SEMCO

DATA BUS

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IN THIS ISSUE

Notice of Annual Meeting and Elections 3

Deals Column, by Bob (The Cheapskate) Click 3

Free Panda Cloud Antivirus Released, by Ira Wilsker 6

Windows Experience Index, by Sandy Berger 8

Download Full Length E-books for Free or Inexpensively, by Ira Wilsker 10

Ubunto 64-bit Operating System, by Brian K. Lewis 12

How I Fixed My Corrupted Recycle Bin, by Sandee Gimblett 15

SEMCO Meeting Pictures 16

Board Meeting Notes, by Carol Sanzi 18

SIGS: IBM, IBM Intermediate, Advanced, Linux 19

DATA BUS Deadline 19

Other Groups Calendar of Events 20

Computer Resource People 21

SEMCO Calendar 22

Map & Directions to SEMCO Meeting at ESD 23

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NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION

The annual meeting of the members of the SouthEastern Michigan Computer Organization, Inc., will be held Sunday, January 10, 2010 at 1:30 pm at Engineering Society of Detroit, 20700 Civic Center Drive, Suite 450, Southfield, Michigan., The election of Officers and Members-at-Large of the Board of Directors of the Corporation will take place at the annual meeting.

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

Problems Never Cease

A while back, I mentioned my lightning strike and replacing my damaged router with a new one by D-Link. I'm told that D-Link has many glowing reviews, but my experience has been just the opposite. It stops working whenever it feels like it and if I switch the Ethernet cable from the router directly into the modem without rebooting either the modem or the computer, the computer accesses the Internet OK, and faster than it did before. When I get the router running again, my network connected printer no longer prints and I have to get Ricoh's help to reconfigure the IP addresses so my printer works. The Ricoh techs have been great. I've tried reconfiguring the printer using the printer's manual, but have not mastered working with IP addresses so far. The D-Link router tech support also leaves a lot to be desired; in fact, they sometimes brush you off whether they get the router working or not, and they're sometimes hard to understand. Once they advised me to upgrade the firmware and quickly got rid of me. Updating the firmware didn't help.

Last week that router quit working twice and I decided I'd had enough of that piece of junk, so I bought another router on sale, but this one is a Netgear, as was my last one, which worked great for a couple of years, until the lightning strike. The Netgear has a disk to help set it up (so did the D-Link) and this Netgear is working fine, but my printer again had to be reconfigured. I'll see if D-Link will let me return the router for them to check, but at this point, it doesn't matter to me. I've had enough of D-Link.

Gotta Keep Those Costs Down

How many people do you know who have been let go by their employer lately, even though they might have been with them for years and have an excellent attendance and work record? Lately, I know quite a few of those people. They go to work one day only to be told that a cut is being made, and it is them. Usually the employee has likely been with the company the longest. I believe that's the corporate way of keeping the bonus up by getting rid of employees who are paid the most. Disregard the knowledge, dependability, and experience they have

for taking good care of customers. All those years of being a responsible and prudent employee meant nothing. Most of the ones I know had to immediately collect their personal items and were escorted off the property like some kind of criminal, which doesn't make them feel very good. An older person has a difficult task finding a job, unless you get lucky, and older can mean over 35 these days.

Time To Help Pay Back The Stimulus Loans

I'm sure there will be several articles soon about doing your income tax return free, but I'll add my two cents worth on that topic now. There are several ways to do your income tax at no cost, but my favorite is "Tax Act," <http://www.taxact.com> which has a free version and a pay version. The free version does your tax return just fine, except that it pesters you frequently about the advantages of their pay version. I used the free version the first year I tried it and it did what I needed just fine. I had already taken my data to a free preparation service and just wanted to compare the results. Tax Act actually found a mistake in the one I just had done for free.

The following year I decided to use the deluxe version (right now they are offering it to me for $12.95) because that one brings forward all of the information from your previous year's return, saving a lot of typing and possible errors. I also called their tech support a couple years ago for help with my "green" credits and had good response with it.

Also, don't forget AARP's free tax help for seniors. We really need to pay our taxes so we can repay the Chinese and keep them from repossessing the USA for nonpayment of our loan. I doubt I could learn to speak Chinese.

This One Can Improve Your Photos

AMS Software announced the release of Home Photo Studio, a new program for photo editing, creating original greeting cards, and decorating ordinary pictures. It offers plenty of frames, tools, masks, filters, and effects (such as 3D and plastic effects). The number of effects may be confusing at first, but it offers opportunities for making every photo special. Greeting card templates can be colorful, darkish, funny, or romantic, and will help the user create a proper greeting card for any occasion. Home Photo Studio offers all necessary functions for uncomplicated photo editing.

The most popular feature, besides greeting card templates, is probably Effects&Filters that allows adding natural phenomena (such as stars, clouds, rain, snow and lightning). You can also add noise and blur, stylize a picture (ancient photo effect, pencil drawing, lithograph, etc.), adjust brightness and saturation; and make complex combinations. The user can adjust the transparence of the effects and set the area to be processed (the top, bottom, center, borders, etc.). There are a variety of picture frames.

Home Photo Studio Deluxe edition costs a bit more than Standard Edition, but is rich with extra features. It is the right variant for those who want to create 3D compositions, get automatically created collages, use plastic effects, and import PNG/Photoshop™ templates. Deluxe edition is also remarkable for it's over 100 professionally designed frames and greeting card templates.

Working with Home Photo Studio is usually trouble-free thanks to the

intuitive interface. But if the user still faces a problem while mastering the program, the detailed Help system is ready to explain how to deal with it.

Features: (Some features are only in the Deluxe Edition)

* Support of more than 20 graphics formats;
* Convenient image explorer;
* Hundreds of filters, effects and masks;
* Fast photo enhancement and retouch;
* Creation of slideshows with smooth transition effects;
* Greeting card templates and picture frames;
* Automatic creation of collages and 3D compositions;
* Auto enhancement and red eye removal.

Home Photo Studio runs under Windows 2000/XP/Vista and 7. The Standard edition costs $39.00 USD and the Deluxe edition costs $59.00 USD. Here's a special offer for user group members. Order the Standard Edition, and then write to <support@ams-soft.com>. The message must include the order ID and the text "DealsGuy Special Offer." AMS Software will then ship the "Deluxe" Edition with 100 extra templates and extended functions. Further product information, as well as its free trial version, is available at <http://home-photo-studio.com/>.

Download link: <http://home-photo-studio.com/PhotoStudio.zip>

Company website: <http://ams-soft.com/>

Some Popular Sites With Low Prices

Some of you probably know about these, but some may not. Here are some URLs for great deals that are popular with the local user group members, and something I check frequently. One is <http://www.1saleaday.com/> where the sale is good for 24 hours only. The price might even be FREE with the only cost being the shipping. I've bought a few items there and some were fantastic deals while others were good, but the item wasn't quite as I expected.

Another very popular one is <http://www.giveawayoftheday.com/> where the item is absolutely free by download for just 24 hours. Some of these free items are reputable ones that normally have a retail price and are rated good software. When it's free, I sometimes download it even though I have no use for it at the time, but I take the attitude that "you never know." I think that men can change their minds too.

<http://www.software-dod.com> is another interesting site where you might find a bargain, but I've only found one I wanted so far, and I'm not sure I really needed it.

If you find something that interests you, I suggest you read it thoroughly because I had something I thought I wanted on 1saleaday, but ended up not getting what I thought I was ordering. Read the description over thoroughly to avoid that.

That's it for this month. I'll soon have more new product announcements on my Web site that didn't offer discounts. Meet me here again next month if your editor permits. 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*>. *Visit my Web site at <http://www.dealsguy.com>.

Free Panda Cloud Antivirus Released By Ira Wilsker

In early May, 2009, I wrote about a novel idea from Panda Software, a Spanish cyber security company. At that time Panda had released an early beta (pre-release) version of its innovative antivirus program that was substantially different than the other competitive products available at that time. As a beta, it was not in a polished final form, and had some issues with some users, and some mixed reviews. In mid-November, Panda released its production version of Panda Cloud Antivirus, version 1.0, as a totally free (for personal use) antivirus program which runs smoothly on Windows XP, 2003, Vista (32 and 64), and Windows 7 (32 and 64).

What is unusual about Panda Cloud Antivirus (<http://www.cloudantivirus.com>) is that it uses a "cloud" or a series of high speed networked computers to carry out most scanning, rather than the client computer that it is running on. According to published tests, this results in a reduction of up to one-half of the processing time and load on the system, compared to the industry average of antivirus products. Since Panda Cloud does not use as much computing overhead as its competitors, many users have stated that they have experienced a significant increase in performance, as Panda Cloud does not have as much "drag" on the system, since it only consumed about 3% of the processing power of the computers on which it was tested. Another unusual feature is that there are no virus signatures to download, as the cloud of powerful networked computers that do the virus scanning are continuously updated, such that there is no periodic updating of the software on the computer. Panda calls its Cloud product, "the first antivirus without an update button." This ensures that the Panda Cloud user will always be referencing the very latest in detection capability and digital malware signatures, a feature often lacking when users do not continuously update the conventional antivirus installed on their computers.

To download and install Panda Cloud Antivirus is a very simple process. The downloaded install file is about 22 megs in size, and downloads quickly on a broadband connection. Once downloaded the only decision that the user must make is to click on the "Accept and Install" button, and the software quickly installs. Since there are no large updated signature file to install, Panda Cloud is ready to function immediately without any further intervention of decisions to be made by the user. This has to be one of the simplest installation processes that I have ever tried. While I did not need any technical support, Panda Cloud offers free technical support via its online forums at <http://www.cloudantivirus.com/forum/index.jspa>.

Panda Cloud Antivirus requires an active Internet connection as Panda calculates a digital signature for the files on the computer, and sends that signature to the cloud for instant analysis and feedback. Once a file has been determined as safe, a process that happens so fast as to be nearly undetectable, Panda knows not to resend that signature to the cloud, unless

that file has been changed. My first full scan seemed a little slow taking longer than usual, as thousands of files were checked and determined to be safe, but subsequent scans were much faster because Panda Cloud did not have to recalculate and evaluate any unchanged files. According to Panda, its library of digital signature files is over a terabyte in size, a file size that would be prohibitive on a personal computer. As I type this, Panda's "Collective Intelligence Monitor" is reporting that it has analyzed an aggregate of over 84 million distinct files, and identified which ones were malware, and which were safe. In the most recent two hour period, Panda Cloud has analyzed over 15,000 new files; the number for all of yesterday was over 166,000 new files. It should be noted that these are all unique files that had not been previously analyzed by the cloud. Panda claims that the cloud can instantly analyze over 99% of all new files it receives, but about one-half of one percent requires Panda's staff to manually analyze the new files for threats. In the past week, Panda Cloud had detected and cleaned over 600,000 computers which were infested with just one or more of the top 10 malware threats, and does not include the computers infected with less common threats that were cleaned by Panda Cloud.

Even though Panda Cloud Antivirus 1.0 has only been available for a very short time, it has already won some accolades. PC Magazine tested Panda Cloud Antivirus 1.0 and awarded it its coveted "Editors' Choice Award," tying for the best detection rate during real-time scanning. Panda Cloud outscored the previous top-rated product in the detection of key loggers, the pesky malware that can steal usernames, passwords, account numbers, and enable identity theft. In its tests, Panda Cloud scored a perfect score in detecting rootkits, those often difficult to detect malware items that may hide in the registry and other hidden locations. Panda Cloud also tied for the top ranking in detecting "scumware" and "scareware," those fraudulent pop-ups that tell the user that his computer is infected, and that for a steep fee, will clean his computer. While generally excellent in detecting malware, PC Magazine reported that Panda Cloud had some difficulties in actually removing some malware, including some rootkits. PC Magazine stated that Panda Cloud was among the best at keeping a clean system free of malware, but was less effective in cleaning an infected machine than some of the other products tested. Despite these shortcomings, Panda Cloud Antivirus 1.0 won the PC Magazine "Editors' Choice Award."

Another computer magazine, PC World, tested a late beta version of Panda Cloud shortly before the release of version 1.0. PC World stated, "Among all of the free antivirus software we tested for our latest roundup, Panda Cloud Antivirus was the best app at blocking known malware." When writing about using the cloud as a detection tool rather than conventional signature files, PC World said, "The approach is intended to take advantage of the latest signatures without the need for signature-database updates–and if its excellent showing at detecting malware in AV-Test.org's zoo of half a million samples is any indication, the approach works. Panda's app produced

an impressive 99.4 percent overall detection rate."

If a user has an active Internet connection, and needs a top-rated free antivirus product that is excellent at keeping clean systems clean, and has about the lowest drag on system performance, than Panda Cloud Antivirus 1.0 Free Edition would be a wise choice.

WEBSITES:

<http://www.cloudantivirus.com>.
<http://www.cloudantivirus.com/en/threat-information>.
<http://www.cloudantivirus.com/forum/index.jspa>.
<http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2355828,00.asp>.
<http://www.pcworld.com/reviews/product/290839/review/cloud_antivirus.html>.

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Windows Experience Index
By Sandy Berger

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Have you ever wondered how fast your computer is compared to other computers? Or would you like to know which component you should upgrade in order to speed up your computer? In Windows XP and older versions of Windows, there were always ways to get performance information. However, this information was given in cryptic charts and numbers. The average person would have had to spend a lot of time to find and assess that information. Now, however, with Windows Vista and Windows 7, Microsoft has made finding and assessing this information much easier.

Inside of Vista and Windows 7 is a feature called the Windows Experience Index. This is a simple tool that gives you an easy-to-read assessment of your computer's performance. To access this feature, click on the Start button and choose Control Panel. In Windows Vista, choose the Classic View. In Windows 7 choose one of the icon views. Then click on Performance Information and Tools. You will be given a snapshot of your computers performance.

The report is divided into five categories: processor, memory, graphics, gaming graphics, and hard disk. Each one of these has a score that indicates your computer's performance in that area. A Base Score is given in bold letters. You need to be aware that the base score is not the average of the scores, but rather, it is the rating on the slowest component. So if your gaming graphics score is 2.2, your overall score will be 2.2 even if all of the other subscores are higher. The base score is given in this manner assuming that your computer can only be as fast as the slowest component.

Currently the scores for a computer running Vista range from 1 to 5.9. The scores for Window 7 computers range from 1 to 7.9. They do not go all the way up to 10 because Microsoft is allowing a little leeway for the added performance levels of future hardware components.

Don't be shocked if your computer has a low base score or low subscores. Microsoft says that a score of 2 is adequate for basic computer tasks like e-mail and word processing. Graphics-intensive software like Photoshop and games should have a score of 3 or higher.

If you use your computer for heavy duty computing including media center for multimedia like recording HDTV programs, then subscores in the processor, memory, desktop graphics, gaming graphics, and hard disk categories are all important and should be at least a 3.

In most cases, inexpensive computers will have the lowest score in the graphics category. This will be more important in a laptop computer because you cannot easily upgrade the graphics card later. In a desktop computer, you can always add a better graphics later, if you choose to do so.

To give you an idea of how these scores stack up, here's the scoring of my one-year-old dual-core, 64-bit computer that was recently upgraded to Windows 7.

* Processor: 6.0
* Memory: 6.0
* Graphics: 3.8
* Gaming Graphics: 3.4
* Hard Disk: 5.9
* Base Score: 3.4

My computer retailed last year for about $500 and would currently be selling for less. I do everything on this computer including running as many as 10 programs at once, working with Photoshop, playing movies, and recording TV. My point is that even though the scores can go as high as 7.9 on a Windows 7 computer, you don't need extremely high scores to have a very useful computer.

This index is a good way to pinpoint slower components that may be worth upgrading. For example, my computer's scores tell me without a doubt, that if I were to purchase a high-end graphics card for my computer, I could almost double its base score and speed its performance.

While this little tool is a great way to score your own PC, it also excels at letting you see how the computer you may be thinking of purchasing stacks up against the others. Most stores that sell computers have a demo running in the store. If that is the case, you can pull up the Windows Experience Index on any computer that you are thinking of purchasing. You can also use it to compare computers. This tool is not perfect, but it does give you a fairly accurate assessment. While you will still have to compare things like the amount of memory, hard drive size, and cost, you won't have to understand as much about the processors and other components. And best of all, you won't have to rely as much on the salesman in the store.

Although I still feel that computers could be made easier to use, the Windows Experience Index is one example of how the newer operating systems are at least making computers easier to understand.

Sandy Berger's web site is at <http://www.compukiss.com>. E-mail: <sandy (at) compukiss.com>.

Download Full Length E-Books for Free or Inexpensively

By Ira Wilsker

About a year ago, I wrote about some of the excellent resources available that provide a wide selection of full-length books as free downloads. Since writing that column I have become aware of some other websites that also offer a wide selection of free and inexpensive e-books. For those who may not be aware, e-books are books of all genres that are available for download. A large assortment of titles, are available for a fee that can be downloaded to Amazon's proprietary Kindle; Amazon claims that over 360,000 titles, including many current best sellers, are available for download. Barnes and Noble recently announced its own proprietary e-book reader, the Nook, which will be released in early 2010. Barnes and Noble has stated that it will have over a million titles available for download to the Nook. While many new releases and bestsellers will be priced at about $10 at both Amazon and Barnes and Noble, there is also a massive library of titles that can be downloaded for free from a variety of sources. The Kindle and Nook are relatively expensive, retailing for $259 each. For those not willing to spend that amount, there are thousands of titles that can be freely downloaded and displayed on computer in the universal PDF format.

In the minutes before typing this column, I downloaded a few titles from two sources that I have not used in the past. Both required free registration, and both offer a selection of both free and paid content. The paid content is usually reasonable in price, with one website offering unlimited downloads of paid content for about $5 per month (free-ebooks.net, discounts available), and another offering unlimited downloads for $9 per year (worldlibrary.net). The first "new" website for me was downloadfreepdf.com, where I found a book for one of my daughters who recently had her first child. I downloaded for free "Baby's First Year - What Every New Parent Needs to Know!" as a PDF file for my daughter. I also found and downloaded two free e-books for my wife, "10 Strategies to Improve Your Nursing Care," and "Student Nurse's Bible." Even though they were all free, I had to go through a checkout process as if I was paying for them, being sure to check the button that indicated that they were free. As soon as I completed the checkout process, the books were instantly available for download as PDF files. The default is to display the files in a browser window; in order to save the e-books on the computer, be sure to click on the "save" icon in the browser window (often a floppy-disk icon), and not the File-Save command on the browser toolbar.

The website ebooknetworking.com has an impressive menu of topics, but many of the topics only offer a small selection of e-books. I like interesting cookbooks, and this website has four titles available as free downloads, "300 Chicken Recipes," "Delicious Diabetic Recipes," "Great Sandwiches," and the "Big Book of Cookies."

The website free-ebooks.net offers a limited number of free e-books for download in PDF format (5 per month free), or unlimited downloads for $5 per month or $20 per year. There is no limit on the number of titles that can be viewed for free online in HTML (webpage)

format. The first category I looked at was "Business" which contained 166 titles available in PDF format, or viewable online in HTML format, which can be viewed in any browser. Free-ebooks.net also makes most of its titles available in the Mobipocket format which may be downloaded and read on Amazon's Kindle, mobile phones, Blackberry, Palm, and several other reader formats. Another interesting category was the "Food and Recipes" section, which offered 66 cookbooks. One that attracted my attention was "Cajun Clark's Cookbook," which contains a free selection of about 80 Cajun recipes, and a link to purchase the entire cookbook of over 1000 recipes. In the Humor category was a very cute (and clean) "Knock Knock. Who's Joking?" a collection of hundreds of short jokes and one-liners. Being a history buff, I found a very interesting e-book in the History category on a subject that I had not seen before, "The Big Guns of the Boer War," by W. J. Havenga. Considering that thousands of people are paying $259 for a Kindle or a Nook, a $20 annual subscription to free-ebooks.net, which provides unlimited downloads, is a relative bargain. For computer users, finding just one good title a year justifies the expense.

Another interesting website is e-booksdirectory.com, which lists 2807 free e-books in 399 categories. The actual e-books are hosted on a variety of websites, including Project Gutenberg, and available in a variety of formats, including PDF, plain text, and a variety of formats compatible with the various e-book readers. I found the listings comprehensive, and downloaded (for free) several titles on military history, religion, health, law, hunting & fishing, science, and travel. I found especially interesting "Mom's Home Cooking" volumes one and two, which had about 250 recipes each. There is something here for everyone at a price that can not be beat.

For those looking for free e-books that are generally highly technical, ebooksdownloadfree.com has a wide assortment available. The major categories of books at ebooksdownloadfree.com include medical, computer, sciences, history, and management. These books are mostly recent publications and require a few mouse clicks to reach the download page, but the results are well worth it. I downloaded several of the books and while the files were large, often over 10MB, they were the complete books in PDF format, including all of the pictures. Some of the downloads were in the RAR compression format, but there are several freeware utilities available that can uncompress the RAR format. Some of the downloads had an attached password text file which included a key to uncompress the files. A few of the download links opened up popup ads, which I quickly closed. This site, ebooksdownloadfree.com had some of the best current titles available.

I like to read and have reference books available. Free or inexpensive e-books may be the way to go.

WEBSITES

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazon_Kindle>.
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Ubuntu 64-bit Operating System
By Brian K. Lewis

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).

I was interested in installing a 64-bit operating system (OS) on my laptop. Since I have a relatively new system that is 64-bit capable, it seemed to be time to try it out. I had downloaded the .iso file for the latest version of Ubuntu, version 9.04 or "Jaunty Jackalope." This is the latest regular release. Another one is due in Canonical's six month release cycle about the time this article is published. The next long-term release is due in the spring of 2010. For more information on the Ubuntu release cycle see <http://www.ubuntu.com/products/ubuntu/release-cycle>.

I used the Brasero Disk Burner software that was provided with Ubuntu version 8.10 to burn the .iso file to disk. Burning the .iso file produced a bootable "Live" CD that could be used for the installation. I already had two operating systems on my computer and I wanted to add the 64-bit OS as the third rather than remove one. The hard drive had Vista in one 160 GB partition and the 32-bit Ubuntu in another 160 MB partition. I thought I would be able to divide that latter partition to use half for the 32-bit and half for the 64-bit version of Ubuntu. At least that was the plan.

I booted the computer using the installation CD. With a Live CD, the first menu allows you to run Ubuntu directly from the CD, install Ubuntu, do a check on the CD or boot from the hard drive instead. To do a few checks of the compatibility of the 64-bit system with my hardware, I ran Ubuntu from the CD. Everything seemed to work properly, except for the printer. That I had expected as the Brother printer I use requires drivers to be downloaded from the Brother web site. At this point everything was looking good, so I clicked on the Install Icon on the desktop.

After a short delay as the software loaded, I was greeted with the opening screen to select the language. English was highlighted, so I just clicked on "Continue." The next screen was to select the keyboard and US was highlighted. Again, just click on "Continue." Next came the screen for the time zone. Since I was doing this in the Central Time Zone, I clicked in that area and Chicago came up as the location. Next click on "Continue" again.

Now I got down to the real business of the installation. The software loaded the drive partitioner. The current partitions were identified as Windows Vista, Ubuntu 8.10 and the Linux swap partition. There were two different bars showing the current partitions in different colors. My choices here were (1) use the entire drive for Ubuntu 9.04; (2) install 9.04 side by side with the current OS's; or (3) do a custom

partition. On selecting the second option and clicking on the Ubuntu partition, there was a slider that I could use to alter the size of the current Ubuntu partition on the second bar. So I used that to reduce the 8.1 partition and the software then added the 9.04 partition to the graphic. Once I was satisfied with the size of the new partition, I again clicked on "Continue." After a few seconds an error message popped up telling me that the process had failed. Oh well, back to the beginning. After trying the process twice, I canceled the installation and restarted the computer with Ubuntu 8.10.

I suspected the partitioning problem was caused by one of two possibilities. One that the partition I was working with was 32-bit and I wanted to install a 64-bit OS which didn't fit the disk formatting. Or two, all the partitions were on the boot drive and so were locked. I needed to try a different tactic. Next, I downloaded an .iso file for the graphic version of Gparted. This is a free partitioning program that works with many different file systems. It can also resize and move partitions without loss of data. Since I had already backed up my Ubuntu 8.10 to an external hard drive, I felt it was safe to use Gparted to create an empty partition on the drive. After booting from this CD, Gparted identified all the partitions in use on the drive. I highlighted the Ubuntu 8.10 partition and clicked on Move/Resize. After entering the new size for the partition, I clicked on Apply. It took about 10 minutes to complete the process. This left an unallocated partition of about 75 GB. Next I exited Gparted, removed the CD, replaced it with the Ubuntu install CD and restarted the system.

After getting back to the partitioning section of the install, it offered me an additional choice to install Ubuntu 9.04 in the largest unallocated partition. That was exactly what I wanted. Selecting that and clicking on Continue allowed the installation to go forward. In about 25 minutes the installation was complete. After the computer was rebooted, I logged into Vista just to be certain it was working. Then I exited and booted into Ubuntu 9.04.

My first impressions of this 64-bit version of Ubuntu are very positive. It loads from the boot menu in about 10-15 seconds. This is noticeably faster than the earlier 32-bit version. It also makes Vista look like a snail. Turning off the computer results in complete shutdown in less than 10 seconds. Try to get Vista to do that!

Ubuntu comes with most of the software that I use on a regular basis: OpenOffice 3.0, Firefox 3.0, Gimp (Photoshop equivalent), XSane (scanning software), Brasero Disc Burner, and Tomboy notes. There are four other packages that I downloaded using the Add/Remove function on the Applications menu. These are: Jpilot (Contact manager), Gramps (genealogy), GnuCash (finances) and Firestarter (a firewall). All of these applications are maintained by the Ubuntu developer community and are free under the GNU license. The download and install process took about 30 minutes, primarily due to the slowness of my Internet connection at that time.

Once all my software was installed, I copied the data files from the old 32-bit partition to the new 64-bit partition and I was off and running. All the data was immediately accessible and

it was apparent I had lost nothing in the transition to 64-bit. I am also very pleased with the responsiveness of all the 64-bit applications. I can't say that there is a tremendous increase in speed, but the time required to load applications does seem to be reduced. OpenOffice for one, opens in about half the time that was required in the 32-bit system. The opening logo appears with little or no delay after clicking on the shortcut icon on the desktop. That alone is a real improvement.

The last item I needed to install was the multifunction printer. As I mentioned earlier it is a Brother MFC machine and the printer/scanner drivers are not provided by Ubuntu. Brother has a web site devoted to the Linux drivers for its products. They also provide installation information for both 32-bit and 64-bit systems. To get the printer drivers to work with my 64-bit system I had to download and install a specific library file. That was available through the Synaptic Package Manager under the System menu. All I needed to do was select the file and click on Apply. The Package Manager downloaded and installed the file. Then I used the command line function in a terminal window to install the printer drivers and the scanner drivers. This was simplified by the fact that Brother had the complete command in their installation instructions. It was very simple to copy it into the command line in the terminal window. Testing both the printer and the scanner indicated that the overall process was successful.

All of the software applications that came with Ubuntu 9.04 were 64-bit as it does not work with 32-bit software. Also, I didn't need to specify what I need for any of the applications I downloaded, with the exception of the Brother scanner software. Both the Add/Remove software function and the Synaptic Package Manager select only the 64-bit applications from the various repositories. When it comes to using a 64-bit Windows OS, it won't be this easy. Although 64-bit Windows can also run some 32-bit applications, this doesn't apply to all software. So in going 64-bit with Windows will require replacement with 64-bit applications. This is especially true of anti-virus software, firewalls and any other utilities that work directly with the hard drive. This means that more time, and money, will be involved in going from 32-bit to 64-bit Windows.

I have been using this new Ubuntu installation for just about a month. Everything I have tried has worked without complaint. I have used both the broadband wireless connection as well as the WiFi in a couple of hotspots. Both have worked without the need for any additional setup. The wireless connection menu comes up with a single click on the wireless icon on the top of the desktop page. Then one click connects the broadband. Once I turn on the WiFi the same menu shows me any available WiFi connections. It also indicates whether or not a password is required for access. My broadband connection has shown download speeds ranging from 1 Kb/S to 3100 Kb/S (kilobits per second). That of course was in different locations. The speed really depends on how close I am to a cell phone tower. Both wireless operations are quite simple and provide me with alternate means of getting to the Internet.

One thing I had not anticipated was the size of the update that needed to

be installed after I had my system up and running. I knew there would be some updates since this version had been released several months earlier. The Update Manager notified me that there was a total of 132 megabytes of files that needed to be downloaded and installed. These were various updates including some security updates. There was also an update to the Ubuntu kernel. This is the heart of the OS. So I clicked on OK and waited for the download and installation to be completed. This was one of the few times that I had to reboot the system after an installation. Unlike Microsoft, Ubuntu notifies you of new updates as they are available and the update rarely requires rebooting of the system.

After using this 64-bit version of Ubuntu, I wonder why I bothered to keep the 32-bit version. Now it just seems to be taking up space on my hard drive. There is no doubt in my mind that this 64-bit Ubuntu is a keeper. I hope I can say the same when I receive and install Windows 7.

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. Dr. Lewis is a regular columnist for Sarasota PCUG, Florida. Web: <http://www.spcug.org>. E-mail: <bwsail at yahoo.com>.

How I Fixed My Corrupted Recycle Bin
By Sandee Gimblett

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).

After recovering from a severe system crash on my laptop running XP, I discovered that I had a corrupted recycle bin. When I opened the Recycle Bin, no files at all would appear, yet when I chose to empty the Recycle Bin, the message would ask if I wanted to delete 76 files. I said not to delete the 76 files. I then created a test file, deleted it, and, again, no files would show-up when I opened the Recycle Bin. When I said to empty the recycle bin again, it now asked if I wanted to delete 77 files, which confirmed my suspicion that the deleted files were actually in the Recycle Bin, but I just couldn't get access to them.

I eventually discovered that the files were in the following directory, accessed via the Command Prompt, in a folder named: C:\Documents and Settings\Sandee\Recent.

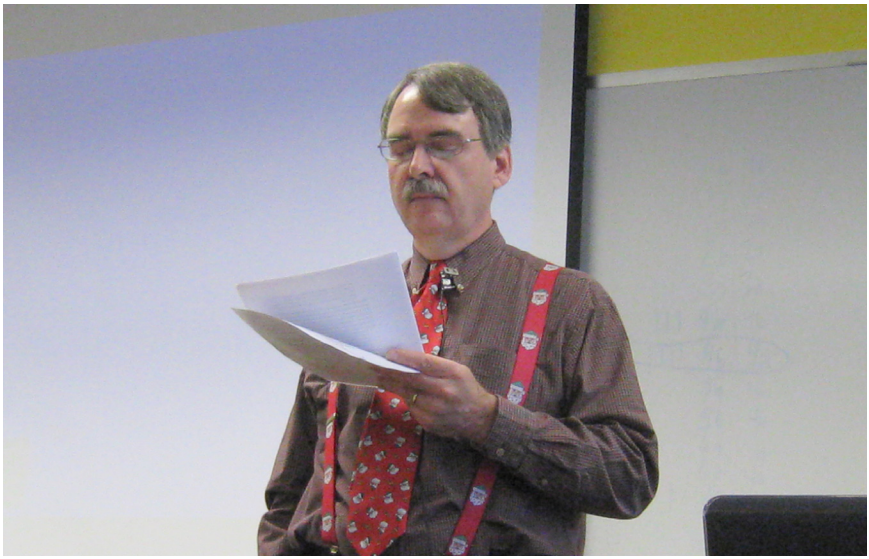
After several attempts to repair the Recycle Bin without success, including running ReplBin.reg and other registry repair techniques, here is what finally worked:

1. My Computer
2. Local Disk (C:)
3. Tools
4. Folder Options
5. View
6. Clicked on SHOW HIDDEN FILES AND FOLDERS
(I keep this option checked anyhow)
7. Un-clicked on HIDE PROTECTED OPERATING SYSTEM FILES (This should usually NEVER be unchecked, but I unchecked it so I could get access to the Recycle Bin operating system hidden folder)
8. Chose APPLY TO ALL FOLDERS,

Continued on Page 21

SEMCO Meeting Pictures

(Above): 'Tom Callow, Richard Jackson, and Franz Breidenich in pre-meeting discussion. (Below): Tom Callow talks about 'Quicken.'



SEMCO Meeting Pictures

Gene Barlow of 'User Group Relations' talks to the group over Skype; discussing how to move to 'Windows 7.'.

BOARD MEETING
12/13/2009
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, SIG-Linux representative Mike Rudas and Members-at-Large Bob Clyne and Chuck Moery. Also attending was past President Gary DeNise. The meeting was called to order at 12:22 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Treasurer, Bette Gay, reported that the amount in the treasury totaled $9,774.79 with $5,038.16 in the checking account and $4,736.63 invested in three Certificates of Deposit. The membership stands at 77.

NEW BUSINESS

Carol Sanzi moved to amend the minutes of the November Board meeting to add, "Bob Clyne seconded the motion and the motion carried," after "Warner Mach moved to authorize up to $100 for Richard Jackson to purchase a new recorder and microphone for the podcasts." Bob Clyne seconded the motion and it was carried.

Richard Jackson and Mike Rudas are still researching the purchase of the microphone and recorder. A purchase will be made soon.

Bob Clyne moved to award Beth Fordyce an honorary membership for the 2010 calendar year. Bette Gay seconded the motion and it was carried.

Bob Clyne moved to authorize the payment of $50 for SEMCO's 2010 APCUG dues. Richard Jackson seconded the motion and it was carried.

Bob Clyne reminded the board that a membership directory is usually published in the January DATA BUS. The consensus of the board agreed that this valuable resource should be included in the DATA BUS again in January.

Richard Jackson moved to plan a volunteer's party at the home of Beth Fordyce. The date will be determined by e-mail. Bob Clyne seconded the motion and it was carried.

A review of the complimentary DATA BUS mailing list took place. After examining the list, it was updated.

A discussion took place regarding ESD's request for $100 a month room rental. After many action plan suggestions, Warner Mach moved to select Bob Clyne as SEMCO's representative to tactfully negotiate with ESD. Carol Sanzi seconded the motion and it was carried.

Bob Clyne moved to adjourn. Warner Mach seconded the motion and it was carried. The meeting adjourned at 1:03 p.m.

GENERAL MEETING
12/13/2009
Carol Sanzi

GENERAL MEETING

Nominations for President were opened. Warner Mach nominated Mike Bader and Chester Blechinger seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations for President.

Nominations for Vice President were opened. Franz Breidenich nominated Richard Jackson and Tom Callow

Continued on Page 21

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)

SIG-IBM
Tom Callow

Jan. 10: 1:45 p.m. PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 8: Terry White of Adobe Systems will demonstrate the latest version of Adobe's popular photo editing program. Terry White is currently the worldwide principal cross media evangelist for Adobe Systems, and is the founder and President of the MacGroup Detroit user group.

SIG-ADVANCED
Franz Breidenich

Jan. 25 (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-IBM INTERMEDIATE

Jan. 10: 3:45 p.m. Microsoft Office 2010 First Look: Tom Callow, as guest speaker will take a first look at the new features in the latest Microsoft Office program, currently available in beta and due for release in 2010.

DECEMBER REFRESHMENT DONORS
Coordinator: Gary DeNise
Donors:
Gary DeNise
Warner Mach
Roland Maki
Carol Sanders
Carol Sanzi

SIG-LINUX
Michael Rudas

Jan. 26 (4th Tues): 6:45 p.m.: At the Oak Park Library. The library is located at 14200 Oak Park Blvd., Oak Park, MI. Topic: General Discussion.

Feb. 2010 DATA BUS DEADLINE (7th day after 2nd Sunday in month)

SEMCO Input and Members' Ads—Deadline: Sun., Jan. 17, 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

Feb. 3, 7 p.m.,(1st Wednesday); Jane Wheatly 810-982-1187 or Pam Raisanen E-mail info: <compinfo@hughes.net>. Web: <http://www.bwcomp.org>. Topic: TBA.

Focus Hope IT Users Group

Jan.9, 9:30-11:30 a.m., 1400 Oakman, Detroit, MI. 48238. Web info <http://www.fhitug.org/Meetings/meetings.htm>. Topic: "What is Cloud Computing and Why Do I Care?" —pre-registration required.

HUG (Holly User Group)

Jan 9. 14, 9:00 a.m.,(2nd Sat.); Groveland Twp. Fire Hall, 3085 Grange Hall Rd. & Dixie Hwy., Ortonville. Topic: TBA.

MacGroup- Detroit

Jan. 24, 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>. Topic: "Tips and Tricks: Tips every Mac user should know." SIGS: 2:00 p.m.

MacTechnics, (MAC User Group)

Jan 16, (3rd Saturday); See web site for meeting time and location. <http://www.mactechnics.org>). JoAnn Olson at 248-478-4300. Topic: TBA."

MDLUG (Metro Detroit Linux User Group)

Jan. 9, 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>. Topic: TBA.

MUG (Michigan User Group)

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

Michigan Apple Computer User Group

Jan. 14, 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://tinyurl.com/royaloakcc>.

SHCC (Sterling Heights Computer Club)

Feb. 2, 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: "Wireless and Other Wonders of Home Networking.".

Continued from Page 18 (Gen Meet)

seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations for Vice President.

Nominations for Treasurer were opened. Richard Jackson nominated Bette Gay and Bob Clyne seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations for Treasurer.

Nominations for Secretary were opened. Bob Clyne nominated Carol Sanzi and Chester Blechinger seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations for Secretary.

Nominations for Member-at-Large of the Board of Directors were opened. Mike Bader nominated Ron Green and Chuck Moery seconded the nomination. Franz Breidenich nominated Bob Clyne and Warner Mach seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations for Member-at-Large.

Continued from Page 15 (Recycle)

chose APPLY, and clicked OK.
9. Right-Clicked on RECYCLER file and renamed it to RECYCLER-BAD
10. Created a dummy file and deleted it.
11. Rechecked my Recycle Bin icon on my Desktop again, and.:
12. VOILA! My newly deleted dummy file was there and all is well again!

Sandee Gimblett is a member of the Tacoma Open Group for Microcomputers, Tacoma, WA. Web: <http://www.tapcug.org/>. E-mail: <maggiebs (at) harbornet.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@comcast.net
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

Jan. 10–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. **PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 8:** Terry White of Adobe Systems will demonstrate the latest version of Adobe's popular photo editing program. Terry White is currently the worldwide principal cross media evangelist for Adobe Systems, and is the founder and President of the MacGroup Detroit user group.

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

SIG-IBM Intermediate 3:45 p.m. **Microsoft Office 2010 First Look:** Tom Callow, as guest speaker will take a first look at the new features in the latest Microsoft Office program, currently available in beta and due for release in 2010.

SIG-ADVANCED, Jan. 25, 2010 (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.

SIG-LINUX , Jan. 26, 2010 (4th Tuesday), 6:45 p.m., Oak Park Public Library, 14200 Oak Park Blvd., Oak Park, MI. Topic: General discussion.

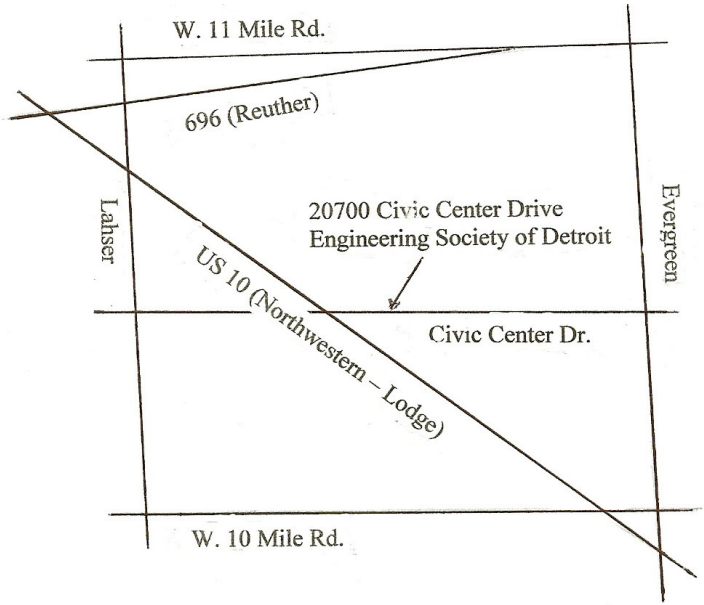
Feb. 14–SEMCO Sunday

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.

ESD
THE ENGINEERING SOCIETY OF DETROIT®
FOUNDED IN 1895
Affiliate Society

apcug
Member of

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

SEMCO (future meetings)
January 10
February 14

FIRST CLASS MAIL
Dated Material

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Helping People for the 21st Century