PPCUG*NEWS*

A PUBLICATION OF THE PRINCETON PC USERS GROUP

The Linux Desktop

Kim Goldenberg

Monday, September 10, 2007

The Linux operating system is free and runs on PC hardware. Linux has a powerful desktop and powerful free applications. The speaker will demonstrate the Linux desktop and some of the free Linux applications. He will discuss the advantages of switching to Linux for everyday needs.

Kim Goldenberg has been working with computers for over thirty-five years, and with PCs for almost twenty of those years. Linux has been his passion for about eight years now and is Linux Professional Institute (LPI) Level 1 certified.

Lawrence Library
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
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.

In this issue:

Upcoming Schedule

October 15 ------- John LeMasney — Firefox Browser Extensions
November 5 ----- -Janie Hermann and Karen Klapperstuck
-------------------- — Social Software: Hype vs. Reality
December 10 ---- -Member's party
January 14, 2008 ----- tba

About PPCUG

General Meetings

Second Monday of the month at the Lawrenceville Library, Alternate Route 1 and Darrah Lane.
7:00 PM: Social Time / Tech Corner
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
(Please include "OK" in the subject line.)

Board Meetings

Board meetings are open to all members. Notice of an upcoming meeting will be posted on the web site.

Board Members

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2007 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.

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President's Message

This past meeting was one of the largest in attendance we have had in several months. I think this is a result of the "information age" merging with Internet search utilities. Everyone who has a computer is connected to the Internet. Were as emailing is probably the most used activity I think more and more people are using the Internet to find information. And there are many sources and ways of searching for information.

Joel May did a great job of introducing us to additional ways of obtaining information from the Google company. He clearly raised the bar on doing presentations with PowerPoint.

This month member Kim Goldenburg will update us on the Linux operating system.
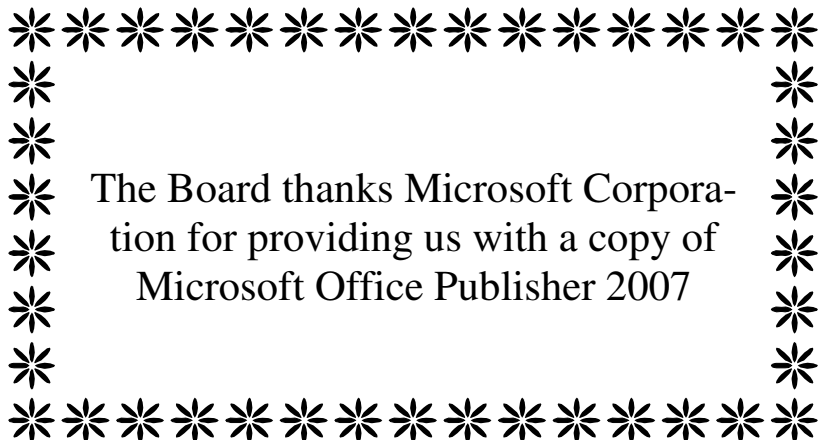
- *Clarke Walker*

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Link of the Month

We all admire the photography in the National Geographic Magazine. Here you can look at more photos and get wallpaper for your virtual desk:

http://photography.nationalgeographic.com/photography/wallpapers

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

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The Board thanks Microsoft Corporation for providing us with a copy of Microsoft Office Publisher 2007

Minutes of the August Meeting

Joel May by Clarke Walker

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

Clarke thanked the large crowd for coming out and acknowledge the appearance of author Nancy Blachman,

Joel May talked about "Some Things You Might Not Know About Google". Information on his talk can be found at http://snipurl.com/somethings and http://snipurl.com/googlereferences.

- Submitted by Clarke Walker

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Pictures from the August Meeting
by Clarke Walker, Clarke_Walker (at) yahoo.com
Member of the Princeton PC Users Group

Author Nancy Blachman

Joel and Milt

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What is APCUG?
It's the Association of Personal Computer User Groups.

by Eugene Freeman, eugene.Freeman (at) ericksonresident.com
Editor, Henry Ford Village Computer Club, Dearborn, Michigan

IF Yes! Then have you explored the many other clubs located in the USA, Canada, Japan and Australia that are also members? If not, you are missing something.

IF No! And you are interested in finding out—click on http://www.apcug.net
Oh! Too much to click on, of course. Start with Newsletters → then Online newsletters
→ States → Pick the State you want.

What state should I pick first?
Why not Michigan? The Henry Ford Village Computer Club AND the SouthEastern Michigan Computer Organization, Inc. http://www.semco.org/ are members of APCUG.

OR—Find Florida in the list of states & click on Central Florida Computer Society. http://www.cfcs.org/newsletter.asp

OR—Find the MOTHERBOARD, a publication of the Computer Users Group of Redding, CA. Of course look in the California list of clubs. http://users.snowcrest.net/ibmpcugr

Ohio is near—check out http://www.acpcug.org/site3/presentations.htm (Akron Canton PC Users Group) and click on Past Newsletters.

Look at all the sites you can contact from their Web site. There are over 300 Computer Clubs that belong to APCUG.

Why Bother?
Of course, to read the Computer Club newsletters—current & past issues— and find what they are doing.

Get helpful tips and tricks that other Club members have found and are sharing. If you find a good one to share, send it to your Editor.

Try Canada, our neighbor. Big Blue & Cousins: http://bbs.bbc.org/newsletter/index.php

Tell us what you find of interest to you that you think our Club should consider doing.

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Apple's New Safari Browser for WINDOWS

by Ira Wilsker, Iwilsker (at) apcug.net
APCUG Director; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, Texas

Websites:

http://www.apple.com/safari
http://www.apple.com/safari/download/plugins.html

Apple recently released a free version of its Safari 3 browser for Windows. While this is the first public release of an Apple produced browser for Windows, many of us already have some Apple software on our computers. Many of us have viewed QuickTime videos on our computers, and QuickTime is a long standing Apple product.

One may ask why Apple would produce a browser for Windows, when there are other, well established Windows browsers available. Microsoft's Internet Explorer still has the vast majority of Windows browser market, followed in distant second by Firefox, and then Opera and Netscape. According to published reports, Apple sees Safari 3 for Windows as a marketing tool to better acquaint Windows users with Apple products, in the hopes that they would buy more Apple offerings, such as the new iPhone. The default startup page for Safari, which is easy to change, is an Apple marketing and support website.

I already have four browsers installed on my main computer, with Firefox being my primary browser, followed by Internet Explorer with occasional use, and Opera and Netscape which I only rarely use. There is no conflict or problem having more than one browser installed, as they do not interfere with each other. Despite what I already have installed, curiosity dictated that I download and install Safari 3. Clicking on the download link at www.apple.com/safari offered the choice of two Windows downloads, a 28 meg download of Safari with QuickTime for XP or Vista, or a smaller 8 meg download of just the Safari for XP and Vista. As may be already obvious, Safari for Windows will only run on computers with XP or Vista.

Apple has done a good job trying to create demand for Safari for Windows, by proximately posting relative performance information on the main Safari website. According to Apple, Safari can load web pages about twice as fast as Internet Explorer version 7, and 1.6 times faster than Firefox. Java scripts execute 2.8 times faster in Safari 3 than they do in Internet Explorer 7, and 1.6 times faster than Firefox. Application load time of Safari 3 is also faster than Internet Explorer or Firefox, while the much smaller Opera loads in about the same time as Safari 3. If Apple's claimed performance advantage survives scrutiny of the trade media, then it may indeed have an edge in the highly competitive market.

I downloaded the full version of Safari 3 with QuickTime. And it installed smoothly with minimal effort. Upon loading Safari 3 the first time, it was immediately apparent that the look and feel of Safari is definitely Apple-esque. While the interface was clean and intuitive, it lacked some of the flair and color of Internet Explorer and Firefox, with a flat gray toolbar and border, which Apple calls "elegant". The commands and structure of the toolbar are similar to other browsers, and required a "zero" learning curve. As is now universal in other recent browser releases, Safari 3 offers tabbed browsing, where multiple browser windows can be sequentially opened in a single application.   Safari 3 is a full featured browser, with easy

to use bookmarks, an integral pop-up blocker, integrated search function, auto-completion of forms, a built in RSS reader, and other features. One somewhat unique feature is "SnapBack", which allows the user to quickly return to previously viewed web pages more efficiently than using the "back" button. An interesting privacy feature is the "Private Browsing" feature (found in the "Edit" menu), which turns off any saving or record of websites visited (history), searches made, cookies received, forms filled, and other current information. In terms of security, Safari 3 supports all of the major internet encryption standards, and proxy configurations. One feature I liked is that Safari 3 automatically imported the bookmarks from my other browsers, allowing me immediate access to the websites I typically visit using those other browsers.

Safari 3 allows the use of plug-ins, much like Firefox. Unlike the well established Firefox, with thousands of open source plug-ins available, the recently released Safari 3 only lists six plug-ins at its site at www.apple.com/safari/download/plugins.html. These six plug-ins offer features that may already be integrated into other browsers, such as an Acrobat PDF viewer, Java, Flash viewer, Real Player, QuickTime, and Windows Media Player. As Safari 3 gains popularity among Windows users, it is conceivable that more plug-ins may appear.

There is a potentially interesting feature built into Safari 3 that I personally do not yet feel comfortable with, but others may find very useful; this feature is "Bonjour for Windows". Bonjour (www.apple.com/bonjour) allows the user to network computers, printers, and other smart devices through the Safari 3 browser. Bonjour uses the open standard IP protocol, and can connect items hard wired through an Ethernet cable, or wirelessly through an 802.11 system. One example that Apple lists is using Bonjour to automatically configure a printer by going to an appropriate Bonjour compatible website which provides the information to configure the printer. Apple lists printers from Brother, Canon, Epson, HP, Lexmark, and Xerox that are compatible with the Bonjour feature.

In using Safari 3 for Windows for a few days, I noticed some interesting usability features. One I especially liked was the feature that allows the size of the screen fonts to be instantly changed, which may improve readability of a web page. The feature in Safari 3 is identical to the same feature in Firefox, and uses the same command (CTRL +) to make the fonts larger, and "CTRL –" to make them smaller. This feature in Safari 3 is superior and more flexible than the method used in Internet Explorer to change font sizes. In terms of readability, most web sites were easier to read in Safari 3 than in Internet Explorer 7. I did notice some minor negative difference between Safari and the others, and that was in terms of page formatting. One minor annoyance was displayed when viewing my weather page (www.beaumontweather.com) which is written in fairly pure HTML, the basic web page language. On Safari 3 some items that used the HTML "center" command did not appear centered, while the same items looked fine in Firefox or Internet Explorer. On some other pages, such as the starting page for a local TV station, some graphics do not appear to load at first, but this is usually rectified by reloading the page. Except for these anomalies, almost all other web pages I visited appeared correctly, and were very readable.

I found Safari 3 to be an attractive alternative to Internet Explorer, and may be of interest to those who might want to try something different in terms of a browser. It is clean and full featured, as is typical for Apple products. As another free browser, users may want to download it and try it.

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Exploring Windows Explorer – Part 2

by Jim Sanders, Vicepresident (at) noccc.org
Vice President, North Orange County Computer Club, California, www.noccc.org

This is part two of Exploring Windows Explorer with the idea of learning how useful this tool can be.

There are several ways to bring up Windows explorer. Click means left click unless preceded by the word right. In no particular order:

1. Click on Start, hover the mouse pointer over All Programs till the window with all options appears, click on Accessories to open the sub-window, then click on Windows explorer. On most machines, it will open with the My Documents directory/folder highlighted and expanded.

2. Right click on Start to open the options window, click on Windows Explorer. On most machines, it will open with the Start Menu directory/folder highlighted and expanded. This is usually down four directory levels with the path - Local

Disk (C:)/Documents and Settings/(current user name for that machine)/Start Menu.

3. Click on Start, on the default XP menu, click on My Computer, this opens Windows Explorer in the Task Pane mode. This is also true if you click on My Documents, My Pictures, My Music, or My Network Places. For most people this means navigating down a path one directory at a time, then backing out one directory at a time with the left arrow in the green circle. If you have followed the advice in part 1, at least you can see the path to where you are at in the address bar. Very few people that use this mode make use of the history file provided by the little down arrows next to the left and right arrows. The history files can speed up navigation quite a bit, but in my opinion are nowhere near as efficient as having the Folders Pane visible instead of the Task Pane. Clicking on the Folders icon in the Menu Bar causes the full tree structure to be displayed in the left hand pane. That allows much more efficient navigation of the files on your disk(s).

4. Double click on the My Computer icon on the desktop - takes you to the same place as #3.

5. Depressing either Windows key (the ones with the MS flag icon and the word "start" on them) and then tapping the "E" key, opens Windows Explorer in the Folder mode with My Computer highlighted.

6. Depressing either Windows key, and then tapping the "F" key, opens Windows Explorer in the Search mode with the left pane asking: "What do you want to search for?" You then have the option os choosing several different categories of search including my most common choice – All files and folders.

7. Clicking on Start and then Search opens Windows Explorer in the same mode as #6.

8. Right click on start, then click on Search, opens Windows Explorer in the Search mode with the left pane stating: "Search by any or all of the criteria below." This is the same location you end up at if you choose path #6 and then click on – All files and folders.

But wait, if that's not enough ways to open Windows Explorer, there's more!

9. You can make Windows Explorer part of the start menu with the following sequence: Start -> All Programs -> Accessories -> right-click on Windows Explorer -> Pin to Start menu

10. You can put a Windows Explorer icon in the Quick Launch portion of the Taskbar with this sequence: right click Start, click explorer, click on the WINDOWS folder, in the right pane, scroll down to explorer.exe and right click it, when the option window opens, click on "create shortcut", place the mouse cursor over the new shortcut, depress and hold the right mouse button then drag the new shortcut to the Quick Launch part of the Taskbar. Release the right mouse button and click on "Move Here." What!, you say you don't have a Quick Launch area, probably because the XP default for that feature is set to disable. You can fix that by right clicking on the Taskbar, hovering over the Toolbars entry till the options window opens, then click on the Quick Launch entry to set a check mark next to it and enable that feature. Once the icon is in place, a single click on the Windows Explorer icon will launch it.

11. You can put a Windows Explorer icon desktop with this sequence: right click Start, click explorer, click on the WINDOWS folder, in the right pane, scroll down to explorer.exe and right click it, when the option window opens click on create shortcut, then click and drag the new shortcut to the desktop. Right click on the shortcut icon you just created and when the option window opens, click on properties. When the properties window opens, click on the Shortcut tab and edit the Target line to have Window Explorer open with the directory of your choice displayed. This is an example of an edited Target line: C:\WINDOWS\explorer.exe /e, /root,c: /select,C:\Documents and Settings\Jim.LIAN-LI\My Documents\NOCCC related files. By substituting the path of your choice for the "C:\Documents and Settings\Jim.LIAN-LI\My Documents\NOCCC related files" portion of the above example, you can have Windows Explorer open and display the directory of your choice.
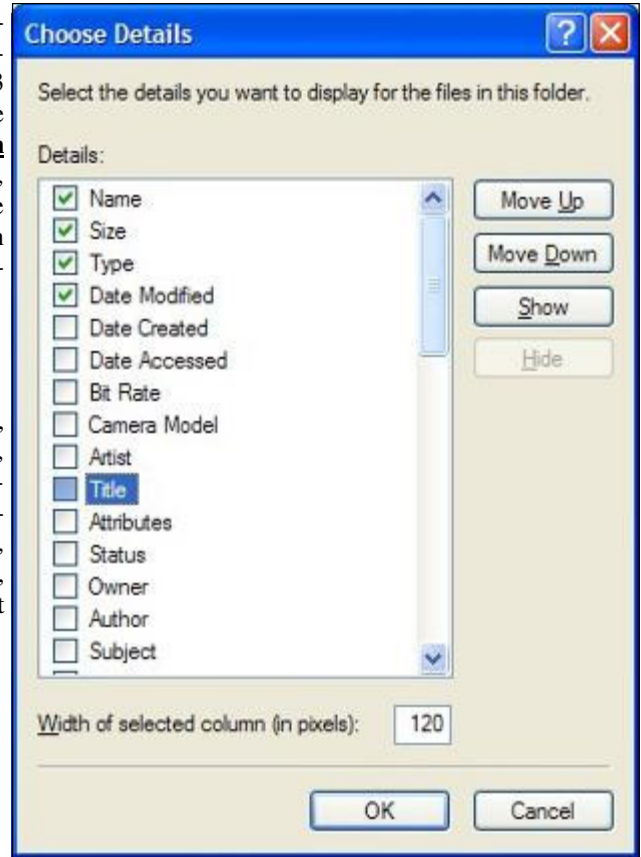
As noted in part 1, the default columns that are displayed in the Window Explorer detail view are: Name, Size, Type, Date Modified. But you should know that they are just four of the 45 possible column types. Not all column types are pertinent for a given file type. For example, Bit Rate is not going to be very useful in a directory full of *.jpg or *.tif files. Camera Model is not very useful in a directory full of *.mp3 files. As hard disks are humongous today (see article -**How big is a 300**

GB hard disk), more and more people have large collections of pictures, video, music and Microsoft Office document files on their computer (and far too many are not backed up). The ID3 headers on MP3 files can provide a lot of information about each track. To easily see that information, you need to turn on more column details. You **can not** break anything by playing with these options. Click on <u>V</u>iew, when the menu opens, click on Choose Details, click on an item in the list to place a check mark in the box which activates the feature, then click on a directory and look at the results. If you don't like the results, repeat the procedure to remove the check mark and it is gone.

The following is the complete list of possible column types:

Name, Size, Type, Date Modified, Dimensions, Title, Date Created, Date Accessed, Attributes, Status, Owner, Author, Subject, Category, Pages, Comments, Copyright, Artist, Album Title, Year, Track Number, Genre, Duration, Bit Rate, Protected, Camera Model, Date Picture Taken, Episode Name, Program Description, Audio sample size, Audio sample rate, Channels, Company, Description, File Version, Product Name, Product Version, Profile, Width, Height, Duration, Bit Rate, Frame Rate, Sample Rate, Keywords.

There will be more in part 3.

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All unattributed articles are solely the fault of the editor.