



# The Cursor



Monthly Newsletter of the  
Washington Area Computer Users Group

Meeting Location:  
Fairfax County  
Government Center



Next Meeting:  
April 16, 2005

## Presidential Bits

By Paul Howard



April 15, 2005

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At the March meeting, we got to see the continued evolution of Adobe Photoshop Elements, version 3, as Chuck Roberts demonstrated some of the latest features of this powerful image editing package. The latest version incorporates a wide range of features for organizing your digital photo collection, quickly appreciated as hundreds of images begin to accumulate from your camera.

### April Meeting: Managing Personal Finances with a Spreadsheet (Excel)

So, now that you've got that personal computer, what are you going to use it for? Managing household finances is one of the applications that comes to mind for most folks. There are a variety of commercial packages out there, and we've featured several meetings on Quicken software and how several of our members use it to avoid chaos in their personal financial life.

In April, WAC's Bob Mason will discuss how he makes use of the Microsoft spreadsheet program Ex-

cel to keep track of his checkbook, and in planning and budgeting his personal finances.

### Hot Video From Las Vegas:

### Highlights from the 2005 Consumer Electronics Show

Geof Goodrum, WAC's Membership Chair and LINUX SIG leader, attended the APCUG annual meeting, and one of the biggest annual conventions in the US, the Consumer Electronics Show, in January. Hear Geof's impressions and see video of the latest in technology gadgets from this year's premier event.





## Lu Spriggs Web Sites for April 2005

<http://wacug.org/>— is the URL for the Washington Area Computer User Group. Visit it for past versions of Sprigg's Web Sites w/hyperlinks.

1. <http://www.ipodder.org/>  
– Download Ipodder1.1.4 at 5.8 MByte. This program receives podcasts, which are dialog files to fit on your Ipod, and listen at your leisure. This site will show you the address for various podcasts. Be sure to read the Readme file!
2. <http://www.winpatrol.com/>  
– Close the door to Spyware with this free program. 1 MByte download. Ver. 9.0.0. Read the HELP file!
3. <http://parentsmedguide.org/>  
– Visit this site for advice on how to help childrew with depression.
4. <http://localsearch.aol.com/>  
– This search site is open to non-AOL members. It puts information about local activities, movies, or businesses sorted by geography. You must enter a location with zip code to guide the search.
5. <http://www.browser.netscape.com/>  
– This is a beta version of Netscape 8.0 based largely on the open-source code for Firefox browser. It includes a 'blacklist' of Web sites known to be dangerous, and a list of sites thought to be trustworthy. It is an 11 MB download! The 'EULA' fine print, which you must accept, is quite extensive and long winded.
6. <http://www.mozilla.org/products/firefox/>  
– Download Firefox 1.0.2 to correct a buffer overrun problem. The download is about 5 MByte.
7. <http://www.govbenefits.com/>  
– Links to many state and federal assistance programs.
8. <http://www.howtocleananything.com/>  
– Get a jump on your home cleaning regimen with 1000-plus tips.
9. <http://pathnet.org/>  
– PATH (Partnership for Advancing Technology in Housing) offers a way to implement innovative technologies.
10. <http://papercrete.com/>  
– This site describes alternate building materials; papercrete combines recycled paper with concrete resulting in lightweight, stronger building blocks. Other recycled material combinations are also described here.
11. <http://www.blinkx.com/>  
– Free download of Blinkx, a desk-top file-search tool for Win XP. Version 2.0.11 beta is a 7.2 MByte download. Installation takes 3-5 minutes.



### NCTCUG

Visit our "sister" user group. The National Capital Technology and Computer User's Group meets the first and fourth Wednesday of the month. They meet in Carlin Hall in Arlington at 5711 South 4<sup>th</sup> Street. Visit their web site for more information, a map and directions:

<http://www.nctcug.org/>



## GNU/Linux SIG

By Geof Goodrum

### DShield.org Fights Back!

One of my favorite free online services is DShield.org, a distributed intrusion detection system. By collecting firewall logs submitted voluntarily by users all over the Internet, DShield.org can analyze network attacks as they develop, who the attackers are, and notify the attackers' Internet Service Providers (ISPs) about their clients' network abuse. Often the attackers turn out to be home computer systems taken over by malicious software without the owners knowledge.

DShield.org provides many useful graphics and tables describing current attack trends and where they are coming from. You can also check whether your own computer is listed as an attacker in their database. The site also provides tools and instructions for submitting many types of firewall logs to the service.

One site feature is the "FightBack Responses of the Week" that lists replies from ISPs notified about attackers on their networks. Here is one of the funnier entries I've seen in a long time:

Date: Mon, 7 Feb 2005  
16:25:43 -0500

This user has been locked in the trunk of a 1980 Cadillac along with his PC and has been driven up and down a very bumpy road for several hrs and we believe that the problem is now resolved.

Thank you for the report

Don't get listed on Dshield.org! Use a firewall and keep your antivirus software updated. And if you really want to fight the bad guys, submit your firewall logs to Dshield.org.

### Linspire Five-O Released

Linspire, Inc. announced the release of their latest GNU/Linux distribution, Linspire Five-O, on March 16. Some features of this release include: kernel 2.6.10; KDE 3.3 plus; X.org 6.8.2; OpenOffice 1.1.3 application suite; Lsongs Music Manager; Lphoto Photo Manager; Lassist suite with reminders, calendar, address book; built-in VPN and enhanced firewall for secure networking; and voice-narrated tutorials. Linspire also includes built-in support for BitTorrent, a popular peer-to-peer networking protocol for fast downloads. A complete list of new features is at <http://linspire.com/newfeatures/>.

A digital download is available now for \$49.95. A download version with a one-year subscription to Linspire's Click'n'Run (CNR) software download service is \$89.95. Boxed versions are also available through retailers.

If you would like to give Linspire Five-O a try, a LiveCD version, LinspireLive!, is available as a free BitTorrent download CD image file at [http://media.linspire.com/cnr\\_linspirelive/index.html](http://media.linspire.com/cnr_linspirelive/index.html) (copies are also available through WACUG

by request). This version allows the user to run the entire operating system and applications directly off the CD without installing to a hard drive. For a limited time, those trying out LinspireLive! can purchase the installable Linspire Five-O version and receive a one year subscription to the CNR service for free (a \$40 value).

### Trainers Sought

7 Hills Media, is looking for individuals to help develop courseware for Red Hat Enterprise Linux, as well as many other products. 7 Hills Media Group's training courses are developed for nationally recognized training brands and accessed by thousands of active professional users. Most work effort can be performed at the trainer's home or office location. Requirements include: 2-3+ years or comparable experience in the subject matter area; prior classroom, certifications, authoring, technical writing and/or training lab experience is a plus; strong English verbal and writing skills; minimal writing effort required; availability to travel on weekday or weekend to VA studio location for 1-2 days on-site video taping, if required. The majority of content is audio or video-based delivery.

If you are interested, send your resume and credentials to Training Coordinator Lee Graham ([lgraham@7hillsmediagroup.com](mailto:lgraham@7hillsmediagroup.com)). You may also send questions to the same address.

*Linux continues page 4*

## New Kernel Numbering Scheme

In March, Linux kernel creator Linus Torvalds continued a long-standing debate about how kernel releases are numbered. Traditionally, kernels are numbered *a.b.c*, where *a* is the major release and *c* is the minor release (mostly bug fixes, security fixes and other improvements). Even-numbered *b* indicates a stable release and odd-numbered *b* indicates a development release with significant new (and possibly buggy) features. For example, the current stable kernel release is 2.6.11 and the last development release (before the stable 2.6 series) was 2.5.75. In between minor releases are “pre-releases” followed by “release candidates,” indicated by appending a sequentially numbered -pre and -rc suffix, respectively (e.g. 2.6.10-pre3 and 2.6.10-rc1). Pre and rc releases are used to test fixes before they receive wider distribution. Just to make things more complicated, individual kernel developers release their own versions by appending their initials (e.g., Alan Cox released a kernel 2.6.11-ac6).

After considering different approaches, Linus decided to add a fourth digit *d* to the kernel numbers for releases with trivial patches and eliminate the -pre suffix entirely. Greg KH volunteered to manage the trivial patch 2.6.*c.d* releases, while Linus will be responsible for the 2.6.*c* and -rc releases.

Okay, this is confusing and even Linus admits it is not perfect. The numbering scheme will probably change again at some point. Luckily, only kernel hackers really need to understand these details. Major

GNU/Linux distribution vendors release their own kernel updates, as needed, and provide their customers with the tools to keep systems updated.

## From Mozilla to SeaMonkey

The Mozilla Foundation announced the end of development for the Mozilla Internet Suite of applications (an integrated web browser, web page editor, chat client, and e-mail/newsgroup client). The organization reasserted the suite’s project name, SeaMonkey, to distinguish it from other Mozilla projects and will continue sustaining maintenance, including security updates, for the 1.7.x branch (1.7.6 was released on March 21 to fix security vulnerabilities). Future efforts will focus on a leadership driven open source

development model for standalone toolkit applications, including the Firefox web browser and Thunderbird e-mail client, a web page composer and others.

However, the Mozilla Foundation contributed a community support page at [http://wiki.mozilla.org/SeaMonkey:Home\\_Page](http://wiki.mozilla.org/SeaMonkey:Home_Page) for those wishing to continue development of the SeaMonkey suite. The community project is getting organized now and is actively seeking user participation.

The Mozilla Foundation published a new project roadmap, with a complete explanation of the SeaMonkey decision, at <http://www.mozilla.org/roadmap.html>.



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# Linux CD of the Month

By Geof Goodrum

In addition to the CD-R discs described below, I can provide any downloadable GNU/Linux operating system distribution (e.g. Fedora Core, Mandrake, Debian, Knoppix) on CD-R. Note: download versions of commercial distributions do not include official technical support or printed documentation.

Discs are available only to WAC members by pre-order. Contact me by phone (703-370-7649) or e-mail ([ggoodrum@bigfoot.com](mailto:ggoodrum@bigfoot.com)) at least 48 hours before meeting day to order or for more information. Single discs cost \$4 each; GNU/Linux distributions on two or three discs cost \$6 per set. All executable programs are for Intel x86 compatible Linux distributions unless stated otherwise. Your requests and suggestions are always welcome!

**Scramble** – v0.9.5. Free GNU General Public License source code by Shifty Games and executable package for Mandrake 9.2 and SUSE 9.0. Scramble is an anagram based puzzle game. You are given 6 letters. From these 6 letters you are to create as many words as you can before the time runs out. You must find at least 40% of all the words or the largest word in the set in order to continue to the next level. Requires SDL (included in most distributions).

**LinkChecker** – v2.7. Free GNU General Public License source code and executable RPM package by Bastian Kleineidam. With LinkChecker, you can check HTML documents for broken links. It features recursion, robots.txt exclusion protocol support, HTTP proxy sup-

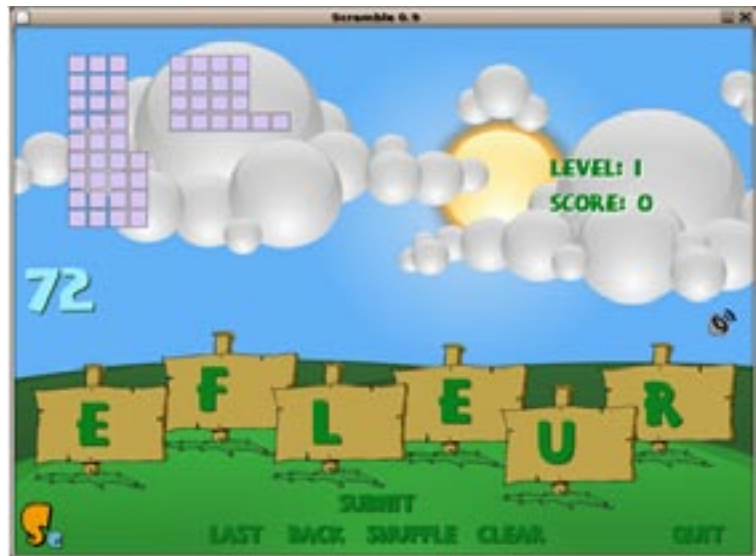
port, i18n support, multithreading, regular expression filtering rules for links, and user/password checking for authorized pages. Output can be colored or normal text, HTML, SQL, CSV, or a sitemap graph in DOT, GML, or XML format. Supported link types are HTTP/1.1 and 1.0, HTTPS, FTP, mailto:, news:, nntp:, Gopher, Telnet, and local files.

**Mozilla** – v1.7.6. Free Mozilla Public License source code and executable by the Mozilla Foundation. Mozilla is an integrated suite of Internet applications, including a full-featured web browser, web page editor, Internet Relay Chat client, and e-mail/newsgroup client. This release fixes recently discovered security vulnerabilities as well as many bugs. Mozilla requires at

least a Pentium 233 Mhz processor, 64 MB RAM, and Linux kernel 2.2.14 or later with the following libraries or packages: glibc 2.2.4 or higher; gtk+ 1.2.0 (1.2.5 or greater preferred); XFree86 3.3.6 or higher, or any xorg; libstdc++5 (newer distros may include libstdc++6 instead, which is not backward compatible). Mozilla has been tested with Red Hat 7.0.

**GNU/Linux Distribution Updates** - Security and bug fix monthly updates for Fedora Core 3.

**Kernel Source** - The latest versions of 2.4 and 2.6 kernel source code for all platforms.



*Scramble*

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# Keeping Up

By Paul Howard

## Software Upgrades

It's the season for updating. About this time of year, when it's time to buy tax software, I usually take advantages of the offers for low or no cost upgrades to my antivirus software. This year I got snookered when I went to Office Depot - lots of tax software, but the combination of Norton Antivirus (NAV) and firewall software packages I desired weren't available. My option was paying for them, leaving my phone number, and hoping they'd call me when their stock arrived.

As a result, I've been getting things in dribs and drabs, and couldn't find the "3 pack" of Norton Antivirus software I wanted before I had to update (read "pay \$24.95 online") the AV definitions subscription on my backup desktop system. Needless to say, the "3 pack" came available, and on sale for \$20 after rebates, a week later. That will give me a spare installation of NAV, should I acquire another computer over the next year.

In the interim, I bought a copy of Norton SystemWorks 2005, which includes NAV, Norton Utilities, GoBack, Checkit Diagnostics, and System Optimizer. Reviewing the manual before installation, (What a concept!) I saw that one of the steps was a system scan for viruses. I chose instead to make sure my current NAV installation was updated with the latest definitions, and ran a scan, knowing that any definition files on the installation CD would be months old (in fact, dated to August, '04).

After completing the installation of the SystemWorks software, check-

ing the "Live Update" feature revealed the need for nearly 9 megs of update downloads. Being "Mr. Dialup," I let the download proceed while watching TV, and then did another scan of the system to eliminate the annoying flag on the status screen chastising me for not having done a complete scan of the system.

When I started to use the features of the software, I noticed that some of the options were "grayed out" and not available for use. Searching the manual, I discovered that System Information, CleanSweep, System Doctor, Optimization Wizard, Registry Editor, Registry Tracker and others are not installed in a "standard" installation. I hadn't noticed a "custom installation" option, which is what I usually use when installing software.

The manual advises using Windows XP's "Add or Remove Programs" feature to install the missing items, and I pointed "Add / Remove" at the CD. A Norton window appeared, with Remove and Modify choices, and I selected Modify. The resulting window showed Antivirus, Utilities, and two other choices, with check boxes and checkmarks. Thinking they were already installed, I unchecked the boxes, and clicked "Next".

The rest is hazy and painful - suffice it to say I uninstalled those programs that were already on my system. I had to get back to the same place, ten minutes later after the uninstall completed, recheck the boxes, and click on the "Customize Norton Utilities" box, where appeared all the programs I wanted access to when I started this exercise. Making sure they were all checked, clicking "Next" got everything installed, or reinstalled. Then I got to download about 3 megs of updates

I'd uninstalled with my faulty assumption, and I got to re-scan the hard drive for viruses - again !!

## Video Upgrades

In February 1995, I bought my first Pentium system, and part of the over four thousand dollar package was a 17" CTX monitor that sold for \$685. In September of '98, the monitor needed a \$120 repair, but I continued to use it through two more powerful CPU system replacements. Finally, in February of this year, I decided it was time to move up to a larger monitor. A sale at MicroCenter featured an LG Flatron L1930B for \$430 (after \$150 in rebates), a monitor that got fairly good ratings from PCWorld for 19" flat panels. Needless to say, April brought a review of ten newer models, but I'm happy with my purchase.

I bought a PowerSpec Radeon 9250SE video card (\$53) with the monitor, because my existing MSI card didn't have a DVI interface. The new card also has 128 MB of onboard memory, vs. 64 Megs on the existing MSI board. However, when I got the new display home, I didn't have the time or inclination to do all the dismantling necessary to put in the new card. So, I just hooked up the analog cable supplied with the monitor (connectors on both ends) and fired up the monitor, which worked great right out of the box.

Several days later, I moved the phone, CDs, calculator, bull and bear toys to remind me of the vagaries of the market, keyboard, trackball, assorted pens and pencils and hoisted the computer tower to desktop level. First however,

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I had to uninstall the video drivers from the computer, thanks to a set of instructions from user group colleague Chuck Roberts, who recently had to replace a video card. I had to work thru the process twice, because the drivers that came with my original card only went down to 800x600, and the grand design is to get down to generic windows drivers at 640x480, before installing the new video card.

The toughest part of the new installation wasn't getting the new card in the computer. Weaving the new DVI video cable through the base of the new monitor and getting it plugged in the appropriate jack proved a challenge, with stiff cables having to make right angle turns in limited space. One of the pluses in the PC World review of this monitor was the clean lines it has for desk use where the back of the monitor is visible.

Not having a bank officer's desk, with the monitor back visible to the public, wasn't a big seller for me - but I can confirm it swivels nicely if you need to show something to others sitting nearby. That's apparently a big deal, 'cause the replacement LG model has autopivot, automirror software that allows image to change so you can flip it over to display to people on the other side of your desk. "Yessir, our friendly loan rate is a mere three percent per month, compounded daily!"

I got everything hooked up, turned on the computer, and gasp, blackness. I checked cables, cycled the computer on and off several times, made sure the new video card was properly seated in the AGP slot. Finally, turned the monitor on and off

(the right answer's always last!) and lo and behold, a picture. Apparently, the monitor was still looking for an analog signal, and ignored the digital one. Several times since, the same thing occurred, but all's been well for the last two weeks.

I popped a DVD movie in the appropriate drive - heaven!! I swear I could see individual raindrops in the movie. The flat panel image was so bright that I've reduced it to 80 percent, to avoid wearing sunglasses. On the other hand, perhaps I should wear the shades and the tropical print shirts I bought last year - for the ultimate "cool geek" image <grin>!!



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### **Virus Attacks Continue at Record Rate**

By Ira Wilsker, APCUG Board of Directors

**A**s most computer users have noticed, the number of attempted computer attacks from viruses, worms, and Trojans has increased to a record level. According to antivirus software publisher Panda Software, the average daily number of new viruses and variants appearing for the week ending April 16 was 122 a day, a rate that has been steadily increasing over the preceding few weeks. It might be of interesting historical note that on average, more new viruses and variants are now appearing on a daily basis than appeared during an average week just two years ago! For those who still follow the old, but now quite obsolete strategy of updating their antivirus software on a weekly basis, the likelihood of becoming infected by a virus is near

certainty.

Many of the other former "truisms" about virus infections are also no longer true, such as "you have to click on an attachment to catch the virus". Virus authors have become more sophisticated and improved their programming and infection techniques. Although Microsoft released a series of patches over two years ago to close an Outlook and Outlook Express vulnerability, there are still millions of computers that remain unpatched and vulnerable. Several of the very common Netsky variants, some released as recently as last week, take advantage of this opportunity, and can infect a computer by simply having the email message appear in the preview pane of any unpatched version of Outlook. As is now common with many of the current crop of viruses and worms, once infected, any antivirus and firewall software installed on the computer is effectively killed, and ports are opened on the computer allowing continued access to the infected computer from persons unknown. Just because an icon for your antivirus and firewall software appears next to your clock, and it may also appear to update periodically, does not mean that your antivirus software and firewall are functioning. It is good security practice to periodically check all computers for virus infection and open ports by running one of the many free and reliable online virus scans and firewall checks. Personally I use Housecall (housecall.antivirus.com) for a free online virus scan to verify that my computer is indeed clean, and Shields Up (www.grc.com) to verify that my firewall is fully functional.

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Our personal computers are being infected at a massive rate, estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands to millions, by innocuous files loaded onto our computers without our knowledge. Many of these new crop of viruses are designed to slip through our antivirus and firewall defenses. One method that unfortunately has been successful has been to rapidly create and disseminate many variants of the same virus payload, and quickly flood the net, primarily by email, with the variants. By spacing each variant by a few minutes or hours over a day, it becomes extremely likely that we will encounter several virus bearing emails before our antivirus software is updated. The belief that updating antivirus software daily is an adequate defense is no longer sufficient to provide protection, considering the lag time between the discovery of a new virus, and the release of updated data files by the antivirus companies. The former holy grail of antivirus software publisher, "continuous updates" which many publishers commendably have now reached, is no longer adequate, as a new virus found right now may massively spread unchecked for several hours before updates are available. This lulls us into a false sense of security, believing that our frequent updates will protect us, while in reality dozens of new viruses will spread and infect countless computers before the next update can be released. It only takes one virus to slip through our protection, and we may be left defenseless from further attacks.

The other method of infection that has been around for years, but now becoming even more common is an

attack by a virus or worm through our network or internet connections. All computers have "ports" or pathways into the computer. A good firewall should close all open internet or network ports except those being actively and intentionally used, and protect the open ports from unauthorized access. Many of the current worms and viruses try to impersonate legitimate data to penetrate firewalls, or will probe almost any connected computer looking for vulnerabilities. It is not at all uncommon for a home computer to be probed for open ports over 100 times per hour, which is the explicit justification for a firewall to be installed on all personal computers. Home computers, especially those using dial-up internet access, which had been in the past somewhat ignored by hackers, have now become prime targets for hackers and worm generated probes looking for vulnerabilities.

This has already created a very real security threat at all levels from our own computers to the national infrastructure. Many of these new viruses flooding our email boxes, or attacking us through our internet or other network connections, contain a "zombie", a small program either scheduled to launch a cyberattack at a predetermined time, or to silently wait for some external signal which will launch a cyberattack. It is not just possible, but now considered a near certainty that sometime in the near future we will be subjected to massive attacks on our critical infrastructures by millions of zombie infected computers, almost all of which will have antivirus and firewall software installed, but possibly neutralized. This is not just science fiction or some possibility, but a very real threat, as demonstrated in

the past by the infamous CodeRed and Blaster attacks, among others.

It is absolutely imperative that we all have antivirus software and a firewall that is updated as frequently as possible, and verified to offer us protection.

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.



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## The Music Wars

By Wayne Steen, QBITS  
contributing editor, Quad-Cities  
Computer Society, Bettendorf,  
Iowa

The music industry is at war with itself and its fans. Who ever thought that a rock and roll band would sue its own fans? Talk about the ultimate in corporate greed. The music industry is full of corporate greed.

However, fear not my loyal readers help is on the way. Steve Jobs of Apple, Bill Gates of Microsoft, and Wal-Mart are coming to our rescue. I feel better already.

Apple has already introduced iTunes and the iPod. Soon, Microsoft and Wal-Mart will come out with their own online music services.

Roxio has brought Napster back from the dead. Napster was once the largest illegal file-sharing service on the Internet. Roxio has now

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brought it back as a good file-sharing service that pays the record companies and artists for their music.

Real Networks has their own online music service and Music Match has their own service. My head is spinning round, round, round.

## Apple

Steve Jobs and Apple are the first ones out of the gate in the online music services race. However, remember back in the 1980s when Apple was the top dog in the computer box wars? They eventually lost out to Bill Gates. Will history repeat itself or has Steve learned from his past mistakes?

iTunes is currently the world's largest online music services company. They have recently added the muscle of over 25,000,000 AOL customers to their arsenal. iTunes works on both Apple and Windows computers. You must have Windows 2000 or Windows XP on your PC in order to use iTunes.

The download is simple and without a hassle. All you have to do is go to <http://www.apple.com> and click on the iTunes link. All you have to do is enter your e-mail address and then download the iTunes software.

iTunes does not charge a monthly fee that all the other online music services charge. However, you can only listen to a 30-second clip from the song that you are interested in. To listen to the whole song you must buy the song for 99 cents.

You can buy as many songs as you want through the Apple Music store. You will have to enter your credit card with Apple music store

in order to download music from iTunes.

You can burn songs onto an unlimited number of CDs for your personal use. You can listen to your songs on an unlimited number of iPods. (I will talk about iPods in a minute.) You can play your songs on up to three Macintosh computers or Windows PCs.

You can also set up an account for your children. Kids now have a legal way to download their favorite songs with music allowance accounts. You set up the account using your credit card and then set up a monthly allotment of how many songs your kids can buy. Once they reach the monthly limit (and they will reach that monthly limit), they cannot download any more songs.

Another nice new feature from iTunes is you can now purchase audio books. At the time of this writing, Harry Potter books were not available from iTunes.

## Napster

Napster is a monthly service that you pay \$9.95 a month for downloading songs. You can download as many songs as you want to your computer. However, if you want to burn the songs to a CD or digital device such as the Dell Music Jukebox then you must pay 99 cents a song.

Real Networks and Music Match also use the Napster model. I like having the ability to download as many songs as I like (or how many songs my hard drive will handle) without having to pay 99 cents a song.

If you want to burn the songs to a CD or a portable digital device then the Apple model may be more to your liking.

## Problems

iTunes will only burn to CDs and Apple's own iPod. The iPod is a 15 GB device that sells for \$299.00 and will carry almost 7,000 songs. Let me see, 7,000 times 99 cents equals about \$7,000.00. This is a very good moneymaker for Apple.

The Dell Digital Jukebox Music Player is very similar to the Apple iPod and costs \$249.00. The math is the same, about \$7,000.00 for 7,000 songs.

The problem is that iPod and Dell do not play nice with each other. If you use iTunes, then you are going to want to buy the iPod. If you use Real Network, Music Match or Napster then you are going to want to use the Dell Digital Jukebox Music Player.

The biggest problem is that not all famous artists are available for download with one of the online service providers. Therefore, you may only be able to listen to a favorite artist of yours on iTunes and another favorite artist of yours may only be available on Napster.

Once again, the consumer is on the short end of the stick with all of the big boys wanting to use their own standards. They are telling us, it is their ball, and you are going to play the game by their rules. We have danced to this song before!

## Conclusion

Who will win the music wars? Let us do some calculations.

I remember being able to buy KISS records on sale at Music Land for \$3.99. Let us do some math. Twelve songs on a typical album

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divided into \$3.99 equals 33 cents. Today we pay 99 cents for a song or \$9.95 for the whole album.

However, that is far better than the \$18.99 suggested retail price of CDs that are currently on sale in stores. Let me see, \$18.99 divided by 12 equals \$1.58 a song. Ouch! I do not know who will win the music wars, but I do know who has lost. The music store retailers and the consumers have lost. I am against illegal file sharing, but I am also against record companies suing 12-year-old girls.

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.



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## Three Short Articles...

By Charlie Paschal, PPCC

### Is DOS Really Dead?

Microsoft officially made the break with DOS with Windows 2000. Although it tried to “fake” out the public by saying that Windows ME did, it wasn’t true. With some information off the Web, a true bootup diskette can be made that will access ME with a floppy.

That’s not true with 2000 and XP, which makes a true break with DOS

— you can’t start either operating system with a boot disk. You can, though, bootup an ill-acting system with a boot disk that contains the correct files out of your root directory.

Both 2000 and XP use an NTFS file system — if you use the native file system the system expects — that supposedly can’t be accessed with a floppy. There are certain floppies — available on the Internet — that can be used to access NTFS volumes.

Another floppy, also available on the Internet, allows a user to boot from it to a version of Linux that allows someone to access and change the administrator’s password. It’s useful for someone who has forgotten the administrator’s password.

### Knoppix — A Tool for Everyone

One of the greatest tools a computer technician has over a home user is the access of another computer. A second computer can be used to access the Internet and find answers to problems. When a home user’s computer is crippled, it’s very difficult to find answers — except by telephone.

Although it’s not another computer, a very useful tool is a Knoppix CD. Knoppix is a version of Linux that runs from a CD. If you’ve got a broadband connection to the Internet, such as a cable modem, it automatically senses the connection and gives you access to the Internet. It usually finds all your hardware, giving you total access to your files and information. You usually can copy files to CDs, floppies or Zip disks.

Get Knoppix at [www.knoppix.org](http://www.knoppix.org). It’s a large download, about 700 megabytes, but it comes in a form

that you can use to automatically make a bootable CD. If you don’t have this CD, download it (or ask a friend with a broadband connection to do it for you) as a tool for a day when Windows won’t start.

### Don’t forget system restore

Viruses are always a threat, but did you know that one can “return” without warning if you don’t turn off one Windows XP feature when cleaning up from a virus?

One of XP’s great features is System Restore that can take your system back to a time when it was running better. I’ve used it countless times to return an ill-acting system back to a healthy time.

What if, though, you get a virus? Because System Restore can contain system settings that will restore the virus itself, it should always be turned off before you remove a virus.

#### To do that:

\* Right Click on My Computer and select Properties and left click. Click on the System Restore tab and check the box labeled “Turn Off System Restore on all Drives.”

Then, clean up the virus and reboot. Don’t forget to turn System Restore back on after cleaning up the virus.

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.



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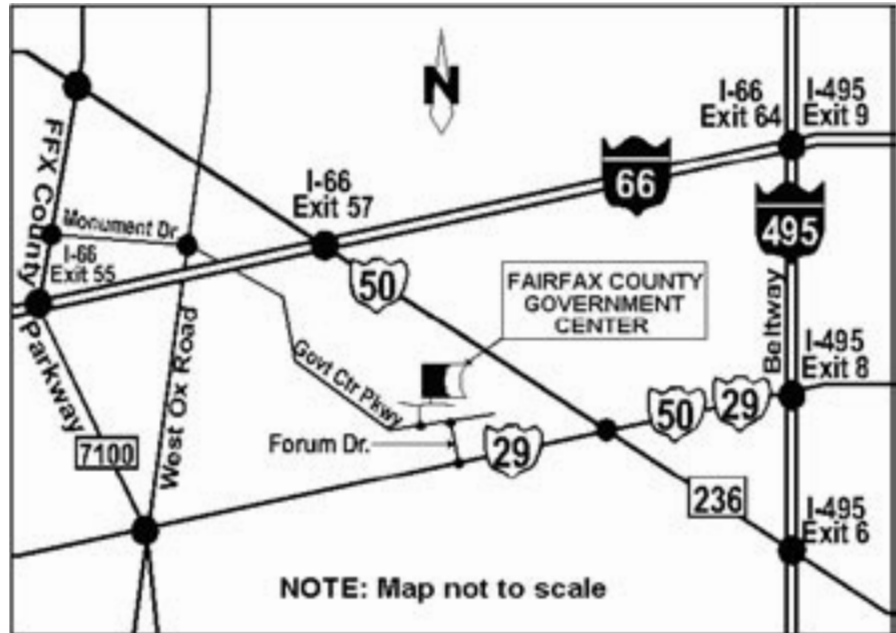
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