



NEWS

A Publication Of The Princeton PC Users Group

Monday February 10, 2003

E-Bay Buying & Selling!

Martin Mosho and guest will explain the tricks of buying and selling all types of merchandise via the Web's largest auction site.

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

Presidents message

By: Clarke Walker

Because January 1, 2003 was on a Wednesday we in the Princeton area were treated to three excellent computer oriented meetings during the week of January 12th. Of course we had our meeting that Monday evening. On Tuesday (2nd Tuesdays of the month) the Princeton Macintosh Group met at Jadwin Hall on the Princeton University campus. They had a local speaker talk about creating video movies with the Macintosh. Then on Thursday (3rd Thursday of the month) the Princeton Chapter of the ACM and IEEE group met at Sarnoff Labs. At this meeting Professor Ed Felton spoke on The Freedom to Tinker.

Also on the first Tuesday of the month the Princeton Library holds a technology talk. Last month Doug Dixon, who spoke to us in September, gave a similar talk about The Digital Papyrus.

Like our group these other groups open their meetings to the public. I encourage you to check at their web sites and visit them.
Their web sites are:

ACM/IEEE Princeton Chapter <http://www.acm.org/chapters/princetonacm/>
Princeton Library <http://www.princeton.lib.nj.us/programs/adultprograms.html#tuesday>
Princeton Macintosh Users' Group <http://www.pmug-nj.org/>

Would some one like to give a talk on genealogy? Or know some one who could?

Finally, I want to thank everyone who voted for me to be your new President. And a special thanks to the other officers.

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About PPCUG

General Meetings

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

7:00-7:45 PM: Social Time

7:45 PM: Meeting Comes to Order

8 PM: Featured Presentation

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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.

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Something Free

By: Vic Laurie - PPCUG

At this time of year many people are still paying holiday bills and their pockets are a little light. So I am going to revisit the subject of obtaining free software from the Internet. Even in today's climate of "product activation" and increasingly stringent licensing requirements, there remains a surprising amount of good software that is free and obtainable just by downloading. To be sure, there is a lot of junk that is offered, but many quite useful and well-written programs are available. Many of them are from individuals trying to establish themselves as reputable writers of software or from small companies that wish to introduce you to their products. Quite a few are European, with a substantial Russian contingent these days. Although a lot of supposedly "free" software turns out to have strings attached, there are some genuinely free and useful programs. I will consider only this latter type and will not discuss shareware, trialware, adware, and other similar types that come with restrictions.

Everybody has their own favorites but in this article I will mention a few of the programs that I personally like. Please keep in mind the usual caveats that whatever you download should be checked for viruses and that nothing should be installed without backing up first.

An Excellent Graphics Program

I will begin with an all-time favorite, IrfanView 32. Over the years I have recommended this graphics program many times. Its author (Irfan Skiljan, a Bosnian living in Austria) has updated the program numerous times and has continued to add new functions. It is presently in version 3.75. Anyone who does not need a full-fledged (and expensive) graphics program like PhotoShop or Paint Shop Pro will find that this program serves most graphics needs. It is far superior to the accessories that come with Windows such as the Kodak imaging applet. It supports dozens of file formats and has numerous editing functions. In many ways it is the epitome of what a freeware program should be like. It is very fast and compact. There is no EULA and installation makes no system or Registry changes. If you want to associate various graphics file types with the program, you can do so but the choice is up to you. In addition to many editing functions, the program also has features such as creating a slide show, batch conversion, and twain support for scanning. To illustrate some of the features available, Figure 1 shows the File menu and Figure 2 shows the Image menu from the program. There are also other menus with additional functions.

The program can be downloaded at numerous sites, including <http://irfanview.tuwien.ac.at/english.htm>. It is completely free with no strings but the author deserves a contribution for his efforts.

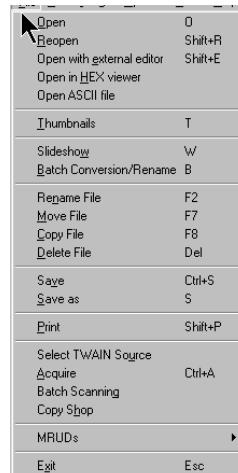


Figure 1. File Menu for IrfanView

Something Free continued on 4

Faxing from Windows XP

By: Don Arrowsmith - PPCUG

Faxing has always seemed like a relic of an older age to me, but there are situations when it just can't be avoided. If you have Windows XP (Home or Pro) and an internal or external modem that supports fax (and most do), you have all you need to handle sending and receiving faxes from the comfort of your home.

The software isn't installed by default with Windows XP but it's easy to add. Look at MS Knowledge Base article 306550 (<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;306550>) for a step by step procedure. In a nutshell, you use the Add or Remove Programs control panel and select Add/Remove Windows Components. Pick Fax Services, insert your Windows CD, and proceed to have the necessary files copied to your hard drive.

The Fax Service must be configured before you can use it. See the same MSKB article for the step by step list. You will be adding a name and phone number to be added to outgoing faxes (TSID) and to be returned to the sender when receiving faxes (CSID). You can also pick whether and how you want to receive faxes. Enabling the service to receive a fax will tie up your modem at all times. This may be problematic if you use a dialup ISP! If you can make your modem always available for faxing, you can choose between Automatic and Manual answer. If you have only one phone line, you will probably want to set Manual answer. Other options include automatic printing and saving an archive copy of received faxes. If you need to modify any of your answers at a later time, go to Start - All Programs - Accessories - Communications - Fax - Fax Console. In the Console, select Configure Fax from the tools menu.

Look at MSKB article 306662 for information on receiving faxes. If you have set up to Automatically receive faxes, the phone will be answered when it rings and the fax will be processed without intervention. When set to manually receive a fax, a Receive Now button will appear in the taskbar that can be clicked to begin the reception. Other ways to begin receiving are from the File menu of the Fax Console or from the Fax Monitor. The Fax Monitor can be started from the Tools menu of the Fax Console and provides progress updates.

The left pane of the Fax Console includes four folders: Incoming, Inbox, Outbox, and Sent. Incoming contains faxes currently being received. When they have completed, they will move to the Inbox. After you select the Inbox, the received faxes will appear in the right pane along with a date/time, originating fax number, size in bytes and pages, and a status indicator (Success, etc.).

You can then double click on a fax to have it open the Windows Picture and Fax Viewer. This is the same application that runs when you double click a picture file from Windows Explorer. You have the same options available along the bottom for Printing, Rotating, Zooming, Saving, etc. Alternately, you can right click the fax from the Console to select Save As, Print, Delete, etc. Faxes will also stay in the folder until deleted.

Sending a fax can be done directly from the Picture and Fax Viewer or almost any Windows application by choosing Fax as the printer to use. See MSKB article 306663 for guidance on how to fax a scanned document or a picture file and article 306661 to learn how to fax directly from a Windows program. Once you have directed your printing to Fax and clicked on Print, the Send Fax Wizard will begin. The first item concerns to whom to send the fax. You can enter names and numbers directly on the form or you can use your address book. Multiple recipients can be entered.

I use Outlook 2000 and have entered Contacts with their fax numbers for my usual recipients. If either a home or business fax is listed, that number is

used. If both are listed, a box appears asking for you to pick one. Of course, an error appears if no fax numbers are listed. I suggest that telephone numbers be entered in canonical form and that you have dialing rules set for your location(s). This allows Windows to correctly dial the number by including or suppressing the area code for the recipient. It will make your life much easier if you ever move, the phone company changes you to 10-digit dialing, or if you use a laptop at different locations. Make sure that you have included the code to defeat any Caller ID tones if you have that feature on your line (usually *70).

The next screen will ask about a cover page. If you initiate the fax by choosing "Send a Fax" from the File menu of the Console, you MUST send a cover sheet that includes at least a subject or notes. Preconfigured cover sheets are selected from a drop down list. There is also a Fax Cover Page Editor application to design your own personal cover pages. These are stored in the Fax folder of My Documents and will also be available in the drop down list. MSKB article 306657 discusses fax cover sheets. If you begin the wizard from an application, a cover sheet will not be required. The last screen of the wizard lets you assign a priority and specify when to send the fax - either immediately or at a later time.

Faxes to be sent appear in the Outgoing folder of the Console along with their status. When the fax is actually being sent, the Fax Monitor will appear and will display progress updates along with sounds during the call. If the called fax number is busy or a connection cannot be made, the fax will be rescheduled for a later time. Information about the retry will be listed in the Console.

Once the fax has been sent successfully, it will be moved to the Sent folder of the Console. As with incoming faxes, you can double click on a fax to see it in the Picture and Fax Viewer. These faxes are actually copies of the original documents and will remain here until deleted. You can delete them from the Console by right clicking and choosing "Delete".

This software is very easy to install, easy to use, very reliable, and has all the options I have ever needed. It's much more convenient than running off to the drugstore or Staples and I highly recommend it.

General Meeting Minutes January 13, 2003

By: Don Arrowsmith - Secretary PPCUG

The meeting opened at 7:50 with new president Clarke Walker asking for suggested topics for future meetings. Some ideas presented were: to have members bring and describe their digital cameras; photo printers; Flash software. Q&A included deleting temporary folders and Panda Anti-virus.

At 8 PM Paul Kurivchack began the main presentation on using PowerPoint. He started a short, self-running slide show with an example of each of the basic types of slides that can be made. These included the use of sounds, graphics, transitions, an org chart, font styles, sizes and colors. Paul then started a new presentation with PowerPoint and showed in detail how each slide was created. He began by stressing the importance of setting up proper title and slide master slides. Care spent on these will make later changes much easier. This link to a Microsoft site contains numerous tips for using PowerPoint: <http://search.office.microsoft.com/assistance/producttask.aspx?p=PowerPoint>.

The formal meeting ended at 9:10.



Figure 2. Image Menu for IrfanView

Protecting Yourself on the Internet

As the Internet has become truly global with hundreds of millions of participants, the number of annoyances and hazards has escalated. For example, viruses in attachments and the clogging of mailboxes with spam have become problems affecting all who use e-mail. Hackers try to plant Trojans on the computers of unwary surfers. Advertising techniques on web sites have become increasingly aggressive and intrusive. The various problems have been discussed in some detail in previous articles, which can be read at www.vlaur.com. Here I will mention a few of the many programs that are available to deal with these problems.

MailWasher- For those who do not have really heavy mail volume (and do not use AOL) this may be the single best program available for filtering e-mail. It works on any POP3 mail server. With it, you can check out mail on the mail server (or multiple servers) before you have actually downloaded the mail to your own computer. Any mail that you do not want you can delete directly from the server(s). You can also bounce unwanted mail back to the sender with a message that you are unknown at that address. Although spammers will likely ignore (or not even receive) these bounces, there is a certain psychological satisfaction in zapping spam. Addresses of known spammers and other undesirables can be put on a blacklist. This program is also a good way to avoid inadvertently opening dangerous attachments. Message bodies and headers can be previewed while messages are still on the server, giving you a chance to assess mail before downloading it. Viewing message bodies before downloading also precludes any HTML "bugs" from telling spammers that the message has been read. Figure 3 shows some of the available options.



Figure 3. MailWasher options

The program is available at <http://www.mailwisher.net>. It can be used without payment but it comes with an unobtrusive scrolling section asking that it be registered with a contribution.

ZoneAlarm- These days everyone who uses the web should have a firewall. There are good commercial ones but the excellent free version of ZoneAlarm from ZoneLabs should be sufficient for most home PC users. ZoneAlarm also comes in a commercial version for businesses or those who want some more features. Firewalls are necessary, not only to keep hackers from coming into your computer, but also to keep Trojan horses and spyware from using your computer to send out to the Internet. Note that the firewall that comes with Windows XP can only block incoming probes and does not monitor outgoing signals. For that reason, I do not regard the XP firewall to be sufficient protection and I believe that it should be replaced. Make sure to disable it before installing another firewall. Only one firewall at a time should be running. ZoneAlarm is available at <http://www.zonelabs.com/store/content/home.jsp>. Look for the link to the free version.

AdAware and Spybot S&D- As spyware becomes more and more prevalent, anyone who downloads any programs from the web needs to have the ability to check for hidden software that might be running on their system. One of the most widely used programs is AdAware from LavaSoft. It can be downloaded at <http://www.lavasoft.de>. However, some people have recently been complaining that the program is not being kept up to date although LavaSoft has promised that a new version (6.0) will be coming soon. An alternative program is Spybot Search & Destroy, which can be downloaded at <http://spybot.eon.net.au>.

Pop-Up Stopper- To help combat those annoying, in-your-face advertising tactics on the web such as pop-ups, use the free program, Pop-Up Stopper, available at http://www.panicware.com/product_downloads.html. (Does not work with AOL) There is also a heftier, commercial version. Note of caution: not all pop-up windows are bad. Sometimes you will block a window that you actually want. Holding down the CTRL key will temporarily allow pop-ups.

PC Magazine

I will end this article by mentioning the veritable treasure trove of useful freeware that is available from PC Magazine at <http://www.pcmag.com/category2/0,4148,2130,00.asp>. Over the years, Neil Rubenking and his colleagues have performed a real service to the computing community by turning out one handy application after the other. In past articles, I have mentioned many of these, including StartUp Cop, Cookie Cop, ContextEdit, and EndItAll, Although some of the older ones may not work in Windows XP, updated versions of many are available. All that have been written since XP came out are compatible with Windows 98/Me and XP. A recent one that I like is UnClean 2.0, which provides an improved uninstall process. PC Magazine now requires registration in order to download but the benefits are well worth this small inconvenience. Registration is free.





PRINCETON PC USERS GROUP

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

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(Last Update: February 1, 2003)
Send Updates to kurivchp@optonline.net for inclusion in this listing.

2003 General Meeting Schedule

- January 13, 2003 – Monday
- February 10, 2003 – Monday
- March 10, 2003 – Monday
- April 14, 2003 – Monday
- May 12, 2003 – Monday
- June 9, 2003 – Monday
- July 14, 2003 – Monday
- August 11, 2003 – Monday
- September 8, 2003 – Monday
- October 20, 2003 – Monday* - Third Monday
- November 10, 2003 – Monday
- December 8, 2003 – Monday

Consultants Corner

Meyda Online

“Meyda means Information”

J.D. Abolins

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Specialties: Information Security, Privacy Issues,
and Web Publishing

<http://www.meydabbs.com>

E-mail: jda-ir@njcc.com

Consultants Corner

You can advertise your consulting business for \$25 per year in addition to your normal membership fee.

Disk Investigator™

By: Robert A Lewis, The Dayton Microcomputer Association, Inc. Dayton, OH

Here's a new utility that members might find useful. Disk Investigator is freeware.

Disk Investigator™ Version 1.3 -- FREEWARE - (Only 0.5 Mb)

Discover all that is hidden on your hard disk - (for Win95, Win98, WinME, WinNT, Win2000, WinXP) -

What is Disk Investigator? - Disk Investigator helps you to discover all that is hidden on your computer hard disk. It can also help you to recover lost data.

Display the true drive contents by bypassing the operating system and directly reading the raw drive sectors. View and search raw directories, files, clusters, and system sectors. Verify the effectiveness of file and disk wiping programs. Undelete previously deleted files.

Download at: <http://www.theabsolute.net/sware/dskinv.html>

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