PPCUG

NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE PRINCETON PC USERS GROUP

Monday November 19, 2001

Home Networking

Jonathan A. White
YES! Consulting LLC & PPCUG Member

Jon will demonstrate how easy it is to set up a Home Network.
Share files, printers and your internet connection.

At

Lawrence Library

Meetng 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

In this issue

Digital Photo by Ed Weiss

Jon Abolins discussing "The GIMP" GNU Image Manipulation application at the October 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 upcoing 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.

Board Members

President:
    Paul Kurivchack 908-218-0778
Vice-President:
    Tom Carman 732-828-6055
Secretary:
    Don Arrowsmith 609-883-9874
Treasurer:
    Tom Canavan 732-422-9055
Members-At-Large:
    Jon Abolins 609-883-8126
    Vic Laurie 609-924-1220
    Kim Goldenberg 609-671-9188
    Sol Libes 609-520-9024

Chairpersons

Hospitality:
    Bill Hawryluk 609-655-0923
Member Records:
    Paul Kurivchack 908-218-0778
Newsletter Editor:
    Paul Kurivchack 908-218-0778
Program Coordinator:
    Sol Libes 609-520-9024
Web Master:
    Jon Abolins 609-883-8126

Web Site

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.

Coming Events

December 10, 2001 - Elections & Holiday Party

Join us for the installation of Officers, food & prizes.

January 14, 2002 - Palm Pilot, more than a PDA

Cass Lewart will demonstrate there is more to a Palm Device than just the calendar & contacts.

February 11, 2002 - Windows XP

Learn about all the new features of XP and why you should upgrade.

March 11, 2002 - Add a Second Hard Drive to your System!

Paul Kurivchack will demonstrate how easy it is to install that second drive you desperately need.

Presidents Message
by Paul Kurivchack

Great News! My high-speed ship has finally arrived. Cablevision in its wisdom finally introduced high speed Internet to Raritan. Within days, I ordered the self install kit, which included a Motorola cable modem, all the necessary cables and simple instructions (but who ever reads the instructions totally anyway). I was up and running within an hour of receiving the delivery. This is just too good to believe how fast it runs. Now granted I could be one of the only people on my block with it at the moment, so I will enjoy the speed while it is there.

This is also good timing for this month's presentation topic: Home Networking and Broadband Sharing by Jonathan White. Jonathan will share his experience in setting up a home network with a high speed Internet connections to all your PC's. Despite the lack of any Internet connection at the Library, he will have an operating network of computers with a Hub or Switch to share files and what it takes to configure such a home system. DSL/Cable Routers are more affordable than ever and easy to set up so if you are ready to take the plunge into home networking plan to be here on the nineteenth.

My thanks to Jon Abolins for doing an excellent job demonstration GIMP for Windows at last months meeting. Jon made using GIMP easy and straightforward in spite of the complex nature of a high-end photo editing application. Download it from http://www.gimp.org to try it out.

This month's newsletter was a real treat to put together. I receive articles from David Kerslake and Don Arrowsmith in addition to our regular monthly contributor, Vic Laurie. I feel that many of our members have knowledge and incites on computers that could be shared with our members and I would like to encourage more of you to write articles for PPCUG News. Please read David and Don's articles in addition to Vic Laurie's Windows Tips and congratulate them for their efforts in supporting our group.

Lastly, to the mundane task of 2002 board elections. Thankfully, Tom Carman – Vice President, has agreed to temporarily take on the added role of Treasurer until a full time replacement can be found. It is never too late to put your name in as a candidate for our board. See the back cover for a list of all nominees for 2002.

If you do not want a board position but want to help in a very important role, we are still looking for a person to create meeting flyers and post them on local supermarket, Library and any other public bulletin boards. The only way our group it to grow it by attracting new members and we desperately need local advertising. Sol Libes and I will help you get started with possible flyer designs and meeting info.

I look forward to seeing you all on November 19th.

Windows Tips: Do the Right Thing

By: Vic Laurie - PPCUG

The Power of the Right Click

Although aware that their mouse has a right button as well as a left, many people have little idea of the extent of the actions available in Windows from a right-click. In fact, many PC users that I encounter rarely use a right-click, thereby missing out on a whole assortment of functions that would make their computing life easier. In point of fact, the right click is far more powerful and versatile than the left. From the right click one can manage files, obtain system information, open numerous software applications and do a whole variety of things. The list is so substantial that we can't cover them all in our limited space but in this article I would like to point out some of the functions that can help a PC user make better use of Windows. I will elaborate on some of the functions in future articles.

The Context Menu

Any object can be right-clicked, even the open desktop. This brings up the "context" menu, so named because its exact contents depend on the nature of the object that is clicked. Figure 1 shows a typical menu obtained from clicking on a file.
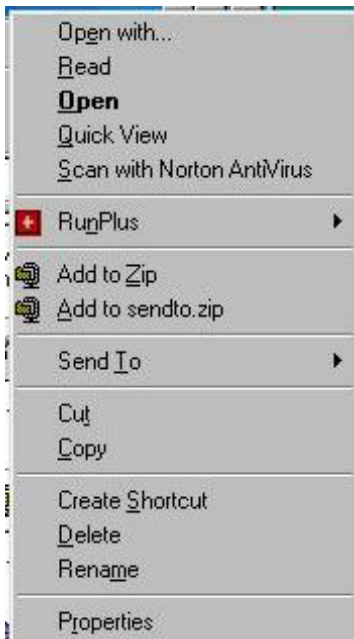

Figure 1. Right-click context menu for a file

The context menu is a list of things that can be done or information that can be obtained. The right click does not actually <u>do</u> anything but presents possible actions. To carry out the actions we need another step and there are several choices. Although keyboard options are available, I find that the easiest way is with the mouse. A single click (right or left) on an item in the context menu carries out the next step in the action for that item. For some items it opens a second window with more details. These expandable items have a small right-pointing triangle on the right side. The program *RunPlus* and the function

Send To are examples in Figure 1. Usually, simply hovering with the mouse pointer will expand these items.

The categories of possible actions vary depending on the nature of the object being clicked. For a file, the menu contains software operations for that particular type of file, including the default *Open* and any operations that installed applications such as WinZip or anti-virus programs may have added. Some kinds of file will have the operations *Print* and/or *Edit.* The basic file management functions *Cut, Copy, Create Shortcut , Delete, Rename* are also in the menu. Two very important functions, *Send To* and *Properties,* deserve separate discussion and will be considered in future articles.

Being able to open a file from the context menu is useful for those who experience difficulty with the left double-click. Senior Citizens in my classes often find this alternate method of opening files to be easier.

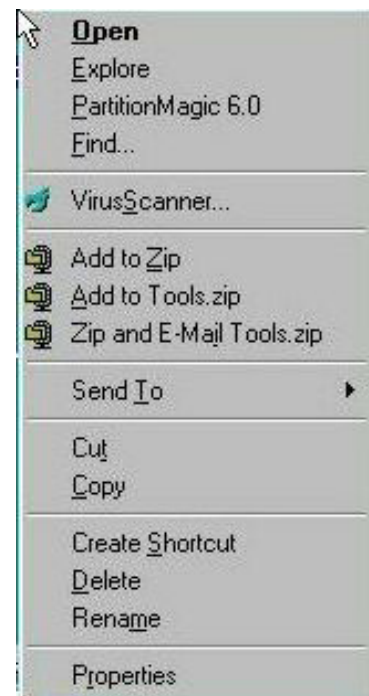The context menu for a folder is slightly different. (Figure 2)

Figure 2. Right-click context menu for a folder.

The folder menu has entries for *Explore* and *Find.* (On the particular computer shown the program Partition Magic also stuck itself into the folder menu). For a folder the default *Open* provides a single-pane view of the contents of the folder. The function *Explore* provides a double-pane (or Explorer) view of the folder contents. *Find* allows a search of the folder contents.

Cleaning the Inside of a Keyboard
By: David Kerslake - PPCUG

Several years ago, I tried a Focus Model 2001, 101 key keyboard, and it was a case of love at first sight. No other keyboard before or since ever felt so good, and had such a satisfying "click" to each keystroke. Since then, I have had several new computers; each with a new keyboard. After a cursory touch and feel session, the Focus 2001 always kept its place as the default keyboard. Somewhere along the way I had to purchase an adapter to make the large plug connect to a PS2 socket, but that was a small price to pay to keep my beloved Focus 2001 in business. The keyboard with my new Dell Dimensions 4100 in February this year had several additional function keys for Windows and various other "one-key" functions, but it did not oust the Focus 2001.

After several years of faultless service, I decided it was time to give the Focus 2001 a tune-up. The procedure was so simple, and the results so satisfying that I decided to share my experience with others who may otherwise feel some trepidation about venturing under the cover of their keyboard.

Unplug the keyboard. Examine it carefully to see how to remove the top cover. Some covers are held in place by screws, while others have plastic tabs that must be depressed or released. Remove the top cover.

Do this next operation on the counter top adjacent to your kitchen sink. Lay the keyboard right side up on several layers of newspaper, or some other absorbent material. Pour approximately 10 ounces of 100% grape juice over the keys—lifting one corner of the keyboard and rocking it makes it easy to evenly distribute the grape juice, which will mix with the lint, dust, cat hair etc., and form what looks like "hairy mud."

After about ten minutes, put the keyboard in the sink and use the spray hose to rinse it down with warm water, flush out the hairy mud. Let it drain on end for several minutes, and then shake as much water as possible from the keyboard. If you happen to have access to compressed air, or nitrogen, set the pressure regulator to 10 psi, or less, then use it to blow out the residual water. If compressed air or nitrogen is not available, use a spray can of Inert Dusting Gas. As a last resort, use a hair dryer on "hot" and keep it moving—if you let it rest in one place, it is easy to start melting the plastic key caps.

Now turn your attention to the cover. Use a toothbrush and a solution of warm water and dishwasher detergent, to carefully brush all the grooves and other features molded into the surface. Rinse the cover in warm water, then dry it with a paper towel, or a soft cotton cloth.

Leave the cover off. With the keyboard connected to the computer, take it for a test-drive. I would recommend leaving the cover off for a day or two to make sure all the water has evaporated.

It may just be my imagination, or just wishful thinking, but I would swear that the keys return faster, and the "click" is crisper

I am not sure the grape juice is essential when cleaning out a keyboard, but in my case, that is how it all started, before the cover was removed! By the way, the amount of "hairy mud" that came out had to be seen to be believed. I have already scheduled my next keyboard cleaning for June 2003.

- End -

Minutes for the General Meeting October 15, 2001
By: Don Arrowsmith

The meeting came to order at 7:45 with Paul asking for questions, some of which were: What background tasks should you terminate when installing new software? Which HTML editors provide separate windows for the HTML code and a rendered browser preview? How can I make an Excel formula reference an absolute cell rather than a relative one? How can I add photos to my eBay listings?

At 8:00 Jon Abolins began the main program - an overview of GIMP. GIMP is a free image manipulation program available for many platforms. Its features rival Adobe's Photoshop and comes with a 900+ page user manual on disk. Jon started by installing the program on his computer and walked us through many of the features. It supports most common image file types and will probably take a while to become fluent with its many options. GIMP for Windows is a 13 MB download from http://www.gimp.org.

Hardware Routers make Good Home Networks

By: Don Arrowsmith - PPCUG

After reading through Microsoft's Windows XP requirements, I decided to acquire a new PC instead of upgrading my old PC. After more thought, I chose to make it a second PC instead of a replacement for my original PC. That led to the question of how to connect both to my cable Internet service. In the past, I've found that www.practicallynetworked.com is a good source of information on networking issues, so I looked over their suggestions. A hardware router seemed like my best choice because it would: Allow both PCs to operate independently from each other; Include a hub or switch to interconnect my PCs; Provide a DHCP client to make the connection to the @Home network; Provide a DHCP server so that I wouldn't have to reconfigure my PC from that which is required by @Home; Include a NAT server to allow both PCs to access the Internet. NAT is short for Network Address Translation. Every machine on the Internet needs a unique IP address to have a successful conversation with a mail server, web server, FTP server, etc. NAT allows you to access the Internet using a single IP address (in my case from @Home's address space) from an internal network using a range of IP addresses that are not visible from the Internet. NAT translates the private address to a unique port on the public address. A byproduct of NAT is that your PCs are (mostly) hidden from the Internet and its hackers. The Barricade uses addresses in the 192.168.2.x range for the internal network.

I selected the SMC Barricade 7004ABR because of its good performance and many features. In addition to my minimum requirements listed above, this unit also includes the following: a connection to a modem to allow for automatic failover to a dialup ISP if the broadband connection becomes unavailable; a print server to allow access from any PC on the home network; anti-hacking features; a logging list of hack attempts, print jobs and configuration access. Further it: Configures via a web interface; Can handle various addressing setups required for most cable and DSL providers; Can set up public ports that provide access from the Internet to a server (FTP, HTTP, etc.) on one of the internal PC's.

Offers free firmware upgrades from SMC, which can be uploaded from any of the PCs; has a four-port switch with 10/100 MHz auto sensing. The ports will auto reverse the TR and RX pairs so you can use either straight thru or crossover (reversing) cables. VPN connections are supported (which I don't use).

I purchased the Barricade from PC Connection for about $80. I had no trouble installing it using their quick-start instructions. A more extensive manual is available as a PDF file. Software support is available via the SMC web site along with downloadable manuals, drivers and firmware. After installing it, I upgraded to the most recent firmware version. The unit is small - about the size of a VHS tape. It includes lights for power and each of the network connections. Blinking lights indicate data transfer. The Barricade looks for an NTP server to set its internal clock, which is used to list time of day on each log entry.

The current firmware is version 1.30. This is the 15th revision since June, showing how active its development is. I have Black-ICE Defender from Network ICE installed on my original PC. I have seen no hack attempts since I installed the router. None, nada, nil! This is down from 5-10 a day when I was directly connected to the cable modem. I may deinstall BID and get improved speed on that PC!

My only negative comment about the Barricade is that the printing speed is much slower than that obtained when directly connecting to the same printer. Hopefully this will be addressed in a future firmware revision although it is not a big issue for me. Configuring printing was the only area that I had trouble with. The supplied instructions are wrong about how to setup a remote printer on each PC - corrected instructions are available on the web. Also, the documentation doesn't state it, but after a firmware, upgrade the printer port won't work properly without a complete power off/on reset of the router. Note that not every printer is supported - only parallel port printers can be connected. If your printer requires two-way communication, uses a serial or USB port, is a GDI only or is a multifunction unit, you cannot use it with this router. My HP 960 works well.

I sent a couple of emails to the SMC support address and they were handled promptly and with accurate information. SMC has an advance exchange option if the unit needs factory service within its 90-day or limited lifetime (available when you register with SMC within 30 days of purchase) warranty. Details are on their web site. SMC also has models available for wireless connections. These are more expensive and, of course, would require wireless interface cards for each PC. Going wireless might be a consideration for you if your PCs are spread out and it would be difficult for you to run network cables. My PCs are close together and so the model I bought uses Unshielded Twisted Pair Category 5 wiring. The wired model saved me money and eliminated my concerns about wireless security and interference from my microwave, cordless telephone and electric ceiling fan remote control. If you need more than 4 ports, you can add a hub to connect up to 253 PCs.

If I ever have connection problems and suspect the router, I can plug a PC directly into the cable modem again. Bringing up WINIPCFG and doing a Release and Renew will let me restore my connection. All in all, I'm very happy with this product so far.

For more information on this router see:
http://www.practicallynetworked.com/reviews/smc_7004abr.asp,
http://www.smc.com/index.cfm?action=products_choose_product&cat_id=4&prodCat=Broadband%20Routers,
and
http://www.pcconnection.com/scripts/productdetail.asp?product_id=249801.

Some more examples of context menus are given in Figures 3 and 4 showing the menu for MY COMPUTER and the C: drive, respectively.
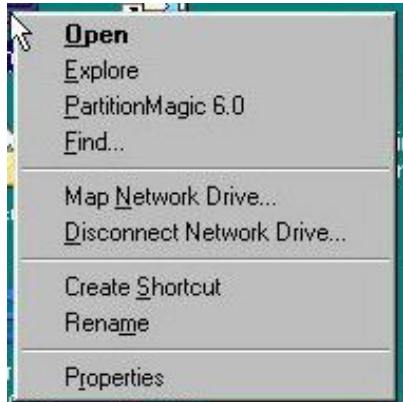

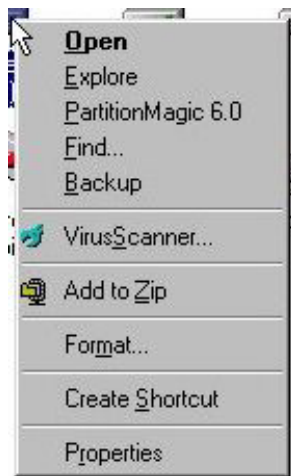Figure 3. Context menu for MY COMPUTER

Figure 4. Menu for a drive

Note that MY COMPUTER has some network stuff added and that the menu for the C: drive has *Backup* and *Format.* In similar fashion, the context menus for other objects, such as Desktop (Figure 5), Taskbar (Figure 6), Network Neighborhood, and others, will contain varying functions, again depending on the nature of the object.
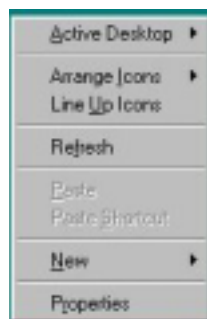

Figure 5. Context menu for Desktop

Figure 6. Menu for Taskbar

Open With

The file menu in Figure 1 also contains an entry *Open with…* This is a very useful function that allows the selection of any program present on the computer as an alternate choice for opening a file. (See Figure 7.)

Figure 7. Open With menu

This function is not normally in the regular context menu but may be added by those who know how to edit the Registry or by way of readily available REG or VBS files. (Similarly the option *Read* is not a standard entry but was added. Adding to the context menu will be discussed in a later article.) Fortunately for those loath to the idea of Registry editing, there is a simple way to get a context menu containing *Open with…* First select (high-light) the file of interest by a single left-click. Then, holding down the **Shift** key, right-click the file. The context menu that opens will now have an added entry *Open with…* Not only does *Open with* allow the choice of a different program to open a file, but also it allows a permanent change in the default program for opening a file. In Figure 7 note the option of putting a check by "Always use this program to open these files".

The *Open with* option is useful for changing file associations and for those times when you may want to use more than one program for a given function. More discussion is in the article in the February, 2001 PPCUG newsletter. The article can be found at http://pages.zdnet.com/hampsi/Articles/Association.htm or at http://www.nerc.com/~srnet1/documents/CourseOutlines/VicFileAssoc.htm

PPCUG Member E-mail Directory

Name Last	First	E-Mail Address
Abolins	John D.	jda-ir@njcc.com
Adler	Seymour	syadler@aol.com
Arrowsmith	Donald L.	donaldarrowsmith@yahoo.com
Axelrod	Albert	aaxelrod@erols.com
Best	John J.	jjbest57@alum.mit.edu
Bolge	Eleanor	embolge@jersey.net
Briggs	George R.	grolbriggs@aol.com
Canavan	Thomas	tcanavan1@aol.com
Caris	Paul D.	pd_caris@csi.com
Carman	Thomas	tom_carman@compuserve.com
Chilton	Neal W.	chilforce@aol.com
Cohen	Jon	jon@njcc.com
Colucci	Frank E.	DasWeb1@aol.com
Crossley	Helen M.	CrossleyHM@aol.com
Davis	Perry J.	perrydavis@compuserve.com
Dinkins-Belton	Joyce	Joyce8NJ@aol.com
Dodge	William B.	b-mdodge@juno.com
Duggins	Marsha	msd@gfol.noaa.gov
Edge, Jr.	Lewis A.	lewis@edgeassoc.com
Einthoven	Bella	einthoven@mail.eclipse.net
Foulkes	Frank	ffoulkes1@aol.com
Gibson	Dawson H.	gibbygib@worldnet.att.net
Goldenberg	Kim	kim_goldenberg@bigfoot.com
Gunther	Bruce W.	bg1509@hotmail.com
Hansen	George	gphansen5@yahoo.com
Hardy	Wayne	wayne99@att.net
Hawryluk	Bill	hawr@compuserve.com
Henry	Chuck	chenry@eclipse.net
Holly	Lois	lois@audet.com
Johnson	Florence	kredit@erols.com
Juelch	H. Karl	karljnj@nerc.com
Kerslake	David	AcuraOwner@aol.com
Ketchel	Joseph	buddyjoe227@aol.com
Keinerman	Irma	rafiki@iopener.net
Kleinerman	Milton	kukumafi@Juno.com
Konvalinka	John W.	jkonvalinka@msn.com
Koosman	Milton	miltonk2@aol.com
Krisak	Bill	BobKrisak@worldnet.att.net

Name Last	First	E-Mail Address
Kurivchack	Paul	kurivchp@optonline.net
Landis	Houston E.	judge@alumni.princeton.edu
Laurie	Vic	hampsi@yahoo.com
Lazar	Joseph	joelazar@nerc.com
Lewis	Lloyd N.	Budnorth@juno.com
Libes	Sol	sol@libes.com
Markward	Margaret	mteragram@aol.com
Metzler	Joseph	76116.3117@compuserve.com
Middleton	Frank	ftmprob@nerc.com
Miller	Douglas E.	D.N.Miller@worldnet.att.net
Mintz	Herman	hmintz4@aol.com
Montani	Linda	l.montani@worldnet.att.net
Mooney	William P.	wmo8350722@aol.com
Mosho	Martin	martinmosho@att.net
Oldenburg	Thomas A.	oldenburg-ta@worldnet.att.net
Olson	Gaylord	go@electrim.com
Papier, Jr.	Philip B.	papierp@bellatlantic.net
Phadke	Laxman G.	lgphadke@home.com
Pitcher	Barbara	bpitcher@ets.org
Rothstein	Rick	rich_web@email.com
Shinkfield	David	d.shinkfield@worldnet.att.net
Sked	Bill	billsked@aol.com
Stegman	Robert	stegmann@optonline.net
Stockwell	Hunt	huntstock@aol.com
Suber	Michael J.	mpsuber@juno.com
Tayyabkhan	Mike	tayyabkhan@aol.com
Tenner	Edward	tenner@clarity.princeton.edu
Walthall	Ronald K.	ronwalthall@prodigy.net
Weinberg	Robert	bweinb@att.net
Weiss III	Edward A.	eweiss@nerc.com
Williams	Ken	krw1948@worldnet.att.net
Willis	Robert S.	rsw9999@cs.com
Willis	Lloyd	lwillis1@prodigy.net
White	Jonathan A.	jawhite@yes-llc.com
Shah	Sonal	sonals@microsoft.com
Stroiney	John	johnstro@microsoft.com

(Last Update: November 10, 2001)
Send Updates to kurivchp@optonline.net for inclusion in this listing.

The 2002 Nominations Are!

President .... Paul Kurivchack
Vice President .... Tom Carman
Secretary .... Don Arrowsmith
Treasurer -Acting .... Tom Carman
Member-At-Large .... Jon Abolins
Member-At-Large ...... Kim Goldenberg
Member-At-Large .... Vic Laurie
Member-At-Large .... Sol Libes

HOME NETWORKING
NOVEMBER 19, 2001
LAWRENCE LIBRARY

Princeton PC Users Group
P.O Box 291
Rocky Hill, NJ 08553