

PPCUG

NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE PRINCETON PC USERS GROUP

Calendar

General Meetings

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

7:00-7:45 PM:

Tech Corner is Open / Social Time

7:45 PM:

Meeting Comes to Order

8 PM:

Featured Presentation

Board Meetings

Third Monday of the Month
8 PM at Lawrenceville Library
Route 1 and Darrah Lane.

Board meetings are open to All.

Newsletter Deadline

Articles for the newsletter are due by the last Wednesday of the month.

Articles will be accepted via e-mail to: kurivchack_p@compuserve.com in the following formats: Word for Windows 6.0, 7.0 or 97; Ami Pro / WordPro, or Ascii Text.

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This Month

Monday December 14, 1998

Elections

&

Annual Holiday Party

Vote for the new Board, Socialize with old friends, enjoy the holiday treats and Win some prizes!

Adobe Page Mill

Age of Empires - Rise of Rome

Mouse Pads and more!

At

Lawrence Library

Meeting Rooms 1 & 2

US Route 1 South & Darrah Lane, Lawrenceville, NJ

☆☆☆☆☆☆ Our New Meeting Location ☆☆☆☆☆

☆☆

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



November general meeting presenter, Steven Rodriguez (left) receiving a certificate of appreciation from Paul Kurivchack for his outstanding presentation - New Multimedia and Animation Developments for the PC.

Digital Photo by Ed Weiss

About PPCUG NEWS

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Voice Mail System

For information about SIGs, meetings, etc. call 908-281-3107

To contact Board Members, use the E-Mail Addresses on page 7 or Web Site.

Web Site

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

Board Members

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Tom Canavan 732-422-9055

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Ed Weiss 609-586-1395

Vic Laurie 609-924-1220

Vince Polignano 609-586-1466

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Larry Lewis 609-771-9536

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Program Coordinator:

Sol Libes 609-520-9024

Web Master:

Jon Abolins

Annual Dues Rates

Normal dues rate is \$25.

New Members Only: after February, the rate is \$2 per month times the number of months remaining in the year.

Coming Events

January 11, 1999 - Telephony & the PC

Jon Conant of Cascade Media Group will speak on advances in the Telecommunications industry and Messaging Systems for home use.

February 8, 1999 - DiskJockey 98 - Win 9x /NT Utility

Tony Pereira of Clear & Simple, Inc. will demonstrate the features and benefits of using this feature filled utility.

March 8, 1999 - Dealing with the Y2K Problem

John Degood of David Sarnoff Las will speak on the technical aspects of why Y2K is such an issue.

April 12, 1999 - Tips & Techniques for Better E-Mail

May 10, 1999 - The History of Personal Computing

Sol Libes will present the early history of computing and the advances that brought us up to where we are today.



Presidents Message

by Paul Kurivchack

For starters, how do you like the new look of the newsletter? I got into one of my creative moods over the past week-end and decided that it is time to brighten the newsletter up. I have made minor changes inside as well and I will be working on changing that portion in the coming months also. Please let me know by e-mailing or calling with your comments, good, bad or indifferent.

In addition, you will notice this month newsletter is chock-full of information on our group including the continuing Vic Laurie Windows 9X Tips. Another Paul Kurivchack software review on file manager utility, Disk Jockey 98 and a reprint article on backing up you registry. As always, our e-mail address list is included and our web page address.

December is time for our annual elections for the board. This year the slate will have a vacancy for the position of Vice President. Jon Abolins, our resident Web Master has agreed to fill in as a Member at Large for 1999. Thank you Jon for your continued commitment to PPCUG.

If any of our current members have the desire and some spare time, we would like your help. We always need help planning the meetings, doing publicity, etc. See me at a general monthly meeting or better yet attend a board meeting.

Looking back over 1998, we have had a very busy and successful year. Sol Libes again did an outstanding job with meeting programming. We started the year with Genealogy, learned about Multimedia, digital photography and music with Mixman. Vic Laurie did a couple of great presentations on Windows 9X Tips during the year. We heard about Linux and investing with the PC. We even had Microsoft come in to introduce our members to Windows 98.

We had the major upheaval of moving from Educational Testing Services to our current home at the Lawrenceville Library. We settled in quickly and it has proven to be a good meeting location. We will continue to meet at the Library for both the general and board meetings in 1999.

We will have our traditional holiday party again this year. We will have a whole slew of snacks to munch on, soda and cider to drink and much more. This year we will also prizes to give away with a copy of Adobe PageMill, Microsoft Age of Empires / Rise of Rome, Baseball 3D, MTV mouse pads and other items. So, plan to attend the party.

Lastly, as we close out the year, the Board and I would like to wish all of our members and their families a very Happy Holiday and a great New Year.

WINDOWS 9X TIPS: ADORNMENTS FOR THE DESKTOP

By: Vic Laurie

What better time of year than December to say a few things about decorating? Who wants to struggle with the registry and all that during the holiday season? So let's apply a little sprucing up to the desktop instead.

Screen Savers

Do you use screen savers? If you have been around for a while, you remember the old video displays whose basic color was a sickly-looking green. If the same image stayed on too long, it would burn into the display screen. Thus was born the screen saver which had the function of keeping a moving screen display in order to avoid burn-in. Today's screens do not have this problem with after-images but the screen saver is still with us in a multitude of varieties. Today their purpose is to hide what we are doing and/or to express our individual personalities. Windows is provided with a few examples but an almost endless assortment is available free on the Internet. For example, you could download from:
<<http://www.freethemes.com/>> or one of the many sites I mentioned in my previous article on freeware such as <<http://www.simtel.net/simtel.net/win95/scrsave.html>>. To change your screen saver, right click on an unused spot on your screen, open Properties, and click the Screen Saver tab.

Wallpaper, etc

A lot of people use the standard dark green background without wallpaper that is the default for many Windows systems. Personally, I like this look but if your tastes run to more exotic looking patterns, you can experiment with the variety of possibilities that come with Windows. (Older machines may need to have the Plus! Package installed.) Right click an empty spot on the desktop, open Properties, and click the Background tab. You will see a menu for Pattern and a menu for Wallpaper. Express your artistic soul to your heart's content. If you do not like Microsoft's selections, you can use any bitmap file. In Windows 98, you have the additional option of using any HTML document. Want a picture of your dog always there on the desktop? Scan a photo of your dog (or spouse or whatever) into a bitmap file. Then use Paint or other editor to achieve the desired image. Free images and/or editing utilities are available from any number of sites such as:

<<http://www.freethemes.com/>>,
<<http://members.xoom.com/FatBill/desktop.html>>, or
<http://www.freewarehome.com/desktop/wp_tools.html>.

Also, see the *PC Magazine* commentary on editing wallpaper at <<http://www.zdnet.com/pcmag/pctech/content/solutions/uu1701b.htm>>.

A free utility for using .jpg files is at <<http://www.winmag.com/windows/>>.

cd/utilities/panorama.html>.

You can also copy backgrounds and wallpaper right off Internet pages if they appeal to you. If you are using Internet Explorer as your browser, right click in a background area on the page and three of the menu options will be Save Background As... or Set as Wallpaper, or Copy Background. Carry out the desired action and now you have a new option for your desktop. If a graphics file such as the types .gif or .jpg is embedded in the page, a right click on it will give you the option of Save Picture as... or Set as Wallpaper, or Copy. For Netscape browsers the right click options can vary quite a bit depending on the nature of the web page you are looking at and in what part of the page you click. If a usable image is present, right clicking will bring up Set As Wallpaper and other options depending on the context.

Icons

I suspect that many people are unaware that it is by no means necessary to accept the particular choice of icon that Windows and other software sticks on your desktop. I didn't pay much attention myself until I began to have trouble picking out the icon I wanted (I admit to a certain amount of clutter) and I decided to make the various icons more individually distinctive. It turns

Windows 9X tips continued on page 4

1999 Elections

The Board of the Princeton PC Users Group would like to present the proposed Officers and Board members for the 1999 calendar year.

President - Paul Kurivchack
V-President - Open
Treasurer - Tom Canavan
Secretary - Ed Weiss

Members At Large:
Jon Abolins
Kim Goldenberg
Vic Laurie
Vince Polignano

DISPLAY A DROP-DOWN LIST OF PRINTERS

To display a drop-down list of printers installed on your PC, right-click the Start button and select OPEN, then select FILE, NEW FOLDER. Name the folder by typing the following:

Printers.{2227A280-3AEA-1069-A2DE-08002B30309D}.

Click OK.

This procedure results in a new folder named Printers, which lists all your installed printers.

BACKING UP YOUR REGISTRY

**THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE
COULD BE DANGEROUS TO
YOUR COMPUTER IF YOU
DO NOT PAY ATTENTION !**

REMEMBER—MOVE, NOT COPY

The wake-up call for me came when I received a fatal error message and a corrupted Registry message. I had to turn off the computer and could not boot back up. I not only could not find my "emergency" diskette (I had made 2, and hid them well) but I had not backed up my Registry.

FOR WINDOWS 95

In Windows95, we entered a new world of the REGISTRY. It has taken the place of the Win.INI files from Windows 3.1 and in many instances replaced the old DOS config.sys and autoexec.bat files. It is also harder to find, harder to decipher and much harder to fix. To start with, the

Register files are "hidden" and "read-only" attributes.

I just happened to have a REGISTRY TROUBLESHOOTING book on hand and had never ever opened it. Needless to say, it was crash course time.

Each time we load a new software, hardware or change any configurations in our computer, we are also making changes to the Registry. I can't remember what I was loading or changing, but it didn't take much.

When the computer boots Win95, the current SYSTEM.DAT & USER.DAT registry files are backed up to SYSTEM.DA0 & USER.DA0. But even they can become corrupted. Now I know you should copy (Copy, not Move) all 4 Registry Files, SYSTEM.DAT, USER.DAT, SYSTEM.DA0, & USER.DA0 to a floppy or several floppies on a regular basis – once a week if you add, uninstall, delete or change any

configurations on a regular basis (once a month for the rest of us).

You can copy all four files from your Windows folder to a floppy. Turn on Display under View to find the files at the end of all of the Windows folders, then click on one, hold down the Ctrl key and click on the other three, select copy, click on "A" drive, select paste. Be sure to check your "A" drive afterwards to make sure all four are there and that they have the exact size as the originals.

If you can't copy in this way, you will need to reboot your machine and press F8 before Windows95 launches. This displays the Startup Menu in DOS. Select the Safe Mode Command Prompt Only option and remove the hidden and system attributes of the Registry files. Now you can copy them onto floppies.

You can use the Backup option if you happen to have Windows95 Resource Kit. The utility is named

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out that whole libraries of icons reside in the system in places you might not realize. Icons, in fact, may be in .dll or .exe files you would never think about. For example, here are some (there are icons in many files) of the system files that contain icons:

C:\Windows\System\Cool.dll
(available only if you've installed Plus!)
C:\Windows\System\Pifmgr.dll
C:\Windows\System\Shell32.dll
C:\Windows\System\Systray.exe
C:\Windows\System\User.exe
C:\Windows\System\Moricons.dll
C:\Windows\Progman.exe

Changing a shortcut icon is quite easy. Right click on the icon of interest, open the Properties sheet, click the Shortcut tab, then Change Icon. Up will pop the current icon, together with any others in the source file whose name is listed. You can select another icon from the current source file or use the browse button to look at other files containing icons. In addition to appearing singly or in groups enmeshed in .dll or .exe files, single icons can be located in .ico files or groups of icons in files such as .icl. When browsing for icons, try the All Files option. You may be surprised at all the icons you find. Even if you do not wish to change an icon, clicking on it and

then browsing through the icon possibilities may turn up an icon you would like for some other software shortcut. Numerous libraries of icons are also available on the web. One of the many sites is

<http://www.winmag.com/windows/cd/icons.htm>.

For editing icons, download the free utility, IconEdit, at <http://www.zdnet.com/pcmag/pctech/download/utilities97.html>.

To change some (but not all) of the system icons, right click on an unused spot on your screen, open Properties, and click the Plus! tab. Select the icon you wish to change, click Change Icon and browse through files as mentioned above. To change the icon for a given file type, open My Computer-View-Options-File Types, select the file type of interest, click Edit, then Change Icon.

Changing folder icons (they are all confusingly similar) and certain system icons is a little more difficult. If you have Internet Explorer 4.x on your system, download the free *PC Magazine* utility, Folders, at <http://www.zdnet.com/pcmag/pctech/content/17/18/ut1718.001.html>. For those

who do not wish to battle Microsoft's Active Desktop and do not have IE 4 installed, you need a registry hack. I promised none of that this time but the insatiable can go to

<http://www.zdnet.com/pcmag/issues/1501/pcm00121.htm>

and

<http://www.zdnet.com/pcmag/issues/1612/pcmg0032.htm>

Finally, links to many sites with desktop ideas (and computer tips in general) can be found at the weekly newsletter site *Locker gnome* at <http://www.lockergnome.com/>.

Personal Note

My wife and I will soon be traveling for a while in warmer climes. So the present article brings this series of Windows Tips to an end for now. I am always interested to know if the articles are helpful, and I welcome any observations or suggestions you might have. As I travel, I will be checking my e-mail at the address: hampsi@my-dejanews.com. Send me your comments and your opinion on whether these articles should continue.

Let me wish all of you the best of holidays and a very happy New Year ahead!

Minutes for the Executive Board November 16, 1998

By: Len Clerke

The meeting was held at the Lawrence Branch Library. Attending were Vince Polignano, Sol Libes, Paul Kurivchack, Kim Goldenberg, Ed Weiss, Vic Laurie, Tom Canavan and Len Clerke

Paul reviewed the slate of candidates for the annual election. One position, that of Vice-President, was still open as of the meeting.

In a discussion of the holiday party, the Board voted that the software items would be raffled at \$1.00 per ticket or three for \$2.00. All items would be in one drawing and winners would have a choice of any of the items remaining.

There was a lengthy discussion of software issues, contacts for donations to the Group and potential program ideas. Our current insurance policy was also discussed in light of our changing needs, in

particular our move from E.T.S., and the possible savings!

Due to a decline of interest in the SIGs, the last scheduled SIG meeting will be on the last Wednesday of December. New SIGs may be established as the need arises although volunteers to moderate them will be needed as well.

Paul raised several issues related to our Web page and its expansion and board members offered their opinions and suggestions.

The meeting concluded at 9:25.

Backing Up continued from page 4

Microsoft Configuration Backup (CFGBACK.ext). Install it to your hard drive, then open it and READ CAREFULLY as you go through the startup screen.

If you should ever lose your Registry, you will now have a spare on hand and can copy it back to the Windows folder. Remember to rename the current Registry (SYSTEM.BAD, USER.BAD) then copy the backups from your A drive.

(You could cheat a whole lot and download and install Registry Saver, a free utility from Webersoft <http://www.software97.com/software97> - It runs automatically as a startup task, but can't detect and repair problems like Win98 Registry Checker does.)

PC COMPUTING, October, 1998 issue warns us RegClean Utility from Microsoft has caused as many problems as it fixes and should be

avoided. They also warned against Microsoft's TweakUI as it won't run on some systems and is incompatible with others.

If you would like more options than Registry Saver, or want to add another toy in addition to Registry Saver, you might consider Search & Replace (\$20) from Steven J. Hoek (www.iserv.net/~sjhswdew). It has an array of search options. Another toy might be Registry Editor Extensions that adds a drop-down history list

WINDOWS 98

There is a utility known as the Registry Checker. Each time Win98 starts, the Checker kicks in and inspects the Registry for any obvious flaws. It won't catch little problems that can drive you nuts like filenames extensions with wrong applications, etc. But it catches the big problems that can cause startup problems.

If it does find a problem, it backs up both SYSTEM.DAT & USER.DAT plus System.ini and Win.ini. The backups go in compressed form to a CAB file and stores in Windows/Sysbckup. It will store up to five of these, throwing out earlier versions as it brings in new versions.

If the Registry Checker finds errors on startup, it puts you in DOS-mode Windows98 StartUp Menu with a warning message - "Windows has detected a registry/configuration error". Follow the instructions to boot to a command prompt and then the Registry Checker takes over and automatically restores your most recent backups which will show you keys you've viewed or edited.

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November 1998
Coastal Area Users Group
Corpus Christi TX

SIG Notes:

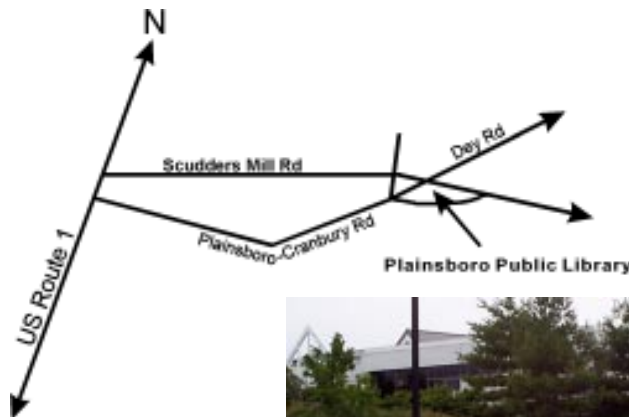
By Paul Kurivchack

The next and final meeting of the Windows SIG is scheduled for Wednesday December 30 at 8 P.M.

Due to the low turnout for the SIG meetings the Board has approved putting the Special Interest Groups on hiatus for the next six months.

The Board will try to determine a new format and direction for future SIG meetings.

We welcome any and all feedback for putting the SIG's back on-line.



The Plainsboro Library



PRINCETON PC USERS GROUP

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

PPCUG Member E-mail Directory

Name Last	First	E-Mail Address	Name Last	First	E-Mail Address
Abolins	John	jda-ir@pluto.njcc.com	Landis	Houston	judge@pluto.njcc.com
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(Last Update: 30 October 1998)

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

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Voice Mail, Win/NT Networks,

Phone Systems & Wiring

Provider of PPCUG Voice Messaging.



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Perry Weaver

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Meyda Online

John Abolins, Sysop

BBS: 609-883-8124

World Wide Web Home Page:

<http://www.meydabbs.com/~jda-ir/>

Consultants Corner

You can advertise your consulting business for \$25 per year in addition to your normal membership fee. The text space is your or your company's name plus five lines.

Membership Card Discounts

STM Robotics/Computers

825 State Highway Route 33

Hamilton, NJ 08619

Phone: (609) 587-3335

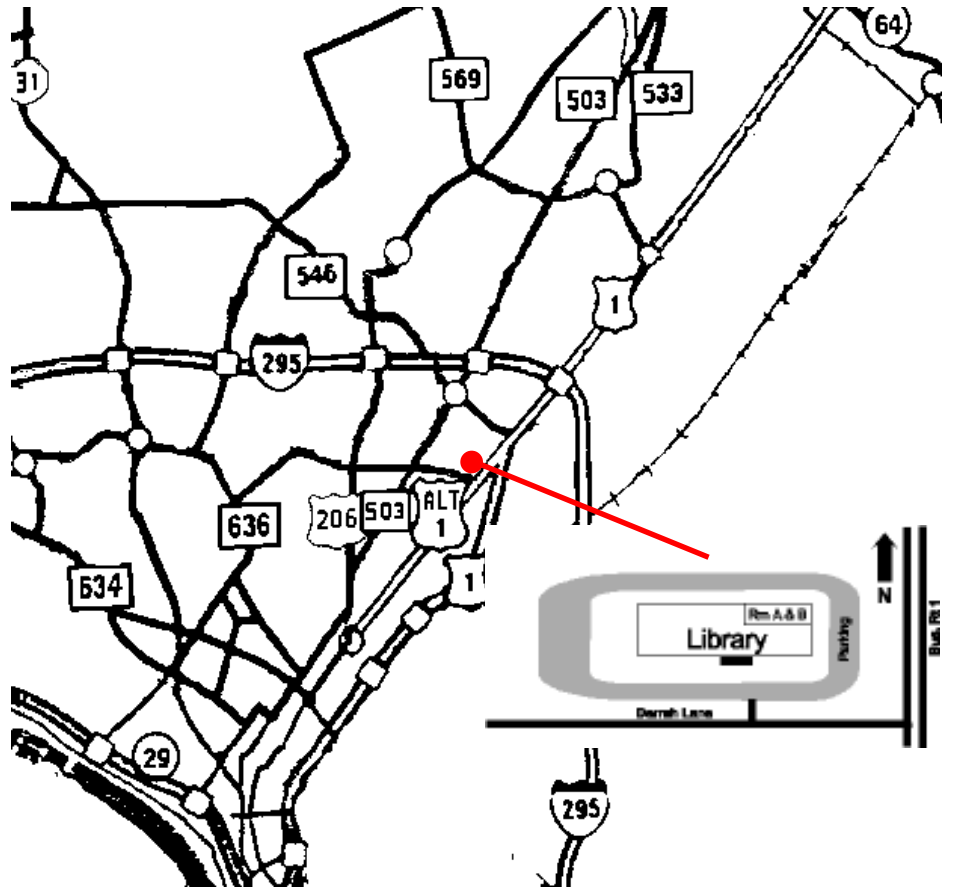
5% off all products and services.



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.



**Elections & Holiday Party
December 14, 1998
Lawrence Library**

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