SEMCO

DATA BUS

Volume 35	April 2010	Number 4

IN THIS ISSUE

The SouthEastern Michigan Computer Organization, Inc. (SEMCO) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), group dedicated to providing information, education and a forum to computer users (professional and amateur) and other interested individuals. Membership in SEMCO is open to all individuals 18 years or older. Persons under 18 years may become members through the sponsorship of a parent or guardian. Dues of $30/year include monthly DATA BUS and free personal ads.

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This publication was created using Adobe InDesign CS2
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[Editor's Note: Some DATA BUS readers may have noticed that we, inadvertently, reran the February 'Deals' column again in March. The editor apologizes for that. This month we combine the column that should have run in March with this month's column, to bring you a double dose of Deals goodness.]

[March Deals Column:]

I often check <http://www.giveawayoftheday.com> to see what's free that day and if it looks interesting, I sometimes downloaded things just in case I might need them some day, but it often takes me a while to get smart. I saw a good Windows tune-up program offered that I liked the other day and it was something I planned to use immediately. Suddenly I noticed a short paragraph on the download page telling me that I should not only download it within the time limit to get it free, but I should install it during that time and then run the activation file so it would be fully activated. Looks like I'll be deleting several files that I downloaded for future use. At least that oversight didn't cost me anything.

By the way, if you like those limited time offers, here's something else you might like to check occasionally. Like the others, these deals are only good for 24 hours, so each day when you check, the product will be different. Start checking <http://www.software-dod.com> daily when you have some spare time and see if they might have anything you like.

Help From Google For Your Job?

I've said before that Louis Vitale of Macon Users Group <http://www.maconusersgroup.org> is one of my favorite authors; I never miss reading his column. A while back, he wrote about asking his nephew why he uses Google a lot. His nephew astounded him when he said that Google helps him make his living. Want to know how? He told Louis that he works for a roofing contractor writing job estimates and all he has to do to obtain the measurements for a house's roof is "Google" that address for the information and do the calculations to estimate the price of it's roof. I was astounded to read that because I was uninformed about that capability in Google Earth. Louis then went on to mention how much fun he had that evening exploring Google's capabilities, even way into the wee hours.

For that matter, I was surprised when my grandson called me Christmas Eve to get my house address so he could use Google to get a map for driving to my house from where he was in Florida; and in the process, he mentioned being able to see my house and the flag flying. I do have a 25' flagpole in my yard and he would not have known that. This high-tech stuff continues to astound me.

A Unique Way That Modern Technology Affects Ranchers

I read an article in Information Week that certainly opened my eyes to the strategy some ranchers must use to avoid criticism for their use of water for irrigation. Many ranchers need irrigation to grow their crops, but the human race also needs water for human consumption, and water is becoming scarcer all the time. So, the ranchers need a compromise which they can do

3

by refining their irrigation technology. It certainly made sense when I read about this technology that has been in use for a while, but now they're refining it to save water even "during" the irrigation. I think you'll find it interesting. <http://www.informationweek.com/news/mobility/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=221601558&queryText=Chris%20Murphy>.

What If The Medication Doesn't Work

Who knows what might lead to your demise, but how about an impressive way to be presented when the time comes. Another of my favorite writers was Pim Borman and I wish he was still writing "The New, The Best, and the Worst." In the last column that he wrote when his user group disbanded, one item was about a personalized casket for the deceased's eternal life. They will actually decorate the casket according to the way you lived your life. For example, a firefighter's casket might have a fire engine and ladders decorating the sides, a chemist might have the glass items for his trade or a doctor might have a stethoscope or other medical apparatus engraved on the sides.

The Web site <http://www.artcaskets.com> states: "Whether bold and vivid or soft and subdued, Art Caskets are as unforgettable as the life they commemorate." I can't say if the mourners would be impressed, but it's your funeral, isn't it? Thinking further, what if the deceased was a former Madam? Wow! Would that funeral be "adults only" if the casket was inscribed accordingly? Don't laugh; during recent excavations in the city of Pompai, archeologists noted that there was a certain male organ depicted over the doorway to one of the shops, so that occupation is certainly nothing new. Anyway, I enjoyed that personalized casket item in the last column Pim wrote. "The DealsGuy" inscribed on the side of my "discounted" casket will do just fine.

Just In Case You Wondered

Many people may be somewhat suspicious when they receive e-mails that you are asked to read, or other ones containing items such as a greeting card you click on to view it, and other catchy things. I never click on them because I've known people who got a virus when they clicked to see a so-called greeting card. Of course, that's not always the case, but bad things are possible.

Anyway, if someone sends you an invitation to try Dropbox, it's actually something you might want to look into. Of course, you should check closely to see where that URL is really taking you, but an invitation to Dropbox could be something that interests you. It's actually a place to store your files on the Web and they can be shared with others if you desire. In your home, a thief could steal your personal files or worse yet, you might have the backup well hidden, but you can't "hide" it from a fire. Dropbox is also handy to sync your files between two machines, and I'm told there are other uses such as linking Dropbox to your machine. Dropbox is good for Windows, Linux and Mac.

Several members here use it, like it and suggested I use it in my column. The Dropbox invitation you were sent is also a way for the sender to earn benefits from Dropbox if you decide to use it, they just didn't mention that, but if it looks interesting, you'll also be helping the friend that recommended it. There is

4

a free version allowing you to store up to two gigabytes of files, and share them with others if you like. Larger storage will cost you so if you're curious; check <http://www.dropbox.com> to look further into the many features.

On the other hand, in the case of Dropbox, you're dependent on somebody else's server to keep your stored files, not to mention staying in business. Mine aren't that important that they need to be kept secret, but you're the judge of yours. I also have a backup in a fireproof safe.

Need a Coloring Book? (Their announcement was edited by me to shorten it)

Star Coloring has launched Animals Coloring Book, a computer-based educational development program aimed at children 4-13 years old. The website based activity course is a perfect choice for parents who want to familiarize their kids with computers without exposing them to violent computer games and the dangers of the Internet. Animals Coloring Book features 25 three-dimensional pictures that strike an innovative balance for different skill levels. With a clear 3D interface, the artistic puzzles are guaranteed to keep a child occupied for a long time.

Animals Coloring Book offers kids an opportunity to develop their artistic abilities without getting messy with real paint. Once Animals Coloring Book has been opened, there is a simple tip for every tool and button (e.g. how to clear the picture, how to return to the previous color, etc). The program features nine basic colors and a palette for blending them, so it's possible to achieve almost any color. The 3D objects and landscapes look much more attractive than those of common coloring programs.

The original music creates a fairy-tale atmosphere and sound effects make the process of coloring almost real. The auto-save feature ensures that the coloring will be safely stored after each session. Simple mistakes are impossible when working with Animals Coloring Book, which is always in full-screen mode. Animals Coloring Book is compatible with both Windows and Mac OS X and costs US$19.95 (all updates are free). User group members will receive a 20% discount by using the coupon code 'DealsGuy' when ordering. Further information on the product, as well as a free trial edition, is available at <http://starcoloring.com/coloring-books/animals-coloring-book>.

Visit <www.starcoloring.com>. Windows download link: <http://download.starcoloring.com/win/animals_coloring_book.exe> (14.2 MB) Mac OS X download link: <http://download.starcoloring.com/mac/animals_coloring_book.dmg.zip> (19.2 MB)

That's it for this month. I'll have some 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>.

5

[April Deals Column:]

I finally received the necessary data to prepare and file my 2009 federal income tax. I had download TaxAct when it was only $12.95 in preparation. I entered the data and when the program computed my taxes, I printed the pages to study them. It showed I was only paying a small income tax and would get back most of the withholding taxes as a refund. My return was relatively simple with five W2s, three 1099s for interest received, and two 1099s for dividends received, neither of which amounted to much this year.

I also had a capital loss for the almost worthless GM stock I sold and I also had insulation installed in our attic which was deductible. The fact that I would be getting back almost all of the money that I paid in made me suspicious. I've always had excellent results using TaxAct in previous years, but getting most of my money back didn't look right. I decided to do it all over again with another free tax product, to compare results.

I decided to try the popular free Turbo Tax to double check. It's done right online. I studied my way through it and found some interesting features; and a few confusing items. When I was almost finished, I discovered that the free Turbo Tax would not handle a capital stock loss transaction unless you paid $14.95 for its other features, (I may have missed something in it). However, it did ask for information about loss carry forwards from my '08 tax return (naming the line numbers) and I could probably use that part by substituting some figures to accomplish what I wanted to know. I tried it and ended up with a result that was somewhat different than I expected, but I thought "it was possible it could be right and maybe TaxAct was wrong." I liked Turbo Tax, although the W2 importing feature didn't work for me in either of the free products I tried.

After considering my valuable time, I decided to try a free tax preparation program from the IRS Web site. There were many free ones listed there, but only four worked for Florida Residents. I choose one called "Complete Tax" and had to do that one on line. I entered the data and it was continuously computing and showing my refund as I entered the data, with a few wild refund numbers. This one allowed my capital loss transaction and asked for loss carry forwards, but when I was done; my refund was more than I had paid in. I rechecked it and found several insignificant omissions, but had to do trial and error to see if they fixed anything. Some were places I hadn't put a check mark for the page being finished, and two were minor data errors.

After an hour of checking and rechecking numbers and check marks, it finally showed a refund that was within $20 of what TaxAct had come up with. Again, I rechecked most of the figures in both programs. I was unable to figure out how to get Turbo Tax to print the pages, or even look at them on the screen, which made comparisons tough. However, Complete Tax did let me print the return and I could easily study the printed pages from Tax Act and Complete Tax to compare numbers. I was finally convinced I could submit the Tax Act return after I input the $250 Stimulus checks I had originally missed. Complete Tax had easily shown me I should enter our stimulus checks, which I missed in the other two. I had to call Tax Act tech support to find where

to make that entry, but they answered immediately and walked me through it quickly. They have great tech support.

It's been submitted and the refund should be here in ten days, unless the IRS finds fault with my work. Tax Act did its job again and I'm happy, although Complete Tax was good. I'm already considering what to do with the funds. Spending it seems like a good idea to help the economy. Maybe I'll call the cruise line!

Conference Update

FACUG (Florida Association of Computer User Groups) is having great success with the 2010 spring conference. Holding it on a cruise ship is certainly different, and I applaud Sam Wexler and the other officers for taking on such an enormous task. There are about 250 conference registrants and, considering the spouses, there will be over 350 attendees. APCUG is not a cosponsor this year because of differing opinions. FACUG has always used the same time frame for this conference with continued success year after year. Why fix something that isn't broken. I'm happy that there will be several attendees from APCUG and a few are doing breakout sessions which I'm looking forward to. There's going to be so many breakout sessions that attendees will have problems making choices. More next month.

Ever Wonder???

Perhaps some have wondered just what files, DLLs or other things are being used by a particular program. The folks in the local Technology SIG were talking about "Process Explorer" which tells you that information. The CFCS (Central Florida Computer Society) technology SIG is interesting because anything and everything might

get discussed and you always come away with new knowledge. I can't attend because I don't drive at night, but I am on their Googlegroups so I can keep up. Process Explorer is free at <http://technet.microsoft.com/en-us/sysinternals/bb896653.aspx>. CFCS is not the only group with that kind of SIG. I read many newsletters and noticed a few other user groups have a SIG like that.

This One Does A Lot For Your Videos and Photos (I edited this announcement to shorten it.)

STOIK Imaging announced the release of the Premium edition of Imagic, a video and image processing solution with enriched functionality. The standard edition is distributed free of charge and provides the advanced features of the Premium edition for 30 days. Features include creation of stereo images, panoramas, slideshows and collages, sophisticated photo editing tools and more. Both editions support direct uploading of photos to Google Picasa and Flickr. A combination of various functions allows working with one versatile solution instead of purchasing and installing several programs.

The built-in photo editor features a Retouch Brush, Skin Makeup, Lens Correction, Color Variations, and many automatic correction functions. It is easy to align and crop photos as well as apply various artistic effects, frames, and clipart images. Besides photo processing, the photo editor also features creation of different kinds of puzzles.

In addition to support for .MPO files (available in the previous edition), Imagic Premium now features creation of stereo images (anaglyphs, .JPS and .PNS files); extending a photographers'

opportunities. Another useful feature is Dark Room editor for processing of .RAW and flat photos. The original image remains unchanged, as all adjustments are saved as a set of parameters. The .RAW files can be converted to a variety of formats, while .JPEG files can be optimized in quality and reduced in size.

The convenient browsers of Imagic Premium allow the user to find any file quickly and easily due to fast indexing algorithm scans and their ability to search by EXIF attributes. There are three browser types; a common Folder Browser, a Calendar Browser for organizing files chronologically and the Tags Browser for organizing by categories. However, the browsers are not intended just for organizing photos and video files, but they can automatically detect all matching photos and seamlessly create panoramas in a single click. Other sophisticated browser features are Batch processing, Geotagging, Slideshow creation and more.

The built-in video editor offers other features; frames can be cut, trimmed and rotated, adjust brightness and contrast, apply effects and transitions, use various titles and captions, and add audio files or record narration. The results can be exported to a variety of popular formats. The program supports multiple ways of sharing images; e-mailing, creating slideshows, uploading images to Google Picasa, Flickr and other web photo albums, as well as direct printing with advanced options.
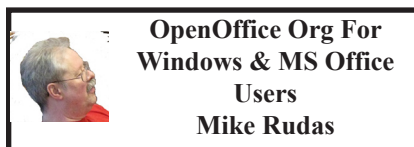
STOIK Imagic Premium is compatible with Windows XP/ Vista/ 7 and costs $49.00 USD for a single-user license. User group members get a 25% discount on all STOIK products by using the coupon code "DEALSGUY" in the appropriate space when ordering; good through May 2010.

Direct download link: <http://store.eSellerate.net/sti/dg> (Check the calculated cost closely when ordering)

Company website: <http://www.stoik.com/>

That's it for this month. I'll have some 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>

OpenOffice Org For Windows & MS Office Users
Mike Rudas

This article is partly inspired by the recent release of OpenOffice.org v3.2.0.

Microsoft Office (MSO) and OpenOffice.org (OO.o) are roughly equivalent—like MS Office, OpenOffice.org is a suite of applications. The main parts of each suite are similar: a word processor (MS Word vs. OpenOffice.org Writer), a spreadsheet (MS Excel vs. OpenOffice.org Calc), and presentation software (MS PowerPoint vs. OpenOffice.org Impress). The difference? OpenOffice.org is free of cost and open source software— MS Office is neither free nor open. OpenOffice.org is also cross-platform-

-versions are available for Windows, Linux, Mac OSX, and others See the end of the article for download links.

One has to wonder why school systems (especially those in low-income areas) continue to teach Microsoft Word or Microsoft Office. Many students' families may have problems being able to afford MS Office packages costing between $100 and $350 (or more). For these users (and most others) a free equivalent like OpenOffice.org begins to look pretty good. To a considerable extent, once you have learned any word processor, that knowledge is useful for any similar program. In fact, most Windows-using beginners would be well-served by starting with the WordPad application included with Windows and working up from there— especially when differences between the different versions of MS Office are taken into account.

Part of the problem in changing teaching tactics on the part of teachers and school systems is training and habit, but much of the issue is probably one of simple familiarity—or is it so simple? In the early days of computer word processing, one of the issues in moving to newer or different software was sometimes referred to as baby duck syndrome, though this might just be a fancy name for "inertia." Another issue is compatibility; how can users be sure that a document saved in OpenOffice.org Writer will look the same in MS Word? This article will try to address some of these issues Even those users wishing to stick entirely to MS Word or MS Office may be able to glean some useful information here.

The Microsoft Office suite is proprietary software. This also means that the default file formats it usually uses (.doc, .xls, and .pps) do not have published specifications; thus, third-party software must reverse engineer these file formats in order to read and display those files correctly—the MS-compatibility part of the OpenOffice.org suite is one example of software built this way. This process is made much more difficult by the changes to the MS-proprietary formats over time—a DOC file created by Word XP has a substantially different internal format than one created by Word 6.0 or WordPad. To complicate matters further, MS Office 2007 uses new default formats– .docx, .xlsx, and .ppsx–that require additional software to be read by Microsoft's own free viewers or older versions of Office. The needed software is free, but still…

The OpenOffice.org suite, on the other hand, uses default file formats that are open, with published specifications collectively known as ODF (Open Document Format)—but users can change those defaults. For those users running OpenOffice.org Writer under Windows, I often recommend changing the default Save formats to those used by MS Office—with some cautions. Most of the following discussion addresses word processor DOC files; OO.o v3.2 can load DOCX files as well.

One aspect to be concerned about is the possibility that a DOC file created using OpenOffice.org Writer may render slightly differently when displayed in Word. This is one reason why I recommend that Windows users who install the OpenOffice.org suite should also install the free-to-use Microsoft Office viewers for Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. They are useful not only for cross-checking an MS-formatted file's compatibility

with the MS software suite but also useful because opening a file in the Word viewer (for example) is much less resource intensive than opening a full word-processing application to do the same thing—not to mention the fact that you can't edit the file by accident in the viewer (accidental editing has happened to me, with annoying consequences).

Another way that the MS Word viewer can be used is to load a DOC file, then copy-and-paste the content into Writer for editing. This sometimes works better for certain types of formatting than loading the file directly into Writer. This may also be true for some DOCX-formatted files, though OpenOffice.org v3.2 imports most DOC and DOCX files just fine.

I personally leave the OpenOffice.org default formats as they are. As I work on a file, I find that it's better to leave them in the default ODF formats—but once I'm finished with it, I will save it in an MS-compatible format as needed. If I can, I use RTF (rich-text format) because it's the most compatible across platforms, but I will use the DOC format if necessary for more complex documents.

If a user wants to change the OpenOffice.org default Save formats, it's fairly easy– Just save as "ODF Text Document.":

Under the Tools menu, select Options. Click the box next to Load/Save to open the submenu. Within the General dialog box you will find various settings. The ones we are most interested in right now are the Document type and Always save as drop-down menus. Here you can change the default save formats to Microsoft Word 97/200/XP formats. Do this for Text, Spreadsheet, and Presentation. You are now good to go. There are also conversion options within the Microsoft Office part of the menu, but you shouldn't need to go there.

In short, OpenOffice.org v3.2 seems to be a winner, so far— it's the most MS Office-compatible version yet. There are a number of tutorials available on the Internet, as well as a variety of useful books available on the subject. It should also be mentioned that there is yet another alternative to MS Word: AbiWord. I'm not going to discuss that program here, except to say that it's a good word processor that may be especially useful for older PCs with limited memory or limited hard drive space.

For links to all the free software mentioned in this article, go to my relevant download links page: <http://tinyurl.com/5qrsxx>.

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High School Robotics Site
<http://www.firstinmichigan.com/>.

10

The FCC is initiating an effort to bring high-speed broadband to all areas of the country. In conjunction with this effort they are providing a web site: <http://www.broadband.gov>.

It is possible to go to this web site and determine your Internet speed. The FCC also asks for your mailing address. This information is being collected in order to determine the broadband speeds in various areas.

Our former newsletter editor, Bill Agnew, reported in the March 2007 issue of the DATA BUS the efforts of his New Mexico group to compare the speeds of various ISPs. See: <http://www.semco.org/newsletter/DataBus200703.pdf>. It appears that the facility they were using for testing is no longer available.

The FCC has two "beta" programs they are using for testing: (1) Ookla and (2) M-Llab. I ran tests using my machine under the following: (1) Verizon Wireless card. (2) Wi-Fi at Panera Bread (Westland Mall location). (3) Wi-Fi at the Westland Library–I indicate the times since speed can vary with time of day:

The measures are defined as follows at the web site:

* Download Speed: The speed at which data is sent from the testing server to your computer.
* Upload Speed: The speed at which data is sent from your computer to the testing server.
* Latency: The time it takes for data to be sent from your computer to the testing server and back (the "round trip time").

* Jitter: The variability in the delay between your computer and the testing server.

The results of my tests were as follows:
Verizon. Ookla: 3-13-2010 7 am:
Dload: 1781 kbps. Uload: 707 kbps. Latency: ?. Jitter: ?.
Verizon 3-13-2010 7 am: M-Lab
Dload: 1052 kbps. Uload: 821 kbps. Latency: 139 ms. Jitter: 363 ms.
P.-bread: 3-17-2010: 10:30 am: Ookla
Dload 1137 kbps. Upload: 587 kbps. Latency: ?. Jitter: ?
P.-bread: 3-17-2010: 10:30 am: M-Lab
Dload: 946 kbps. Uload: 648 kbps. Latency: 144 ms. Jitter: 247 ms.
Library: 3-17-2010: 12:05 pm. Ookla
Dload: 8050 kbps. Uload: 2417 kbps. Latency: 28 ms. Jitter: 3 ms.
Library: 3-17-2010: 12:10 pm. M-Lab
Dload: 4035 kbps. Uload: 7665 kbps. Latency: 76 ms. Jitter: 41 ms.

Because the results at the library were somewhat surprising, I reran:
Library: 3-17-2010: 12: 15 pm. Ookla
Dload: 7795 kbps. Uload: 2747 kbps. Latency: 33 ms. Jitter: 8 ms.
Library 3-17-2010: 12:15 pm. M-Lab
Dload: 3920 kbps. Uload: 7108 kbps. Latency: 37 ms. Jitter: 123 ms.

Although there is considerable variability, I clearly should do my high-bandwidth work at the library.

Bob Clyne was concerned about the privacy issues on the FCC site (see their privacy statement) and pointed out the CNET speed test at: <http://reviews.cnet.com/internet-speed-test/?tag=nl.e776>.

The CNET test returns one value: The "Connection Speed." I got the following values:
Library: 3-17-2010. 12:30 pm:
1409.8 kbps.

Library: 3-17-2010. 12:33 pm:
1187 kbps.
Verizon: 3-20-2010: 9:35 am:
181.7 kbps.

Bob Clyne ran the following tests on March 20, 2010 using his Verizon Wireless USB EVDO modem plugged into his Cradlepoint MBR-1000 router and using Firefox 3.6:

12:34 pm: Ookla:
Dload: 1274 kbps. Uload: 355 kbps.
Latency: 74 ms. Jitter: 17.
12:36 pm: M-Lab:
Dload: 509 kbps. Uload: 258 kbps.
Latency: 629 ms. Jitter: 1450 ms.
12:38 pm: Ookla:
Dload: 675 kbps. Uload: 268 kbps.
Latency: 71 ms. Jitter: 11 ms.
12:40 pm: M-Lab.
Dload: 657 kbps. Uload: 289 kbps.
Latency: 695 ms. Jitter: 1407 ms.
12:44 pm. CNET. Connect: 80.3 kbps.
12:45 pm CNET. Connect: 68.4 kbps.
12:52 pm CNET. Connect. 107.1 kbps.

Your Attention Please!
By Warner Mach

Item 1: Penguicon.
Penguicon 2010 is April 30 (Friday) through May 2 (Sunday) 2010 at the Troy Marriot (200 W. Big Beaver Red in Troy – East of I-75).

This year, as in 2009, SEMCO will have a "hospitality room" in conjunction with MDLUG (the Linux folks).

Penguicon is a combination science fiction and open-source/Linux and music and games and comics and film and freaky-stuff convention that has been held for several years in the greater Detroit area.

See the web site at <http://www.penguicon.org> for a list of celebrities and events.

For a review of last year's Penguicon (with pictures) see <http://www.semco.org/newsletter/DataBus200906.pdf>. A number of SEMCO members will be going. Maybe we will see you there?

Item 2: Second Life.
Don Singleton, of APCUG, and I are trying to organize a discussion group in Second Life. The first meeting discussion would revolve around the possibilities presented in Second Life plus issues of concern to computer group members.

One of the big advantages of S.L. is that people can come together from all over without having to physically travel. Don will be putting a notice in the APCUG newsletter for people around the country.

If you are on S.L. and you would like to try this kind of event then check the following dates and decide your first and second choice for meeting: April 16, 17, 23, 24. One meeting date will be selected. The meeting will be held at 5 P.M. Linden time (Pacific Standard Time - 3 hours behind Eastern Standard Time). Send me a note before April 13: <warnermach@gmail.com>.

The meeting will be "inworld" at the APCUG office: "Plush Nonprofit Commons 146,18,26."

Item 3: SEMCO Meetings
I have set up a picture review of the past year of SEMCO meetings on Facebook: <http://tinyurl.com/y8cm99e>.

Click on individual pictures to expand them and to read a description.

It has been a busy year since we moved to the Engineering Society of Detroit.

WUBI? What the Heck Is A WUBI?
By Jim McKnight

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

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

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

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

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

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

That's it!

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

NOTES:

- Hibernation is not supported when installing Ubuntu via WUBI (for either Windows or Ubuntu).

- Follow these links for detailed WUBI operating instructions:

  <http://wiki.ubuntu.com/WubiGuide> and here:

<http://help.ubuntu.com/community/Wubi>.

- Ubuntu 32 bit can run under Windows 32 bit or Windows 64 bit.

Jim McKnight is Director of the Los Angeles Computer Society, CA. Web: <http://www.lacspc.org>. E-mail: <jim.mcknight (at) lacspc.org>.

13

Board Members Present: Vice President Richard Jackson, Treasurer Bette Gay, SIG-IBM Chairman Tom Callow, SIG-Advanced Chairman Franz Breidenich, SIG-Linux Chairman Michael Rudas, Publications Committee Chairman Warner Mach, Members-at-Large Bob Clyne and Ron Green. Also attending was Hermine Turner, President of the Focus Hope IT User Group. The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

Treasurer, Bette Gay, reported that the amount in the treasury totaled $10,028.88, with $5,288.98 in the checking account and $4,739.90 in CD's. The total membership is 79.

Richard Jackson requested that the original allocation for the Penguicon program book ad be increased by $10 to $50. Bob Clyne moved to amend the Penguicon ad authorization to change half-page to quarter-page and $40 to $50. Tom Callow seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Bob Clyne moved to amend that the board meeting minutes, as published in the March issue of the DATA BUS, as follows:

(1)   In the last sentence of the first paragraph, change "The May board meeting was called to order…" to read "The February board meeting was called to order …"

(2)   In the first paragraph, under Old Business, change "CD interest income of $3.26" to "CD interest income of $3.27."

(3)   At the end of the 5th paragraph, under New Business, change http://www.penguicon.com to http://www.penguicon.org.

(4)   In the last paragraph, in the "moved to adjourn" delete the clause "with Ron Green abstaining."

Tom Callow seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Bob Clyne moved that $150 be authorized for expenses in support of a SEMCO and MDLUG joint hospitality room at Penguicon 2010. Franz Breidenich seconded the motion and it carried.

Tom Callow suggested that if Penguicon comes up next year there should be more advanced discussion of possible expenses, such as the purchase of the badge ribbons, the Penguicon ad, and the hospitality room. We should evaluate whether these would be a real benefit to SEMCO.

Bob noted that some of the purchases had to be done between board meetings (tentative approval was sought by e-mail) and that MDLUG had belatedly made the decision in favor of a hospitality room.

Richard Jackson suggested that SIG-Linux was bringing the group into more of a Linux orientation.

Bob Clyne reported that the Audit Committee had completed their review of the Organization's financial records for 2009 and issued their report that the records present a full and fair picture of the Organization's finances and that the transactions entered into were proper.

NEW BUSINESS

Mike Rudas indicated that he wanted to create a Facebook presence for SEMCO. Initially he envisioned a SEMCO account and, eventually, a SIG-Linux account. He moved that the

14

Alien Critter

Fred Acerri's Description:

This photo was taken with the camera of the Iphone 3G. The original photo was of a ceiling fan. I used two apps on the Iphone to manipulate the image.

One was "iDroste." This app allowed me to create the spiral shape of the image I saved this and then applied the app the "Cartoonizer." Both of these apps are filters of sorts.

I changed the resultant color image to b/w using Picassa.

The image reminded me of some of the creatures one sees in sci-fi movies either a tentacle reaching out or an alien amoeba in the stage of development.
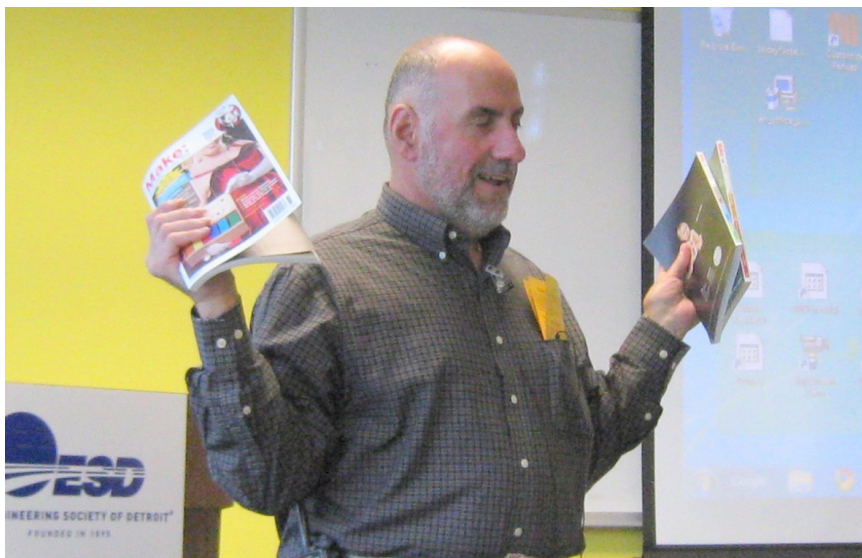
SEMCO Meeting Pictures

(Above): Hermine Turner of Focus Hope IT User Group discusses Microsoft Office Live Small Business Tools. (Below): Members at the break period.

(Above): Paul DeAthos, Chairman of SIG-IBM Intermediate, shows magazines that he is making available to the members. (Below): Tom Callow talks about doing your income tax using Turbo Tax.

board approve this project. Ron Green seconded the motion.

Tom Callow moved to amend Mike's motion to the effect that the setup of the accounts be done by Mike, but the Facebook content should be under the control of the Internet Committee. Bob Clyne seconded Tom's amendment and the board approved the amendment.

Mike's motion, as amended, was approved by the board.

Mike Rudas noted that he will enter into discussions with Richard Jackson and the Internet Committee regarding the Facebook presence.

Richard Jackson noted that there was a problem with the recently purchased microphone for the audio recorder. The microphone is defective and will have to be returned. This caused a problem for last month's podcast.

Richard Jackson passed out an analysis of the meeting evaluation forms for January and February. There was some discussion of improvements that might be made.

Ron Green suggested that, on the SEMCO web site, in the information about the Engineering Society of Detroit, that it should simply state that parking is in the back of the building, rather than that "additional" parking is in the back. Richard Jackson will pursue this issue.

Mike Rudas noted that he has some CD's with free and open source software and will bring a few of these CDs to the meetings.

Richard Jackson noted that we had received a copy of "Windows 7 Ultimate" from APCUG, as a prize for renewing the SEMCO membership

promptly. This would be used as a door prize during the SIG-IBM meeting.

Guest Hermine Turner, President of Focus Hope IT User Group, outlined, to the board the advantages of belonging to "GITCA," the "Global IT Community Association" <http://www.gitca.org>.

After the presentation, Ron Green moved that the meeting be adjourned. Warner Mach seconded the motion, and it carried. The meeting was adjourned at 1:13 p.m.

Inserting the Total Number of Pages in Your Document By Sharon Parq Associates

It is not unusual to put a page number in your headers or footers, if you choose to use headers and footers with your document. You can also, however, insert a field that indicates the total number of pages in a document. This can be used in a header or footer or directly within the text of your document. To insert the total number of pages in your document, follow these steps if you are using a version of Word prior to Word 2007:

1.   Position the insertion point where you want the total number of pages to appear.
2.   Choose Field from the Insert menu. You will see the Field dialog box.
3.   In the Categories list, choose Document Information.
4.   In the Fields Names list, choose NumPages.
5.   Click on OK.

The process of inserting a field is a bit different in Word 2007. Follow these steps:

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)

SIG-IBM
Tom Callow

April 11: 1:45 p.m. Cloud Computing Explained: Russ Ryba, of IonEarth, runs a company that provides satellite-based GPS tracking for long distance race events. His company converted to the "cloud" three years ago. He will explain cloud computing, the services offered, the challenges to be faced, and the economics involved. He will also examine where things are likely to go in the future.

SIG-IBM INTERMEDIATE
Paul DeAthos

April 11: 3:45 p.m. Trouble-Shooting: Paul DeAthos, Chairman of SIG-IBM Intermediate, will speak on "Easy trouble-shooting of electronics."

SIG-ADVANCED
Franz Breidenich

April 26 (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
Michael Rudas

April 27 (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.

Mar. 2010 DATA BUS DEADLINE (7th day after 2nd Sunday in month)
SEMCO Input and Members' Ads—Deadline: Sun., April 18, 11:59 p.m.
Members' personal ads are free. To mail, use Editor address on Page 2; e-mail address: <warnermach@gmail.com>. PLEASE send to arrive sooner than deadline.
Business Ads - Deadline: Second Friday monthly. Contact Editor (address Page 2)**.**

Warner Mach
warnermach@gmail.com
(to post monthly computer group info)

**CALENDAR-OF-EVENTS
OTHER GROUPS**

COMP (Computer Operators of Marysville & Port Huron

May 5, 7 p.m.,(1st Wednesday); Jane Wheatly 810-982-1187 or Pam Raisanen E-mail info: <compinfo@greatlakes.net>. Web: <http://www.bwcomp.org>. (See web site for meeting location). Topic: (Tentative) "Live Meeting with Gregory West and Computer Tutor Pamela Tabak."

Focus Hope IT Users Group

May 1, 9:30-11:30 a.m., 1400 Oakman, Detroit, MI. 48238. Web info <http://www.fhitug.org/Meetings/meetings.htm>. Topic: TBA.

HUG (Holly User Group)

Apr. 10, 9:00 a.m.,(2nd Sat.); Groveland Twp. Fire Hall, 3085 Grange Hall Rd. & Dixie Hwy., Ortonville. Topic: TBA.

MacGroup- Detroit

Apr. 25, 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: "Adobe Creative Suite Tips and Tricks (Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign and more)." SIGS: 2:00 p.m.

MacTechnics, (MAC User Group)

Apr. 17, (3rd Saturday); See web site for meeting time and location. <http://www.mactechnics.org>). JoAnn Olson at 248-478-4300. Topic: "Fix it Tools."

MDLUG (Metro Detroit Linux User Group)

Apr. 10, 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)

Apr. 13, 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

Apr. 8, 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)

May 4, 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.".

20

1. Position the insertion point where you want the total number of pages to appear.

2. Make sure the Insert tab of the ribbon is selected.

3. In the Text group, click Quick Parts. You'll see a drop-down menu.

4. Choose Field. Word displays the Field dialog box.

5. In the Categories drop-down list, choose Document Information.

6. In the Field Names list choose NumPages.

7. Click on OK to close the dialog box and insert your field.

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MARCH REFRESHMENT DONORS
Coordinator: Gary DeNice
Donors:
Gary DeNice
Warner Mach
Carol Sanders

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

April 11–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. **Cloud Computing Explained:** Russ Ryba, of IonEarth, runs a company that provides satellite-based GPS tracking for long distance race events. His company converted to the "cloud" three years ago. He will explain cloud computing, the services offered, the challenges to be faced, and the economics involved. He will also examine where things are likely to go in the future.**.**

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

SIG-IBM Intermediate 3:45 p.m. **Trouble-Shooting:** Paul DeAthos, Chairman of SIG-IBM Intermediate, will speak on "Easy trouble-shooting of electronics."**.**

SIG-ADVANCED, April 26, 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 ,April 27, 2010 (4th Tuesday), 6:45 p.m., Oak Park Public Library, 14200 Oak Park Blvd., Oak Park, MI. Topic: General discussion.

May 9–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.

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)
April 11
May 9

SEMCO: A Community Organization
Helping People for the 21st Century