

The Voice of
FCUG

May 2010
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Meeting 7.30 pm 4th at
New Canaan Historical
Society
13 Oenoke Ridge

DUES ARE DUE!

BOILERPLATE

"The Voice of FCUG" is the monthly newsletter of the Fairfield County Computer Users Group, Inc., a registered non-profit organization dedicated to helping members use their PC computers. Non-commercial and non-profit users are free to copy or quote material herein; proper credit and sending a copy of the publication to the Editor would be appreciated.

Members can exchange ideas and opinions through this newsletter, at a monthly meeting held the first Tuesday of most months, at occasional SIG programs, and on a bulletin board reached from the Club Internet Web-site at www.fcug.org.

Meetings and SIG groups are open to the public. **Membership costs \$35/Yr from this issue on.** For information and payment contact

Ed Congleton, Treasurer: 203-966-4854,
251 Weed Street, New Canaan, CT. 06840

To submit articles or letters for The Voice send an e-mail message to thevoice@fcug.org, hopefully with article attached, or mail paper, or even a diskette in ASCII, Word, or WordPerfect format to:

The Voice, 280 Main Street, Westport, CT 06880

THE EDITOR'S DESK

Well, it has happened. Here is the annual dues envelope (hope it folds up correctly...) with the NEW SUSCRPTION RATE. Sorry, guys, we are asking for \$35 this year, the first dues raise since the club began in 1980. If you didn't read this piece last month, that may be a surprise; if you don't read this piece either, I hope you read the envelope contents before you write the check!



This is the last issue of the 30th year of existence of the club. Thirty years! It hardly seems possible! In thirty years, though, between, say, 1910 and 1940, the automobile changed from a cranky unreliable sporting challenge to a run-of-the-mill undistinguished commuting tool. So it is hardly surprising that in the last thirty years the home computer has changed from a cranky unreliable intellectual challenge to a run-of-the-mill undistinguished computing tool. How full of challenge was the TRS-80, which came with nothing but a combination operating system/BASIC interpreter, leaving us to develop everything we needed! And what fun we had doing it, and showing other members what we had achieved! And how non-challenging is today's machine, which connects us to the world without effort so that we can do our usual round of letters, accounts and games using programs written and sold at great expense by others.

DUES ARE DUE!

PROGRAM FOR 4TH MAY 2010

Call to order	7:30
Novice topic	7:40
Q and A: Art Bettauer	8:00
Refreshments Jane and Charlotte	8:20
Main topic: Ed Fitzgerald "Essential Technologies for Today's Real Estate Business"	8:30
Adjournment	10:00

Please bring empty ink cartridges to the meeting. The club can use them to help keep the dues from rising.

LOOKIN' FOR A RIDE?



If anybody who wants to attend meetings has a transport problem, please mention it and together we will look for a solution. You can also contact Dick Booth (dick.booth at juno.com) or phone (203) 847-8047. He can tell you who lives near you, or might pass by on their way.

-----ooOoo-----

1913 LEYLAND T BUS

Questions and Answers

By Chuck Davis

**Editor, Webmaster,
Sun City Anthem
Computer Club
www.myscacc.org**



From the November 2009 issue of "Bits, PCs and Macs", the journal of the Sun City Anthem Computer Club of Henderson, NV

Question: My 6-year-old computer with Windows XP is running extremely slow. Is this caused by being worn out, viruses, or some other condition?

Answer: Most Windows XP machines of that age had minimum RAM memory installed recommended by Microsoft. As time has passed, RAM memory requirements have increased. Windows XP with Service Pack 3 must have more than 512MB. Better yet is 1GB. Your computer may run like it was when new. Service Pack 3 is loaded with updates patching vulnerable portions of the XP operating system. For a complete picture of what is in Service Pack 3, visit this Microsoft web page: <http://tinyurl.com/6hd237>

If you determine that you have adequate RAM, the next most common cause of a sudden slow down is usually a virus, Trojan or other malware program. Dozens of them. Either way, to get rid of the malware or add RAM memory contact one of your Club's [Gurus].

Question: I accidentally unplugged my mouse and when I plugged it back in, it wouldn't work. I held in the power button until it shut down. Luckily I had just moments before saved the document that I was working on. On restarting the mouse worked fine. How can one turn off a computer using just a keyboard on a computer with Windows XP installed?

Answer: This situation has perplexed many users over the years.

1. Press the WinKey to bring up the Start Menu.
2. Use the "up" arrow key to select the shutdown option. It will be first on the list from the bottom of the Start Menu.
3. Press the Enter key to select Shutdown to bring up the shutdown options dialog box (the one that fades out the rest of the desktop).
4. Use the "Tab" key to cycle the "focus" through the three option buttons (Stand By, Turn Off, Restart).
5. By pressing the "Tab" button, you will see a subtle "highlight" cycle through the buttons on the Shutdown Options dialog - whichever button the highlight is on will be the one activated when you hit the ENTER key.
6. Press the ENTER when the highlight is on the selection you want.

I suggest that you practice it a couple of times, even when it is not necessary. Practice... Oh, never mind – you know.

Question: I am confused. What is the latest version of the free AVG Anti-virus/Anti-spyware?

Answer: As of this writing, it is AVG 9. It installs differently than the previous versions. The download file is simply a download manager, which downloads the program once installation has commenced.

Question: I have just recently bought a new computer. It has a trial version of Office 2007 installed. I have bought a retail version that I want to install. How do I go about this?

Answer: You must uninstall the trial version, restart the computer and then insert the CD into your computer. Use the Product Key code that is on the CD case.

Question: I continually get documents from various folks with the .docx extension. I can't open these in Word 2003. I hate having to ask the sender to convert it to the older format. Is there a way around this?

Answer: Download and install the "Office Compatibility Pack for Word, Excel and PowerPoint 2007" file formats here: <http://tinyurl.com/3xr4tt>

Question: Should I export the address book in Office Outlook 2003 to save while reinstalling Office and how do I get the messages exported?

Answer: The OUTLOOK.PST file contains all information that you have in Outlook; messages, folders, contacts, calendar entries, rules, etc. Therefore, it is the only file required.

1. The proper way to save Outlook data is to copy the OUTLOOK.PST file to an external storage device. If you back up your "Documents" folder to an external hard drive, I suggest that you move the OUTLOOK.PST file to a folder under the Documents folder. Then you will back the file up each and every time.

2. Data files are unaffected when the program is uninstalled and reinstalled.

For detailed step by step information on moving the Office Outlook 2003 OUTLOOK.PST file, print and follow the instructions on this Web page: <http://tinyurl.com/2fbudn>. Similar instructions for Office Outlook 2007 may be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/5slnp>.

Question: I have been asking around about a program to create a custom font on my Windows XP machine. Are there any free ones available?

Answer: Yes. It is called Private Character Editor and is a very well kept secret, as it is not on the start menu, but is already on your computer. You can use the Private Character Editor to create your own characters, which you can then insert into documents by using the Character Map.

Character Map enables you to view the characters that are available in a selected font. By using the Private Character Editor, you can:

- Ⓞ Create new characters.
- Ⓞ Edit existing characters.
- Ⓞ Save characters.
- Ⓞ View and browse your character library.

To open the program, Start and choose Run, enter "eudcedit" (without the quotes) and then click on OK. It's also available on Windows Vista and Windows 7. To get started you should use the Help facility extensively. There is a brief outline on these Web pages: <http://tinyurl.com/yjttjxj> & <http://tinyurl.com/yjfbjyz>.

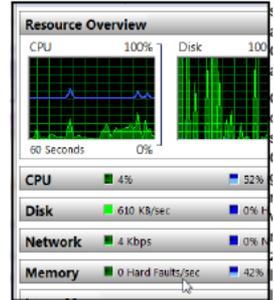
Of course, you can use these Private Characters on your computer. Others won't see them unless installed on their computer. If you create a document (.pub, .doc, or .xls) you can create a PDF and send that to another user.

Question: I'm in a heap of trouble. I can't get Internet Explorer 8 to work. How can I fix this?

Answer: Visit [a friend or one of the club's Gurus] and download either the Firefox or Google Chrome browser. Move it to your USB Flash drive or burn it to a CD. At home start your computer, install the browser and when you gain access to the Internet visit this Web page using your new browser for assistance: <http://tinyurl.com/cxckuj>

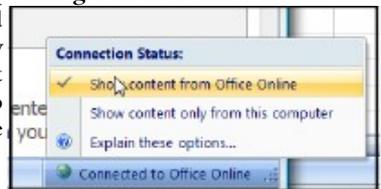
Question: I have got my new Windows Vista Home Premium 32-Bit machine up and running. Quite frankly, I find it easy to use. However, when I go to the Task Manager and click on Resource Overview, I see a disturbing number next to “Memory,” specifically the number ranges from “...0 to 125 Hard Faults/sec...” Do I have memory errors on my new system and should I return it?

Answer: I'm surprised that you didn't buy the latest operating system, i.e. Windows 7. There is no need to return it. All is normal. Further, the numbers that you are seeing are not unusual for a 32-bit system due to memory usage being limited to approximately 3.125 GB of RAM memory. In that all of RAM has been used and the system is paging portions of running programs to the hard disk, and then the program needs the portion on the hard disk (virtual memory) the system retrieves the code and proceeds with your work. That action is a “Hard Fault” in Microsoft's terminology. The illustration [above] is from my Windows Vista Home Premium 64-Bit machine with 8GB of RAM, I seldom have noticed other than zero. On some occasions, when I am closing the Resource Overview window, there is a jump in the number.



Question: I have two computers using Microsoft Office Excel 2007. On the laptop, I tend to get meaningful, useful responses to a search when using Help. On my desktop I get a bazillion meaningless links to totally unrelated topics. How can I get the same results on both?

Answer: When you open the Help function, you may change the way the search works. Open Excel, then press the F1 key on your keyboard to open the Help function. At the lower right corner of the Help dialog box is a small notification (known as the Connection Status) that may read “Show content from Office Online,” or “Show content only from this computer.” If you don't see these choices, you are missing an update to your office system. Click here to visit the Microsoft site to download:



<http://tinyurl.com/y1q4faf>

“Show content only from this computer”

will give you only the applicable responses to your search. If you didn't have that update applied, it is because you do not have Microsoft Update installed or enabled on your computer. It will provide updates to all of your Microsoft programs that are not related to the operating system, Windows XP, Windows Vista and Windows 7. It is important for the security of your computer to keep these updated.



THE WAY WE WERE -- MAY 1990

President -- Aaron Bisberg
Vice President -- Herman Parks
Secretary -- Taylor Vincent
Treasurer -- Ed Congleton
Editor -- Alan Abrahamson
TBBS System Operator -- John Krause
Printed by Technical Reproductions, Inc.

Disk Storage – How It Works. Reprinted from PC Computing – March 1990. Two pages, with illustrations.

Bill's Bumbblings No. 51–ARGH! – Bill Hart. Three more pages programming a solution algorithm for the well-known block-moving puzzle.

Life after PCShell or XtrrPro Gold – George Saladino. Three pages of experiences.

MSDOS Commands You Must Know – John Perry. Three pages on ASSIGN, CTTY, PATH, MODE and CHKDSK.

DrawPerfect–Almost – Aaron M. Bisberg. Four pages of review.

Novice Nook #22 – Roger Giler. Two pages on Buffers, Files and CONFIG.SYS.

FCUG May 1, 1990 Program

Main Topic – Printers : Bill White of Computerland in Fairfield.

Novice Program: Do It In DOS : Roger Giler

Shareware Topic: Shrinking Files : John Krause.

Questions & Answers : Ted Rosen.

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Tidbytes

TECHNOLOGY is about to take another leap which may affect us all, particularly those who have older computers: the BBC reported recently that the hard disk's standard 512-byte sectors, in use since the introduction of the original floppy disk, are to be phased out in January 2011 in favor of 4K-byte sectors. As each sector carries a fair overhead in terms of header and tail markers and such, this will make for faster disk accesses, and more usable space on your hard disk. BUT if you



are still using Windows XP, or (save the day) anything older, you may be in trouble, because the 4K sector was not even a gleam in its parents' eyes when they came out, so your operating system may not be able to handle a new hard disk. Windows 7, Vista, OS X Tiger, Leopard, Snow Leopard and versions of the Linux kernel released after September 2009 are all 4K aware, so hopefully their users will be able to recover from the shock. If you install a new disk, or build your own computer, be prepared...

WELL, so much for that: I misquoted. Read what the BBC said about disk speeds:

"The 512 byte sector assumption is enconced into a lot of the aspects of computer architecture," said Mr Burks from Seagate. To help Windows XP cope, advanced format drives will be able to pretend they still use sectors 512 bytes in size. When reading data from a drive this emulation will go unnoticed. However, said Mr Burks, in some situations writing data could hit performance. In some cases the drive will take two steps to write data rather than one and introduce a delay of about 5 milliseconds. "All other things being equal you will have a noticeable hard drive reduction in performance," said Mr Burks, adding that, in some circumstances, it could make a drive 10% slower. In a bid to limit the misalignment, hard drive makers are producing software that ensures 512 sectors line up with 4K ones.

Sounds as though we shall be living in Interesting Times, as the old Chinese curse had it...

MICROSOFT is pulling the Big Switch on older systems soon: a report from Uniblue said that support for 2000, vanilla Vista and XP SP2 will be ending 13th July 2010, The latest updates available are XP SP3 and Vista SP1; get those packs now, or consider upgrading to Windows 7. (Or Linux or Mac, of course, but who dares whisper that HERE? This is a TRS-80 club, right?)

PASSWORDS. They are always a nuisance, and too many times we resort to something simple, like the same one all the time. There are a large number of articles around with suggestions for easily-remembered, hard-to-guess passwords, and this note is going to be Yet Another Password Suggestion (YAPS for short): use something connected to the site, like its name, but alter some characters by using numbers or special characters which look not unlike the originals. For example, if I want to sign in to a site called BACKDROP, I might start by making it all lower-case (backdrop), then change the a to the @ sign (b@ckdrop), then the c to a 6 – similar shape, slightly – and the k to a capital (b@6Kdrop), and replace r with a 2 and the p with a 9 – again, similar shapes. The result: b@6Kd2o9, which I might suggest is a pretty strong password in any circumstance. But its origin is easy to remember, and as long as you keep the alteration steps logical and remember how they are applied, you don't even have to write it down. Good idea? Let me know...

CONTROLLING SYSTEM RESTORE

Vinny La Bash

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www.spcug.org

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Did a shareware application you were enamored of turn out to be an unmitigated disaster? Perhaps a device driver installation, system update or modification to a registry key went bad, and your system wandered into an alternate universe. Windows has a utility called System Restore that takes a picture, called a Restore Point, of your system before certain types of operations are started. System Restore is a very handy feature that allows you to go back in time to erase actions you have come to regret. If a problem occurs you can revert back to the way things were, and all is well again.

System Restore, for all its utility and convenience, has its drawbacks. Some argue that if there is not enough free disk space, System Restore will fail to create a restore point, so an unsuspecting person may discover that there is no restore point available when trying to put things back to normal. There is also no way to make a permanent restore point that will not get deleted after a time when automatic restore points need the disk space. This could be a predicament if a problem is intermittent.

It is possible that System Restore may be responsible for your disk drive running out of room. While today's super-sized drives make that less likely than a few years ago, running out of disk space could still happen, especially if you load up your system with videos. You can reduce that likelihood even further by configuring System Restore properly.

The snapshots we talked about in the first paragraph are taken by a built-in program called the Volume Snapshot Service (VSS). There is no way to access this utility in the standard Windows Graphical Utility Interface (GUI). This means you can't get to it with a menu option. You need to open a Command Prompt window with elevated administrator privileges.

Click on the Start orb located down at the bottom left corner of your screen, select All Programs, and open the Accessories folder. Right click on the Command Prompt icon and then select "Run as Administrator" from the menu. That will open up a Command Prompt window with enough authority to configure System Restore.

Before doing any configuration, let's take some time to understand how System Restore works. You can do this with the **vssadmin** tool. At the Command Prompt type **vssadmin /?** (Press Enter after typing a command.)

You see a list of all the commands supported by the utility.

(Note: Shadow copy = Restore Point)

Enter the command **vssadmin list shadows**. This displays a list of all the restore points currently on the system.

The **list shadowstorage** command displays the amount of disk drive space currently being used to store restore points, how much space is set aside to accommodate restore points, and the maximum permitted size for restore points.

To see what's available on your own system, at the Command Prompt type: **Vssadmin list shadowstorage**. Take a few minutes to understand the way the information is displayed. If there is enough free disk space you can store up to 64 restore points before Windows automatically starts deleting old restore points to accommodate new ones.

Making backups is an essential task, but there is no reason why Windows should be allowed to consume every available byte of storage with System Restore points. The default settings allow Windows to run amok, but you can reset the maximum value with the **resize shadowstorage** command. Here is an example:

Vssadmin resize shadowstorage /for=c: /on=c:/maxsize = 12GB

The /for= switch specifies the disk drive where the storage space is to be resized.

The /on= switch tells Windows where to save the Restore Point.

The /maxsize= switch tells Windows how much space it can use for Restore Points.

If you don't specify a maximum size you are giving Windows permission to do anything it wants. The minimum size is 1GB. I have seen references stating that the minimum size can be as low as 300MB, but I could not verify that information.

After entering the **resize** command the system needs to be restarted to take effect.

Configuring System Restore points won't solve every problem you may have with Windows, but it will give you more control of how Windows allocates resources.

This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

-----ooOoo-----

Running Windows 7 and earlier using Grub4DOS

Bill Wayson

bwayson@gmail.com

I was recently asked if I knew of an open source solution for booting either Windows XP or 2000 and Windows 7 which have been installed on the same computer. Apparently a number of Windows XP and 2000 users would like to try Windows 7 but retain their earlier Windows environment – a completely understandable request. Now, booting Windows and other non-Windows operating systems installed on the same PC is commonly done by users of Linux, is normally set up automatically, and is fairly easy to customize should the need arise. Heretofore I have not had the need to investigate this for a purely Windows PC, so I had to do some investigating.

The Web being what it is, I quickly learned about Grub4DOS, and this month I will relate what I have read about it.

GRUB (the GRand Unified Boot loader) is the default boot manager used by most current Linux distributions, and is designed to boot multiple operating systems. (A boot loader is the part of the boot process that starts an operating system running, a part which most Windows users are unaware of.) Grub4DOS is a version of GRUB modified specifically to be used in Windows environments and appears to be a solution for our Windows 7 investigators. The Grub4DOS project page is at gna.org/projects/grub4dos – here is where you will find a link for downloading the packages. The Grub4dos wiki at grub4dos.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main_Page is a good launching point for many sites on the Internet that provide more detailed information on the software. A well-organized user manual

FCCUG, Inc.

c/o Ed Congleton, Treasurer

251 Weed Street

New Canaan, CT 06840



Thanks! Now we can all get down to . . .

Another Great Year of FCUGGERY!

Name: _____

Street: _____

City, St: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone (Home): _____

Phone (Work): _____

(in case of meeting cancellations)

EMAIL: _____

System/OS: _____

Suggestions for meeting subjects:

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN...

Yes, DUES are due! AND they have risen this year for the first time EVER.
We know you hate it, but we hate it even more!

“WE” are the poor souls who have to assess, receive, record, make badges, write appeals like this,
revamp this form each year, and . . .

\$35!



\$35!

Worst of all – chase after those who didn't get around to paying their dues when first asked. . .

So, PLEASE, get the agony over with now!

Take a moment, please, to:

- write out a check for **\$35 (YES! \$35!)** to FCUG.
- Fill in the information requested below.
- Fold this sheet into an envelope (or use your own).
- Put the check inside, seal it, stamp it and mail it.

TO MAKE THE ENVELOPE:

1. Fold the long edges toward this side along the lines on the other.
2. Fold the page on the center line so the address shows.
3. Place your check inside, fold the top down and seal all round with tape.

can be found at diddy.bootland.net/grub4dos/Grub4dos.htm, and a user support forum is located at www.boot-land.net/forums/index.php?showforum=66.

You'll need to grab the Grub4dos package, currently **grub4dos-0.4.4-2009-06-20.zip**. Unzip this file into its own folder, such as C:\Grub4DOS.

The safest way to test Grub4DOS is to follow the instructions at diddy.bootland.net/grub4dos/files/install_windows.htm#windows1. If, after rebooting, the grub4dos menu does not boot, you know that Grub4DOS is probably not compatible with your hardware. You simply need to reboot back into Windows, edit the C:\boot.ini file to remove the changes you made for Grub4DOS, remove the C:\Grub4DOS folder, and your PC will be back to where it was before you started.

If grub4dos does boot, then you can proceed to install Grub4DOS in the master boot record (MBR) using the instructions at diddy.bootland.net/grub4dos/files/install_windows.htm#windows4.

As you read through the manual at diddy.bootland.net you'll see many sections that are quite technical. The manual describes all the functionality of Grub4DOS. What you will be most interested in doing is setting up a correct C:\menu.lst file, a text file of Grub4DOS commands which is the menu and configuration file that will work on your PC. The exact contents of menu.lst depend entirely on your setup, the number of hard drives, the operating systems installed, and where they are installed.

Given a reasonable and basic setup with Windows XP installed on the first hard drive and Windows 7 installed on the second hard drive, your menu.lst file could be as simple as this:

```
color light-blue/blue light-red/red
timeout 10
default 0
title Windows XP
    chainloader (hd0,0)/ntldr
    rootnoverify (hd0)
title Windows 7
    map (hd1) (hd0)
    map (hd0) (hd1)
    map --hook
    find --set-root /bootmgr
    chainloader /bootmgr
    rootnoverify (hd0)
```

This file will produce, at boot time, a menu on your screen with two entries: "Windows XP" and "Windows 7." Windows XP will boot by default, but you can arrow down, select, and boot Windows 7 within 10 seconds of the appearance of the menu.

You may be wondering how Windows 7 can boot from the second hard drive. Take a look at the "map" commands above. They will cause Windows 7 to believe it actually is on the primary C: drive and XP is on the D: drive, and Win7 will boot none the wiser. A pretty neat trick.

Without a doubt, the greatest weakness of Grub4DOS is that it does not include an installation utility that will scan your PC for operating systems and automatically generate a correct menu.lst file. This is a shame since there is nothing mystical about the file or Grub4DOS commands, and once it is set up, it can be forgotten until you change your hard drive setup or operating systems. But it does require learning the Grub4DOS syntax and the way it sees the drives in your PC, as well as understand some of the basics of how a PC boots to a running operating system.

If it is any consolation, you will not harm or erase anything on your PC due to an incorrect entry in menu.lst. The worst that will happen is that you will be unable to boot into one or more of your Windows installations, even though they are still there. If you have your original Windows installation CDs or DVDs, or a suitable recovery disk, you can use it to reinstall the original Windows MBR, boot into Windows, try to correct your Grub4DOS menu.lst file, and reinstall Grub4DOS to the MBR.

If you have questions or would like to learn more about Linux [the rest is specific to the CIPCUG, so is replaced by....] call Bill Hart at 203-454-2549 and leave a message if no-one is there.

From the February 2010 issue of "The Outer Edge", the journal of the Channel Islands PC Users Group, Oxnard, CA. Many thanks...

-----ooOoo-----

DOWNLOADING AND CONVERTING YOUTUBE VIDEOS

Ira Wilsker

PCUG Director; APCUG Representative, Golden Triangle PC Club;
Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont, Texas;
Radio Show Host (Mondays, 6-7pm Central Time, klvi.com)
iwilsker (at) sbcglobal.net

I frequently get emails from readers of this column and listeners of my radio show regarding problems they are having. While I cannot guarantee an effective answer, I can at least try to help them out, or tell them where they can find a solution. Some of the more interesting, or more common questions I will occasionally post here under the premise that if a few of you are having a similar problem, then many others are having a similar problem.

Last Friday I was forwarded an email that had been bouncing around one of the departments at Lamar University about how to download YouTube videos and convert them to a format that can be used in PowerPoint. Some of the faculty have rightly found that there is some useful content on YouTube that is applicable to academic lectures, and they would like to use this information in class. Fortunately, there are several good solutions.

My personal first choice in downloading YouTube videos and converting them into a format that can play in PowerPoint, or on most video players, is a free add-on for the Firefox browser called DownloadHelper (www.downloadhelper.net). DownloadHelper is extremely popular with Firefox users, having been downloaded and installed about 54 million times! DownloadHelper places a small icon on the bottom edge of the browser window consisting of three colored balls; when the balls become animated, the DownloadHelper menu becomes available by clicking on the icon. Left-clicking on the icon shows the title of the video, and clicking the title downloads the video in YouTube's native FLV format to your computer. Right-clicking on the icon opens the menu which allows the user to convert the video into any of many popular formats. Alternatively, clicking on the three-ball icon that appears to the left of the video title at the top of the screen opens a one-click menu that offers all of the options. The one that I use most often is the "Download and Convert" which can download and convert the video in a single action. For compatibility purposes, especially when embedding the video in

PowerPoint, I mostly select the WMV (Windows media format), but sometimes choose the QuickTime MOV, or AVI formats. For those who do not have FireFox installed, it is available free at getfirefox.com, and does not interfere with any other browser on the computer.

For those using any browser, there are several free online services that will download YouTube (and other) videos to your computer, and some will also convert them to popular formats for you. Even though its server is frequently busy and located in Brazil, I like Forinside, at www.forinside.com. Forinside is extremely easy to use; all the user needs to do is copy the URL (web address) of the video and paste it into the textbox, and use the pull-down menu to select a format. Clicking the download button will start the process. Forinside can convert online videos into any of the 10 most widely used formats, and can download videos and audio from YouTube, MySpace, Google Video, and Mp3Tube. For those who already have videos on their computers that they would like to convert into other formats, Forinside offers that service for free. Simply click on the orange "File" tab, then "Browse" your hard drive for the file you want converted. Use the pull-down menu to select any of the 10 formats available, click on "Convert" and Forinside will upload the original video to its server, convert it to the chosen format, and then download it to your computer in the new format. Your original video remains intact on your computer. As stated above, the Forinside server is often very busy.

Another service that can download YouTube videos directly to your computer is Download-YouTube.com. This site is very easy to use from any browser. Simply open the desired YouTube page, and in the address bar of your browser insert the phrase "download-" (download hyphen) before the word "YouTube" in the URL, and the user will be directed to the Download-YouTube web page. On the Download-YouTube page either click on the "Click here to download" link, or right-click and "Save Link As" or "Save target as" and the file will be downloaded in the native YouTube FLV format.

One of the easiest free YouTube downloaders is Orbit Downloader, available at www.orbitdownloader.com. This download tool has some of the highest editor and user ratings on the popular download sites, and can accelerate downloading of not just YouTube videos, but most general downloads as well. Orbit Downloader integrates seamlessly into Internet Explorer, FireFox, and Opera, and includes a "Get It" button that appears when connecting to YouTube that offers a single click download. YouTube videos will be downloaded in their native FLV format.

There is a free bundle of video software that can download YouTube and other media, convert them to most formats, and even edit video and audio files. The software bundle aptly named "Free Studio" contains 23 video and audio utilities, and is a 30 Meg download available for free download from www.dvdvideosoftware.com/free-dvd-video-software.htm. According to the publisher of Free Studio, "With this free software you can convert video and audio files between different formats and to iPod, PSP, iPhone, BlackBerry and other portable devices; burn and rip DVDs and audio CDs; upload and download videos and music to your computer, iPod, PSP, iPhone and BlackBerry; perform basic editing of audio and video files." This bundle, reviewed and top rated by several of the major download sites, may be a worthwhile bundle to download and install.

If there is a need to convert the YouTube FLV videos, or any other video formats, into a more useful format, such as WMV or MOV, a utility called "Any Video Converter Freeware" may be useful, as it supports dozens of video and audio formats, and can easily convert files between these formats. This software is available for download from www.any-video-converter.com/products/for_video_free, and according to its publisher, has been downloaded over 25 million times.

The online service CNet gave Any Video Converter Freeware its highest 5-star editors' rating.

If your only need is to play downloaded YouTube videos, there is an easy and free solution that does not require any conversion utilities. YouTube's FLV format can be played on the universal video player (free) VideoLAN - VLC Media Player (www.videolan.org). The VLC media player is one of the most widely used video players in the world, with over 110 million downloads, and has earned a very loyal following. VLC media Player can play almost every available video and audio format without the need for any plug-ins or add-ons, and is available for free, and will run on almost every operating system.

With these utilities and services, downloading YouTube and other videos and converting them into another useful format is simple. I routinely use such downloads in class both as individual videos, and as videos embedded in PowerPoint. There is much that can be done with online videos, and these utilities and services are worthy of a try.

WEBSITES:

- <http://www.forinside.com> – Online download and conversion
- <http://www.downloadhelper.net> – FireFox Add-on and converter
- <http://www.orbitdownloader.com> – Automated downloader
- <http://www.download-youtube.com> – Online download
- <http://www.videolan.org> – Free universal video player
- http://www.any-video-converter.com/products/for_video_free/
- <http://www.dvdvideosoftware.com/free-dvd-video-software.htm>

-----ooOoo-----



What The Heck Is A WUBI?

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The Windows-based Ubuntu Installer (WUBI) is a program that allows you to install and remove Ubuntu-Linux from within Microsoft Windows (98, 2000, XP, Vista, or Windows 7). WUBI automatically creates a dual boot option that lets a Microsoft Windows user try Ubuntu without risking any data loss due to disk formatting or partitioning. Normally, installing Ubuntu or any version of Linux on a system that is also running Windows is intimidating and very risky. Total failure to boot Windows is a common result.

WUBI to the rescue: The WUBI installer is now included on every Ubuntu Live CD and easily installs Ubuntu INSIDE of windows (all versions), and in the same partition (drive letter) as Windows if you like. The install process is like any other program installed in Windows. Installing this way is soooooo easy. Also, when you want to remove Ubuntu, you just go to Add/Remove Programs and remove it like any other program running under Windows.

Dual-boot: After the installation, a new (dual) boot option screen appears right after power up, allowing you to select whether you want to run either Windows standalone or Ubuntu standalone.

Wow, what a great way to play with Linux/Ubuntu without the hassle of partitioning the hard drive and dealing with those messy dual-boot managers like GRUB or GAG. Yuck (Yes, those are real acronyms. Not the Yuck. It just means yuck).

To start the process, you need an Ubuntu Live (Install) CD that you or a friend has downloaded and burned. You can also go to the Ubuntu website and have them mail you a free CD (10 weeks).

To install Ubuntu using WUBI, just insert the "Ubuntu Install CD" while Windows is running. Do not boot the CD. The CD should start. If not, go to My Computer, open the CD and click on wubi.exe. When you see the opening window, simply select "Install Inside Windows". After that, you answer a few questions about what drive letter, and how much drive space you want to allow for Ubuntu.

That's it!

I have tried this under XP and Windows 7 and it is flawless.

NOTES:

- Hibernation is not supported when installing Ubuntu via WUBI (for either Windows or Ubuntu).
- Follow these links for detailed WUBI operating instructions:
<http://wiki.ubuntu.com/WubiGuide>
<http://help.ubuntu.com/community/Wubi>
- Ubuntu 32 bit can run under Windows 32 bit or Windows 64 bit.

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FCUG MEETING 6TH APRIL 2010

As the crowd (which grew to 34 as the evening progressed) collected and the noise rose, so did Ed Congleton, in the absence of other officers, to call us to order. He told us that the Two Eds Show would, after all, run in reverse order: Ed Hicks would be first, then he would follow after the break. As Charles Bryk (sorry, guys; I had forgotten to include ex-presidents in "other officers") then announced, Well, either way, two Eds were better than none...

Ed Hicks introduced us to Livescribe, and their Pulse Pen, a rather fat pen with some amazing capabilities. He described it as a device to help memory. You can find it at Costco, Staples, BestBuy, Target, and other places, though it may be best to search for it on their web sites. Amazon.com has it also, as well as J&R

The Pulse Pen is not only a writer; it is also a recorder. It comes with a docking station which plugs into a USB port in your computer, from which it is recharged, and several notebooks of specially prepared paper. The paper is covered with a faint dot pattern of which every portion is unique, so that the pen can tell which part of a page it is being pointed at. Write a note and then point to it, and the pen knows (a) where on the page it is being pointed and (b) to which recorded voice file that portion refers in the pen's memory. So, by recording a lecture at school, or a talk at a meeting, and making a note about it at the same time, you can later point to that note and hear that portion of the recorded session played back. Incredible!

While the special paper can be purchased, you can also print your own if

you wish; the template is available among the files that accompany the pen. Actually, you do not buy a CD with the pen, but download the programs and Starting Guide pages from the web site. The pen will run with Windows or Mac.

The audio sections are visible in a folder when the pen is linked to the computer, and can be downloaded and stored like any other file. There are different pen versions with different amounts of built-in memory; there are 1GB, 2GB and 4GB versions and they can hold up to 100 hours of recordings per GB!

Teachers (contrary to your reporter's initial thought) like it as it helps students in taking notes on lectures and understanding them afterwards. The 2GB version costs about \$150 and the 4GB one about \$160 or so. Ed passed one round the room and we all had a chance to see at least that it writes like a normal pen.

Fantastic. Dick Booth rose and told us a bit about Ed, who was one of the founder members of this club back in 1980, who taught in New York schools for many years and now runs a company called Orienteering Unlimited in Westchester County.

It was then time for Art Bettauer to control the roar as Questions were asked and (sometimes) answered.

Q: How do I download Outlook Express?

A: It is part of Internet Explorer 6. You will have to uninstall I.E.7 and install I.E.6.

A': Windows Livemail is a modern equivalent.

Q: I don't seem to be able to attach a Word document to an Outlook e-mail.

A: From Word, press File and select Send To. One of the options is Mail Recipient and this will set up the message layout for you.

Q: What is my best defence against interference using Vista?

A: Set up your Spyware blockers and such to run in your Administrator account, then go onto the Internet using a User account. That way anyone who breaks in will not be able to get at your spyware protections at all.

Q: Optonline is swamping me with spam.

A: A fair amount of discussion; the likeliest candidate: Use your message filter to trap anything sent from Optonline and transfer it instantly to the Trash Bucket.

Info: Dell have a new laptop with a touch screen. It also uses facial recognition to avoid the need for a personal password!

Q: What happens if you don't shave for a while? (Apparently it can accommodate that within reason.)

Food Time. The usual grand feast and much conversation. It took a fair effort on the part of Lenny Bloom, who had arrived a bit late, to get us to settle down again. Once again, Jane and Charlotte are to be thanked profusely.

It was then time for Ed Congleton to show us his new 35mm slide scanner from Brookstone. This was very largely a hands-on real-time demonstration. The scanner is about six or seven inches by three by four, and has a vertical slot right through from one side to the other, into which one of two cradles can be fed. The one cradle is designed to hold four 35mm slides; the other can take about six or seven inches of 35mm film strip. Plug it into a USB port, install the software, and you can preview and then scan your pictures at different densities, color, black-and-white, or negative, and so on. The accompanying software can not only operate the scanner, but can also be used to edit the pictures once they have been scanned.

Ed had been given this equipment as a present, and has been archiving old slides. Historically, when he received the slides back from the developer he had, after looking at them, simply put them aside with all the others. As examples, he brought two of these boxes picked at random from the pile. One was labelled '1961' and the other 'UK 1977 No.6' – which raised two questions: where are Nos 1 through 5? and is No.6 the last one of the set?

Anyway, he opened one box and placed four slides in the cradle. Slides must go in a certain way round; if the pictures were taken vertically, that must be corrected at editing time. In operation, two were found to have been put in upside down also; but, again, that was easily correctable with the editor.

At the end of the demonstration Dick Booth suggested the use of Picasa from Google, which can easily arrange libraries of pictures for display and editing from stored files on your computer or in cyberspace.

The program ended; the chairs were though to be in the right places for the Historical Society's needs the following day, so we swept up the crumbs from the feast and closed the building.

-----ooOoo-----

Eliminating Obsolete Windows Device Drivers

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Device drivers are programs that are designed to control (drive) specific types of hardware (devices) that are attached to your computer. These devices can be attached through wires or by wireless connections. No matter how the device is attached you need a program to tell it how to interact with the computer. An operating system such as Windows comes with myriads of device drivers built into it so when you bring your new computer home, attach your printers, external drives, etc., most of them work fine.

The caveat is that drivers are hardware-dependent and operating-system-specific so your external CD-ROM, which worked flawlessly under Vista, may not work with Windows 7 until you install an updated device driver designed for the new OS.

Every operating system directs device drivers to communicate with their devices through the computer bus or a communications subsystem. It is a process which is largely invisible to those trying to get work done on the computer, much like the internal workings of an automobile are largely invisible to a driver trying to get from home to the grocery store.

The invisibility of device drivers is a good thing when everything is working smoothly, but it tends to hinder troubleshooting when trying to track down the cause of a problem. When you upgrade or change hardware, Windows doesn't usually delete the old device drivers. Sometimes these obsolete programs can cause hardware conflicts. Seemingly unrelated quirky behavior on the part of the computer can often be traced to a no-longer-used device driver.

Resolving device driver problems in Windows can be difficult. In this article we're going to focus on finding outdated device drivers and eliminating them from your system.

Manually searching for device drivers on a Windows system can be frustrating, time-consuming, and mostly a waste of effort. Conveniently for us, Microsoft has provided a way to locate unused device drivers and remove them.

The directions herein are designed specifically for Windows 7, but the general process will work for Vista and XP. There are slight variations in the process with each of the operating systems; just be careful when reading each screen. Let's get on with it.

The Device Manager as it comes from Microsoft is not set up to display device drivers that are no longer being used. The Device Manager has to be configured to show obsolete drivers so we can remove them. You need to add something called a special Windows Environment Variable. This is a text string that contains a path, file name or drive. Programmers refer to this as a system property. We don't really care what they call it as long as it works.

1. From the Start Menu, right-click on Computer.
2. Select Properties at the bottom of the list.
3. From the System window, select Advanced system settings.
4. From the System Properties dialog box, select the Environment Variables button. (See illustration)
5. The Environment Variables dialog box contains two panels, User variables and System variables.
6. Click the New... button.
7. In the New System Variable dialog box, type
`devmgr_show_nonpresent_devices`
8. Type 1 in the Variable Value text box.
9. Close all the dialog boxes.

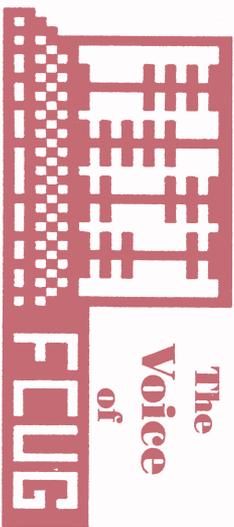
In most cases there is no need to restart the system.

Let's test the results of our labor:

1. Access the Start Menu.
2. Right click Computer.
3. Select Manage.
4. When the Computer Management window appears, select Device Manager.
5. Open the View menu and select Show Hidden Devices.

From now on whenever you open a branch within the Device Manager tree structure and device icons are "grayed out" or appear faded, these are the unused drivers. You can safely delete them. Whenever you add, remove or change your hardware configuration, always check for left over drivers and avoid problems.

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