced Power Management (APM) or Advanced Configuration and Power Interface (ACPI) configurations

in some systems may cause a freeze up with one or more of these exit options.

Connect Me Now

Are you finding that logging on to your Internet provider seems to take a long time? If you are using an Internet service provider that uses Microsoft's TCP/IP (most ISPs but not AOL), you may be able to speed things up. (Microsoft Knowledge Base Article Q130073 at <http://search.support.microsoft.com/kb/c.asp>.) *Please note:* this suggestion is for stand-alone computers using dial-up. It is not applicable if you are attached to a LAN, cable, or anything that uses a network card. By default, many computers come with unnecessary protocols and network bindings installed. When logging on to a dial-up ISP, the system wastes time checking these out. Go to **My Computer | Dial-Up Networking**. (*Dial-Up Networking* may also be on your desktop.) Find the Connector for your ISP. Open its Properties Sheet with a right-click. Click the *Server Types* tab. The entry for *Type of Dial-Up Server* should read "PPP: Internet, Windows...". Under *Advanced options* make sure *Log on to network* is not checked. Under *Allowed network protocols* uncheck NetBEUI and IPX/SPX. Be sure to leave TCP/IP checked.

If you have the new type of DSL, which uses PPPoE ((Point to Point Protocol over Ethernet, also written as PPOE), you want to be sure that the Network card has a dummy IP address. Otherwise, you will experience glitches in the connection as the card periodically waits for a dynamically assigned IP.

Minutes for the General Meeting

April 9, 2001

By: Ed Weiss

After several attempts to start the meeting, Paul began at 08:05. He had procured the use of the Library's overhead projector, due to a bulb failure in the one belonging to the Group. Paul began by noting that the sign-up sheet was on the table for those members who wished to volunteer for the TCF parcel pickup crew that will take place 05/05 & 05/06 this year. He also mentioned that we will have a Polaroid LCD projector on demo for the May meeting. Also, Tom & Paul are still on the agenda for the PC-build that was scheduled earlier this year. And the final item of note was that a number of members have NOT paid their dues, and may do so either by seeing one of board members, or by sending a check for the amount to the Group's PO box.

At 08:20 PM, Paul began the demo of TechSmith's SnagIt, a very unique product on the market today that allows you to capture the screen in a number of different ways. It runs under Windows 9x, NT, and 2000. And appears to be very user friendly even to the casual user. Paul also gave a simple demo of two of TechSmith's other products that work both with SnagIt, and

stand-alone. Camtasia is a product that is used to make AVI type files that were captured screen displays that would be very useful in a training or helpdesk environment. DubIt, was also demonstrated, and it's function is to add audio to either files captured with SnagIt, or any other type of graphic file such as jpgs, gifs, tiffs etc. At 09:30 PM, Paul ended the demo to a small but enthusiastic membership, and was thanked by quite a bit of applause. Then several items that were donated by TechSmith to the group were awarded to members in attendance by drawings. At 09:40, all the door prizes were handed out, the meeting was adjourned, and the room was cleaned up.

A special thanks to all the members that stick around the extra few minutes to help put away the chairs, and clean up.

Any member who missed the opportunity to sign up for TCF, should drop Paul an email with the dates and times that they can work. There are plenty of openings, and besides, you get to be part of one of the largest computer fairs in the country.

Web Site for Articles and Presentations

Vic Laurie- PPCUG

Many people have asked that I put up a Web site where PowerPoint presentations and newsletter articles can be accessed and/or downloaded. ZDNet gives 15 Mbytes free (you do have to put up with some advertising pop-up windows) so I have finally broken down and started a site specifically for that purpose. It is at

<http://pages.zdnet.com/hampsi/computers/>. This site will supplement the PPCUG site <http://www.ppcug-nj.org/> where many of the articles (and all of the newsletters) are already available.

Several of my previous PowerPoint presentations can be viewed there and/or downloaded to your own computer. If you do not have Microsoft Office already, PowerPoint viewers are free from the Microsoft download site. For a viewer go to <http://officeupdate.microsoft.com/downloadDetails/Ppview97.htm>

Articles from the PPCUG newsletter will be available also. The latest article and other recent selections are in HTML form. This means that all the many Internet links in the articles can be clicked (Note that due to rapid and constant change on the Internet some may not work anymore). Also every article for the year 2000 is available in an indexed HTML form. In addition, all articles for 1999 and 2000 are archived in a single zip file for each year. Both DOC and PDF formats are available. They are not indexed but will be some day if I get the time.

In The Mail Box

By Paul Kurivchack



On June 2nd Microsoft will be hosting "Extreme", a fee event demonstrating the following products: Office XP, Window XP and X box

Go to the following website to register for the event: <http://www.microsoft.com/extreme/>



PRINCETON PC USERS GROUP

<http://www.ppcug-nj.org>

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(Last Update: May 4, 2001)

Send Updates to kurivchack_p@compuserve.com for inclusion in this listing.

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WE'LL HOLD YOUR ITEMS FOR PICKUP!

**THANKS FOR MAKING THIS YEARS
EFFORT A SUCCESS!!!**

Directions To Our Meeting:

The Lawrence Library is at the corner of Business Route 1 South and Darrah Lane.

From Princeton and North: Take US Route 1 South, past the Quaker Bridge / Mercer Shopping Centers. Continue on approximately 1 3/4 mile past I295 to the Route 1 split, stay to the right to Business Route 1(Brunswick Pike). First traffic light is Darrah Lane. Library is on right side. Park in lot towards Route 1 and to the rear. Enter Library at main entrance in front. Meeting rooms A & B are located through glass door on Route 1 side of building.

From Trenton and South: Take I295 North to US Route 1 South. Library is approximately 1 3/4 miles south of I295. Continue south to Business Route 1(Brunswick Pike). First traffic light is Darrah Lane. Library is on right side. Park in lot towards Route 1 and to the rear. Enter Library at main entrance in front. Meeting rooms A & B are located through glass door on Route 1 side of building.

For additional information visit <http://www.ppcug-nj.org>



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