

October 2008 Volume 24 Number 10

PPCUG NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE PRINCETON PC USERS GROUP

The Paperless Office: A Real-life Implementation

Jim Bartolomei and Jaime Campbell

Monday, October 6, 2008, at 7:30 p.m.

We have been hearing about the "paperless office" for decades. This seemed like a good idea, but somehow was derailed by the accessibility of inexpensive copiers, printers and fax machines. The term is now used to describe a company that uses modern technology to create, edit, store and share electronic documents, minimizing, but not necessarily eliminating, paper.

Jim Bartolomei opened an accounting firm in Lawrenceville, NJ. Jim provides a variety of accounting, tax and consulting services to these types of companies, ever mindful of the unique challenges facing their owners.

Jaime Campbell is a Senior Accountant/Advisor. She has exemplary skills in the use of Microsoft Office applications and is a certified Microsoft Master, having earned the highest certification levels in Excel, Word, PowerPoint, and Outlook.

Mercer County's Lawrence Library
Meeting Room 1

US Alternate 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 imply endorsement of its programs.*

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Upcoming Schedule

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| November 10, 2008 | - tba |
| December 8, 2008 | --- Member Party |
| January 12, 2009 | ---- tba |
| February 9, 2009 | ---- tba |
| March 9, 2009 | ----- tba |
| April 13, 2009 | ----- tba |
| April 24-26, 2009 | ---- Trenton Computer Festival |

About PPCUG

Regular Meetings

Second Monday of the month at the Lawrenceville Library, Alternate Route 1 and Darrah Lane.

7:00 PM: Social Time / Tech Exchange

7:30 PM: Meeting comes to Order

7:45 PM: Featured presentation

For information about upcoming meetings or joining PPCUG, see:

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

or email us at:

[ppcug.nj \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:ppcug.nj@gmail.com)

(Please include "OK" in the subject line.)

Board Meetings

Board meetings are held as needed.

Board Members

President:

Clarke Walker 609-883-5262

Vice-President:

Tom Carman 732-828-6055

Secretary:

vacant

Treasurer:

vacant

Members-At-Large:

Al Axelrod 609-737-2827

Kim Goldenberg 609-631-9140

Vic Laurie 609-924-1220

Sol Libes 609-520-9024

Chairpersons

Hospitality:

vacant

Member Records:

vacant

Newsletter Editor:

Clarke Walker 609-883-5262

Program Coordinator:

Arnold Rosner 609-586-1011

Web Master:

Joe Budelis 609-921-3867

Yahoo Moderator:

Joe Lazar

2008 Annual Dues

Dues are \$40 per calendar year with a mailed newsletter or \$20 per year with online access to the newsletter. New members pay \$3.25 or \$1.75 per month times the number of months remaining in the current year.



Summary of the September 2008 Meeting



At 7:30 p.m. Clarke started the Meeting.

Sol Libes displayed an antenna and USB tuner for receiving digital television signals. He then showed us some sites where you can view or download videos.

Sol's presentation's slides can be found at <http://www.libes.com/sol/tv/>

Sol Libes
by Judge Landis

Submitted by Clarke Walker



Pictures from the September Meeting

by Judge Landis, judge@alumni.princeton.edu

Member of the Princeton PC Users Group





President's Message

At our November meeting will be accepting nominations for Club Officers and Board Members for next year. In the sidebar on page 2 you will find a list of the various positions. Please consider being an officer. Just let a "Board Member-At-Large" know of your interest.

On Saturday, October 18, 2008, the Ewing SeniorNet will be holding an open house at their new facility. They have invited us to have a table to hand out information about our club and answer questions. Al Axelrod has agreed to coordinate staffing the table. He needs at least two people to do this. Information on the Ewing SeniorNet can be found at: <http://www.ewingsnet.com/>

For the October meeting Arnold has arranged for two advocates of the "Paperless Office" to discuss their results. Because the Library is closed on Columbus Day we had to move the meeting to Monday, October 6, 2008.

- Clarke Walker



Link of the Month

While I was searching for Sol's web site I came across this site that contains information about many business leaders and companies. Try searching for "Sol Libes". You will be more impressed with the work that Sol has done.

<http://www.zoominfo.com/>

Have you discovered a useful link or add-on? Then share it with the members of the P PC UG.



Firefox 3 – Hot New Browser

by Ira Wilsker, [lwilsker \(at\) apcug.net](mailto:lwilsker@apcug.net)

APCUG Director, Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, TX, Radio and TV Show

Websites:

<http://www.getfirefox.com>

<http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/features/>

<https://addons.mozilla.org/firefox/>

- Free Download

- Features

- Add ons

After a lengthy wait, Mozilla has released the latest and greatest release of the very popular web browser, Firefox 3. This new release, available for free download from www.getfirefox.com, has many new features, making it a very strong competitor to Microsoft's ubiquitous browser, Internet Explorer.

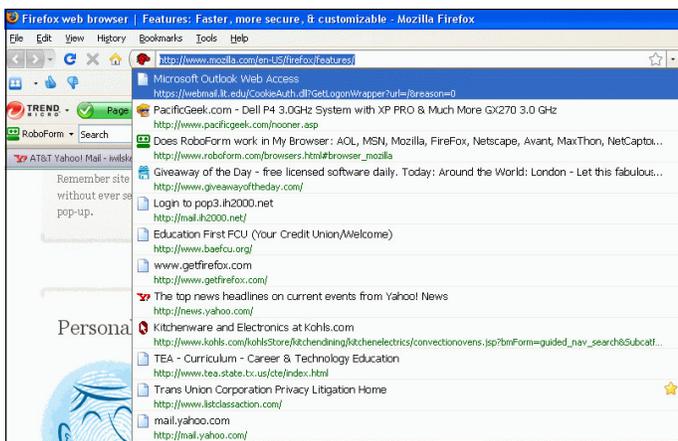
Firefox evolved from an earlier browser, Mozilla, which in turn grew out of the Netscape browser as AOL announced the cessation of Netscape development. Since its first release several years ago, Firefox in its current and previous versions has developed a wide following, with hundreds of millions of copies downloaded. The newly released version 3 has tentatively set a Guinness world record with over 8 million copies downloaded in its first 24 hours of public release, despite overloaded servers that discouraged countless people from downloading it the first day of issue. According to published reports, the number of copies of Firefox 3 downloaded surpassed 14 million downloads in the first 72 hours. Obviously, many people are using it.



Rhetorically, so why are so many using Firefox 3 rather than Internet Explorer (IE), which is installed by default on all contemporary Windows computers? There are several other fine browsers in circulation, such as the newly released update to Opera, and Apple's Safari (for both Windows and Mac), but for Windows computers, Firefox is firmly in second place, right behind Internet Explorer. If Internet Explorer was not preinstalled on Windows computers and integrated into the operating system, there is a good chance that Firefox 3 could surpass IE in a fair competitive market. Firefox 3 is faster rendering web pages than IE, has superior tabbed browsing,

is written in tighter code taking fewer system resources, and has many advantages over IE. There is no reason why PC users should not download Firefox 3 for Windows (7.8mb download), and install it, as it runs happily on computers that already have IE installed. On a fresh installation of Firefox on a Windows computer, Firefox will nondestructively import the favorites (bookmarks), cookies, and other information from IE, without making any changes or impeding IE in any way. If Firefox 3 is installed on a computer that has an older version of Firefox installed, it will automatically install it as an upgrade, including all bookmarks, passwords, cookies, and other information. Once installed, many users, such as me, prefer to use Firefox instead of IE. In my case I would say that I use Firefox for 98% of my browsing tasks; it would be 100%, but I have IE setup to access another internet account that I have, but rarely use.

According to the Firefox 3 website at www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox, over 15,000 improvements were made to version 3 over version 2. The newly released version 3 is claimed to be faster, safer, and smarter than the previous version, and also IE! One of the new features, which I have personally verified, is the fact that web pages do indeed load faster than on IE and previous versions of Firefox. Firefox 3 also consumes less system memory and system resources, leading to improved computer performance when Firefox is loaded and running, compared to the previous version, or even IE. Firefox 3 is also more secure than previous browsers, and incorporates the latest technologies to help prevent phishing (identity theft), and other website forgeries. A neat new feature in Firefox 3 is "Instant Website ID", where clicking on the tiny website icon ("site favicon") at the left of the URL in the menu bar will display site information and identification, which will likely indicate if the site is as intended, or a web forgery. Firefox 3 has also been engineered to work smoothly and compliment Vista's parental controls, as well as most antivirus and other security programs.



Another interesting feature unique to Firefox 3 is the "Smart Location Bar" that shows detailed information on websites recently visited, and is accessed by clicking on the right side of the menu bar. This Smart Location Bar is intelligent, in that it adapts to persona preferences to locate better website matches. Typing a "tag" or keyword in the menu bar opens a detailed list of previously visited websites containing that keyword, making it very fast and easy to locate websites that have previously been visited. Another very useful feature is the integrated spell checker, which underlines any misspelled words typed in a browser window; right clicking on the word opens a list of suggested spellings, which a mouse click will instantly replace the incorrect word with the correctly spelled word.

Malware of various types, including worms, Trojans, viruses, and spyware is a growing menace to internet users. Firefox 3 integrates a sophisticated anti-malware feature that provides some protection if the user either intentionally or erroneously accesses a website that contains attack code. If such a dangerous website is accessed, a full screen (browser window) display will appear as a warning. Firefox, working with other organizations (including Google) maintains a continuously updated list of so called "attack sites", so there is nothing for the user to update or maintain. In the event the user does happen to fall into a suspect site, such as a very freshly created phishing (identity theft) website, the forgery can be quickly reported by simply clicking on HELP – REPORT WEB FORGERY; this will connect to a Google service that collects such information on a real

-time basis, verifies the forgery, and automatically adds it to the malware list, as well as forwards the information to groups like Phish Tank (www.phishtank.com) for further action.

Many of us use multiple passwords and user names on countless websites. Firefox 3 has an excellent integrated and secure password manager. When a password is first entered, Firefox 3 asks if you want it to remember that password and logon information, without any annoying pop-ups. Speaking of pop-ups, Firefox 3 incorporates a sophisticated and easily configurable pop-up blocker which can stop pop-ups and pop-unders, speeding and making more enjoyable the surfing experience. In some cases, pop-ups are not irritating advertisements, but instead contain important information; these can be easily allowed when desired.

Many of us choose to tweak the appearance and features of our browsers, and Firefox 3 happily obliges. Firefox has many themes and "personas" that can be selectively implemented to change the appearance of the browser to meet our individual tastes. For those of us who want additional features, Firefox offers over 5,000 free "add-ons" (addons.mozilla.org/firefox), which are easy to install devices to customize the browser to work as desired. I have installed about a dozen add-ons, including some security add-ons (PhishTank, McAfee SiteAdvisor, and others), as well as an enhanced download manager (the one integrated in Firefox 3 is very adequate for most users). I also have selected to use differently colored tabs on the top of the browser window, an add-on that can make a tab an IE window (for the rare cases when a website is intended for IE only), a PDF manager, and several other add-ons.

Firefox 3 is an outstanding and free product. It is a very worthwhile competitor to Internet Explorer, and users should try it to see if they like it. I like it, and use it almost exclusively on my desktop and notebook computers. That is the best recommendation I can give it.



Your Next Computer Will Be Green

by *Marjie Tucker*, [mcug \(at\) dnet.net](mailto:mcug@dnnet.net)

Editor, Mountain Computer User Group, GA, www.mcug.org

With Europe leading the way, the computer industry is decidedly becoming "green." The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and the Restriction of Hazardous Substances (ROHS) directives went into effect earlier this year. These two directives state that certain electrical and electronic equipment must cut down on hazardous materials such as lead, mercury, and cadmium. They also give customers the right to return their equipment free of charge. Companies have several years to fully implement these directives, but the leaders have already started to make changes.

Dell, for example, is advertising Energy Smart workstations and notebooks that can reduce power consumption by as much as 78%. The Energy Smart configuration uses a default power setting that is designed to reduce consumption and energy costs right out of the box. In addition, the power supply, fan, and motherboard use significantly less energy to maintain cool internal temperatures.

HP is using 80 Plus power supplies to lower energy bills and AMD technology that reduces heat output and PC power consumption. In addition, they have already introduced an HP recycling program where you can trade-in or donate the products. Government Initiatives Many U.S. government agencies have implemented standards and regulations to encourage green computing. The Environmental Protection Agency launched an Energy Star program in 1992 and strengthened its requirements in 2006. In 2003 the California State Senate enacted the Electronic Waste Recycling Act and in 2007 President Bush issued Executive Order 13423 requiring all federal agencies to use the Electronic Products Environmental Assessment Tool when purchasing computer systems. In addition, a global consortium called The Green Grid was founded in 2007 by AMD, APC, Dell, HP, IBM, Intel, Microsoft, Rackable Systems, SprayCool, Sun and VMware.

Another initiative formed by a group of Global-minded IT executives, the Green Computing Impact Organization (GCIO), was created to be an active participant in transforming the IT community from an environmental liability to an Earth conscious example of responsibility. GCIO is a nonprofit organization that is based on environmental audit programs for consumers and small business homes with respect to general energy-efficiency programs (including lighting, heating, insulation, etc.). GCIO's mission is to educate and assist enterprise technology users in the design of environmentally aware and respon-

sible information system operations. They help consumers become more environmentally responsible by reducing energy consumption and electronic waste in an effort to protect the Earth.

GCIO is sponsoring educational programs across the country and participating in a Green Computing Summit that will be held in Washington, DC on May 20th. The summit will address how public sector IT managers, procurement officials, and program managers public sector professionals can transform their IT and data center operations into more environmentally conscious yet efficient solutions. This conference will attract senior government IT professionals and their industry partners tasked with helping agencies become greener in the coming years. Attendees will represent federal, state and local governments, public policy organizations and suppliers to government. You can read more about this event at www.e-gov.com/EventOverview.aspx?Event=SGCS08.

Features of Green Computing

Power management is the most popular method. The operating system of the computer can be set to directly control the power saving aspects of the hardware. It can automatically turn off the monitor or hard drive after a period of inactivity. Or, the entire system may hibernate, turning off most of the components such as even allow the user to manually adjust the voltages supplied to the CPU to reduce the electricity consumption and the amount of heat that is produced. As of July of 2007, all new Energy Star certified desktops must have a power supply that is at least 80% efficient.

Other features include using motherboard video output instead of a video card, hard disks that consume less power, flash based solid state drives that require fewer write cycles, and lower energy monitors. And, manufacturers of networking equipment are developing switches and routers that reduce energy costs.

Recycling Materials

Obsolete computers can be reused for charities, non-profit organizations, and developing countries. Parts from really old systems can be recycled through some recycling centers. Some recycling charges can be passed back to the manufacturers.

Recycling this equipment keeps the lead, mercury, and chromium out of our landfills. In addition, computer supplies such as cartridges, paper, and batteries can be easily recycled.

How Can We Work Greener?

Visit the website for Climate Savers Smart Computing at www.climatesaverscomputing.org to view a three step program to go green. Here are the basic steps that they suggest:

Step One - Turn on Power Management. Since the average desktop PC wastes nearly 50% of the energy it consumes as heat, it makes sense to use the power management features that are built into Windows XP and Vista. The benefits? You will reduce your electricity bills and your energy footprint will be lowered as you reduce your greenhouse gas emissions. The Climate Savers organization predicts that the power management features on your computer can save nearly have a ton of CO2 and more than \$60 a year in energy costs.

Step Two - Buy an energy efficient computer. Energy Star, the program designed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, specifies the standards that equipment and appliances must meet to wear the Energy Star badge. You can visit their website at www.energystar.org for specifics. Basically an Energy Star compliant PC uses 15 to 25 percent less energy. This program is expected to save U.S. consumers and businesses more than \$1.8 billion in energy costs over the next five years and prevent greenhouse gas emission equal to 2.7 million vehicles.

Step Three – Unplug from phantom power. As long as your computer is plugged in it still uses electricity, even while it is turned off or in standby mode. A computer that is turned off, but still plugged in, can use up to 10 watts. The Climate Savers estimate that you can reduce your electricity bills by as much as 10% by unplugging your appliances and electronics when they're not being used.



Skype 4.0

by Joe Nuvolini, [nuvo \(at\) nuvolini.com](mailto:nuvo(at)nuvolini.com)

Webmaster & APCUG Rep, Pikes Peak Computer Application Society, CO, <http://ppcompas.apcug.org/>

I've been a Skype subscriber for some time now. What is Skype, you say? Well, it's an online chat/phone/video service which has, as of the end of March, some 309 million registered users. Last I heard, that is more subscribers than all the US telephone services combined! It allows you to make computer to computer calls free worldwide. It can support 12 million users at a time. In addition to audio and video chat, you can instant message, send text messages to phones, and share files. You can call from computer to phone as well.

It has three levels of service for the computer to phone service. For \$2.95 per month you can make free computer to phone calls anywhere in the US and Canada. The \$5.95 service includes the US, Canada, and Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Monterrey Mexico. For \$9.95 per month you get unlimited free computer to phone calls worldwide. They point out that unlimited means up to 10,000 minutes per month. Let's see, 10,000 minutes is over 6.9 days! I'm currently subscribing to the \$2.95 service. To call overseas with my service it runs about 2.1 cents per minute to Europe or from Europe back to the States. Skype has been offering video calling as well since 2005. Their data compression allows quality voice transmissions on a bandwidth of as little as 2kbs and video on 6kbs. It has a new version, 4.0, which is in beta testing. It allows you to see the person you are calling full screen. For this feature to work well you need 90kbs. I'm using it and it seems to work real well. This full screen mode will be very useful for the computer user group community.

While at the Association of PC User Groups (APCUG) Convention held in conjunction with the January 2008 Consumer Electronics Show (CES) attendees in their forum with the vendors discussed presentations at user group meetings. Over the years, the cost of sending representatives out to user groups for the purpose of promoting their wares has become no longer cost effective. We discussed the use of Webinars (live presentations across the Internet).

This new version of Skype looks to be ideal for such a program and it can be done at little or no cost to the vendors and user groups. If you haven't tried Skype, you should. You can download the current version (3.8) at: <http://www.skype.com/download/skype/windows/>. If you are adventurous and want to try 4.0 beta go to: <http://www.skype.com/intl/en/download/skype/windows/beta/>.

By the way, if you have wireless Internet access you can purchase a WiFi phone at the Skype online store and it will allow you to make calls whenever and wherever you have wireless Internet access. There's a lot more information which you can checkout at their Website: <http://www.skype.com>.

