

MONITOR

Vol. 24, No. 3

March 2007

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March 13—Greece Senior Center
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Intuit Quicken Premier 2006

Move a Data File

Between Two Computers

2006 for Win98/Me/2000/XP

by Jennie Schlueter

As the saying goes, you can't have too much of a good thing. While that may or may not be true, it's pretty safe to say that having access to more than one computer is all good.

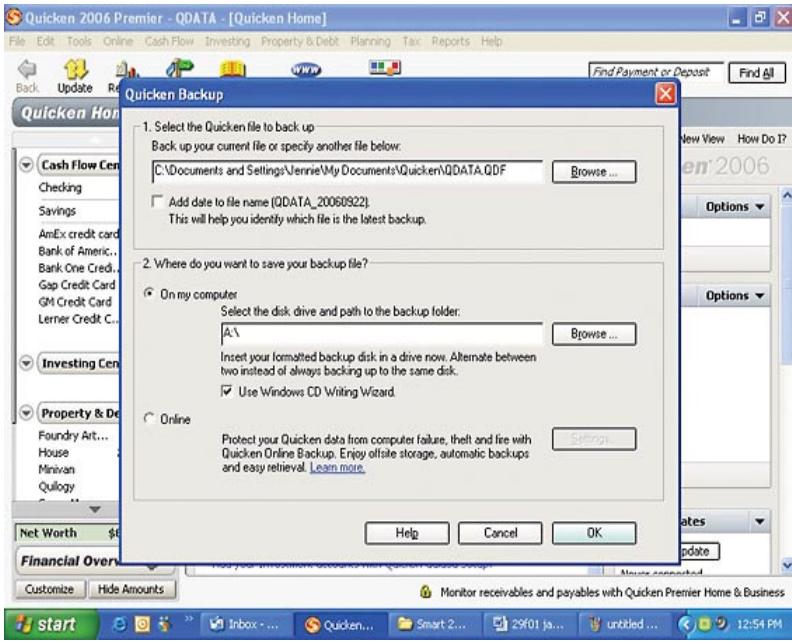
When it comes to Quicken Premier 2006, however, working with multiple computers can require a little maneuvering. For example, what do you do when you want to move a Quicken data file from one computer to another? We'll dissect this helpful how-to and have you on your way faster than you can say "file share."

Back It Up

The best way to move a file from one computer to another is by using Quicken's Backup and Restore Backup File commands. Let's say that you're working on your home PC to help you plan for retirement. When the software asks you for specific 401(k) information, you realize you've left it all at work. You decide it might just be easiest to fill in the information from the office over your lunch break, but you'll first need to move the file you're working on now from your home PC to your office PC.

Use Quicken to open the file you want to move. You're going to back up the file to removable media. You can back up Quicken information in one of several ways: You can simply follow the prompts to back up your data file that Quicken offers every third time you close the program, you can choose Backup from the File menu, or you can press CTRL-B. All three options will open the Quicken Backup dialog box. Because the file you want to back up is already open, press CTRL-B.

From the Quicken Backup dialog box, specify which file you want to back up. Quicken assumes you want to back up the currently open file, so you don't need to choose another file name in this case. It's probably a good idea to click the Add Date To File Name checkbox in Step 1. This will make it easy for you to identify the latest backup.



From the Quicken Backup dialog box, you can decide if you want to back up your data file to media on your computer or to a server on the Internet.

contains an older version of the file you are about to open, the newest backup will overwrite the older version. Quicken will open a dialog box asking you to confirm this overwrite before proceeding.

When the file is fully restored, it will alert you with a dialog box. Click OK. There will now be a copy of the file in the Quicken directory in your My Documents folder on your hard drive.

Old vs. New

Once you have moved your data file and begun making changes on the new computer, the information in the file on the first computer will no longer be up-to-date. So if you want to work on the file on the first computer again, you'll have to complete the above backup and restore process again. If this is something you plan on doing a lot, it can get difficult to determine which file is the most recent version.

You could avoid some of this hassle by using removable media that would make your Quicken data file portable, but Intuit does not recommend this.

The back-up-and-restore method works well for moving data files every once in a while. If this is something you'll need to do often, however, you should probably consider signing up for Quicken's Online Backup service.

Quick Studies, *Smart Computing*, January 2007, Vol.18 Issue 1, Page(s) 69 in print issue.

How To Use Disk Cleanup

by Marty Sems

Disk Cleanup helps you cut the clutter on your Windows 98/Me/XP/Vista computer's hard drive. The utility, which is built into Windows, finds unnecessary files in various categories such as Temporary Internet Files and Offline Files. You can then choose which categories to delete, often freeing up many megabytes or even gigabytes at one stroke.

When you're troubleshooting a problem on your PC, the advice you'll find or hear from other users often

includes running Disk Cleanup. This isn't because the utility has a proven track record of fixing problems—it doesn't. However, it can eliminate some variables in the troubleshooting process, such as a corrupted TMP (temporary) file that could be causing trouble or a lack of free space for the swap file.

Disk Cleanup also doesn't detect duplicate files, such as multiple copies of space-eating songs and photos. Still, it's a useful tool with which every Windows users should be familiar.

Windows Me/XP

To run Disk Cleanup in WinMe/XP, right-click Start and choose Explore, or press the Windows logo and E keys at the same time. Right-click Local Disk (C:) and choose Properties. Click Disk Cleanup to begin.

Windows Vista's Disk Cleanup allows you to shut down Hibernate mode and reclaim disk space allocated to it.

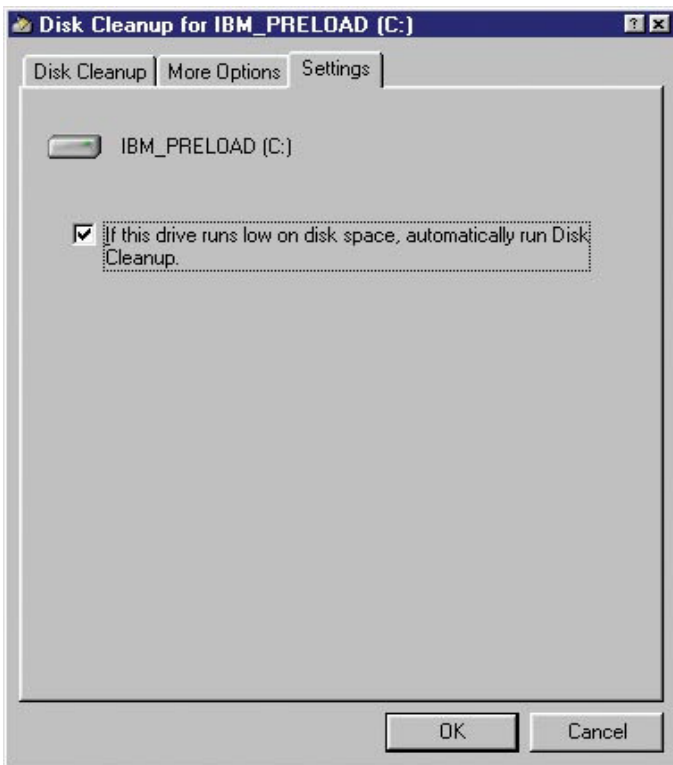
After searching your hard drive (WinXP may take several minutes), Disk Cleanup will give you a list of junk file categories called Files To Delete. On the right, the utility will tell you how much hard drive space it can reclaim by deleting the files in each category. WinXP expresses drive space in kilobytes or bytes, such

as 2,255,003 (2.3MB), but WinMe sticks to megabytes, such as 0.06MB (60KB).

In WinXP, Disk Cleanup can also find old files that you haven't accessed in a long time and compress (but not delete) them to save space. Compress Old Files isn't a very attractive option, however, as it takes a PC longer to access compressed files when they're needed. Also, because new hard drives cost as little as 20 cents per gigabyte, adding storage capacity with a new hard drive is preferable to compressing files in most cases. Compress Old Files is usually also to blame for how long it takes WinXP's Disk Cleanup to scan your hard drive.

Click the checkbox next to any category to select or deselect it for file deletion. The Temporary Files category is a good place to start (Disk Cleanup may ignore temp files less than seven days old), as are Temporary Internet Files, Temporary Offline Files, Offline Files, and Setup Log Files. Before you check the Recycle Bin entry, you might want to first double-click its icon on your Desktop to make sure that there's nothing in it that you don't want to throw away permanently.

Some categories, such as Downloaded Program Files (which includes unneeded ActiveX controls and Java applets), cause a View Files button to appear. Click it, and you'll see a window with a list of the files Windows



Windows 98's Disk Cleanup window has a Settings tab. Here, you can tell Windows to automatically run the utility when the hard drive gets too full.

says is OK to delete. Close the window when you're finished looking.

Windows XP lets you clean out a huge number of Microsoft Office setup files, but if you have to do a repair operation later, you'll need to insert the Office installation disc at that time.

When you're ready for Disk Cleanup to erase your expendable files, click OK and Yes. If your hard drive has more than one partition, such as C: and D:, run Disk Cleanup on each.

The Disk Cleanup window has another tab called More Options. Here you'll find more ways to free up hard drive space. The Clean Up button in the Windows Components section launches the Windows Components Wizard in WinXP and the Add/Remove Programs feature in WinMe. The Installed Programs section's Clean Up button links to Add/Remove Programs feature in both OSes (operating systems). Finally, the System Restore section's Clean Up button nukes every restore point but the most recent one. This is a little drastic, so Windows asks you whether you want to proceed.

System Restore's Clean Up button is kind of pointless for two reasons. Firstly, it doesn't reclaim usable hard drive space from System Restore because it doesn't change the amount of space allocated to the utility.

In WinXP, you can do this by right-clicking My Computer, choosing Properties and the System Restore tab, setting the Disk Space To Use slider to a lower setting, and clicking Apply. In WinMe, right-click My Computer and select Properties, the Performance tab, and File System. Adjust the System Restore Disk Space Use slider and click Apply. Reducing System Restore's disk space may erase your oldest restore points.

Secondly, if you needed to delete old restore points as part of troubleshooting, you would get rid of all of them (not even sparing the most recent restore point) by disabling System Restore. In WinXP, select the Turn Off System Restore checkbox just above the Disk Space To Use slider. In WinMe, click the Troubleshooting tab, select the Disable System Restore checkbox, click Apply, and then click OK.

Win98's Disk Cleanup differs only slightly from WinMe/XP's. Its Disk Cleanup window has a third tab called Settings, which bears a self-explanatory checkbox reading If This Drive Runs Low On Disk Space, Automatically Run Disk Cleanup. If you enable or disable this option, click OK.

Windows Vista

In case you've been using Windows Vista long enough to worry about detritus on your hard drive, here's the procedure for using Disk Cleanup. Note that the final version of Vista, which may be available by the time you read this, may differ a little from the build we used to pen this article (build 5600 Release Candidate 1).

Click the Start icon (the Windows icon orb) in its familiar place at the lower-left part of the screen. When the new Start menu appears, click Computer in the column on the right. Think of Computer as Vista's version of Win98/Me/XP's My Computer; as with the Documents, Pictures, and Music folders, Microsoft simply dropped the "My" part of the name. Computer combines the features of My Computer and Win98/Me/XP's File Explorer in one window, meaning that you'll see icons for your hard drive partitions and other storage devices in the center, plus a folder tree on the left. You can also reach Computer by pressing the Windows logo-E combination keystroke.

Next, right-click Local Disk (C:). Choose Properties. Windows 98/Me/XP users will be on familiar ground here, as the Local Disk (C:) Properties panel will look much as it did in those earlier OSes.

Click the Disk Cleanup button at the lower-right. Here, Vista will throw you a curve ball. It will ask you whether you want to clean up the files in the current user account only or in all of the user accounts on the PC. Click either option, and Vista will immediately start to analyze the files on the PC. Because of improvements in the way Vista indexes files with its default file system settings, this process may take much less time than on systems with WinXP.

Some of Vista's Files To Delete categories can really free up substantial amounts of hard drive space. One example is System Error Memory Dump Files, which denotes files Windows Vista creates when it logs information about an error that has occurred. And if you don't care for Vista's Hibernate mode, check Hibernation File Cleaner. This can free up gigabytes of space and disable the Hibernate mode at the same time.

After you've chosen the types of files to delete, click OK. Vista will ask you whether you really want to proceed, so click Delete Files. When Disk Cleanup is finished, click OK.

Although it doesn't "clean up" problems on the hard drive such as bad Registry entries or spyware, Disk Cleanup is nevertheless an important tool. Use it occasionally and pay attention to what you delete with it.

Windows Tips & Tricks, Smart Computing, January 2007 • Vol.18 Issue 1, Page(s) 31-32 in print issue.



Q. Now that Windows Vista has been released, should I change from my Windows XP computer? Is it something I need?

A. In word, no. With any product this new, I recommend holding off for the time being and not rushing out to either purchase a new computer with Vista installed or "upgrading" your current computer to Vista. Call

me a technological conservative if you must, but historically, whenever a new operating systems makes its debut (Windows XP came out in 2001), there are always a few bugs, glitches and gremlins to be worked out and compatibility issues yet to be discovered and resolved. Vista's first major update, SP-1, will address most initial problems, and should be released later this year.

I'm using Vista and providing lots of tips and tweaks to subscribers of my weekly computer-help newsletter (www.MrModem.com), and answering a myriad of questions about it, as well. I haven't run into any major problems, but I'm running Vista Ultimate on an AMD64 5600 dual core processor with 4GB of RAM, and oodles (sorry for the technical talk) of video and graphical horsepower.

For the time being, if your current computer is working fine, and you're able to do the things you need to do with your PC, leave well enough alone. Vista will be waiting for you when the time is right for you—and so will I.

Q. I have a digital photo that would make an ideal passport photo, so I would like to print a full page of small photos. Please tell me how I can do that.

A. You'll need the right software to accomplish that task. One of the most popular applications is the cleverly named Passport Photo (<http://tinyurl.com/8419m>). You can select between U.S., Canadian, standard or custom passport photo size. A free trial version is available, or it's \$10 to purchase.

Q. I just replaced my old printer with a new one, but when I go to print, my computer still thinks the old printer is the one to use. The new printer was installed properly and I can see it listed, but how do I make sure that's the printer my computer uses?

A. Establishing which printer is your default printer, meaning the printer it should use whenever you issue a print command, is easy. To do this, click Start > Settings > Printers. You'll see your old and new printer icons displayed. Right-click the printer that you want to establish as your default printer—in this case, your newly installed printer.

On the menu that appears, click "Set Printer as Default" and a check mark will appear. Once you see the check mark, you're done. Just close the Printers window and your new printer will spring to life the next time you have something to print.

Mr. Modem's DME (Don't Miss 'Em) Sites of the Month

Causes of Colors

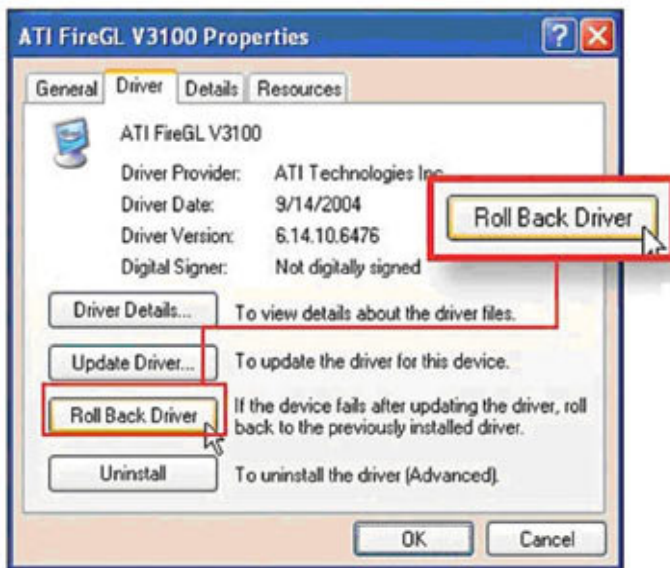
Have you ever wondered why the sky is blue, how rainbows are created, or what makes an emerald green? Me neither, but work with me here. This educational site examines the 15 causes of color, the concept of microconsciousness (huh?), and the way in which color is taken in by our eyes and how it impacts our life experience. This Web site is described as a "journey into light, where you can learn how light is created, lost, and moved." There are also other features, including how the world looks through color-blind eyes and how animals see.

<http://webexhibits.org/causesofcolor/>

Roadside America

We've all heard jokes about the World's Largest Ball of String and other obscure attractions that lurk just off the beaten path of the U.S. Interstate Highway system. Roadside America is an online guide to uniquely odd tourist attractions. If you're planning a road trip, you may want to take a brief detour to explore attractions such as The Pig Hall of Fame, The Voodoo Museum, and the World's Tallest Totem Pole. If nothing else, this site proves that there's something for everybody.

www.roadsideamerica.com



Time and Date

This handy site will generate a calendar for any year you wish. You can personalize your calendar by adding special dates or holidays, then printing it.

www.timeanddate.com/calendar

Mr. Modem provides prompt, personal answers to computer and Internet questions by email, plus easy-to-use PC tips, including Windows Vista, for subscribers of his weekly computer-help newsletter. For more information, to view a sample issue, or to subscribe, visit www.MrModem.com.

Media Notes

by Bill Petitt

Southeast Virginia Computer Group

I'm trusting that Microsoft really did get Vista out on Jan. 30th as promised. If that happened, then the computer giants also introduced their new machines with Vista loaded. Did anyone run out and buy one? I'm hoping that the printer makers also got their drivers out by that date, too.

But first, let's retill some old ground. Something we all think about and rarely do. Backup. But, I don't just mean copying files to safe storage places. There are some other methods. Take a look.

No-Brainer Backups Using Windows' Own Tools—Five options for implementing a Windows backup strategy without investing a dime in third-party utilities.

Any PC user who hasn't been hiding under a rock knows the importance of making backup copies of critical system and data files. But many people may not realize that Windows XP and 2000 have several built-in backup options. These tips will help you devise a perfect Windows backup strategy.

Option #1: Last Good Configuration: Every time you shut down your system, Windows makes a backup of certain Registry and driver settings (specifically, those in HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\System\CurrentControlSet). If things go awry and you can't start Windows (or you merely have second thoughts about a new graphics driver you've just installed), you can restore your machine to its previous state by pressing <F8> just before Windows starts. Use the arrow keys to select Last Known Good Configuration, and press <Enter>. (If you have already restarted Windows with hardware settings you don't want, this technique won't work because the system stored the info from those drivers in its backup when you most recently exited Windows.)

Option #2: Device Driver Rollback: Windows XP automatically backs up your old device drivers when you update them. You can restore a device to the way it was in happier times by reverting to this backup when a new driver causes problems. Choose Start, Run, type `devmgmt.msc`, and press <Enter> to open Device Manager. Double-click the device whose driver you want to restore to open its Properties dialog box. Click the Driver tab and select Roll Back Driver.

Option #3: System Restore: A good way to back up system settings, drivers, and critical system files in XP is by using System Restore, which can back up your configuration automatically on a defined schedule if you allocate sufficient storage to it. Use it to make backups (which it refers to as "restore points") prior to making any system change (Windows creates a new restore point automatically whenever you install new software.) Choose Start, Programs (or All Programs), Accessories, System Tools, System Restore. Then select Create a restore point and follow the prompts. System Restore doesn't affect your data, nor does it work every time, so don't count on it as your only protection.

Option #4: Hardware Profiles: You might find these useful when testing new hardware or device drivers. Choose Start, Run, type `sysdm.cpl`, and press <Enter>. Click the Hardware tab and then the Hardware Profiles button. Select your current profile—or the profile that you want to back up—from the list, and click Copy. Name it something like Test Profile and press <Enter>. Choose the startup settings you prefer under 'Hardware profiles selection', and click OK. When you restart your PC, choose Test Profile (or whatever you named the profile). If your experiments make Windows unusable, choose your original profile at the startup prompt; you may need to change your hardware back, too. If you like the new configuration, return to the Hardware Profiles dialog box and either delete the old default profile or make the new one your default.

Option #5: Windows' Backup Utility: To back up your files manually in XP and 2000, choose Start, Programs (or All Programs), Accessories, System Tools, Backup. Users of XP Home Edition can install the program from the Windows CD: Look for it in the `valueadd\msft\ntbackup` folder, right-click the `Ntbackup` file, and choose Install. Be forewarned, however, that the utility's Automated System Recovery feature

doesn't work in XP Home.

Microsoft lifts the curtain on Ultimate Extras

For months now, Microsoft has made it known that it planned to position its downloadable Vista Ultimate Extra add-ons as icing on the top tier of the Vista cake. What Microsoft hadn't made public—until January 7—was exactly what would be part of the Ultimate line up.

But at the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) 2007 kick-off, Microsoft showed a bit of what Microsoft has planned for the first wave of Ultimate Extras (<http://windowsultimate.com/Blogs/Extras/Default.aspx>). And at Microsoft's Windows Vista Lab, an event for about 60 bloggers, Most Valuable Professionals (MVPs) and Windows community members held in Las Vegas on January 6 and 7, Microsoft officials filled out details on the rest of its Extras strategy.

Microsoft plans to make available only to Ultimate customers starting on January 30—the day that Vista becomes available in the retail channels—the following Extra downloadables:

- A Vista-customized version of the Texas Hold 'Em poker game
- Multi-user interface language (MUIL) packs, designed to allow individuals fluent in different languages to share the same PC. Microsoft plans to make MUILs available for 35 languages, in addition to English. (MUILs also are available to Vista Enterprise customers.)
- BitLocker Online Secure Key Storage. Ultimate customers will be offered a secure place to store their BitLocker encryption keys in the Online Vista Marketplace. That way, if they lose their keys, they will be able to retrieve them over the Web. (BitLocker encryption is a feature of the Ultimate and Vista Enterprise SKUs only.)
- Windows DreamScene, animated wallpaper technology that allows users to run high-resolution video inside the Vista Aero Glass user interface. Microsoft and selected partners, starting with Stardock Corp., will be providing sample content. DreamScene has been known by the codenames "Motion Desktop," (<http://www.wincustomize.com/Articles.aspx?AID=140735>) and, more recently "Borealis."
- "Digital publications," a bunch of tips and tricks, blog links and other resources for getting the most out of Ultimate.

These are just the first few offerings under the Ultimate Extras banner. Microsoft is planning to roll out downloadables over time, company officials said.

Justin Hutchinson, a group product manager for Vista, showed off a bit of the capabilities of DreamScene. He also put through its paces a new "photo-imaging" Extra developed by Microsoft Research. GroupShot allows users to combine elements of multiple pictures together (<http://research.microsoft.com/projects/GroupShot/>) into a new image.

At the Vista Lab, Microsoft officials said that GroupShot is an example of the kinds of next-generation Extras that Microsoft has in the development pipeline and won't be available as part of the first round of Ultimate Extra downloads. Microsoft isn't going public yet with its packaging or delivery time frame for the next wave of Extras.

Vista SP1 is due in the second half of 2007

After lots of wavering, Microsoft has finally made the due date for Windows Vista Service Pack 1 (SP1) official: The update will ship in the latter half of 2007.

(Microsoft didn't issue a press release with that pronouncement. Instead, it notified its Technology Adoption Partner testers of it via an e-mail regarding the imminent start of the Vista SP1 testing program.)

The second half 2007 date won't be too surprising to folks who believed Microsoft Server and Tools chief Bob Muglia, who confirmed reports that Vista SP1 would be timed to hit with Longhorn Server, another Microsoft product due in the latter half of 2007.

But in recent months, other Microsoft officials have tried to muddy the SP1 waters, claiming Microsoft had no timetable for Vista's first service pack. Such a claim might even be believable, given how long (2008!) Microsoft is delaying delivery of Service Pack 3 for Windows XP.

Why the secrecy, Microsoft? Customers, especially many corporate ones, are still using SP1 as a marker for when they'll consider deploying a new software release. By refusing to provide an SP1 ship target, you've been creating more FUD (fear, uncertainty, and dread).

Backtracking a bit, I'm often asked just what should I back up. Here is some guidance for you: Which files

should you back up?

This year, make it your New Year's resolution to back up your computer. Every computer owner should back up important files. Chances are you've gone through the whole year without doing just that. It doesn't have to be as time-consuming as it sounds. Backups are as simple as copying and pasting files to an external hard drive. For small backups, you could even use thumb drives.

The tougher question is this: Which files do you really need to back up? That largely depends on you. But there are categories of files that most people should include. The priorities should be files that are both important and irreplaceable. Those include photos and financial records. End your list with items that are convenient but not vital.

Files to save:

- Photos, music and home video
- Financial statements
- Personal writing and art
- E-mail, contact list and calendar
- Web browser bookmarks (or Favorites)

You can cover a lot of ground by backing up My Documents. That folder contains the My Pictures and My Videos folders. Most people also keep their written documents in My Documents.

Saving e-mail:

E-mail, contact and calendar information can be harder to find. The following are backup steps for some e-mail programs.

In Outlook, click File>>Import and Export. Select Export to File and click Next. Select Personal Folder File and click Next. Select your inbox or other items you want to save and click Next. Click Browse and locate the place where you are storing your backup. Then click Finish.

Outlook Express lacks an export feature for messages. You can find a workaround on the Microsoft site.

To find Thunderbird data, click Start>> Run. Enter "%APPDATA%" (without quotes) into the box and click OK. Back up the Thunderbird folder.

Saving Favorites (bookmarks):

Web browser bookmarks are also typically outside the My Documents folder. But they're easy to back up. Start by opening your browser.

In Internet Explorer, click File>>Import and Export. A window will pop up with a few questions. Choose to Export Favorites and click Next. Highlight the Favorites folder to select all your Favorites and click Next.

Under Export to a File or Address, click Browse. Then find the location of your backup and click Save. Click Next and, finally, Finish.

In Firefox, click Bookmarks>>Manage Bookmarks. Click File>>Export. Find the location of your backup and click Save.

Microsoft extends support for XP Home, XP Media Center. Would you like some extra support with that software?

That's what Microsoft is now offering buyers of Windows XP Home Edition and Windows XP Media Center Edition. The company announced on Wednesday that it is adding five-year customer support for the operating systems, marking the first time that such extended service has been offered with a Microsoft consumer product.

The "extended" support, which kicks in after April 2009, will bring the two products on par with Microsoft's Windows XP Professional for businesses. Microsoft previously reserved its five-year extended support feature to only enterprise-grade products.

Under Microsoft's Support Lifecycle Policy, consumers and businesses both receive "mainstream" support for their products. XP Home Edition and XP Media Center will see mainstream support end in April 2009, which includes paid support, security updates, design changes and feature requests.

Once mainstream support expires, the five-year extended support is due to kick in. Previously, XP Home and XP Media Center consumers would migrate to self-help support for eight years, after their mainstream support ended.

The extended-support level includes roughly half of the eight features included in mainstream support.

Those not included are design changes and feature requests, warranty claims, no-charge incident reports and nonsecurity hot-fix support, unless a user purchases an extended agreement within 90 days of the mainstream support expiring.

The phase for additional software support will provide consumers with service until 2014, Microsoft said.

For the software giant, extending its help window is nothing new. Microsoft extended support for Windows 98, Windows 98 SE and Windows ME by two years, with assistance ending last summer.

And although Microsoft is expanding its support for its two consumer XP products, the move comes as it is gearing up to release its Windows Vista operating system to consumers next week. Vista is expected to ultimately replace XP, though market watchers note that it might take some time.

“Microsoft has listened to customer feedback and realized that providing security patches for Windows XP Professional, and not extending that support to the XP Home and XP Media Center Editions, was not a consistent approach,” a company representative said. “Microsoft is currently making the change for Windows XP Home Edition and Windows XP Media Center Edition only, and (it is) taking additional time to evaluate a permanent policy change that would apply to all consumer operating system versions.”

From the February 2007 issue of The Umbrella Online, Monthly Newsletter of the Hampton Roads Virginia Computing Community.

Should You Upgrade to Vista?

by Brian K. Lewis, Ph.D.

Sarasota PCUG, Florida

As regular readers of this column know, I have been using the beta version(s) of Vista and writing about my experience. I'll grant you that I haven't covered every aspect of the Vista experience. However, it is difficult to touch on everything in an operating system as massive as this. The best I can do is pass on comments on the parts I use frequently. As to the answer to the upgrade question—it's "maybe." I'll give you some of the pros and cons related to my experience.

In deciding whether or not to upgrade you need to determine if your hardware is adequate to run Vista. The system I am using has 768 MB of RDRAM, a 1.2 GHz Intel processor, and an NVIDIA GeForce 2 MMX video card (a correction from previous articles) and an 80 GB hard drive. Frankly, I don't think you would want anything less. A faster processor combined with 1 GB of RAM would be the minimum in most situations. You will also need a DVD drive, as Vista will be sold on DVDs only. From what I have learned it appears that Microsoft will produce only one DVD, but it will contain all the consumer versions of Vista. When you pay for the Vista Basic version and start the installation, the product key that you have to enter tells the setup program which version to install. Then if you decide you need to upgrade to a version with more bells and whistles, you get a new product key that unlocks and installs the upgrade version you paid for. I've already seen some comments on the web that the hackers will be paying for Vista Basic and then will hack the DVD to install the Ultimate version. Let's hope not!

So if you have sufficient hardware then you can go to the next step. What is there about Vista that's better than XP? (Note that if you are still running Win98 or WinMe, plan on upgrading. Both Vista and XP are vastly superior to either of these older, non-supported operating systems.) One thing I found that I really like is Vista's ability to go to the Internet to find device drivers for hardware. It did this very successfully for my sound system. I also installed an external hard drive that usually requires me to dig out the manufacturer's disk to get the necessary drivers. XP frequently forgot the driver and would have to reinstall it whenever I plugged the drive into the USB port. When I plugged the drive into a USB port on my Vista computer, there wasn't even the usual found new hardware notice. So I went looking and in "Computer" I found the hard drive identified and was able to access the file on it. So I just went ahead and did a complete backup. Vista's backup software found the drive and did the complete backup in the background while I continued working. This process did not work with my Epson scanner. Vista did some searching and then said I needed to visit the manufacturer's web site to see if software was available. So you can see that this Internet process doesn't work with all hardware.

Another thing I like in Vista is the added security. I don't like that the firewall is only a one-way blocker, but the scheduled daily parasite check is valuable when you have a cable or DSL connection to the Internet. I don't find the User Account Control (UAC) system to be intrusive as some others have reported. Even when I am working in the Administrator account it is not a problem. I think having to enter a password to

carry out operations that affect the system/registry is a good idea. It is one more barrier for any malware to overcome. In addition, when I am working in User mode and want to install a new application, I don't have to remember to right-click the install file and select "Run As." Instead, when I double-click the file I get a permissions window with the Administrator name and a box to enter the password. Much easier and much quicker way to get on with the installation.

I also like the change that has been made in the Start/All programs menu. It keeps you from having to search through multiple columns of programs to find the one you want. Scrolling through a single column list is something I find easier to do. For new computer users, the use of an icon in place of a "Start" button may not be intuitive. However, placing your cursor on the icon does cause the word "Start" to pop up just above the icon. One of the interesting little facets is the speed with which informative small windows pop up when you place your cursor on an icon. There is really no apparent delay, which is quite helpful.

Another change I like is that there is a search box in every directory window. You don't have to go back to the Start menu to initiate a search. Also, your searches can easily be saved. You have the options in each window to select files to burn to a CD/DVD, e-mail, or print. These selections are made using a menu across the top of the window.

When it comes to CD/DVD burning there is one aspect I don't like. That is that the default mode calls for formatting the CD or DVD so that it functions like a removable drive. Microsoft refers to this as the "Live File System." The problem with this is that the CD/DVD may not be readable in other computers. Their warning implies that the "Live File System" can be read in computers using the Windows XP operating system. However, I found this to be inaccurate, at least as far as the beta versions were concerned. It may be different in the final release version.

You can change the formatting method to "Mastered." This is the usual way you burn a CD/DVD by copying all the files for that disk at one time. CD/DVDs formatted for the "Live File System" can have files added by "dragging and dropping." You can also add and erase files. However, on a non-rewriteable disk the file is still there even though it is not accessible. Frankly, there are other burner software programs that I prefer. The third party programs also work much faster than the Vista application.

In Windows XP when you have a file folder open you can move or copy a file that has been selected. When you click on the move or copy icon on the right side of the window you get a browse window which allows you to select a destination either on your local computer or a computer on your network. Vista does not have this function. To move a file or files, you must first select them to be copied. Then you have to go to the destination window and select paste from the right-click menu with your mouse. Then it's back to the original window to delete the files you have copied to the new location. If that sounds like a roundabout procedure, well it is. The XP procedure is cleaner, faster and easier.

Networking is another area where there have been some improvements made. However, if you have a network with both XP and Vista computers, there are still some bugs that have to be worked around. The Windows Help files have eliminated the references related to networking with XP computers. There are no references to the fact the new Internet protocol, IPv6, needs to be installed on XP computers for them to be networked with Vista computers. I couldn't even find the web page reference in the Help file that give me the details on installing IPv6 on XP computers. Again, this may be changed in the final version or the current build I'm using may not need to have IPv6 installed on the XP computers. But that is something I haven't be able to determine.

The biggest drawback I see to Vista is the pricing. The \$99.95 upgrade for the Home version is the same as with XP Home. Except, this lowest cost upgrade gives you only Vista Home Basic. This version has fewer capabilities than does XP Home. The version of Vista that comes closest to matching XP Home is Vista Home Premium and it carries a premium price; \$150.00 to upgrade. Vista Home Basic lacks the Windows Media Center, DVD video software, and wireless networking provisioning. This latter capability, if available, would provide automatic configuration of laptops in WiFi hotspots. Vista Home Basic does not allow for scheduled backups and does not include backup to a network device. Neither Basic nor Premium allow for image-based backups. They also do not support motherboards with two processor sockets. How this will play out with the Intel Core 2 Duo processors, I really don't know. Vista Home Basic also does not have the new Aero graphic interface. That is found only in the Home Premium, Business and Ultimate versions. Unfortunately I can't tell you about the Aero interface as my computer doesn't support it.

Vista Business is the next higher priced version. It is \$199.99 for the upgrade. Although it has the image-based backup capability and wireless networking provisioning, it lacks Media Center capability and as well as the Movie Maker and Video production capabilities. You would have to obtain third party software for these functions if you have a need for them.

So if your only interest in using a computer is for e-mail, web surfing, word processing, then you might be satisfied with Vista Basic. However, you would be just as well off to stick with XP Home for the time being. If you are running a small business from your home you would probably be quite satisfied with Vista Home Premium. So who would need Vista Business or Ultimate? The business version might be useful in a small business with a wired or wireless LAN or where employees require laptops with wireless functions. It also has integrated Fax & Scan software. However, if you needed the Movie Maker, Media Center, or video production capability, then you would have to move up to Ultimate. That has an upgrade price of \$259.00.

If you are concerned about the security of Windows XP and the frequent security patches Microsoft has to release, then you can consider that Vista is more secure. That doesn't mean it will never need security patching. Quite the contrary. Any OS, especially one as complex as Vista will have hackers attempting to find its weak points and that will result in the need for security patches.

My concluding thoughts on this are that you will eventually have to move to Vista, unless you want to try an alternate OS such as a Linux version or a Macintosh OS. There are emulator programs for both Linux and Macintosh that permit you to run most Windows software. If you aren't one that always needs the "latest and greatest", then you might consider waiting until you purchase a new computer with Vista pre-installed. I certainly wouldn't recommend that anyone rush out and upgrade as soon as Vista hits the market. Wait a while, possibly until the first patches are available or further reviews of the final market version are available. There also may be some "street pricing" that will lower your cost of upgrading. Vista appears to be an improvement over XP, but for the average user, it is not a "great leap forward."

Dr. Lewis is a former university & medical school professor. He has been working with personal computers for more than thirty years. Courtesy of the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG).

Stop! Think! Click!

by Lou Torraca

President. the MOAA Hawaii Chapter Computer User Group, Hawaii

The world has changed. Today we can work, check bank balances, book travel, research medical questions, talk to friends and family members, order books and music, bid on auction items, and even buy a car without leaving home. Thanks to the Internet, we have access to entertainment, shopping, email and other information, 24 hours a day. This access to information is greater than most folks in my generation could have ever imagined. However, the Internet is not without hazards. The Internet and the anonymity it affords can give online scammers, hackers, and identify thieves access to your computer, personal information, finances and more.

I have written about it before, and so have many others, but with Christmas almost here and many of you already shopping on the Internet, I wanted to provide an update on that Internet bugaboo: *Security!* First of all, for those of you who are concerned about using your credit cards for Internet purchases, a couple of things to consider: first, most credit card companies have either a \$50 maximum amount which

“...most credit card companies have either a \$50 maximum amount which you are liable for if someone uses your number without your permission...”

you are liable for if someone uses your number without your permission. In fact, many have a \$0 liability policy, sometimes tied to a requirement that you report the use within a certain time-frame. So, step one should be to check with your credit card customer service and find out what the policy is. Also, it is possible, with many credit cards to get a one-time use # which might be a new account number, or just the three-digit number on the reverse side of your card. Check with the credit card company or the issuing bank. Obviously, you will want to check your credit card account regularly to see if any bogus charges have been added and this is pretty easy if you setup an online account. Even easier if your issuing bank or credit card company has an alert setup that will notify you if an unusual charge appears. Remember that all the other security measures that affect your computer, e.g. anti virus, anti spy/malware, firewall, updating your operating

system, etc. further insure your safety. A good reference is: www.microsoft.com/athome security/viruses.

The Washington State AARP folks gave an excellent presentation on this topic at the national AARP convention and graciously gave me their permission to use any parts I wanted to for this column. Here are a few of the pretty extensive notes I took.

Protect your privacy and personal information online; if you are asked for personal information such as your name, email, address, telephone number, account numbers, or Social Security number, find out how the information is going to be used before you share it. Find out how the requester protects your personal information. Remember, it is your information.

Whether you are shopping, banking, or conducting other business online, do not provide your personal or financial information through a company's website until you have checked for indicators that the site is secure. Look for "https" in the Web address (the "s" stands for secure). Look for a padlock or an unbroken key in the lower right corner of the status bar. Double-click the padlock or key to ensure that the "issued by" name on the security certificate matches the name in the address bar.

If you get an email or pop-up message asking for personal information, do not reply or click on the link in the message. If you think there may be a need to provide information to the requester (you have an account with the company or have placed an order) contact the company directly by telephone. Do not send your personal information via email; it is not a secure transmission method.

Here is an excellent place to review the topic of phishing: www.microsoft.com/athome/security

Anyone can set up shop online. It is a good practice to know whom you are dealing with and what you are getting into. Proceed with caution in your online activities. If you shop online, check out the seller before you buy. A legitimate business or individual seller should give you a physical address and a working telephone number you can call in case you have problems. Call the telephone number before you buy. Never send cash, personal checks or money orders for online purchases. Check out the terms of the deal, like refund policies and delivery dates. The law requires sellers to ship items as promised or within 30 days after the order date if no specific date is promised.

Delete junk email without opening the message. If you open the email, it can alert the spammer that the address is good. Never reply to spam. This includes responding to an option to "Remove me from your list." Do not buy anything or give to any charity marketing through spam. Spammers may swap or sell email addresses of their customers. If you make a purchase as the result of a spam email, it may result in more spam. Do not forward chain email messages. You lose control over who sees your email address. You might also be forwarding a hoax aiding in the delivery of a virus.

Passwords are the key to unlocking your computer and online accounts. A strong password provides better security against hackers and thieves. Strong passwords should be over eight characters in length, combine letters, numbers, and symbols, and should avoid using common words. Do not use your name, your spouse's name, your birthday or location.

Change your passwords regularly or at least every 90 days.

Do not use the same password for each online account you use. Keep your passwords secret. Do not give passwords out to family or friends or send your passwords over email. Do not enable the "Save Password Option" if you receive a dialog box asking you if you would like the computer to remember your password. Do not store written passwords on or near your computer.

Record passwords and store in a safe, secure place. One way to create a strong and memorable password is to think of a "pass phrase." Think of a phrase that is easy to remember like "I save my pennies for a rainy day." Use the first letter of each word as your password, converting some letters into numbers that resemble letters; for example "Ism¢4ard." Notice the combination of upper and lower case letters, numbers and symbols.

Pay attention to what kids do and whom they meet online. Consider a rule that no child reveals personal information, including photos, without permission. Warn kids never to meet Internet "friends" in person. Parental controls are provided by most Internet Service Providers, or sold as separate software. No software can substitute for parental supervision. Talk to your kids and/or grandkids about safe computing as well as things they are seeing and doing online.

Stop and think before you click; before you provide information, open files or attach-ments, or download files from unknown senders, take a minute to stop and think before you click.

Free downloads can contain spyware. To avoid it, resist the urge to install any software unless you know exactly what it is. You can install anti-spyware software and then use it regularly to scan for and delete spyware programs that may sneak onto your computer.

Email attachments and links sent over email will not damage your computer without your participation. You have to open an email or attachment that includes a virus or follow a link to a site that is programmed to infect your computer. Hackers use a variety of enticing file names such as “Per your request!” or “Fwd: FUNNY” to get you to open the email attachment or click on the link. Do not open an email attachment unless you expect it and know what it contains. You can help others trust your attachments by including a message in your text that explains what you are attaching.

“Instant messaging” is a form of online communication like email. You can type messages to someone and they can see the messages almost immediately. Files attached to instant messages can also contain viruses. In most cases, viruses spread when you open an infected file attached to an instant message appearing to come from someone you know.

Finally, two things, share your knowledge with others so that they will be more vigilant on the “net and report abuses, including spam, via the Federal Trade Commission <http://www.ftc.gov>, your Internet Service Provider and your bank or credit union. Most have addresses to use that may begin with phishing, abuse, or spoof. Check their web pages for the correct one.

Courtesy of APCUG.

The New, the Best, and the Worst

Collected by Pim Borman

Webmaster, SW Indiana PC Users Group, Inc.

Watch the Back Door!

Many an afternoon I see a school bus stopping in the neighborhood to unload students toting enormous bags of expensive text books on their backs. It always irks me because it seems so unnecessary. The heavy backpacks put an unhealthy strain on the students’ spines, and the expensive books put a severe strain on family budgets, especially if there are several children of school age. (Public school students must pay for their text books in Indiana, in case you’re not from around here.)

It would be so much easier if the students used inexpensive, functional notebook computers with the textbooks stored on CDs. Ideally, classrooms should be equipped with permanent, networked units for common use so that the students can leave their own computers at home to minimize damage and loss during transport. After all, most colleges already require that students have a computer, so why not start in high school, or even earlier?

Cost shouldn’t be a problem. A fully functional computer running free Linux and Open Source software can cost less than a year’s worth of textbooks. Acceptance will be harder to come by, with expected resistance from book publishers about to lose a highly profitable and captive market. Microsoft may not be happy either. Teachers may have to be retrained, and administrators, having been weaned on MS Windows, may oppose the use of what many still regard as a second-best operating environment.

Often necessity is the father of invention. Third World countries, only now entering the world of computing, are the most likely to introduce revolutionary progress in low-cost personal computer productivity. My own computer, equipped with all the latest bells and whistles, sits idle for more than 99% of the time. In a Third World classroom, or maybe a small office, it could easily support a dozen or more terminals and monitors if provided with the right, free software. History would repeat itself, since time sharing of computers was first introduced in the 1960’s when mainframe computers were also unaffordable for individuals. Students will only need inexpensive dumb terminals and bare-bones monitors. In England an organization calling itself Ndiyo (Swahili for “yes”) is working on this approach. It makes full-fledged computing available to many at low cost.

An alternate approach called “One Laptop Per Child” initiated by academics at MIT, aims to provide specially designed laptop computers at a cost of less than \$100 per unit to millions of children in poor countries. The computing experience is less advanced than with the time sharing approach, but having your own computer, no matter how primitive, has a strong psychological advantage. I can testify to that. My first introduction to computers was via a Telex terminal connected to a time-sharing mainframe that I used for

scientific modeling work. It was useful and interesting, but not nearly as captivating as running my own simple programs in Sinclair Basic on my own first (\$100) Timex-Sinclair computer.

An essential part of introducing computers to Third Worlders (and not only school children) is the availability of free software in the form of Linux and the OpenSource programs to do just about anything productive that computers are capable of. This in turn will grow and mature the Linux/OpenSource technology to the point where it may well return to the West through the back door as an attractive, low-cost alternative to expensive and bloated Microsoft Windows and Office programs. (Based in part on an article in *The Economist*, 9/23/2006—thanks to Louis Ritz.)

A South-African dotcom millionaire, Mark Shuttleworth, is financing the development of a totally free distribution of desktop Linux and all the necessary software. Called Ubuntu (“Humanity to Others”), it is already preferred by many Linux users. It is totally free. Even the CDs on which it is distributed are mailed to you free for the asking (www.ubuntu.com). Although possibly intended for use in Third World countries, Ubuntu is also rapidly gaining followers in the US. What did I just write about the back door?

What Is Web2.0?

Usually when major computer-related improvements are forthcoming, they are hyped long before they actually become available. Have you heard about Vista? I thought so.

Surprisingly, a major improvement in the Internet Web protocol, Web2.0, seems to have sneaked in through the back door. And yet, Web2.0 is to the old Web what the telephone was to the telegraph. With the traditional Web, you send a message, such as a request for a street map, to a Web address (“www.mapquest.com”) that gets translated into a numerical Internet Protocol address by a Domain Name Server. The addressed site responds to your message and the connection is broken. To send a follow-up message (“zoom in”) the whole process must be repeated. Slow-slow-slow.

With Web2.0 the connection, once established, remains open until you close your browser window. This allows an immediate back-and-forth communication as if the distant Web site were located on your own computer. It allows you to go to Google Earth and seamlessly scroll and zoom the maps to your heart’s content (provided your Internet connection is fast enough). It also makes it possible to provide application programs, such as an Office Suite similar to Microsoft Office, on a Web server to be made available via a Web2.0 connection. Several providers are moving in that direction, including Google and Microsoft. News sites can provide live hyperlinks whereby when your pointer hovers over a headline a summary of the news pops up on the screen. The possibilities are endless.

Happily, the user doesn’t need to do anything to benefit from this new technology. The Internet servers provide all the program-ming that any major Web browser can understand. Enjoy!

How Broad Is Your Broadband Connection?

Not nearly as fast as you would like it to be, right? If you have a cable connection and the kid next door is online playing Doom, or Bully, or whatever, you’re sharing online access and your connection probably crawls. Not much you can do about that. But you can minimize some other delays.

One of these is the time it takes your browser to connect to the site you want to address. If you type an Internet address such as swipcug.apcug.org/index.htm, a Domain Name Server (DNS) provided by your Internet Service Provider (ISP) translates it to the corresponding numerical Internet Protocol (IP) address. Unless the entry has been cached after having been used before, the lookup procedure may take some time.

OpenDNS is a new, independent, and free Domain Name Server that claims to be faster than many ISP servers, mostly by using a very large cache. In addition it keeps track of known phishing sites and blocks them with a warning message. It will also try to correct misspellings and still provide the intended Web site, or suggest possible sites you might be looking for. When I intentionally typed swipcug.apcug.NET (instead of the correct.ORG domain) I got a choice of four possible sites with the correct one first on the list. Simple instructions for replacing the default DNS addresses of your ISP with the OpenDNS addresses can be found at <http://welcome.opendns.com/> (read Steve Bass in *PCWorld*, November 2006)

If you want to check the download and upload speeds of your broadband connection you can use SpeakEasy at <http://www.speakeasy.net/speedtest/>. As I am writing this, on Friday at 10:45 pm, my connection speed with Sigecom to Chicago is: Download Speed: 3866 kbps (483.3 KB/sec transfer rate), Upload Speed: 347 kbps (43.4 KB/sec transfer rate), about as good as it gets in my experience. Speeds to

Seattle are similar.
Courtesy of APCUG.

From The DealsGuy
by Bob (the cheapskate) Click
Greater Orlando Computer Users Group

Manage Your Clipboard History

One Version Is FREE And A nice Discount On The Other. LW-WORKS Software has released Version 4.0 of Clipboard Recorder, an application that helps users manage their Windows clipboard history and provides easy ways for users to access their saved clipboard data. Once its running, Clipboard Recorder adds an icon to your system tray and monitors your system clipboard. As you copy any data from other applications to the system clipboard, Clipboard Recorder will capture it and store it to the listening clipboard record list in a compressed format.

Clipboard Recorder provides four ways to select the records; Popup Window, Floating Window, Menu Window and Main Window. Most of the time, you don't need to leave your working application to access your clipboard history! The selected clipboard records can be pasted to your working application directly just as if you have pressed "Ctrl + V." Clipboard Recorder also features transferring clipboard data between computers. Therefore, users can do "Ctrl + C" on one computer and "Ctrl + V" on another.

Clipboard Recorder is available in two versions, Professional and Standard (Freeware). The professional version with complete online help costs \$29.95 (user group members get a 30% discount using the coupon code "Special"). Clipboard Recorder 4.0 runs under Windows 98/ME, Windows 2000, or XP Home and Professional. Visit the LW-WORKS Software home page at <http://www.lw-works.com> to order Clipboard Recorder or to download a fully functional trial copy.

Here Is Help To Sort Your MP3 Files

This handy utility will sort a musical collection of any size, quickly reorganizing folders and renaming files on your hard drive. MP3 Sorter physically rearranges music on your hard drive while similar programs just create a list of files, but make no actual changes. After you use MP3 Sorter, all changes will be seen in Explorer as if you arranged files manually. Prior to actually rearranging files, MP3 Sorter allows users to see the structure of files and folders after renaming/rearranging takes place. MP3 Sorter renames files according to the artist's name and the title of the track and places them in folders like this; "Artists\Album + Year." The utility has an adjustable renaming system.

The utility has a preview window showing the newly arranged structure and comes with a Duplicate Checker that insures against accidental overwrites. You can see the transfer result to avoid any transfer mistake, and if you want to undo the transfer operation, it is possible to return the original file and folder structure with the help of the Roll Back Manager. Also, you can make MP3 Sorter delete source files, which will be done only if copying was successful. MP3 Sorter provides an advanced editor so you can change custom tokens whenever you like. After MP3 Sorter neatly reorganizes your MP3 collection, you will be able to find required music tracks on your hard drive with the speed of a radio DJ.

MP3 Sorter runs under all versions of Microsoft Windows and costs \$24.95 (USD) for a single-user license, but users group members get a 10% discount by using this URL: <https://secure.shareit.com/shareit/cart.html?PRODUCT%5B300080839%5D=1&COUPON1=MP3ST891>. Licensed customers are entitled to the fully functional version of the product, free technical support and free upgrades. Further information on 'MP3 Sorter', as well as a free trial copy is available free of charge from <http://www.prograce.com>. Product page link: <http://prograce.com/index.php?page=mp3>

Download link: <http://prograce.com/download/MP3SorterInstall.exe>

Bob (The Cheapskate) Click <bobclick@mindspring.com>. Visit my Web site at <http://www.dealsguy.com>

Planning Meeting Notes

February 6, 2007

by John McMillan

Sally Springett hosted the February Planning meeting attended by Bob Avery, Arpad Kovacs, Mike Lavelle, John McMillan, Dan Rothfuss, Steve Staub, and Tom Thompson. It was noted that the January Society meeting at the Pittsford Library was better attended than several of the past few sessions including December's Jeopardy game held at the same venue. It is not known how much is attributable to location as opposed to the evenings topic or other factors.

February 13th John will present Video Editing Part 2 at the Brighton Library. Mike Lavelle reported that he is pursuing several alternative topics including talks on Linux and Vista but the March meeting is to be announced. Members are encouraged to mention any subject of interest to Mike or a member of the planning committee. Tom Thompson expressed interest in hearing about GPS units being hooked up to a laptop computer.

Sally announced that the Brighton Town Park used last year has been reserved for the August Picnic. Routine printer maintenance is expected to be completed before starting to print the Monitor on February 17th.

Steve pointed out that the treasury is in very poor shape because of continuing increases in operating expenses. Recent investigations brought to light a post office glitch that, although fixed, has accounted for missed deliveries that may have caused some members to be in arrears. We will focus on reducing the number of people in arrears and continue to search for ways to contain operating costs. The committee agreed by a unanimous vote to increase the annual dues by \$5 effective April 1st. For most of us this will mean \$35 a year.

Help's Half Hour

Led by: Arpad Kovacs

Recorded by Jan Rothfuss

Q: One member is trying to update all of his drivers for an HP printer and Scanner. Now his printer does not work.

A: The HP ImageZone software must be used. A generic driver will not support the enhanced features. Anything new needs to use the ImageZone program.

Q: Another member had received a message that his computer is infected and to press here to analyze. Should I do it? He has AVG software.

A: Arpad recommended to never, never click on this box. TrendMicro or Bit Defender are both online scanners that are recommended for use instead. The issue of seeing so many pop-up windows signals that he does have a virus. He should add a firewall, too.

Q: Has anyone tried the HitMan software? It is used to run the sweep of products automatically—Spybot, Adaware, etc.

A: No one present had tried it. It was suggested that he send an Email to Nick to see what he says.

NOTE: Arpad reminded everyone that all new computers now come with Vista operating system. Some old XPs may be found at sellout prices. He reported that there are many problems with Vista. Service Pack one will fix most of the hardware compatibility issues, hopefully. It may take two months before it works well. For software, you should check on the software site. Arpad also suggested that you could see what Vista looks like by loading on the Vista Transformation Pack. IT can be downloaded from the following site: <http://www.softpedia.com/get/System/OS-Enhancements/Vista-Transformation-Pack.shtml>

Q: When using Firefox, he is having trouble when he moves between links as the whole program closes.

A: Firefox now opens tabs, not whole new windows. You have to be careful not to close the window as this will close Firefox all together. Simply close the tabs.

February Meeting

by John McMillan

Steve Staub started the business portion of the meeting by announcing that 16 members owe the Society dues. This amounts to \$480.00 that is desperately needed. The treasury has dropped so low that at the February 6th meeting, the Board members voted unanimously to increase the annual dues by \$5 per person, effective April 1st. This first increase in over eight years has been forced upon us as inflation has increased all of our expenses. As an example, the August picnic permit has gone from \$50 to \$80 over the past few years. If you have not paid your dues please mail a check to Steve at RCSi, c/o St. Stephen's, 350 Chili Ave., Rochester, N.Y., 14611 as soon as possible.

The March meeting will be at the Greece Community Center, a place we have not been to before. Check the web site for the address, map and instructions. The speaker and topic are to be announced.

Any one with ideas for future programs should pass them to program chairman Mike Lavelle or mention them to any of the board members. Arpad asked anyone who had an topic they would be interested in hearing about to raise their hands. Tom Thompson mentioned learning more about GPS – Computer hookups. Another member said she would like to hear about backup programs and techniques. Nick Francesco has been asked to talk about Linux at the April meeting. Dave Thompson gave the date and location for the next photography SIG meeting. 50/50 tickets were sold during the social break.

The evening's presentation was Video Editing, Part 2. John McMillan, ended the business meeting by projecting a marquee like coming attractions announcement. After the social break, he called the group to order with a brief introduction in which sound, video, titles and still photos were likened to jig saw pieces being assembled into the completed puzzle.

During the introduction he stated that the talk would concentrate upon assembling a video from previously gathered material. After using slides to illustrate Adobe Premier screens and describe functions, Premiere would be used to demonstrate the actual processes.

He started with the Storyboard, an aide to planning the order of scenes for the movie. Several slides showed the succession of events as the Storyboard was opened. Then clips were inserted from Project Bins; deleted and rearranged to the desired sequence. Several methods of saving the Storyboard were also mentioned.

John went on to identify icons in the Monitor window that offer different ways of performing editing tasks. Focusing on the dual pane approach he uses, he described the Source Pane and its Indicator, Control and Selection tracks. This pane is used for viewing video clips dragged from a Bin in the Project window. It offers several methods of frame by frame precision for extracting one or more scenes from a single clip.

Next he described the Timeline where the actual movie is assembled. Sound, Still and Title clips are dragged directly from a Bin to a Timeline video or audio track where they can be edited. When a video scene is dragged from the Source Pane, either the picture, sound, or both can be used in the movie and additional editing can be performed. Other tracks in the Timeline show the presence of, or need for, rendering to combine tracks and effects into a playable video. The scale of the Timeline can be adjusted to show greater detail or to reduce scrolling.

The Monitor Window Program Pane is used to view the contents of the Timeline. There are controls that may limit the portion seen or even make adjustments to the contents of the Timeline. Following that, were slides that showed Transitions, used for easing dramatic scene changes, plus special Audio and Video effects than can be invoked. The first part of the presentation ended with a short discussion of converting the assembled movie to a DVD for showing on televisions without requiring a computer.

John then opened Adobe Premier with an existing project containing Sounds, Still, Titles and Video Bins. Some preloaded clips were dragged to the Storyboard where they were reordered into a desired sequence. After a discussion of Timeline scales, he illustrated many editing techniques that included dragging clips from either bins or the Source Pane to multiple Timeline tracks; combining Sound and Title clips for composite scenes; the use of brackets to lengthen or shorten scenes in the Timeline; and cut and paste to relocate scenes. The use of Opacity and Volume Bands was covered as Titles or Sounds were made to fade in or out for greater impact.

A number of scenes were developed from a single video clip using tools in the Source Pane and Timeline.

A process of combining all tracks and special effects into a playable video, called Rendering, was used frequently to build files that could be reviewed for content and timing. The end result was a 52 second video which was played so attendees could see the results of various actions.

He closed with a recap of DVD burning and summary observations about Video Editing time demands before opening the floor to questions.

Treasurers Report

by Steve Staub

Balance as of 12/18/2008	\$280.79
Expenses	
Postmaster	\$100.00
St. Stephens (2 months)	120.00
Paper	83.47
Sally (park permit)	<u>80.00</u>
Total expenses	\$383.47
Income	
Dues and donations	\$507.00
Balance as of 02/16/2007	\$404.82

Note: The club owes a member \$249; the annual fee for the address CD required by the Post Office.

Renewals: Robert Best, Arpad Kovacs, Michael Lavelle, David Osofski, Joseph Pia, Al Saia, Steve Staub, David Thompson, Tom Thompson, Art Trimble, and Ted Zajac.

New member: Fred Sturenrod

The Lighter Side

Customer: "I'm having trouble installing Microsoft Word."

Tech Support: "Tell me what you've done."

Customer: "I typed 'A:SETUP'."

Tech Support: "Ma'am, remove the disk and tell me what it says."

Customer: "It says '[PC manufacturer] Restore and Recovery disk!'"

Tech Support: "Insert the MS Word setup disk."

Customer: "What?"

Tech Support: "Did you buy MS word?"

Customer "No...."

The place I work for charges about \$100 per issue for tech support.

Tech Support: "So what can I do for you?"

Customer: "I'm trying to run Live Update with Norton, and it came up to a screen with a list of updates, and it says 'Next.' What do I do?"

Tech Support: "Did you hit 'Next?'"

Customer: "Oh, it's working now."

Tech Support: "Anything else I can do?"

Customer: "No, that's it, thanks."