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DEALS COLUMN
from the DealsGuy
Greater Orlando Computer UG
by Bob "The Cheapskate" Click

I've been writing the DealGuy column for 14 years and have not missed a month, but it's time I took a month off, so don't look for the column next month. I need a break and thanks in advance for the opportunity. I'm finding less and less to offer anyway so a break is probably in order.

A while back, I talked about the FACUG spring conference and the attendance of about 140, but I was unable to find out how many user groups were represented. I was able to take a look at the registration recently and it looks like they came from 39 user groups, but remember that there were also several APCUG officers there who listed their own users groups. I'm glad it was successful, but next year's FACUG conference will be really something to look forward to. I'm sure you will read about it, and it looks like the attendance for that one will set a record.

Thanks for your feedback about my comments pertaining to the special setup arrangements for the SAP Sapphire show. So far, readers said they understand the difficulty of taking pictures under such difficult conditions. I don't feel too bad because I have watched the official photographers for some shows get very frustrated trying to get good pictures of the booths they were supposed to photograph.

I'm working on an article about trade show setups, but here is something else to think about. When you walk through the entrance to a trade show, you probably don't pay much attention to that obscure security guard who stands

in the background and is checking for badges as you walk by. You probably don't even consider that the person you are walking by sees much more than you realize. I can't say this about "all" the people checking badges, but it is mostly true of the more experienced guards you see. They usually look like they are casually checking for your badge, but here is what really happens with an experienced security guard:

They actually take a mental snapshot of your badge and automatically read the name on it to see if the name matches the gender of the person wearing it (is it a male name if the person is a male), some shows they may look for other traits; they read the year to make sure the person is not using a last year's badge, and they check for color codes that might be on it to allow certain people in only on certain days (sometimes the day of the week is there, but usually only a color bar on the bottom). For some shows there might be other info on the badge. A good guard can also spot a phony badge made with a computer pretty easily because they get used to seeing the right badge. Yes, people try all kinds of tricks to get in free because some shows have very high registration fees.

They also must be diplomatic when they run into a belligerent attendee who doesn't want to be bothered going to registration to obtain a proper badge. Some of them are ready to punch you when you stop them. As you can imagine, diplomacy is a good thing to master. They usually do all this for somewhere around eight or nine dollars per hour, depending on what city you work in.

Since I don't have very good vision, I try to avoid entrance door positions,

although I don't mind working at loading docks where you mostly see the same people going in and out while working, and you get so you recognize them when you see them. Since most of those workers wear colored wristbands for ID, they hate to wear them on their arm so you must look on the wrists, a belt loop (with their shirt hanging over it), or other spots to find it. Often you must ask them to see it if it is not in plain sight. Some convention center employees don't like to wear badges, but again, you get to know them, rather than argue with them. I once worked an entrance to a pharmacist job interview area where I had to watch for an ampersand on the badge someplace. That was a tough one for me. One person somehow got an interview without paying the fee and we were all given the name to watch for; and one guard found that person, who was then interviewed by show management.

Worried About A Web Site's Safety?

A popular warning product for dangerous Web sites is McAfee's "Site Advisor" <<http://www.siteadvisor.com>>. I've read a couple of reviews that were not all that complimentary, but have not tried it myself. Another one that I have not read about either way is Site Hound. When you get there, these products warn you if a Web site is safe to visit. Site Hound is offered by Fire Trust <<http://www.firetrust.com>>. There is a free version, and also a pay version with more features for \$29.95. They also offer MailWasher if you want spam protection and it is a popular product with a one time price. There used to be free updates for life, but it doesn't look like that applies any more. Do your homework if you are interested in either of these. User group member discounts

are available for Firetrust products through APCUG <<http://www.apcug.net>>. Your user group must be a member to have access to the Sharepoint page for that information.

Ever Consider A Virtual Cover? (This is their announcement, but edited)

Insofta Development has unveiled the newest version of Insofta Cover Commander, a tool providing the effective solution to quickly and easily create quality custom-designed three-dimensional virtual boxes for software, e-books, DVDs, manuals, CD-ROMs and screenshots. Version 3.1 delivers a host of improvements.

Enhancements in the latest version of Insofta Cover Commander include support for batch processing from the command line, providing a perfect solution for creating a large number of similar virtual boxes, books, and many more. This is essential for those who create covers and boxes for on-line shops, catalogs and other large projects. The program also allows saving animation in SWF, GIF and AVI format.

The program enables creation of sophisticated and modern cover designs with very few mouse clicks; streamlining workflow. The program allows comprehensive customization of background color and transparency, gradient, shadow and reflection; what's more, the settings can be saved and used later. All the features are delivered in multilingual user interface (English, German, French, Spanish, Japanese, Hungarian and Russian).

Insofta Cover Commander is compatible with Microsoft Windows 98, ME, NT, 2000, XP and Vista, and costs \$48.30 for a single license, entitling a user to 1 year of free updates.

Further information on the product, as well as its free trial version, is available from <<http://www.insofta.com/cover-commander>>. User group members get a 20% discount by entering the code ICC-RRDJ-DUG in the proper space.

Direct download link: <<http://www.insofta.com/download/covercommandersetup.exe>>. Company website: <<http://www.insofta.com>>.

Problems?

A while back I mentioned the problem I had not being able to access the memory in my digital picture frame with either of my desktop machines, but I could with my new laptop. Nobody was able to tell me what was wrong, but Bob Balogh, a past president of the Boca Raton Computer Society <<http://www.brcs.org>>, sent me a suggestion for finding the answer <<http://www.blackviper.com/>> and I am sharing his advice with my readers who might have their own problems. I have not had the time to go there to research it yet, but hope to get it done soon. Bob's suggestion is below:

"The above is one of the best sites available for learning about your computer. The section on Windows Configurations, left hand side, is most helpful." Bob also writes a monthly help column, and has traveled to other user groups in his area to do presentations."

I always read Bob's column in their newsletter, Boca Bits, and here is something he recommended for their members. Bob likes to keep a monthly calendar on his desktop. This enables him to see the entire month at a glance. The one he suggests also has an array of other features that lets you enter events that are upcoming, etc. It is called Rainlendar Lite, and it's free at <<http://www.snapfiles.com/get/Rainlendar.html>>.

That's it for this month. I'll have some more new product announcements on my Web site that didn't offer discounts. This column is written to make user group members aware of special offers or freebies I have found or arranged, and my comments should not be interpreted to encourage, or discourage, the purchase of any products, no matter how enthused I might sound. Bob (The Cheapskate) Click <[bobclick at bellsouth dot net](mailto:bobclick@bellsouth.net)>. Visit my Web site at <<http://www.dealsguy.com>>.



Microsoft Releases Free Beta of New Security Software By Ira Wilsker

Many of us love to kick Microsoft as the 600 pound gorilla who created the most popular computer operating systems and also attracted countless miscreants who locate and take advantage of security breaches. Microsoft has produced some very good security products, such as the anti-spyware product Windows Defender, and some mediocre products such as Windows Live OneCare. Now, Microsoft is releasing a free public beta of its newest incarnation of comprehensive security software code named "Morro," but publicly named "Microsoft Security Essentials" (MSE). The public beta release of MSE should be online by the time you read this, at <http://www.microsoft.com/security_essentials>. There are some reports that Microsoft will limit the number of beta downloads of MSE to 75,000.

MSE's final release version is scheduled to be available later this year, and is planned to be a free security package designed to

protect the computer from viruses, spyware, rootkits, and Trojans. MSE will be replacing Microsoft's current commercial offering, Windows Live OneCare, which Microsoft announced will be discontinued as of June 30. Initial reports that have leaked from Microsoft indicate that MSE will be a low-end security product, competing against the wildly popular free offerings from AVG and Avast, but lacking the full featured security capabilities of such commercial powerhouses as McAfee, Norton-Symantec, and TrendMicro. MSE will be a free download, and will run on Windows XP, Vista, and the new Windows 7. Separate installers will be available for 32-bit and 64-bit versions of Windows, and will vary from 3mb to 7mb in download size. It should be noted that only users of genuine licensed copies of Windows will be able to download and install MSE, as Microsoft claims that the MSE installer will be able to detect illicit copies of Windows and block the installation.

Preliminary anecdotal reports leaked about Morro, the precursor of MSE, indicate that it will install with a wizard that will require the uninstallation of any antivirus software that is on the computer before MSE can be installed. MSE will also deactivate Microsoft's Windows Defender anti-spyware if it is installed on the computer, as it will no longer be needed.

MSE will offer free frequent updates of virus and malware signatures, as well as system scans on demand and at scheduled times. MSE was designed to minimize the impact on system resources, and not significantly degrade system performance. The user interface (UI) is simple and clean, much like Windows Defender, and does not

require any technical skills to properly operate. Microsoft designed MSE to be a simple but effective free security utility to protect Windows computers lacking effective antivirus and anti-spyware software. At present, it does not appear that MSE will be offering additional security features and benefits included in the top-selling commercial security suites. "This is security you can trust," said Alan Packer, general manager of Microsoft's anti-malware team, when asked to define how it differs from rivals, both free and not. "And it's easy to get and easy to use." "Rather than scan and clean, which it also does, it's trying to keep you from being infected in the first place," Packer said.

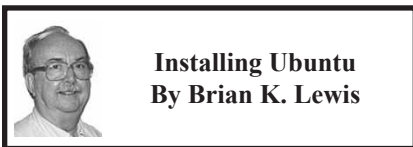
In addition to malware signatures which will be updated frequently, MSE will use a feature Microsoft calls "Dynamic Signature Service" which links the computer with MSE installed to Microsoft's servers. If MSE detects suspicious behavior, but does not have a digital malware signature in its database, MSE will query Microsoft's servers. "If it sees something new, like a new binary, the client queries the back end," Packer said. "The server can then ask for a sample, which the client sends as a hash." The user can control and consent to the sending of the potential malware to Microsoft, as MSE will ask for permission to send it. If Microsoft has already created a digital signature and remedy for the malware, the server will instantly push the signature to the computer. "We have a list of known good software, of course, but outside that, if a program is doing things like hooking Autostart points in the registry, or trying to kill other processes, Essential will query the servers." Packer said.

It is too early to tell about the quality of protection offered by MSE, as it has not yet been tested and rated by the independent services that test and rate security products. It also needs to be noted that the current software is a “beta” or pre-release version, and may contain unresolved bugs or other problems that will likely be resolved by the final release later this year. Still, if your PC is lacking effective security software, or your subscription to a commercial product is about to expire and you are willing to take the risk of having beta software provide basic protection to your computer, then Microsoft Security Essentials may be a worthwhile consideration.

WEBSITE:

<http://www.microsoft.com/security/essentials>> (effective June 23).

Ira Wilsker is an APCUG director; Columnist, The Examiner, Beaumont TX; Program Director of Management Development at the Lamar Institute of Technology, Beaumont TX; and a radio and TV show host. Contact him at <iwilsker@apcug.net>.



**Installing Ubuntu
By Brian K. Lewis**

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As I said in my last article in the Monitor, this one would be about my experience getting Ubuntu up and running on my new Asus laptop. I had been running version 8.04 (Hardy Heron) on my old laptop. Since it

seemed to be quite successful I decided to use it for the initial install on my new computer. Perhaps I should point out that Canonical, producers of Ubuntu, turn out a new version of their OS every six months! Compare that with Microsoft and its multi-year production cycle. Hardy Heron is a long-term support version with guaranteed support until April 2011. That's three years from its original release date. In the meantime, version 8.10 (Intrepid Ibex) was released in October 2008 and will be supported for two years. However, the latest version is 9.04 (Jaunty Jackalope) which was released on April 23, 2009. Since I was starting my installation the end of March, I decided that installing Hardy Heron should be fine. A bad guess, as it turned out.

The process of installing any Ubuntu version is very similar to installing Windows. The exception being when you want it to share the hard drive as a dual boot system with Windows. Then a few extra steps are needed. The first step is to download Ubuntu. This will be an ISO image file. That is a compressed file in the format specified by the International Organization of Standardization. It is almost 700 megabytes in size, so it's best to have a broadband connection for your download. (If you don't have a broadband connection, you can request a free CD from Canonical and have it mailed to you.) Once the file is on your hard drive it has to be decompressed and the image burned to a CD. Most commercial software can burn the ISO file image to a CD. I used CDBurnerXP, a free Windows program, to burn the image to the CD. That gave me a bootable CD that either runs Ubuntu from the CD or it can install the OS to a

hard drive as a dual boot with Windows/ Vista or it can take over an entire drive. If you have two hard drives in your computer you could have Ubuntu take over the second drive and dual boot with Windows. There is also an option to install it as Windows software allowing you to run it within Windows or Vista. I haven't tried this option. It just seems to me that running Ubuntu under Windows you would lose many of the benefits of Ubuntu, especially its stability.

The hard drive on my laptop was already partitioned into C and D drives and formatted with NTSF. (That's the file system XP and Vista use.) My intention was to install Ubuntu on the second partition as a dual boot system. As I found out, if your hard drive is not already partitioned, don't change it. Let the Ubuntu installation do it for you. That is much easier. I ended up doing a more manual preparation of the hard drive which requires a better understanding of how Linux systems need to be set up. You can find the info on the Ubuntu site, but why make things any harder than you have to! Once the drive was set, Ubuntu spent some time installing all the files needed for my hardware and the additional software. If you are interested in the details of installing Ubuntu, check out this web site: <<https://help.ubuntu.com/community/GraphicalInstall>>. They have a detailed graphical presentation (screen shots) of the steps involved.

During the installation Ubuntu asks for a user name and a password. I used my initials and a fairly secure password. I recommend that you do not shirk this password setup. It will help to protect your computer from problems caused by outside entry of worms or trojans through the Internet connection. The

password has to be entered for software installation or any other administrative function. So using a strong password is advisable.

Now I was ready to do my part of the setup. I had to program my new USB modem so I could connect to the Internet. That requires some knowledge of the command line functions in Terminal. I had done this on my previous computer but some of the information for the new modem was different, so I had to find that first. It took a little hunting, but everything worked once I had the commands right. The other thing I had noticed was that the sound didn't seem to be working and the video resolution was not right. So I investigated both of these through the Ubuntu forums. That turned out to be far more difficult than I imagined it would be. My laptop has an NVidia graphics card. It turned out Hardy Heron did not have the drivers for my card, it was too new. The drivers available on the NVidia web site also didn't seem to help. My sound card was part of the Intel chip and the drivers just didn't seem to want to work with it no matter what I did. Then I also found that Hardy Heron didn't recognize my eSATA port. After doing more research in the Ubuntu Community forum, it seemed like I needed to try the Intrepid Ibex upgrade or maybe I would have to wait for Jaunty Jackalope to solve my problems.

So, next I downloaded the ISO file for Intrepid Ibex and burned it to a CD. That gave me a bootable CD that I could use to test how well this version would work with my laptop. When I booted from the CD, although it took some time to load, the video setup was perfect. It recognized my NVidia card and gave me the 1200x800 resolution that I had

with Vista. It also had the expected 3D effects and other graphics features that my card supports. Next I tried the sound and had no problem playing some WAV files I had stored in the Linux partition. Better and better. With previous live CDs I had never been able to connect to the Internet with my old wireless modem. But I clicked on the wireless Icon on the top bar of the window and it gave me a list of several local wireless networks and it also had a choice of a wireless broadband connection. So I tried the broadband connection and within seconds I was connected through my Verizon wireless modem to the Internet. This live CD also recognized my printer, but didn't have the drivers to print to it. However, everything was working much better with Intrepid Ibex than it had with Hardy Heron. So, I decided my next step was to upgrade to Intrepid Ibex.

If I had done an install from the live CD, it would have wiped out many of my files that had been created using Hardy Heron. It wouldn't affect my documents as they were backed up to my external drive. However, there were other files that I had created to help with hardware compatibility and additional software I had downloaded that would have disappeared. So I went back to the Ubuntu site to find out how to upgrade, rather than install Intrepid Ibex from the CD. It turned out to be much easier than I had anticipated. In the System-Administration menu there is a selection for "Software Sources." This contains the information on locations where the Synaptic Package Manager will find additional software. On the Update tab you will find the options for operating system updates. Mine had been set for "long term support" updates only.

I changed that to "standard updates," clicked OK and exited the window. The package manager told me that there was an update available, version 8.10, and it could be downloaded. It also gave me an estimate of the amount of time it would take with my connection. The estimate was two hours, but it ended up taking 30 minutes less. Once the download was complete, the upgrade installation started. About an hour later, the screen announced that the system needed to be rebooted. Since I still have the live CD for Intrepid Ibex, I automatically have a backup CD, should problems occur down the road.

After the upgrade, the first thing I noticed was that the dual-boot menu reflected the new version of Ubuntu. Next, it took far less time for the user name/password request to show up. Then, very quickly, on the desktop there was the Intrepid Ibex. I will be replacing the Ibex graphic with my own wallpaper, another very easy task. But, I had noted there was no sound. So I clicked on the sound icon and found that the sound had been muted! Once I corrected that, it worked perfectly. First problem solved! Then I clicked on the wireless icon and there was the broadband choice. I selected it and within seconds I was on the Internet. Second problem solved. However, the screen resolution didn't seem right. With some hunting I found an NVIDIA X Server settings on the System – Administration menu. That allowed me to change the resolution to 1200x800. Third problem solved.

Next, I realized I hadn't tried to use the eSATA port when I was running the live CD, so now was the time to try that out. I plugged in my external drive and all three partitions appeared in the Places menu. I clicked on the

main partition and all the files come up in the file manager (nautilus) window. So, everything that I had problems with under Hardy Heron seemed to be working with Intrepid Ibex. And, the improvement came without having to do anything with the Ubuntu command line. In my mind, that makes Ubuntu much more ready for the average user. With an easy install, either single or dual boot, a great selection of software that is easily available through a graphics interface, it is becoming something that anyone can try and, probably, enjoy using. As for crashes, in more than 10 years of using various flavors of Linux, I have yet to have one crash. I certainly can't say that for Windows over the same period of time.

My next step will be to download a live CD of the latest version, Jaunty Jackalope, after the initial surge of business slows down. I really don't want to be trying to download almost 700 MB of data at a time when thousands of other Ubuntu enthusiasts are trying to do the same thing. By trying out the live CD version I can be sure that it will work with my hardware before doing an upgrade. I have already seen the problems that occur when you have to remove a newer version and revert back to a previous version. That is something I really don't want to do again. Windows has similar problems as those who replaced Vista with XP found out. I am also considering downloading the 64-bit version of Ubuntu. I am very curious as to how it would work with my hardware. You may be sure I will share the results with you.

So for all of you Windows/Vista users who are curious about Ubuntu, the easiest way to test it on your hardware is to download a live CD. From the home

page, <<http://www.ubuntu.com>>, you can download either the latest version, or an earlier version. I would recommend that you not go back any further than version 8.10, Intrepid Ibex. You really should give it a try and download the CD, especially if you have a broadband connection. You'll also find the Ubuntu has a large selection of games that come with the installation. So, have some fun and games with Ubuntu!

Dr. Lewis is a former university and medical school professor of physiology. He has been working with personal computers for over thirty years, developing software and assembling systems. He can be reached at <[bwsail at yahoo.com](mailto:bwsail@yahoo.com)> Dr. Lewis is a member of the Sarasota PCUG, Florida. Web:<www.spcug.org>.

**Let's Never Forget the First
King—DOS
By Rick Smith**

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***Oh where, oh where has my little
DOS gone.***

***Oh where, oh where can it be,
with its life cut short and windows
cut long***

Oh where, oh where can it be?

Some might say that I'm losing it, but you cannot lose what you never had.

Where has DOS gone? Some might say it's still around in the various forms of Linux. Others might say it's buried deep in Microsoft operating systems waiting to be called out by a

powerful wizard to cast potent spells with a command prompt. But most of us just believe that it's just lost, never to be found again. Like a lost pet that you once had affection for, once it's gone you seem to remember only the good times and seem to forget all the problems that it caused you.

DOS does that to people. There are still a few of you "old-timers," and you know who you are! Those who sit at the doughnut table at club meetings and reminisce about the "good ol' days" when all you needed was a Northgate keyboard and a monochrome screen to have absolute power over your world. You know what I'm talking about. Way back when people spoke about computers with fear and awe. They were things better left to experts and shady government entities. The quickest way to kill a conversation in those days was to talk command line technobabble. It always made everyone in the room feel uncomfortable that they couldn't understand you, like you were speaking a different language.

On the flip side, though, it gave you an incredible feeling of power, that you, and you alone, could master the savage beast and control your own destiny. Neh Ahh Ahh Yahh. (Sometimes I think all those comic books I read have permanently warped my thinking.) But really, didn't you feel special? That you and you alone, could master something that would make others wince and shirk away. You didn't have to be popular at school. You didn't have to be good looking. You didn't have to be wealthy. You did not have to have any of those things that everyone else needed to be important. You had knowledge.

And knowing the secrets of the PC universe, did you use that knowledge to

gain wisdom or for greed? I think most of you, unfortunately, like me, used it for personal greed. We gave ourselves over to the dark side of the force and used our skill to enrich ourselves financially. But eventually as we all grew older, and some of us wiser, we started using our skills to teach and help others, which led you to me, to read these words and words of others in this tome. You all became a band of brothers forming the fellowship of the DOS.

And just! And just as your powers were at their peak, everything came crashing down like the Jedi of old. A new power rose in the universe to supplant the old ways. Windows came rushing down like a wind from heaven with trumpets blazing and fire and smoke billowing up in great clouds. And when this behemoth came to rest, its great weight crushed the last vestiges of DOS underneath its feet.

A new group came forth to rule the PC world. A group of men, and, yes, women, too, who knew nothing of the old ways but were formed from clay in the new ways. These new acolytes grew up in the ways of the PC, each having their own since they were young.

Gone was command prompt. In was the mouse. The wizards of old became legend. And after time they have become forgotten to be remembered by only a few at computer club meetings. There are still a few prophets preaching to us not to forget the old ways. I saw one at last month's meeting giving a history lesson at the club meeting. But they are old and feeble now with most of their words echoing on deaf ears.

So I say to all today! Remember the DOS! Don't let the old ways die, as you never know when you will be called upon as I have this week to use my

skills again. Fortunately, I have not been found wanting as I was able to vanquish the beast with my skill at the command prompt. I have beaten down one enemy, but more are waiting to attack.

So be on your guard, be ready, and be faithful to the cause. Put away your mice as they are no use against such foes. Operate your PC only with the keyboard and keep yourself ready for the fight. For it shall come. It shall come. Let's never forget the first king: DOS

Rick Smith is a member of the Channel Islands PC Users Group, CA: Web: <<http://www.cipcug.org/vccomputers.com>>. E-mail: <[Rants\(at\)vcmail.net](mailto:Rants(at)vcmail.net)>.



**Driver Query Helps
Resolve Driver Problems
By Vinny La Bash**

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Anyone using Vista for any length of time knows that most of the common driver problems were resolved long ago. Advances in computer technology including removable devices, however, have called attention to problems that may be caused by device drivers that are no longer needed, but still installed on the system. These drivers can become corrupt over time. If they become inadvertently enabled they can cause memory conflicts which under some circumstances could crash your system.

Most people beyond the novice level have some familiarity with Device Manager, but are usually not

knowledgeable with its limitations. They know the Device Manager will allow a rollback to a previous version of a driver if problems are encountered, but few know the Device Manager has no way of keeping track of a device driver's history. This is important because you can't document which version of a device driver is good and which version could cause problems.

You can get around this limitation by using a command-line tool called Driver Query that will track the history of all the device drivers on your system. From the Start Menu, open Accessories, and activate the Command Prompt. Type driverquery.exe at the command line and you will see a list of all the device drivers with some basic information included. This list by itself won't do you much good. You need to use some command-line switches to get the information that you need. At the command prompt type:

**DRIVERQUERY/FO:CSV/V> C:\
DRIVERINFO.CSV**

DRIVERQUERY is the primary command that tells the operating system to run the query.

The /FO switch says you want the output to be formatted.

CSV (Comma Separated Variable) tells Vista to format the output so it can be displayed in a spreadsheet.

/V (Verbose) tells the query to blab its head off and tell everything it knows about each driver in the system.

C:\ says to put the output file in the root (primary) directory of the primary drive where your operating system is installed. This makes the file easy to find in case you can't remember where you put it.

DRIVERINFO.CSV is the name of the file with an old DOS style extension.

You can name the file anything you want, but do end it with the CSV extension or you might confuse your spreadsheet when you try to open it.

After creating the file, open your spreadsheet, click the file open icon and in the File name: box type:

C:\DRIVERINFO.CSV

By opening the file this way you don't have to get into DOS commands. You may, of course, use DOS if you feel Vista isn't complicated enough.

Your spreadsheet will resemble the illustration (below). After expanding the columns you will have to scroll horizontally to see all the available information. The amount of information for each driver has greatly increased, but you still don't get the driver version. Tracking driver changes is possible if you run the query periodically and compare the Link Date column for changes. It's clunky and cumbersome, but it does the job.

Another important piece of information that's missing is any data about whether or not the driver is

signed. A signed driver is a device driver that includes a digital signature which is an electronic security mark that tells you who published the driver. It also indicates if the original software has been altered in any way. Signed drivers provide assurance that the software actually comes from the manufacturer and hasn't been changed.

This exercise is an excellent illustration of the laws of information availability.

1. The information you have is not the information you want.
2. The information you want is not the information you need.
3. The information you need you can't get.
4. The information you can get is either too expensive or too troublesome to obtain.

Vinny La Bash is a member of the Sarasota Personal Computer Users Group, Inc., Florida. Web: <<http://www.spcug.org>>. E-mail: <labash@spcug.org>.

1	Module Name	Display Name	Description	Driver Type	Start Mode	State	Status	Accept Stop	Accept Pause	Page 1
2	ACPI	Microsoft ACPI Driver	Microsoft ACPI Driver	Kernel	Boot	Running	OK	TRUE	FALSE	
3	adp94xx	adp94xx	adp94xx	Kernel	Disabled	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
4	adpahci	adpahci	adpahci	Kernel	Disabled	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
5	adpu160m	adpu160m	adpu160m	Kernel	Disabled	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
6	adpu320	adpu320	adpu320	Kernel	Disabled	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
7	AFD	Ancillary Function Driver for W	Ancillary Function Driver for W	Kernel	System	Running	OK	TRUE	FALSE	
8	agp440	Intel AGP Bus Filter	Intel AGP Bus Filter	Kernel	Manual	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
9	aic78xx	aic78xx	aic78xx	Kernel	Disabled	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
10	alide	alide	alide	Kernel	Disabled	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
11	amdide	amdide	amdide	Kernel	Disabled	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
12	AmdK8	AMD K8 Processor Driver	AMD K8 Processor Driver	Kernel	Disabled	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
13	arc	arc	arc	Kernel	Disabled	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
14	arcsas	arcsas	arcsas	Kernel	Disabled	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
15	aswFsBlk	aswFsBlk	aswFsBlk	File System	Auto	Running	OK	TRUE	FALSE	
16	aswMonFt	aswMonFt	aswMonFt	File System	Auto	Running	OK	TRUE	FALSE	
17	aswRdr	aswRdr	aswRdr	Kernel	System	Running	OK	TRUE	FALSE	
18	aswSP	aswSP Self Protection	aswSP Self Protection	Kernel	System	Running	OK	TRUE	FALSE	
19	aswTdi	aswTdi Network Shield Support	aswTdi Network Shield Support	Kernel	System	Running	OK	TRUE	FALSE	
20	AsynchMac	RAS Asynchronous Media Driv	RAS Asynchronous Media Driv	Kernel	Manual	Running	OK	TRUE	FALSE	
21	atapi	IDE Channel	IDE Channel	Kernel	Boot	Running	OK	TRUE	FALSE	
22	bowler	Bowler	Bowler	File System	Manual	Running	OK	TRUE	FALSE	
23	BrHtLo	Brother USB Mass-Storage Lo	Brother USB Mass-Storage Lo	Kernel	Manual	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
24	BrHtUp	Brother USB Mass-Storage Up	Brother USB Mass-Storage Up	Kernel	Manual	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
25	BrSend	Brother MFC Serial Port Interfa	Brother MFC Serial Port Interfa	Kernel	Disabled	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
26	BrSerWdm	Brother WDM Serial driver	Brother WDM Serial driver	Kernel	Disabled	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
27	BrUsbMdm	Brother MFC USB Fax Only M	Brother MFC USB Fax Only M	Kernel	Disabled	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
28	BrUsbSer	Brother MFC USB Serial WDM	Brother MFC USB Serial WDM	Kernel	Manual	Stopped	OK	FALSE	FALSE	
29	BthEnum	Bluetooth Enumerator Service	Bluetooth Enumerator Service	Kernel	Manual	Running	OK	TRUE	FALSE	

Speed Demons

By Bill Roman

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 below).

There is an issue that I feel must be addressed, since the issue continues to come up on a regular basis. As a PC technician I constantly get asked why the clients' computer has become so slow, and if there is anything wrong with it.

The first thing I tell the client is that there are two main culprits that contribute to a PC becoming very sluggish. The first being lack of RAM memory. This answer usually elicits a quick response from the user that they "only do e-mail, Internet and word processing" or some similar response. I then go into a discussion with the user that there are two kinds of memory in a computer: hard drive storage, which holds all their music, pictures, documents, etc. and RAM, or working memory. A user could have plenty of hard drive space to store all of their documents and stuff, but when they don't have enough RAM, the computer will, over time, become slower and slower.

Why you ask? When the computer was originally purchased (usually somewhere between 2 and 5 years ago) Windows XP, in this case, required about 512MB of RAM to run properly. As Windows critical security updates and service packs are installed, as well as upgrades and updates to all

sorts of programs used on a daily basis (antivirus, Internet Explorer, AOL, Adobe Reader and Flash Player, printer updates, etc), the programs NEVER get smaller, always bigger.

Now, several years later and the programs being used are double or triple in size, but the computer is the same one with the same specs as when it was purchased. Adding more RAM memory is a quick, cheap way to improve performance to an aging computer, and extend life before a replacement is in order. Windows XP should have at least 1024 MB (1GB) of RAM to run properly, and Windows Vista (32bit) needs 3GB of RAM. More is not better in the case of Vista for technical reasons I will not go into in this article.

This is only half the battle. The other half is to beat down what I will call the "moochers." Years ago when I would inspect a computer for sluggish performance, it was usually because of a rogue game that was installed. Back then quite a few games adopted the theory that the only reason you owned your \$3000 or \$4000 computer (yes, it was that much back then, even more depending on how far back you go) was to play some ridiculous \$49 game. The game would change many settings that allowed the game to work properly, but made it miserable to perform simple tasks like type a letter.

Now, in 2009 every program under the sun assumes that they are the main focus, and must be given priority at all times. What does this mean to you, the end user? Each time when an upgraded revision of Adobe Reader comes out it always wants to include the new "MSN Toolbar" or "Yahoo Toolbar" etc. This adds unnecessary junk to your browser, which slows down getting online. In

Do you want to play Pac-Man?



addition, many of these programs load an additional program when Windows starts to speed it up when starting it. This is just lousy practice that is a very poor substitute for tight efficient programming. If the program was small and lean there would be no need for “speed loaders,” which make your computer take an exorbitant amount of time for Windows to start.

Not to pick on, but a classic example of this is how much Apple’s iTunes has grown through the years. iTunes 6 which

was released in January 2006 was about 35MB in size. iTunes 7.5 was 52MB and iTunes 8.1 (the current release) is now up to 70MB. The program is twice as large only three years later, and loads a number of programs when Windows starts to aid loading this memory hog.

What to do about this? In short be mindful when installing updated programs to unselect add on toolbars and, if available, to kick them out of

[Continued on Page 21](#)

SEMCO Meeting Pictures



**(Above): Bob Stead shows the device that calls forth the musical 'loops.'
(Below): Mr. Stead plays along on the flute.**



SEMCO Meeting Pictures



**(Above): President Mike (Bad to the Bone) Bad-er at the July meeting.
(Below): SIG-IBM Chairman Tom Callow talks about various search engines.**





BOARD MEETING

7/12/2009

Carol Sanzi

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

President Mike Bader, Vice President Richard Jackson, Treasurer Bette Gay, Secretary Carol Sanzi, SIG-IBM Chairman Tom Callow, SIG-Advanced Chairman Franz Breidenich, Publications Committee Chairman Warner Mach, and Members-at-Large Bob Clyne and Chuck Moery. Also attending were provisional SIG-Linux Chairman Ray McLaughlin and member Ronald Green. The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Treasurer, Bette Gay, reported that the amount in the treasury equaled \$9,763.11 with \$5,031.74 in the checking account and \$4,731.37 invested in three Certificates of Deposit. The membership stands at 78.

Bob Clyne moved to amend the minutes of the June 14, 2009 SEMCO Board Meeting as follows:

1. In the first paragraph, correct the spelling of "Gary DeNice" to "Gary DeNise."
2. In the first paragraph, correct the spelling of "Renee Jacque" to "Rene Jacques."
3. In paragraph 3 of "New Business," change the sentence, "Attendance to the event was only open to board members for previous year meetings, but is now open to all members." to "Event attendance is open to all members."

Tom Callow seconded the motion and it was carried.

Bob Clyne moved to pay \$99 to the Engineering Society of Detroit for

SEMCO's Affiliate Society dues. Tom Callow seconded the motion and it was carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Ray McLaughlin requested an update on the status of the SIG-Linux. Bob Clyne explained that they are to continue meeting. A report of their activities published in the DATA BUS will help keep members informed and may increase participation.

Bob Clyne will communicate with the Engineering Society of Detroit to reiterate that SEMCO will be meeting at their facility on the Second Sunday of every month. Hopefully this will assure that the meeting room will be unlocked for our use.

Richard Jackson moved to adjourn. Carol Sanzi seconded the motion and it was carried. The meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

SEMCO

Serving the needs of professionals, hobbyists, novices, and prospective computer users since 1976.

- * Learn more about computing in an informal, non-academic setting.

- * Get honest answers to computer questions without commercial bias.

- * Meet and interact with other computer users. Personal and electronic networking.

- * Gain access to members willing to provide help in response to a phone call or e-mail

- * Receive monthly newsletter with informative articles.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)



SIG-IBM
Tom Callow

SIG-IBM INTERMEDIATE

August 9: 1:45 p.m. Laptop Repair:

Eddie Durrett will be speaking on: (1) Techniques for disassembling a laptop. (2) Diagnosing problems. (3) Dealing with the fear of "How am I going to be able to put this back together(?)" (4) Reassembling the laptop - Mr. Durrett is A+ certified and fixes computers at customer location for a service company every day.

August 9: 3:45 p.m. Microsoft Home

Server: SIG-IBM Chairman Tom Callow will discuss configuring and using the Microsoft Home Server.



SIG-ADVANCED
Franz Breidenich

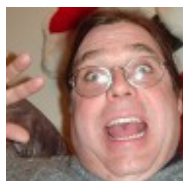
August 24 (4th Mon.): 6:45 p.m.:

At the Oak Park Library. The library is located at 14200 Oak Park Blvd., Oak Park, MI. Phone: (248) 691-7480. Topic: Wide ranging discussion of computers and computing.



SIG-LINUX
Ray McLaughlin

August 25 (4th Tues): 6:45 p.m.: At the Oak Park Library. The library is located at 14200 Oak Park Blvd., Oak Park, MI. Topic: Linux issues. .



Sept. 2009 DATABUS DEADLINE (7th day after 2nd Sunday in month)

SEMCO Input and Members' Ads—Deadline: Sun., August 16, 11:59 p.m. Members' personal ads are free. To mail, use Editor [address on Page 2](#); e-mail address: <machw@att.net>. PLEASE send to arrive sooner than deadline.

Business Ads - Deadline: Second Friday monthly. Contact Editor ([address Page 2](#)).

COMP (Computer Operators of Marysville & Port Huron)

Sept 2, 7 p.m., (1st Wednesday); (New Location). The Acheson Community Resource Center, Port Huron. Jane Wheatly 810-982-1187 or Pam Raisanen E-mail info: <compinfo@hughes.net>. Web: <<http://www.bwcomp.org>>. Topic: Social Networking.

Focus Hope IT Users Group

Sept 5, 9:30-11:30 a.m. (1st Saturday-usually), 1400 Oakman, Detroit, MI. 48238. Web info <<http://www.fhitug.org/meetings/meetings.htm>>. Topic: TBA."

HUG (Holly User Group)

August 8, 9:00 a.m., (2nd Sat.); Groveland Twp. Fire Hall, 3085 Grange Hall Rd. & Dixie Hwy., Ortonville. Topic: TBA.

MacGroup- Detroit

August 16, 3:00 p.m., Birmingham Temple, 28611 West 12 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills. Info: Terry White, <terry@macgroup.org> or 248-569-4933. <<http://www.macgroup.org>>. MacGroup 23rd Anniversary. Topic: TBA. SIGS: 2:00 p.m.

MacTechnics. (MAC User Group)

August 15, 11:00 a.m., (3rd Saturday); (SIGs at 9:30); See web site for meeting location. <<http://www.mactechnics.org>>. JoAnn Olson at 248-478-4300. Topic: TBA.

MDLUG (Metro Detroit Linux User Group)

August 8, 12:30-2:30 p.m., (2nd Saturday); MDLUG meetings will be at The Gaudior Academy located at 27100 Avondale Avenue in Inkster. Web: <<http://www.mdlug.org>>. Info: Raymond McLaughlin <president@mdlug.org>. Topic: Swap Meet.

MUG (Michigan User Group)

August 11, 6:00 p.m., (2nd Tuesday): MUG meetings are at The Farmington Community Library—Main Branch, 32737 W. 12 Mile Rd., Farmington Hills, MI. 48334. <<http://www.mug.org>>. Topic: TBA.

Michigan Apple Computer User Group

August 13, 7:30 p.m., (2nd Thur.); Westview Office Park, 26100 American Dr., Suite 100, Southfield MI. 48034. Avi Drissman 248-232-7865. Web: <<http://www.themichiganapple.com>>. Topic: TBA.

Oak Park Computer Club

Every Fri., 10:15 a.m. at Oak Park Recreation Bldg, Oak Park Blvd. west of Coolidge.

Royal Oak Computer Club

Every Wed., 12:30 to 2:30 PM at Mahany/Meininger Senior Community Center, 3500 Marais Ave., Royal Oak, 48073. Near Crooks & 13 Mile. Guest speakers & regular monthly speakers. <<http://www.geocities.com/royaloakcomputerclub>>.

SHCC (Sterling Heights Computer Club)

Sept 1, 7:30 p.m. (1st Tues); Macomb Community College South Campus, Bldg. K, 14500 E. 12 Mile Rd. Don VanSyckel <Don@VanSyckel.net>, 586-731-9232; Web: <<http://www.SterlingHeightsComputerClub.org>>. Topic: "Backup, Issues and Techniques." (No meeting in August).

Continued from Page 15

starting up when Windows loads. I have discussed at our local computer club meetings to do your best to keep running processes to a minimum. By clicking control, alt, delete once (with no programs active) will bring up the task manager and show how many processes are running. A good number for Windows XP is less than 35, and for Vista it's about 45.

Startup Cop and the free CCleaner utilities have the ability to disable or remove programs from starting, but I would check online in a Google search before disabling anything unless certain. I do hope this article sheds some light on the subject of pokey computers. Remember, it's not so much the hardware as it is software that kills a computer! Until next time!

Bill Roman is Advisor to the Board of Directors, The PC Users Group of Connecticut. Web: <<http://www.tpcug.org>>. E-Mail: <[br\(at\)numbercrunch.com](mailto:br(at)numbercrunch.com)>.



COMPUTER RESOURCE PEOPLE

This is a list of members willing to be resources for other members to call when they have hardware or software questions.

Are you willing to help members learn?

Which software programs are you familiar enough with?

It is not necessary to be an expert, but just have some familiarity with the program and be willing to help someone starting to learn it. Please give this some thought and volunteer at the next group meeting.

Almost Anything: Vander-Schrier

AutoCAD: Comptois

Genealogy: Cook

IBM PC Hardware Issues: Clyne, Yuhasz

Operating Systems: Callow, Clyne, Yuhasz

MAC Hardware and OS Issues: Yuhasz

Security: Bader

MS Office for Windows: Callow

MS Word: Clyne

Networking: Callow

Novell Netware: Yuhasz

Quicken: Clyne

Geocaching: Cook

Relational Database Programming: Lis

Bader, Mike—586-573-7330, 9am–8pm.....	mdbader@flash.net
Callow, Tom—248-642-5770, 9am–5pm.....	tcallow@monaghanpc.com
Clyne, Bob—810-387-3101, 9am–10pm.....	clyne@mich.com
Comptois, Jerry—248-651-2504, anytime	
Cook, Stephen—313-272-7594, eves.....	scook48227@ameritech.net
Lis, Bernie—248-669-0101, 10am–8pm.....	BerLLis@comcast.net
Vander-Schrier, Jack—586-739-7720, 12–8pm.....	jvanders@myself.com
Yuhasz, Steve.....	Help@yuhasz.org



**SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN
COMPUTER ORGANIZATION, INC.**

SEMCO CALENDAR

**Engineering Society of Detroit
20700 Civic Center Dr., Suite 450, 4th Floor
Southfield, MI. 48076**

August 9–SUNDAY (Meet 2nd Sunday)

**SEMCO Board Meeting at 12:00 noon. For Officers and SIG Chairpersons.
Other members are invited to attend.**

SEMCO General Meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

SIG-IBM 1:45 p.m. Program: Laptop Repair: Eddie Durrett will be speaking on: (1) Techniques for disassembling a laptop. (2) Diagnosing problems. (3) Dealing with the fear of "How am I going to be able to put this back together(?)" (4) Reassembling the laptop - Mr. Durrett is A+ certified and fixes computers at customer location for a service company every day.

SOCIAL PERIOD 3:15 p.m. Refreshments! (Reminder: We must continue to maintain a neat environment.)

SIG-IBM Intermediate 3:45 p.m. Program: Microsoft Home Server: SIG-IBM Chairman Tom Callow will discuss configuring and using the Microsoft Home Server Chairman

SIG-ADVANCED, August 24, 2009 (4th MONDAY), 6:45 p.m., Oak Park Public Library, 14200 Oak Park Blvd., Oak Park, MI. Phone: (248) 691-7480. Directions: Oak Park Blvd. is 9 1/2 mile Road; library is west of Coolidge. Info: Franz Breidenich 248-398-359. TOPIC: Wide-Ranging Discussion Of Computers & Computing.

LINUX DISCUSSION GROUP, August 25, 2009 (4th Tuesday), 6:45 p.m., Oak Park Public Library, 14200 Oak Park Blvd., Oak Park, MI. Topic: Linux issues.

Sept 13–SEMCO Sunday

<http://www.semco.org>

PUBLIC INVITED

(Please copy this and the next page to post on your bulletin board)

SEMCO Meetings at Engineering Society of Detroit
20700 Civic Center Drive, Suite 450, 4th Floor
Southfield MI 48076



From I-696 exit at Evergreen. Take Evergreen south to Civic Center Drive. Civic Center Drive is about halfway between I-696/Eleven Mile Rd. and 10 Mile Rd. Turn west, right if you are coming from the north, onto Civic Center Drive. Follow Civic Center Drive, watching the number signs on the right. When you get to the 20700 sign turn right, north, and follow the drive until you arrive at the southwest corner of the brown building with the Engineering Society of Detroit sign near the top. Turn right, east, and go past the front of the building. When you reach the end of the building, turn left, north and go to the back of the building and turn left, west, again. The parking lot will be on your right. The entrance is in the center of the building. Park in back of building. Enter the rear door. The ESD office is on the fourth floor.



**SouthEastern Michigan
Computer Organization, Inc.
P.O. Box 707
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303-0707**

SEMCO (future meetings)

August 9

September 13

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