The Cursor

Monthly Newsletter of the
Washington Area Computer User Group

Stan Schretter and his Apple iMac

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Presidential Bits

by Geof Goodrum
President, Washington Area Computer User Group

I've always admired the skill of Apple® computer engineers at designing beautiful, intuitive user interfaces. Guest speaker Stan Schretter gave us the benefit of his experience with the Apple Mac® and Microsoft® Windows® PC options at the June 18th meeting. Stan brought both his iMac®, an integrated computer built into a beautiful high resolution 27" screen, and his MacBook® notebook, which he used to present his briefing slides and video. One point from Stan's briefing was that the Apple Macs are closed, pre-configured systems that avoid the mix-and-match hardware compatibility complications that sometimes turn up on Windows PCs. That said, we did have an Apple hardware compatibility issue of our own for the presentation, as we could not use a standard mini-plug audio cable to get sound from Stan's MacBook into the OLLI audio system, because the plug body was blocked by the MacBook case.

The Mac OS X operating system features a completely integrated drag-and-drop graphic interface, something that isn't always true for Microsoft Windows. The Mac OS X operating system also includes the Time Machine® application that makes backing up and restoring the system and files very easy. Office application software for the Mac, including word processing, spreadsheet and presentation manager software is very inexpensive (iWork, $79), as are operating system updates (the upcoming "Lion" release is $29.99).

Of course, the Apple computers themselves are fairly expensive, but perhaps not entirely out of line with equivalent Windows PCs. While Stan mentioned that current Macs run on Intel-based hardware like PCs, he did not mention that those who are willing to forgo Apple support can, in fact, run the Mac OS X operating system on properly spec'd commodity PC components. Visit the OSx86 Project at http://www.osx86project.org/ for more information. There was also some discussion about running Microsoft Windows applications on the Mac, which is possible by running an actual copy of Windows within
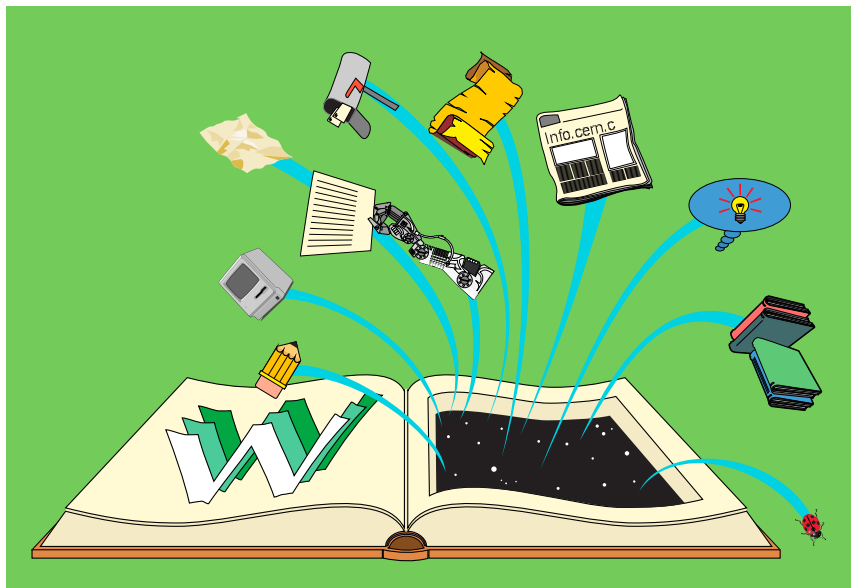
Lloyd's Web Sites for July 2011

by Lloyd Johnson
Columnist, Washington Area Computer User Group

Visit www.wacug.org for past issues of Web Sites with hyperlinks.

1. SepiaTown — http://sepiatown.com/. SepiaTown a time machine. SepiaTown lets you use your computer or mobile device to see what the very spot you're standing on looked like decades or centuries ago.

2. Parenting.com — www.parenting.com.

3. Engadget — www.engadget.com. Engadget is a web magazine with obsessive daily coverage of everything new in gadgets and consumer electronics.

4. LIFE: Your World in Pictures — www.life.com. LIFE.com represents the most amazing collection of professional photography on the Web.

5. For your summer travel — www.gasbuddy.com. Gas Buddy tracks daily Gas Station prices.

6. Daily info on science — www.sciencedaily.com/articles.

7. Potential Dangerous Products (lawn equipment, cookware, toys and more) — www.saferproducts.gov.

8. Listen and Get Audiobooks for free — www.librivox.org. These books are read by volunteers (you can be one,too).

9. Bob Vila — www.bobvila.com. It has been 30+ years since Bob Vila first appeared on "This Old House"; still giving home improvement advice.

the Mac OS (Parallels Desktop for Mac, http://www.parallels.com/products/desktop/, or VMware Fusion http://www.vmware.com/products/fusion/overview.html), installing and booting Windows on Apple computers with Boot Camp (http://www.apple.com/support/bootcamp/), or running an application compatibility layer (Codeweavers CrossOver Impersonator, http://www.codeweavers.com/products/crossover/, or Wine, http://wiki.winehq.org/MacOSX).

Those interested in the current version of the Apple iMac should take a look at the June review featured at The Register (http://www.reghardware.com/2011/06/17/review_apple_imac_27in/).

Thanks also to the volunteer tech crew who helped out with the PC Clinic at the June meeting, including Scott Hanak, Roger Fujii, and Nick Wenri. They helped fix several problems with PCs brought in by our members.

The meeting on July 16th will feature Tom Polhemus, Financial Crimes Investigator with the Fairfax County Police Department. Tom will provide a non-technical talk on Internet / On-Line safety. For those who purchased a copy of the Acronis True Image Home backup software (perhaps at our April meeting), we will have a Learn30 tutorial session led by Neal Grotenstein on how to use the software.

See you there!

⌕
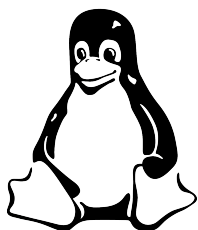
Linux and Open Source News
by Geof Goodrum
linux@wacug.org

Surrendered to Sony

I regret to announce that I recently removed Yellow Dog GNU/Linux installation from my Sony® Playstation® 3 (PS3) after fourteen months resisting. You may recall my April 2010 article (http://www.wacug.org/pdf/cursor/1004cursor.pdf,

page 4) about Sony pushing out a firmware "upgrade" to PS3 owners with the sole purpose of disabling the OtherOS feature that allowed users to install and run Linux on a 10 GB partition of the PS3 hard disk.

I didn't mind missing out on new feature updates (including 3D Blu-Ray disc support), multiplayer gaming, and the Playstation Store through the Sony Playstation Network (PSN), but I was not happy when Netflix® announced in October 2010 that it would soon require PSN access to stream movies online to the PS3 (previously, Netflix did not rely on PSN). Even then I held out – in partial protest, I've had my Netflix account on hold since December 2010.

My resolution wavered several times. I did not use Linux on the PS3 very often, but I didn't want to give up my rights to do so. Sony did not allow full access to the power of the PS3 system while running Linux, and I just found using Linux on my six year old PC more convenient. While there are "jailbreak" hacks available to gain control over the PS3 system, even allowing running Linux while regaining access to PSN, these also presented a risk of being banned from PSN permanently if Sony detected the hack. I preferred to keep my system completely within the bounds of the Sony terms and conditions in case Sony restored the OtherOS feature. I had some hopes for the class action lawsuit filed on behalf of PS3 owners, though this is still trying to gain traction in the courts (see http://www.groklaw.net/articlebasic.php?story=20110402000830503).

As you may be aware, Sony recently brought down the PSN for several weeks after it discovered the network was hacked and user account information was stolen. While Sony was rightfully embarrassed by its failure to secure its network properly, it also had reason to believe it would lose market share to rivals. PS3 owners freely expressed their anger with Sony in online forums. As Sony worked to secure PSN and bring it back online, it promised a "Welcome Back" package of free games, online items, and extended services (http://us.playstation.com/psn/welcome-back/). I noticed that many PS3 owners were not impressed –

most, if not all, of the games offered are a few years old, so most of the dedicated gamers already have them.

However, at least one of the games in the package is one that I wanted for a long time (I'm cheap – I wait years for games to hit the bargain bin). Some of my favorite TV shows are on summer hiatus, so I began to think about using Netflix again. So, with a sense of resignation, I used the built-in PS3 utilities to back up my PS3 files (e.g. photos, video, music, game saves and demos) on a USB portable drive, downloaded the latest firmware (which clearly warned that the OtherOS feature would be removed and OtherOS files would no longer be accessible – back these up first if you want to save them), created a new password for my old account on PSN (required due to the PSN security breach), sync'd my game trophies on the Sony servers through PSN, and reformatted the hard drive to recover the 10GB partition used by Linux. Then it was a matter of using the PS3 system utilities to restore the PS3 files from the portable drive (took several attempts – the PS3 would reboot during the restore process and then could not find the drive again – I had to power cycle the drive during the reboot), and resync the game trophies from the Sony servers. I spent some time downloading/updating software for the PS3 photo management software, the Playstation Home virtual environment, Netflix, and other features, as well as downloading content from the Welcome Back offer. By the way, I made photographs and video of the OtherOS removal process to demonstrate that I was legally compliant with Sony's terms (per the Groklaw story cited above, Sony is demanding proof from plaintiffs about using Linux on the PS3, though Sony wants to inspect plaintiff's PS3 hard drives!).

I'm a bit depressed by the whole thing, and certainly upset with Sony. I will avoid buying Sony products in the future. In the meantime, if I want to do work on my PS3, I figure I can use Google Apps or access my Linux PC through the PS3 web browser.

GNU/Linux Distribution Releases

GNU/Linux distributions are bundled collections of software including a set of applications and an operating system built on the Linux kernel. Some distributions include general applications such as office suites, music players, and web browsers, while others may have specific purposes such as computer system recovery, network firewall, media center, or gaming. Individuals, community projects, or businesses create distributions. While some distributions are commercial and include fee-based technical support, other distributions are freely downloadable or can be ordered on CDs or DVD at low cost.

WAC can provide CD-R and DVD±R media for any downloadable GNU/Linux operating system distribution (e.g. Fedora, Mandriva, Ubuntu, Debian, Knoppix). Please note that free download distributions do not include official technical support nor printed documentation. Single CD-R discs are available with a $3 donation; GNU/Linux distributions on multiple CD-Rs or single DVD±R are available with a $6 donation. Discs are available only by pre-order. Contact Geof Goodrum by e-mail (linux@wacug.org) at least 48 hours before meeting day to order or for more information.

The following list summarizes distribution release announcements from Distrowatch.com for the period June 4 – June 29, 2011.

AV Linux 5.0
Chakra GNU/Linux 2011.04-r1
DoudouLinux 1.0
Fuduntu 14.10
Greenie Linux 9N
Imagineos 20110605
IPFire 2.9 Core 49
Macpup 525
Netrunner 3.2
Parted Magic 6.2
PCLinuxOS 2011.6
Peppermint OS Two
Porteus 1.0
Sabayon Linux 6
Salix OS 13.37 "Fluxbox"
Scientific Linux 5.6
SystemRescueCd 2.2.0
Tiny Core Linux 3.7
Toorox 06.2011
Untangle Gateway 9.0
Vinux 3.2
Webconverger 8.0

Zorin OS 5
Zorin OS 5 "Gaming", "Multimedia"

Featured Linux Software of the Month: July 2011

The software described below can be downloaded at the links provided or copied onto a USB flash drive at the WAC meeting. However, please check the online package management tool included with your GNU/Linux distribution first, as installation is often just a click away.

Family Farm – v1.3.1. http://familyfarmgame.com/en/family-farm-game. Commercial executable (free demo) for Ubuntu 10.10 (32/64 bit) by Hammerware s.r.o. Work the farm in this game of 19th Century farmsteading and build a home for your families. This is a simulation of a farmstead experienced in stories that span a generation. Keep them fed, develop their skills, and grow their land into a Family Farm! Enjoy role playing game and board game mechanics designed by the creator of dozens of board games. Requires 1.6 GHz or faster CPU, 512MB RAM, and 200MB hard disk space. May require proprietary graphics drivers (e.g. Nvidia, ATI); does not support Intel graphics chipsets.

Imagination – v3.0. http://imagination.sourceforge.net/. Free GNU General Public License source code by project leader Giuseppe Torelli with the invaluable support of Robert Cheramy, and executable packages for Fedora and Debian (Ubuntu). Imagination is a lightweight and simple DVD slide show maker for Linux and FreeBSD written in C language and built with the GTK+2 toolkit. True, there are some other GUIs that do the job, but they usually require a lot of dependencies to be installed first and often their interfaces are bloated. Imagination has been designed from the ground up to be fast, light and easy-to-use. It requires the ffmpeg encoder to produce the movie file and libsox to handle the audio. Imagination at present features 69 transition effects, random function to automatically set a random transition on all the selected slides, cut/copy/paste ability on the slides, "Ken Burns" capability, text on the slides with some text animations, ability to add an empty slide with a gradient editor and export of the slideshow as OGV Theora/Vorbis, widescreen FLV video and 3GP for mobile phones.

JasperReports – v4.0.2. http://jasperforge.org/projects/jasperreports. Free GNU Lesser General Public License Java code by Jaspersoft and the JasperForge Community. JasperReports is the world's most popular open source reporting engine. It is written entirely in Java and it is able to use data coming from any kind of data source and produce pixel-perfect documents that can be viewed, printed or exported in a variety of document formats including HTML, PDF, Excel, OpenOffice and Word.

Jaspersoft Studio – v0.2.5. http://jasperforge.org/projects/jaspersoftstudio. Free GNU General Public License Java code by Jaspersoft. Jaspersoft Studio is a report designer for JasperReports. It is a full rewrite of iReport on top of the Eclipse platform. It allows you to create very sophisticated layouts containing charts, images, subreports, crosstabs, and much more. It can access your data through JDBC, TableModels, JavaBeans, XML, Hibernate, CSV, and custom sources. It can publish your reports as PDF, RTF, XML, XLS, CSV, HTML, XHTML, text, DOCX, or OpenOffice. This version introduces an enhanced query dialog, new extension points for pluggable data adapters, query designers, and data mapping tools, along with various other bugfixes and improvements.
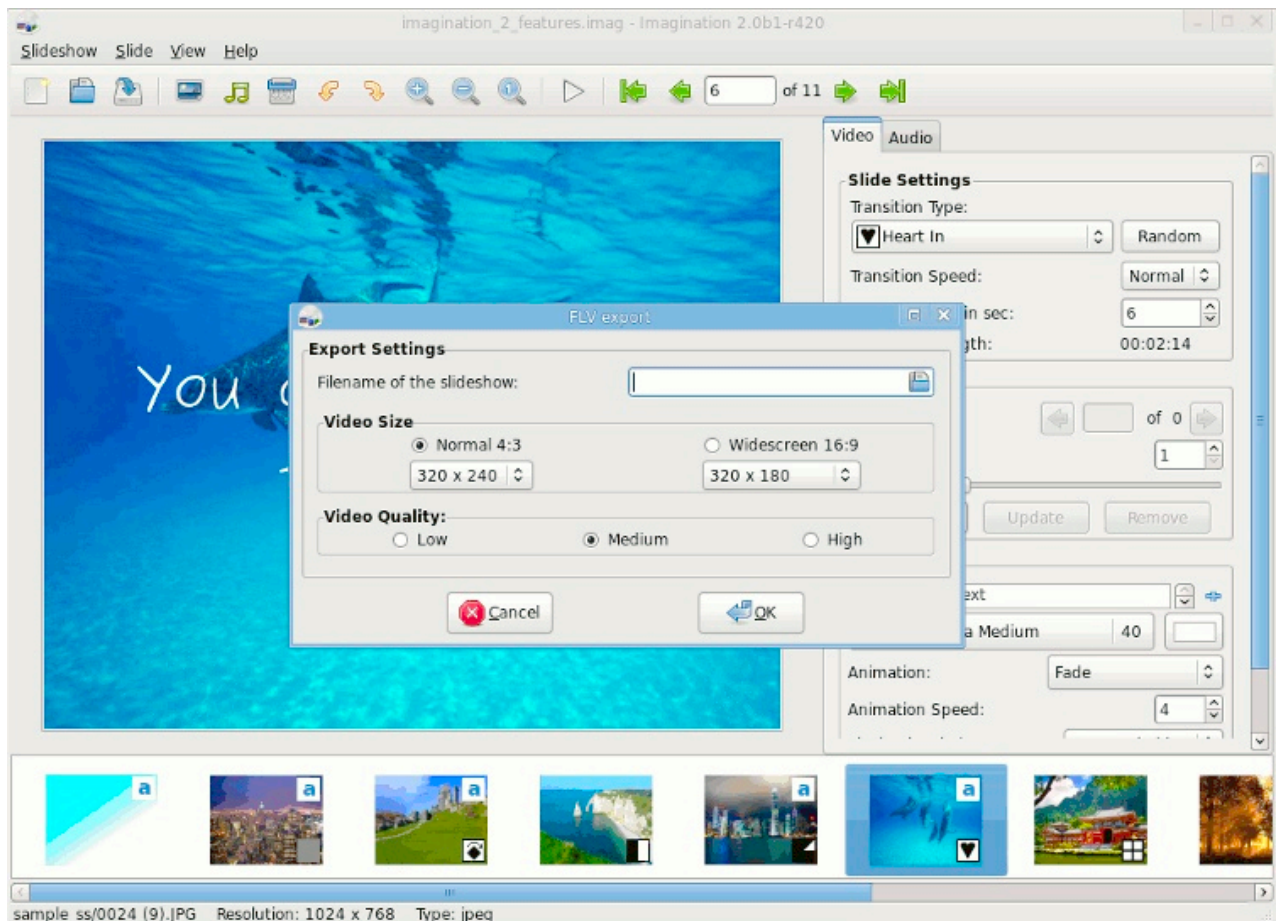
Kernel Source - v2.6.39. http://www.kernel.org/. Free GNU General Public License source code for all platforms by the Linux community.
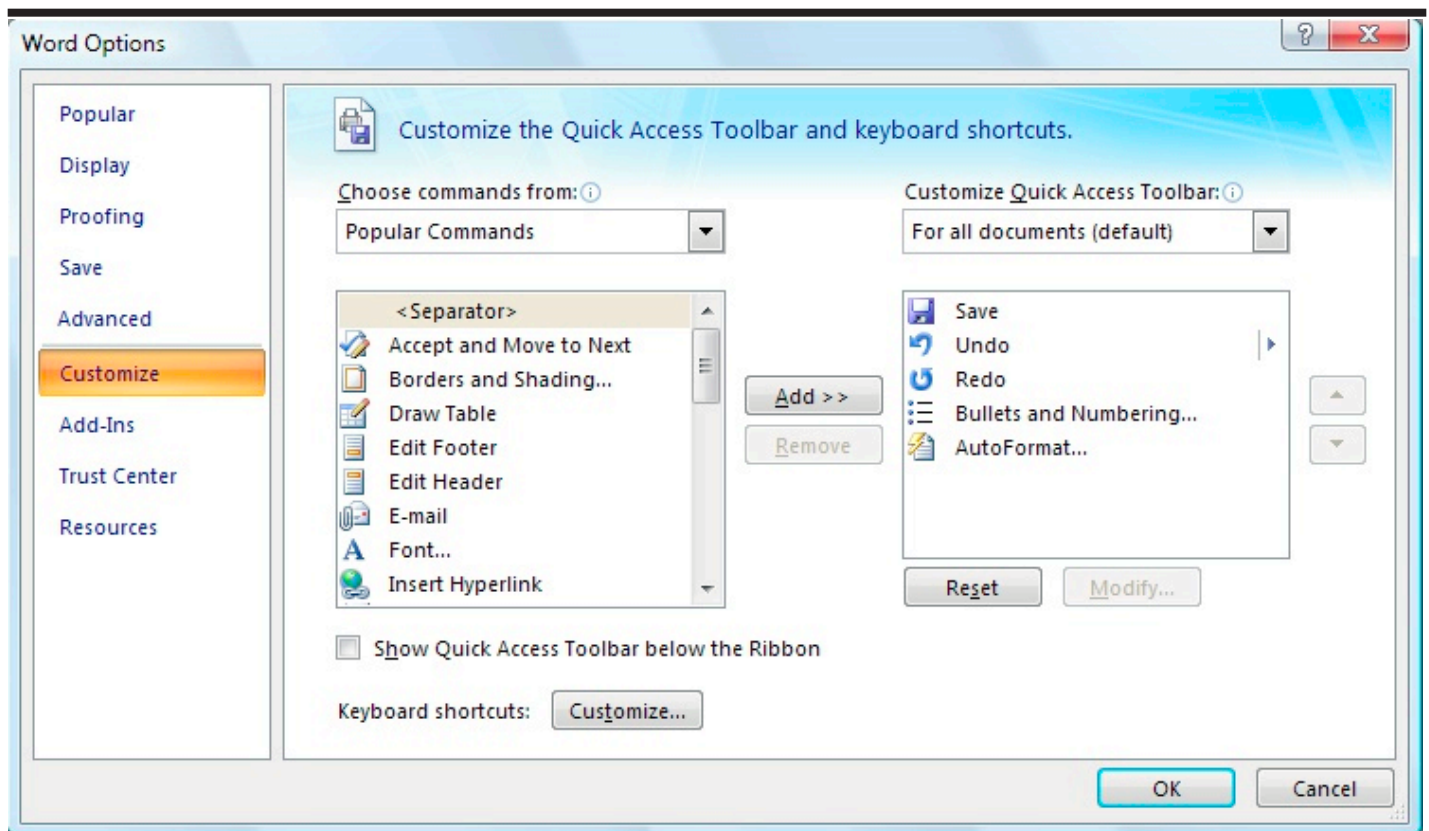
Linux Screenshots on Page 6

Above: Screenshot from Family Farm   Below: Screenshot from Imagination

The Customize area of the Word Options dialog box

Word Tips: Customizing the Quick Access Toolbar

The Quick Access Toolbar is the area just above the ribbon, at the top of the screen, and just to the right of the Office button. The Quick Access Toolbar includes three tools that allow you to save your document, undo an action, and redo an action. You can, however, change the tools that appear on the Quick Access Toolbar. To customize this toolbar, follow these steps:

1. Display the Word Options dialog box. (In Word 2007 click the Office button and then click Word Options. In Word 2010 click the File tab of the ribbon and then click Options.)

2. At the left side of the dialog box click Customize (Word 2007) or Quick Access Toolbar (Word 2010).

3. Using the Choose Commands From drop-down list, specify what group of commands you want listed in the dialog box.

4. In the list of commands at the left side of the dialog box, select the one you want to appear on the Quick Access Toolbar.

5. Click the Add button. The selected command is copied to the list at the right side of the dialog box.

6. Repeat steps 3 through 5 for any other commands you want on the toolbar.

7. If you want to remove any commands from the Quick Access Toolbar, select the command at the right side of the dialog box and click Remove.

8. When you are satisfied with the list of commands, click OK.

Your newly customized Quick Access Toolbar should be visible and usable at the top-left of your screen.

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Excel Tips: Ages in Years and Months

Many times in early childhood education, a child's age in Years.Months format is needed for reporting, admitting, and evaluation. Basically, this format shows the number of elapsed years and months since birth, separated by a period.

There are several ways you can go about getting the desired age. The formula you choose to do the work depends, quite literally, on your preference in formulas.

Assuming that you have the birth date in cell A1, you might think you could use some math on the date to determine the proper information. For instance, you might think that you could use this formula:

```
=NOW() - A1
```

This produces a value that is the difference between the two dates, but if you then apply a custom format ("yy.mm") to the result, you'll find out that it doesn't give the sought-after Years.Months. You get something close; the years are right, but the months vary from 1 to 12 when they should vary from 0 to 11. (Somebody can be 12 years and 0 months old, but it is not proper to say 12 years and 12 months old.)

This means that you need to start casting about for a formulaic approach. A simple formula would be the following:

```
=YEAR(NOW())-YEAR(A1) & "." & MONTH(NOW())-MONTH(A1)
```

There are many variations on the above, but the problem is that they all only look at the month of today compared to the month of the birthdate; they don't take the day of the month into account. What is that important? Because the number of elapsed months since birth is dependent on how the day of the birth month compares to the day of the present month, and the formula doesn't allow for that distinction.

So, you might consider a more complex formula that actually tries to calculate elapsed years and months, such as the following one:

```
=TEXT(INT((NOW() - A1)/365.25),"##0")&"."&TEXT(INT(MOD(NOW -
A1,365.25)/31),"00")
```

This comes much closer to what is needed, but it is still possible to be off by a day or two right around the time of the month when the birth day is approached. Closer still is a formula which uses the YEARFRAC function:

```
=ROUNDDOWN(YEARFRAC(A1,TODAY()),0)&"."&ROUNDDOWN((YEARFRAC(A1,TODAY())-
ROUNDDOWN(YEARFRAC(A1,TODAY()),0))*12,0)
```

The best (and simplest) formulaic approach, however, is this one:

```
=DATEDIF(A1,NOW(),"y") & "." & DATEDIF(A1,NOW(),"ym")
```

The formula relies on the DATEDIF function, which determines the difference between two dates. The value returned by the function depends on the third parameter passed to the function. In this case, the first invocation of DATEDIF returns the number of elapsed years and the second returns the number of elapsed months. It provides the most accurate results of any of the formulas discussed so far.

Converting Documents to PDF

by Wayne Comstock
Member, South Walton Computer & Technology Club (SWCTC), Florida
http://southwalton.apcug.org/
Walaco (at) gmail.com

One technique I frequently use to save an online article or publication is to convert and save it as a PDF file. Once converted, Adobe Reader software then becomes an excellent way to open, view and read any converted document off of your computer screen. PDF documents can also be easily emailed to others as an attachment.

You can convert to PDF from any file you can print, including Microsoft Word, Works, Excel, PowerPoint and digital pictures. Rather than being printed ink to paper the file becomes a PDF file. If the document is already a paged PDF file you can convert the file to just the pages you select and select your PrimoPDF printer to convert.

You will need PDF conversion software to accomplish this. I recommend the Free PrimoPDF program. It's free, easily installed and available at:

www.primopdf.com/index.aspx

1. Browse Primo web site and download one of the two installers available for 32 and 64-bit versions of Windows. Ensure that the version you download corresponds to your operating-system.

2. When prompted, select a download location which you can find easily, such as your 'Desktop' or 'My Documents' folder, and click OK.

3. When the download is complete, double-click the file named FreewarePrimoPDFXX.exe (XX being a 2-digit number) which would have appeared in the location you selected in the previous step.

4. Follow the simple instructions to complete the installation. A system-restart is NOT required.

PrimoPDF installs itself as a virtual printer in the Windows Printers and Faxes device group. This allows any software with print functionality to output files to PrimoPDF for quick and easy PDF conversion.

To convert a document to PDF:

1. Open a document in any printable program (e.g. Microsoft Word, Works etc.), and select File >Print.

2. In the printer dialog, select PrimoPDF from the dropdown menu and click OK to complete the print, and launch the PrimoPDF interface.

3. Select one of the Creation Profiles for the document Quality you need to achieve. A detailed explanation can be found in the PDF Creation profiles section of this guide. Point your cursor at each button to define.

4. Select the Save As dropdown menu to set a name and location for the created PDF.

Ask when creating PDF – Allows you to rename the PDF and select a save-location.

Specific Folder – Allows you to select a save-location while using the name of the document which is being converted. This option returns you to the PrimoPDF interface should you wish to change other settings for the same conversion.

5. Click the Create PDF button to convert your document.

6. Alternatively, if you wish to save the PDF under a different name of directory, just click Cancel and you will be returned to the Save As dialog.

There are many more options and features available. (Appending a PDF).

Go to the web site below and download the PDF Primo detailed User Guide.

http://www.primopdf.com/pdfs/PrimoPDF_V5_User_Guide.pdf

Using Caution with USB Drives

by Mindi McDowell
Produced 2008, 2011 by US-CERT, a Government organization.
http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST08-001.html

USB drives are popular for storing and transporting data, but some of the characteristics that make them convenient also introduce security risks. What security risks are associated with USB drives?

Because USB drives, sometimes known as thumb drives, are small, readily available, inexpensive, and extremely portable, they are popular for storing and transporting files from one computer to another. However, these same characteristics make them appealing to attackers.

One option is for attackers to use your USB drive to infect other computers. An attacker might infect a computer with malicious code, or malware, that can detect when a USB drive is plugged into a computer. The malware then downloads malicious code onto the drive. When the USB drive is plugged into another computer, the malware infects that computer.

Some attackers have also targeted electronic devices directly, infecting items such as electronic picture frames and USB drives during production. When users buy the infected products and plug them into their computers, malware is installed on their computers.

Attackers may also use their USB drives to steal information directly from a computer. If an attacker can physically access a computer, he or she can download sensitive information directly onto a USB drive. Even computers that have been turned off may be vulnerable, because a computer's memory is still active for several minutes without power. If an attacker can plug a USB drive into the computer during that time, he or she can quickly reboot the system from the USB drive and copy the computer's memory, including passwords, encryption keys, and other sensitive data, onto the drive.

Victims may not even realize that their computers were attacked.

The most obvious security risk for USB drives, though, is that they are easily lost or stolen (see Protecting Portable Devices: Physical Security for more information). If the data was not backed up, the loss of a USB drive can mean hours of lost work and the potential that the information cannot be replicated. And if the information on the drive is not encrypted, anyone who has the USB drive can access all of the data on it.

How can you protect your data? There are steps you can take to protect the data on your USB drive and on any computer that you might plug the drive into:

• **Take advantage of security features** – Use passwords and encryption on your USB drive to protect your data, and make sure that you have the information backed up in case your drive is lost (see Protecting Portable Devices: Data Security for more information).

• **Keep personal and business USB drives separate** – Do not use personal USB drives on computers owned by your organization, and do not plug USB drives containing corporate information into your personal computer.

• **Use and maintain security software, and keep all software up to date** - Use a firewall, anti-virus software, and anti-spyware software to make your computer less vulnerable to attacks, and make sure to keep the virus definitions current (see Understanding Firewalls, Understanding Anti-Virus Software, and Recognizing and Avoiding Spyware for more information). Also, keep the software on your computer up to date by applying any necessary patches (see Understanding Patches for more information).

• **Do not plug an unknown USB drive into your computer** – If you find a USB drive, give it to the appropriate authorities (a location's security personnel, your organization's IT department, etc.). Do not plug it into your computer to view the contents or to try to identify the owner.

• **Disable Autorun** – The Autorun feature causes removable media such as CDs, DVDs, and USB drives to open automatically when they are inserted into a drive. By disabling Autorun, you can prevent malicious code on an infected USB drive from opening automatically. In How to disable the Autorun functionality in Windows, Microsoft has provided a wizard to disable Autorun. In the "More Information" section, look for the Microsoft Fix it icon under the heading "How to disable or enable all Autorun features in Windows 7 and other operating systems."

The Cursor provides news, commentary and product information to members of the Washington Area Computer User Group.

E-mail membership inquiries and address changes to membership(at)wacug.org
E-mail article submission and reprint requests to cursor(at)wacug.org

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Dues are collected on an Annual basis and include download access to WAC's monthly newsletter, *The Cursor*, in PDF format.

Annual Dues: $25.00
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Remit payment in person at the WAC Membership table on meeting day, or by mail to:

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    Programming   Publishing   Hardware

    Other:

Next WAC Meetings: <u>Jul 16</u> · Aug 20 · Sep 17 · Oct 15 · Nov 19
Call (703) 370-7649 for the latest meeting information or visit our web site at
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<u>Meeting Location</u>
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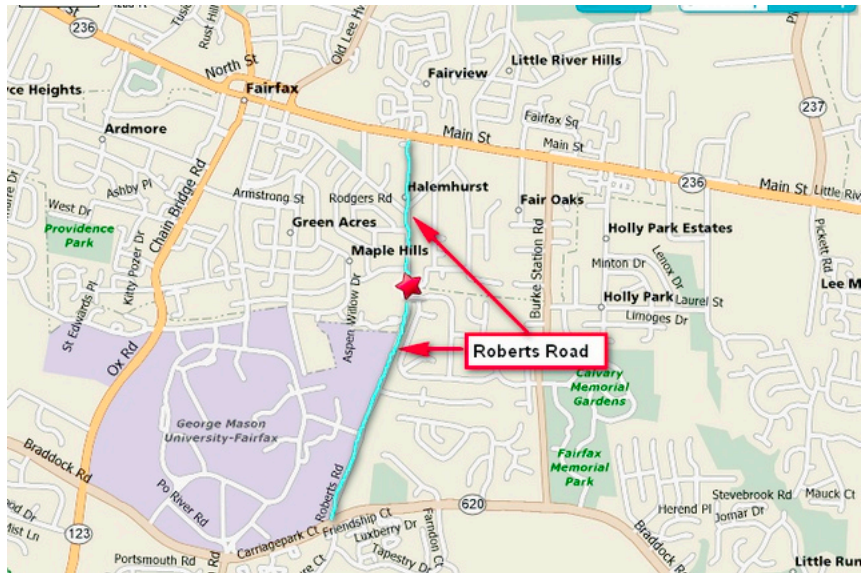
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July 9, 2011

Windows 7 Jump Lists

by Vinny La Bash
Regular Contributing Columnist, Sarasota PCUG, Inc., FL
May 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor
www.spcug.org
labash (at) spcug.org

There are those who say that Jump Lists are new to Windows 7, and there are those who say Jump Lists are nothing more than hyped-up extensions of the My Recent Documents menu which began in Windows 95. There is truth in both viewpoints.

Previous to Windows 7, the My Recent Documents menu listed the newest file version of its application. If a Word document was created at 7:00 am followed by a Spreadsheet edited at 8:00 am, followed by a drawing revised in Paint shortly thereafter, all three would be listed in reverse chronological order on the same list.

In Windows 7, each of those files would be on a separate list, each list comprised of files created by its own specific application. If you right-click on the Word icon for example, you see a list of the most recent Word documents that were created or edited by Word. A right-click on the Excel icon would reveal a list of the most recent Excel spreadsheets. The same holds for Paint, Adobe Photoshop, or PowerPoint.

Windows XP had the right idea, but the concept wasn't taken far enough. If an application that runs on Windows 7 is capable of generating files it will have its own Jump List. If you use one application heavily, it's very handy for that application to possess its own jump list. The Excel Jump List does not contain files generated by other applications, it shoes only Excel spreadsheets.

Jump Lists act like application specific Start menus. You can find them on the application icons that appear on the Taskbar after the application is open. They also reside in the Start menu in the recently opened programs area. The Jump Lists on the Start menu appear a bit different than those on the Taskbar, but they function in exactly the same way. If you "pin" an application icon to the Start menu or the Taskbar you will get a Jump List by right-clicking on the icon.

Jump Lists have several defaults, the application's shortcut icon is displayed, you can close one or all windows that happen to be open, you can pin or unpin, see a list of up to ten recent files, and specific tasks associated with the application. If you bring up the Jump List for Internet Explorer 8, there is an item that let's you do InPrivate Browsing.

Right-click on any of the files listed in the Jump List. You can remove the file from the list, pin it permanently to the list, save it in another location, rename it, copy it, print it or even send it to another location.

An application's Jump List can be found in more than one location. If you open a Jump List from the Start menu and then open the same application's Jump List from the Taskbar or any other location, you will see exactly the same list of items. That's the kind of consistency that makes sense.

Different Jump Lists from the same application will show you the same thing, but a Jump List from Internet Explorer 8 will show something different than a Jump List from Media Player. IE 8 doesn't show recently played songs, and Media Player won't show you recently visited web sites. What you see on the list depends on the program.

Let's look at some odds and ends about Jump Lists that may prove useful. By default, the Internet Explorer icon in IE 8 is pinned to the Taskbar. When you wish to pin another application to either the Taskbar or the Start menu right-click on the application's icon, no matter where it is located, and pin it to either or both locations. You can unpin just as easily so don't worry about doing something you can't undo.

You can take an item from a Jump List and drag and drop to a new location such as the Desktop or a folder. Drag and drop to an email message and Windows will automatically attach it for sending.

If you unpin an item from a Jump List don't be perplexed if it reappears on the list the next time you open it.

You can't pin folders to the Taskbar because they are considered Windows Explorer items, but you can pin Windows Explorer to the Taskbar and folders will appear as items in the Jump List.

It can be useful to clear a Jump List for security or personal reasons. You don't have to unpin each item individually.

To clear a Jump List:

1. Open Control Panel.

2. Click Appearance and Personalization.

3. Click Taskbar and Start Menu.

4. Click the Start Menu tab in the dialog box.

5. Clear the checkmark in the Store and display recently opened items in the Start Menu and Taskbar check box.

6. Click Apply.

7. Recheck the box you cleared in step 5, unless you want the Jump List always empty.

Note: If you wish to change the number of items in your Jump Lists click the Customize button and follow instructions.

8. Close any open dialog boxes.

Some programs display useful tasks in their Jump Lists. Tasks on a Jump List can't be added to or removed.

Searching - or better still, Finding
by Phil Sorrentino
President, Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, FL
June 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor
www.spcug.org
president (at) spcug.org

Now where did I store that list of DVDs. I could have named it "DVD List" or "Movie List" or "DVD Inventory", but I'm not sure. This is the situation I used to find myself in quite frequently when I have a hardcopy of something that I hadn't used in awhile and want to change, but don't remember where I stored the file on the computer. This problem can be solved in a few ways. An obvious one is to include, somewhere on the hardcopy, the name of the file and where it is located, like D:/MyInfo/HomeInfo/Inventory/DVDList.xls. Now if you have a hardcopy you can always find the file on the D: drive. But this solution doesn't help if you

have discarded or lost the hardcopy. So, thank goodness for Search Utilities.

Windows XP had a simple search utility that could be found by clicking the Start button and then selecting "Search" in the list on the right side of the menu. Once there, you could select "All files and folders", where you could input "All or part of the file name:", then select the Drive(s) you wanted searched, and finally select "Search". As files and folders matched the search criteria, they are displayed on the right side of the window for review. If something is familiar, you can double-click it and inspect it further. More often than not, this process finds whatever was forgotten, lost or misplaced.

That was how it was. Now that I have upgraded to Windows 7, when I select the Start Circle (or Start Orb), immediately right above the Circle, I get a search box that suggests "Search programs and files". When I input a word, like "list", I immediately get results. So far, I have never gotten any results that I can use. (This may be because I have not set up "Indexing" correctly, or maybe I'm missing something.) So, although I am very pleased with Windows 7, I have not been able to find lost files as easily as I could with XP. (No, this is not, at all, a reason to stay with XP.)

If you Google "Free Search Utilities", you will find many possibilities. But, just as I was about to start looking for a search utility, I read a brief review, in Smart Computing (Dec. 2010), of "Ultra File Search", a free search utility. The review made it sound like it would do the things the XP Search feature did. I downloaded it to a "test Windows7" machine and after using it a while, I was convinced it could do the type of basic file and folder search that I was missing.

Ultra File Search can be found at http://www.ultrafilesearch.com/ and the developers describe it as follows:

Ultra File Search is a Search Utility which is able to find quickly Files, Folders and Text on your Local, Network, DVD, CD-ROM, USB Hard or Flash Drives. Ultra File Search allows you to specify several File Masks and multiple Drives and/or Folders at the same time; it is able to sort out files

and folders according to their properties (e. g. Modified Date) and find files which contain one or more specific words or sentences.

This Utility does not use background indexing, does not waste system resources and does not use extra space on the disk. Ultra File Search does NOT contain any Spyware, Adware or Viruses and is Free for Personal use.

(Note the comment about not using "background indexing". Maybe that is the source of my not finding things when I use the Windows 7 Search. I'll have to pursue those thoughts.)

From the description, it sounds like Ultra File Search attempts to replicate the features of the Windows XP Search feature. Ultra File Search has a start-up window that looks much like the Windows XP "Search Results" screen, but it uses tabs to present its features.

Upon starting Ultra File Search, the Files and Folders tab is shown. This is similar to the "All files and folders" selection in Windows XP. Just input a file name and browse for the drive you want to search and then click the Search button. Search results show up in the bottom of the window. The three remaining tabs on the opening screen of Ultra File Search offer different ways of attempting a search. "Containing text" provides the ability to search for a file that contains a specific text sequence. Think of it as looking for particular words or phrases in a text (.doc, .docx, .rtf, .txt) document.

There are a few options like "Match All" and "Case Sensitive" that may help with the search. Additionally, you can eliminate System, Hidden, Image, and Media files to speed up your search.

The "Date and Size" tab provides the ability to search for files that were "Modified, Created, or Last Accessed" between specific dates and times. This may be useful if you know the very specific kind of information about the file in question. This may also be a good way to eliminate large numbers of files under certain conditions. Additionally, this tab offers the ability to search based on the size of the file provided that very specific information is known.

The fourth tab , "Attributes", provides the option to search for files based on certain system parameters" such as "Archive", "Read Only", "System", "Hidden", and "Directory", which may be useful under some very specific circumstances. This tab also offers some NTFS only (New Technology File System), file searches using the NTFS parameters, "Compressed", "Encrypted", "Temporary", "Not Indexed", "Reparsed Point", "Sparse File", and "Offline". These last search criteria may be useful only under certain very special circumstances and probably only to those very technically inclined.

If you are familiar with the Windows XP search feature, you will see that Ultra File Search provides, to a Windows 7 user, all of the features that were available in XP. Now with Ultra File Search I can finally locate that "DVD Movie List" I started looking for.

Is There a Tablet PC in Your Future?
by Sandy Berger
Compu-KISS, www.compukiss.com
sandy (at) compukiss.com

Apple's iPad tablets are flying off the shelves and many competitors are introducing similar tablets. Here's a brief synopsis of the tablet situation and what it means to you.

In just nine months in 2010, Apple sold more than 15 million iPads. In the first month of sales, the iPad 2 sold millions more. According to some industry experts the iPad is the fastest growing new product in history. Perhaps, though, the most important thing about the iPad is that it has ushered in a new era in computing. Steve Jobs calls it the Post PC age. Although I agree that this is a new era in computing, there is nothing Post PC about it. The iPods, iPhones, and iPads that Mr. Jobs is talking about, all run on computer processor chips. They all perform functions that are similar to those performed by computers. No, this is not the Post PC era. Rather, it is the era of ubiquitous computing. If you look up the word "ubiquitous," you will find that it means omnipresent, pervasive, permeating, universal, and ever-present.

This is what mobile devices like the iPhone and especially the iPad bring to us.

I expect that tablet PCs like the iPad will continue to grow in popularity. Although as of this moment, no other manufacturer has yet been able to equal the design, implementation, and price point that Apple has set, the march of the tablets has only just begun. There is plenty of competition in the making. Apple boasted $9.5 billion in revenue from the iPad in the last nine months of 2010, so everyone else is hurrying to get their version of the tablet PC to market.

Motorola recently released the Xoom, an Android tablet that is a competitive but pricey alternative to the iPad. Research in Motion, the creators of the BlackBerry, released their tablet called the Playbook in April. This will, of course, be based on their own BlackBerry operating system. Asus, Dell and LG Electronics will be introducing new tablets based on the Android operating system in the next few months. Samsung has announced that they will revamp their Android Galaxy Tab tablet and introduce two updated versions soon. HP is scheduled to roll out its first tablet based on the webOS operating system sometime in June. So within the next few months, we will have at least eight tablets from major manufacturers running four different operating systems.

If you are wondering why you should care about this, here's the scoop. Tablets are an entirely new category of computers. In most cases, they will not replace personal computers, but will augment them. There will still be computers running infrastructure, businesses, and hospitals, but both professionals and home users will find tablets extremely useful for their day-to-day living.

Since tablets have touch screens. You don't need a keyboard, mouse, or stylus. This makes them extremely portable. Also most tablets have very long battery lives, so you aren't tethered to the wall by a cable. Because tablets use apps rather than traditional software programs, they are much easier to use and more stress-free than computers.

App stores like Apple's iTunes store and Android's Marketplace have hundreds of thousands of apps available, so a tablet PC can be quickly and easily personalized to perform only the functions that the user needs or wants. This gives users a more intimate relationship with their devices.

In fact, this relationship is not only revolutionary, it is often somewhat magical. I recently watched my three-year-old granddaughter play with a Disney fairy app on an iPad. She gently moved the iPad to and fro to make Tinkerbelle and her friends fly over the breathtaking scenery sprinkling fairy dust over the land. She was thoroughly enchanted. I also watched a 70-year-old man who was equally mesmerized by the interactive audio and video of a magazine site that he was viewing on his iPad. These devices are engaging for everyone. People from three to 103 can use and enjoy them.

Tablets are so empowering that I predict that they will become indispensable to everyday living. Who wants to walk into another room to get over to the computer when they need a recipe or want to look up a word. It is much easier to just grab a tablet PC off the coffee table. You can use it to watch television when you are on the go, to check the weather in the morning, or to read a book or listen to music as you endure the wait in the doctor's office.

Teachers are using tablets with great success because they are enthralling to children. Doctors are using them as a point-of-care device that can not only document the patient's progress, but can also help doctors explain procedures to patients. Artists are using them to create new masterpieces.

More and more applications are being found for tablets every day. With the new tablets that will be appearing in the next few months, this will be a very interesting category of devices to watch. Keep your eyes open, there may be a tablet PC in your future.