

The Voice of  
**FCUG**

**October 2004**  
**Volume 25 No. 5**

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**Meeting 7:30 pm 5<sup>th</sup> at**  
**New Canaan Historical**  
**Society**  
**13 Oenoke Ridge Road**

## **BOILERPLATE**

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

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

Meetings and SIG groups are open to the public. Membership costs \$30/Yr, prorated. For information and payment contact

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

The Voice, 280 Main Street, Westport, CT 06880

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## **The Editor's Desk**

Sometimes you can be too controlling. Setting up a new version of my regular Web mail program I was inserting my log-in data. Knowing that, in the past, I had had to flag a box marked 'Server requires authentication', followed by re-entry of my ID and password, I set them as before. Suddenly, while I could receive mail without trouble, I was completely unable to send any. Tried all sorts of combinations of parts of my regular id, re-typed my password over and over again, all without luck.

Finally, after three or four days of having to revert to the old version for my e-mail, on a whim I turned off the box and removed all the identifications which followed. It worked! My understanding of how my log-in and e-mail interacted was completely wrong, or the new version actually approached the problem from a different angle. Whichever, freeing up the controls solved the problem.

Now to tackle some of the other update problems. Guess those of you switching to XP find much the same. There's really nothing new the whole world over. . .

---ooOoo---

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### Program for 5<sup>th</sup> October 2004

<b>Call to order . . . . .</b>	<b>Fearless Leader – Charles Bryk . . . . .</b>	<b>7:30</b>
<b>Novice topic: . . .</b>	<b>A Beginner's Introduction – I.M.A. Guru . . . . .</b>	<b>7:40</b>
	<b>A Mystery Presentation</b>	
<b>Q and A: . . . . .</b>	<b>Moderator – Martha Fleischer . . . . .</b>	<b>8:00</b>
<b>Epicurean Break . .</b>	<b>Chef du Soir – Marylou Wilkinson . . . . .</b>	<b>8:20</b>
<b>Main topic: Traveling by Internet – Lenny Bloom . . . . .</b>	<b>Travelocity and other fish. . . . .</b>	<b>8:30</b>
	<b>(Possibly followed by a raffle)</b>	
<b>Adjournment . . . . .</b>		<b>10:00</b>

### LOOKIN' FOR A RIDE?

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



## THE WAY WE WERE – OCTOBER 1984

PRESIDENT: Robert Jackson      VICE PRESIDENT : Herman Parks  
SECRETARY: Patricia Brinson      TREASURER : Robert Gould  
EDITOR : Alan Abrahamson      BULLETIN BOARD: (203) 846-\*\*\*\*  
*This Newsletter printed by Sir Speedy Printing Center, Wilton CT.  
Licking, sticking, folding & stapling by: Herman and Jeff Parks.*

The future of Radio Shack – George Saladino.

“. . . So, what is the future for the Shack? I see a dim future in computers, if they do not change some of their marketing planning. . . .”

Ask Alan. No questions, but listing of HELP/DEM, a program by Alan.

Letterset Design System – review by Alan Abrahamson.

What Your Missing – Alan Abrahamson. (Considerable) list of clubs with whom newsletter exchanges have been arranged.

Congratulations to Dave McGlumphy on passing the exam for Certified Data Processor.

TRSDOS 6.0 Passwords – Richard Colvin. Reprinted from NYBBLER.

Unkilling Files in TRSDOS 1.3 – Dave McClure. Reprinted from Northern Bytes.

Model 4P Boot Mode Key Selection – reprinted from MCTUG.

“The Fairfield County Computer Users Group Inc. Bulletin Board, a TBBS system, is up and running at (203) . . . .”

NEWDOS-80 v2. Error Codes – Phil Yacht. Reprinted from USR(80).

Elegant Displays – Mel Seder. Reprinted from the WPG Micro-80 Users' Group Newsletter.

Model 100 Video Escape Codes – Jeff Aston. Reprinted from DATAPORT.

Model III Useful PEEKs and POKEs – Mike Stuver. Reprinted from Micro Info Exchange.

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MultiDOS 1.6 Patches – Paul Snively. Reprinted from Northern Bytes.

### The President's Page

“. . . One night at a party I ran into one of our old members and I asked him why he stopped coming to meetings. He responded that he had moved on to another computer (not IBM). He had gone to other club meetings, but he said FCUG was a notch above the others! Since he has not found his application for his computer, he has stopped trying to figure out hoe the thing works. . . .”

---oOo---



**A Useful Reboot Tool for those with major troubles. . .**

# SCSI

*(The following article, copied from the July 2004 issue of PC News, the journal of the Houston PC Club, was taken from an entry in [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com).)*

Short for 'Small Computer System Interface' and pronounced "scuzzy", SCSI is a parallel interface standard used by Apple Macintosh computers, PCs and many UNIX systems for attaching peripheral devices to computers. Nearly all Apple Macintosh computers, excluding only the earliest Macs and the recent iMac, come with a SCSI port for attaching devices such as disk drives and printers.

SCSI interfaces provide to faster data transmission rates (up to 80 Megabytes per second) than standard serial and parallel ports. In addition, you can attach many devices to a single SCSI port, so that SCSI is really an I/O bus rather than simply an interface.

Although SCSI is an ANSI standard, there are any variations of it, so two SCSI interfaces may be incompatible. For example, SCSI supports several types of connectors.

While SCSI has been the standard interface for Macintoshes, the iMac comes with IDE, a less expensive interface, in which the controller is integrated into the disk or CD-ROM drive. Other interfaces supported by PCs include enhanced IDE and ESDI for mass storage devices, and Centronics for printers. You can, however, attach SCSI devices to a PC by inserting a SCSI board in one of the expansion slots. Many high-end new PCs come with SCSI built in. Note, however, that the lack of single SCSI standard means that some devices may not work with some SCSI boards.

The following varieties of SCSI are currently implemented:

SCSI-1: Uses an 8-bit bus and supports data rates of 4 Mbps.

SCSI-2: Same as SCSI-1, but uses a 50-pin connector instead of a 25-pin connector, and supports multiple devices. This is what most people mean when they refer to plain SCSI.

Wide SCSI: Uses a wider cable (168 cable lines to 68 pins) to support 16-bit transfers.

Fast SCSI: Uses an 8-bit bus, but doubles the clock rate to support data rates of 10 Mbps.

Fast Wide SCSI: Uses a 16-bit bus and supports data rates of 20 Mbps.

Ultra SCSI: Uses an 8-bit bus, and supports data rates of

20 Mbps.

SCSI-3: Uses a 16-bit bus and supports data rates of 40 Mbps. Also called 'Ultra Wide SCSI'.

Ultra2 SCSI: Uses an 8-bit bus and supports data rates of 40 Mbps.

Wide Ultra2 SCSI: Uses a 16-bit bus and supports data rates of 80 Mbps.

---oooOooo---

## TidBytes

The Register had a terrible story the other day of Davida vs. Goliath where G. gives every sign of winning out. To read the original, check out [www.theregister.co.uk/2004/08/04/penguin\\_katie-hijack](http://www.theregister.co.uk/2004/08/04/penguin_katie-hijack).

In 1996 in the UK, Katie Jones was given her own domain, Katie.com, by her husband, for her small chatroom business. But four years later another Katie, teenager Katie Tarbox, in the U.S., wrote a book about her experiences with a paedophile met in a chatroom, and it has been published by Penguin Puttman – and a TV program was broadcast – under the name 'Katie.com', although Ms. Tarbox's site is actually Katiet.com. So far, P.P. Refuses to apologize, or to change the name of the book, is trying to strongarm Mrs. Jones into giving up her domain name, and the mountain of e-mail and traffic to the Jones' site by seekers of Ms. Tarbox is destroying the Jones family's legal use of their legally-registered domain. Yes, the case against P.P. Grows stronger by the day, and K.J. Would have a good chance of a big win if she went to court, bu she doesn't have the resources to start the process, apart from any international problems. The Register summarized:

“What makes it all especially ironic of course is that the book itself is about the abuse of the Internet to disrupt an innocent person's life. In the situation of Katie.com, however, it is increasingly the case that the abused has become the abuser.”

Don't you just love it when Big Business puts it to the little woman?

\* \* \* \* \*

This has nothing to do with computer, really, but was found on the Inquirer site recently. Digital scanners used on passport checking

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have an aversion to teeth; a broad smile upsets their ability to distinguish one physiognomy from another. So the British Home Office now requires citizens not to smile on their passport photos. To rub salt into the wounds of some of the national stereotypes, perhaps, the Inquirer commented:

“. . .[In future] the face of the British traveler will always be of a sad, brain-dead, blank-faced moron, which is hardly good for the National image.

“It is bad enough that foreigners have to put up with sad, brain-dead, blank-faced morons quaffing too much lager, demanding fish and chips and shouting ‘don’t you speak English, or what?’, without seeing a picture of them as they enter the country.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Talk about Code Orange! There’s a new Trojan attack afoot in Britain, according to the Register. An e-mail describes a fictitious order, showing the cost to be charge to the recipient’s credit card, and also offers a link to a website if the recipient wishes to “view the order in more detail”. But, if you visit the site, while it appears merely as if under construction, in the background your Windows machine is being infected with a variant of the Mitgleider proxy Trojan.

This will install a keystroke-logging program onto vulnerable PCs. It is possible because of well-known Windows security bugs, namely an MHTML URL vulnerability (MS04-013) and an ADODB.Stream vulnerability (whatever these are; I just quote the story. . .). Both of these flaws can be fixed by the latest Internet Explorer megapatch (MS04-025).

If your machine becomes infected, the next time you go to your on-line banking site, the Trojan can potentially record your password and PIN used to log on. In addition, the Trojan can surrender control of your machine when the criminal attacks.

British banks are providing ways of circumventing this; for example, by having customers use a mouse to select password characters from an alphabet list. So if you find your bank offering something like this option soon, you will know the criminals have invaded these shores as well – or that your bank officers read the international press – or the Voice!

\* \* \* \* \*

Got both your suspenders and your belt tightly secured? On the Web, you had better; the Sans Institute reports that unpatched PCs

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now last only about 20 minutes before being compromised by some hacker. And if you have a broadband connection, that drops to about 10 minutes, they say. Just a warning. . .

\* \* \* \* \*

In case you hadn't noticed (where have you been hiding?), all those anti-spam laws are having almost no effect at all. And, as I think this page has reported before, and as VnuNet reported recently, 85% of spam originates inside the U.S., although only 28% of the originating computers reside here. Ray! Ray! We'll show them; we can send more spam per computer than any of those dumb foreigners!

\* \* \* \* \*

Now here's a story that captures my fancy! Someone in England offered an attractive, well-appointed country called Belgium for sale on eBay over there. The price rose to about \$17 before the news broke, when it actually reached about \$68 before eBay pulled the auction off its blocks. One assumes the seller may have been miffed, as many Brits are, by the way it seems to them that bureaucrats in Brussels try to tell the rest of Europe to do without any debate. What a great idea! Pick your favorite government department to offer for sale. . .

\* \* \* \* \*

Notice to the Bleeding Edge Brigade: the Inquirer reports that Microsoft is in the process of rolling out a beta version of its upcoming version of XP, known as Windows XP Pro X64. Downloads are available, they said; though the website was not mentioned, this site looked promising:

[www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/64bit/evaluation/upgrade.mspx](http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/64bit/evaluation/upgrade.mspx)

\* \* \* \* \*

And hot on the heels of that announcement came a report from the UK of a security hole in the new XP SP2 megapatch. It's hard to explain, but "in theory, rogue application could wait until the firewall is down and then generate false system information indicating that the firewall is in fact up and working. That's because the WMI database – Microsoft's implementation of WBEM – is set to read/write, not read-only, reports eWeek. The magazine's labs used a simple script to generate false firewall status information." So far, luckily, no maloperators are known to be using this technique, but don't hold your breath, or leave your line to the Web open without protection.

Seems sort of typical of TBOR: take shortcuts all over. Some people I have read (check Steve Gibson of grc.com, for example) think they are doing it on purpose, to generate instabilities they can

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take advantage of later; if it's not that, they must be some of the most careless programmers around. Either way, XP is not for me – yet.

\* \* \* \* \*

More trouble in River City. A security firm called Http-equiv has discovered yet another problem with Microsoft Internet Explorer. This one arises because there is not enough checking when drag-and-drop actions take place from the Web to your machine. Http-equiv demonstrated it by setting up an example where a program is planted in the startup directory when a user drags a program masquerading as an image. And conceptually, though this demonstration used drag-and-drop, it could be rewritten to use a single click. The vulnerability has been confirmed on a fully-patched system with Internet Explorer 6.0 and Microsoft Windows XP SP1/SP2. Their solution? “Disable Active Scripting, or use another product.” . . .

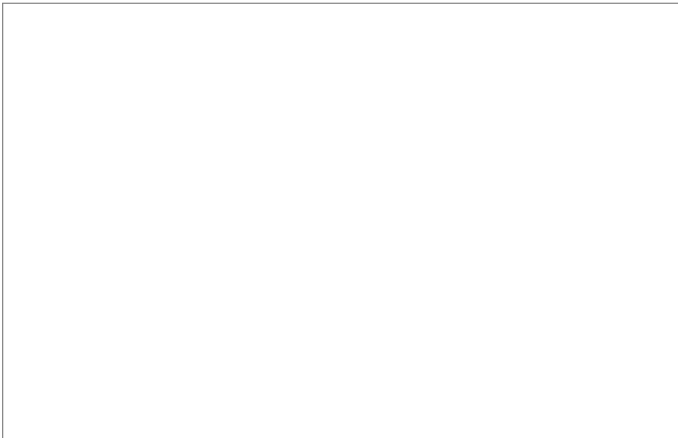
\* \* \* \* \*

And now for something completely different. . . The BBC (and many other sites, including the Register) reported in early September that a guy took his mother-in-law's wheelchair while she was away and fitted it with a jet engine! Bet she was surprised when she got back!

[Well, er, no; she had a new set of wheels and he is using the old ones as a fund-raiser for charities. . .]

What that has to do with computers, I don't know, but there it was in among the serious stuff. Enough for now.

--ooOoo--



## **My Adventures in Spam-Land**

**Charles Bryk**

Like most computer users, I've been troubled by spam. Troubled to the point of considering dropping e-mail. My solution was to buy a software program called "McAfee Spam Killer". It worked OK, eliminating 65-75% of my spam, bringing it under control.

For about a year I was satisfied, but my satisfaction started to evaporate when a pop-up ad appeared stating that my year of free updates had expired. I'm sure that this probably had been written somewhere in micro-type on the box, or instructions, etc. but, like most people when installing a program, I did not notice it.

The pop-up went on to say that if I wanted the service to continue, I should click on "Next". There was no mention of cost, but I had a very strong suspicion that it was not free, so until I could investigate further I just clicked on "Close". That's when the fun began.

The pop-up came back instantly. And kept coming back. I could not get rid of it without closing my Internet connection. After several days of trying different approaches, I finally gave up and clicked "Next". But again, it kept coming back. It would not go away. I tried some other things with no luck, and decided to call McAfee Customer Relations.

When I called I was full of outrage. I was just steamed up by the whole concept of buying a "Spam-Killer" program that turns out to be the ultimate Spam. Denying me access to the Internet was just the frosting on the cake. But the Customer Service Representative responded so quickly to my complaints that I was pretty sure he had heard them before.

He did not offer me apologies or condolences. He just quickly offered me two options: I could buy new software for \$39.95; or I could unload the present program and maybe reload it after getting

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instructions from McAfee Technical Service @ \$2.50 per minute!

I know I probably would have been better off if at first I had just clicked “Next”; but I regarded the offer as an invitation, rather than a ransom note for my Internet access.

—oOOo—

### ***FCUG Meeting 7<sup>th</sup> September 2004***

At 7:35 Lenny Bloom called the assembled 38 or so people to some sort of order and reminded us that there is a Board Meeting at his house next Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> September, at about 6:30pm. Wives are invited as well. [Ed.Note: Pity these notes will not be out in time.]

Also, the December party will definitely b3 at the Laurel Club again, on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December, despite the Editor’s attempt to mislead everyone by saying in the last issue that it was to be held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup>. . .

We were also told about epicurious.com, a gourmet recipe website well worth a visit. And, almost as an afterthought, that some dues are **overdue**. . .

Jim Sullivan and Walt Graham told us of the meeting of the CTPC on 28th September. They will be attempting to Demystify Wireless Networking. Bring your laptop with its WiFi card ready to increase the confusion – the more the merrier! Check their website, stpc.org, for directions to the new location.

Nick Fellner praised the Cogan Fairs as places to pick up printer ink supplies at reasonable prices, and Charlie Scott mentioned that the Wall Street Journal had said ink cartridge refilling and resale is now becoming a growing industry.

Ed Congleton then showed us Novices quite a number of Windows’ Hidden Features, and very interesting they were. Trouble: nearly all apply to XP only. First was the Calculator. Under XP you have the option of making it a Scientific version, with features like direct display of values in Hex, Octal, or Binary. He showed us that one million is F4240 Hex, but there were so many digits in the Binary equivalent that your reporter’s pen was in danger and he had to avoid copying it down. Also a new Disk Management option allows you to tailor the system in a number of ways, including reassigning drive letters.

Yes, Virginia (and Andy), there is a DOS in XP, but you have to Run CMD to use it, as they have taken it off the regular Start/Programs tree.

Among things which do work with at least some earlier

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Windows versions, Ed showed us 'ping'. This can be used to check availability of any website, or part of your network, if you type 'ping' followed either by the web address, or the URL. 'ping www.cnn.com' did not work, nor did 'ping 192.168.1.1' because his laptop machine was running solo – the Internet connection was broken or turned off outside our control – but the technique was shown. Also 'ipconfig /all' shows network component details. 'tracert /?', or indeed just 'tracert', will tell you how to use tracert to trace the route by which you are connected across the Internet to a remote site. 'route' will also tell you much more than you ever wanted to know about this similar command.

After that short interlude to keep the rest of us happy, Ed returned to XP-only items. 'eudcedit' is a Private Character Editor, which allows you to add your own characters to the standard set. Run 'dfrg.msc' to invoke an internal disk defragmenter, or 'fsmgmt.msc' to show shared folders, sessions and open files, or 'perfmon.msc' for a Performance Monitor with a fascinating graphical display of resource usage, or 'clipbrd' (or was it 'clipbrd.msc?') to show the clipboard contents. A worthy block of research, Ed; many thanks.

Bill Patton headed the Q&A session and reminded us of a useful trick revealed at last month's meeting: to stop continual bad boot-ups because of slow hard disks, hold the reboot button down for about 3 seconds to let them get up to speed before the boot process cuts in.

Q: Is XP SP2 a Good Thing, or not?

A: XP boots and closes down more slowly because of the extra security – say about 5 or 10 seconds. SP2 does conflict with some programs; a list is available.

Q: Will SP2 be a requirement before loading later updates?

A: Probably.

Q: My XP system shows a delay between the keyboard and the screen which does not occur with 98SE.

A: May be a graphics problem. Also check Notepad against Word, say, to see if there is any difference in the effect.

Q: My Roxio CD Creator says it has burned a CD, but a check claims it is still blank. Dell sent instructions to uninstall the IDE controller and let the system reinstall if on re-boot. This solves it, but I have to do this every time I burn a new disk.

A: XP includes its own CD Burner. Or try Nero. Or try the "Classic" option with Roxio.

More comments and discussion, some of tis lost, sadly. Lynn Bloom

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mentioned an article called "Browser Beware" in the September/October issue of "Ancestry" magazine. [Ed.Note: !!!] A questioner was also told that 98SE is more stable than ME.

It was then time for us to attack the goodies provided by Bill Obermuller. Plenty for all – many thanks, Bill. And finally it was time for the Editor to tell us how he does what he does with only a plain word processor.

This was supposed to be a demonstration of three ways: Word, WordPerfect, and Open Office – but there were some problems. Basically, if you define the paper as 5.5"x8.5", Portrait (just half the regular 8.5"x11" sheet size when turned 90 degrees) and at printing say the pages are to be 8.5"x11" Landscape, and that the output is to be a booklet, or brochure (or whatever your program calls it) all the page sorting is made for you. The printing was not demonstrated, but the page setup was.

Microsoft Word came first. File / Page Setup shows four options, of which only the first two are used. At Margins, first set 'Mirror Margins', then set the margins to 0.25", except for the Outside which was made 0.45". At 'Paper Size' alter the dimensions and flag 'Portrait'. Then you can start typing.

To make the front cover more interesting, a Text Box was Inserted and set to 4.5"x7.5" to fill the page. A border was set by placing the cursor on the border line and right-clicking, then selecting 'Format Text Box'. On the first option, 'Colors and Lines', you can select the style of border and the background color inside the box (but not for the Voice!) The title and the other stuff was copied in from a file (to save time) and reformatted to look good. But it then became almost impossible to get a new page to be added below this one, because it did not seem possible to get the cursor to move past the box. All attempts moved the existing page down, so finally two pages were added, the text box cut and pasted back into the new first page!

Page numbering was also tricky. Use the fourth option of Page Setup to control the header, and View / Header and Footer to lay out the content. But it seemed almost impossible to stop the header content appearing on all the pages. If this program were used, the Editor would probably just hard-write the page headings as needed. .

For the back page, two Text Boxes are used. In each, after the border had been set, the cursor was moved inside and Format / Text Direction allows vertical typing to be done. Pictures, though, have to be turned with a graphics utility and saved that way first.

Then WordPerfect. Here there were some strange troubles which cut the demonstration short. First, you can go to File / Page Setup, or to Format / Page / Page Setup to control the paper size and

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margins. Instead of 'Mirror', the option 'Alternating' is used on the margins/layout option. But a simple cursor move allowed the user to drop below the box on Page 1, so extra pages were added properly. But. . . None of this formatting could be done unless a printer had been defined, and apparently the wrong one was picked, as the closest to the page edge the margins could be set was 3" from the outside edge and 2.75" from the bottom! There was not time to finish, so we moved on.

The program actually used, OpenOffice, is available for free from [openoffice.org](http://openoffice.org), provided you can handle a 65MB download! But it does provide several of the regular office features, as described in the Voice for February 2003. There is a drawing program, a spreadsheet and a presentation program. As far as Microsoft is concerned, the Writer can read and write Word files, though there is often some confusion in the translation, and the Spreadsheet can use Excel files.

The first thing to do is to define the Styles to be used. There are two: 'Covers' has no header, while 'Body' does. Format / Styles / Catalog, select 'Page Styles' in the top window and press 'New'. On the first option, Organizer, name the output 'Cover' and the next page format to be 'Cover' also (you don't want an automatic shift to another format. . .) Under the Page option you set the dimensions, the Page Layout as 'mirrored', and save it. Make another style called 'Body' with everything the same except that under the option 'Header' you set Header On and decide its size, spacing, and whether you want the same left as right. You can leave the option for Automatic height setting on – it is the default.

Now you open the document with the Style 'Covers' selected. Open a new page, press Format / Stylist, select page styles and double-click 'Covers'. Here you insert a Frame, not a Text Box, but you can give it borders and size it in the same way. When you have filled the first two pages, page numbering is to start, so you end the second page with Insert / Manual Break, select Page Break, and name the new style as 'Body'. In the header space you can type and format the heading. For page numbering use Insert / Fields and select Page Number. For the last page, again, two frames were defined, and while they could still be resized a right-click allows the choice of 'Frame' to format it, within which, on the option 'Options' the box 'Text direction' can be set to Vertical.

Time ran out. There was no raffle, sadly, so we stacked the chairs and left. At least it was a clear night and not too sticky. . .

## To Upgrade or Not to Upgrade!

By **Timothy Everingham**, TUGNET

*teveringham@acm.org*

*Copied from the website of The Users Group  
Network of Southern California*

To upgrade or not to upgrade, that is the question. Whether it is nobler to upgrade the computer you have, or to put aside the invested fortune of your current computer and get a new one? Or yet do you even need to put your cash into computer hardware? Even Shakespeare didn't have to deal with these questions, which in recent years have become even more complicated to answer.

Where you should start is by determining what your present and future needs and wants are going to be. Don't try to project over five years. I am not talking about what hardware you may drool over, but what you will want of need to do with your computer. Will it be word processing; web surfing; email; burning CDs and DVDs; database or list management; software development; photo, graphics, video editing and creation; or something else? Then you look at the application software that will accomplish those tasks. Also look at how long will your current application software and operating system(s) be supported by the manufacturer (Windows 98 will no longer have support and patches available after December 31, 2003). Also, if you have software that is known to be troublesome, like Windows ME, the need or desire to upgrade it should be considered. Then you look at the system requirements to run these applications: hardware, operating system, and other supporting software (software that is required to be installed on your system in order for your application to run).

Remember that the companies want to sell you the software or hardware, resulting in their minimum software requirements listed being as low as possible and maybe not reflecting real world conditions. If you have a system that is exactly listed as the minimum system required, consider that this product will run extremely slowly and crash at times. Some manufacturers list both minimum and recommended system requirements, and you do not want to be too far

below the recommended requirements. Also some system requirements listed do not change the RAM requirements for different operating systems. They list as minimum RAM the one for the oldest operating system. A program may run on Windows 95, 98, 98 SE, ME, 2000 and XP; but the amount of RAM needed in reality is more for Windows 98, 98 SE and ME than Windows 95, and more for Windows 2000 and XP than Windows 98, 98 SE and ME.

There are some general guidelines. If you have a Pentium II computer, AMD equivalent, or older, and are doing anything else than word processing, simple web surfing and e-mail you are looking at having too many things needed to upgrade for it to be worthwhile. With Macintosh or notebook computers upgrade options are more limited than desktop PCs, so unless it is fairly new you should be looking at getting a new computer. Also you have to look at how many of your computer's components are close to or past their expected lifetimes. If your computer's components are five years old or older, your computer is living on borrowed time. Where the upgrade option looks better is with Pentium 3-, Pentium 4- or Athlon-based desktop computers. However, software activation has made this more complicated. With activation the software takes a snapshot of your computer's hardware configuration. If you try to run it after doing too many upgrades the software decides that it is not the same computer, violating the software license and shutting itself down. You then have to go to the software manufacturer and try to convince them that the computer you upgraded is not a new computer. The most famous of the programs that includes this feature is Windows XP, but there are a growing number of application software packages that have this feature too.

Of course, this has bred a lot of fear, uncertainty and doubt (FUD) about upgrading computers, which the people who sell new computers are happy to take advantage of. If you do a combination motherboard (main circuit board) and processor replacement, activation could be a problem for you.

If your current computer fits your system's requirements or your expected needs and wants, congratulations; you are done without having to spend any money.

However, if you still are considering upgrading, the next thing you want to do is get out your motherboard manual (it may be contained in the computer manual). It will tell you what components can be installed on it. If you can't find your manual, there is likely to be a PDF of it on the manufacturer's website. While you are there check to see if there are any BIOS updates available that may give the motherboard new features that you may need. If the motherboard does not support the processor, type, speed, or amount of RAM, or the type of plug-in card (AGP, PCI, EISA, ISA) you want to install, you will have to install a new motherboard that will. For drive (IDE, ATA,

SATA, SCSI), IEEE 1394 (Firewire), and USB interfaces you can get plug-in cards instead of getting a new motherboard.

Upgrading your RAM is probably the thing that can be most effective in putting off the need to buy a new computer. The others would be a new video card and a new hard drive.

Installing a CD or DVD R/RW drive is also a good option in order to back-up things on your hard drives and being able to take data and media files that you use infrequently off your drives.

Don't forget to calculate your power requirements and have the case be able to fit the motherboard. After you make up a list of your proposed upgrade parts, add up the cost of them. Then compare this cost to what the cost of a similar system to your upgraded one would be. If you are doing a lot of upgrading you will find that the totally new computer will be close to, or cost less than, the cost of upgrading (there is a discount for buying an entirely new computer rather than just the parts of one). If you find yourself in this position you should lean toward buying a new computer. With this type of consideration you should also be looking at how you would transfer data and applications from your old computer to your new one (remember software activation issues).

With AMD releasing their Athlon 64-bit desktop processors, one of the issues in upgrading or buying new computer is "Will I need a 64-bit processor?" For most people the answer is not until the later part of this decade. To get the most out of a 64-bit processor you need 64-bit applications running on top of a 64-bit operating system. Of course, if you have a Mac G5 system running Panther (Mac OS 10.3) and some of the recent versions of the high-level Apple content creation applications you are already there, but for the PC world the only 64-bit applications programs now are very high-level server-based or scientific applications.

There is 64-bit Linux, but the Windows XP version is still in beta and won't be out until spring 2004. There will be 64-bit versions of some games in 2004, but do not look until 2005 for a significant amount of 64-bit software for Windows XP. Because there will be a lot of 32-bit computers around for a while there should be plenty of 32-bit software. The 64-bit Athlons and what rumors say Intel is developing as a 64-bit desktop processor will be able to run 32-bit applications well, which should also keep the 32-bit software market healthy for quite a while. So, unless you are high-level gamer, run high-level scientific or content creation applications, or run Macs, you should wait on getting a 64-bit-processor computer.

Making the decision on whether to upgrade your current computer or buy a new computer has become more complex than it was a few years ago. A systematic step-by-step approach is appropriate. First determine your needs, then what will support filling those needs, and then weigh the costs of upgrading or buying new.

## **The Voice of FCUG – Page 19**

May the wisdom of the Great Elizabethan Bard be upon you, resulting in a fruitful bounty of computer buying.

*Timothy Everingham is CEO of Timothy Everingham Consulting in Azusa, California. He is also Vice Chair of the Los Angeles Chapter of ACM SIGGRAPH, the largest chapter of the Association for Computing Machinery's (ACM) Special Interest Group on Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques and one of Southern California's significant professional organizations within the entertainment and media industries. He is also on the Management Information Systems Program Advisory Board of California State University, Fullerton; which he also graduated from with honors with the double majors of Management Information Systems and Accounting. In addition he is the Vice President of the Windows Media Users Group of Los Angeles. He is also part-time press in the areas of high technology, computers, video, audio and entertainment /media and has had articles published throughout the United States and Canada, plus Australia, England & Japan. He is a member of TUGNET. Further information can be found at <http://home.earthlink.net/~everingham>*

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### **25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party!**

**When: Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2004.**

**Where: Laurel Club, Norwalk (as before)**

**Cocktails . . . Dinner . . . Programmers**

**Mark your diary now!**

## **Oh FUD, where do I want to go today?**

**By Bob Franklin**

*Copied from the August 2004 issue of the Red River Monitor, the journal of  
the*

*North-West Louisiana Personal Computer User Group, Inc.*

FUD was defined by Gene Amdahl after he left IBM to found his own company” “FUD is the Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt that IBM sales people instill in the minds of potential customers who might be considering [Amdahl] products.” Now that we know that FUD stands for “Fear, Uncertainty and Doubt”, have you been a victim of FUD? Well, I certainly was. Back in the early 90s IBM introduced the OS2 operating system to compete with Microsoft Windows. IBM presented a demonstration of the OS2 operating system to our user group at a general meeting. I could clearly see that OS2 was better than Windows. [Ed.Note: 3.0 in those days, probably.], but as a new user, fear, uncertainty and doubt took hold and I stuck with Windows, as did most users. OS2 is now history because of the FUD tactic.

More than a decade later the FUD tactic is still at work in the software industry. Microsoft is now using the FUD tactic to sway users from Linux. Folks, you have nothing to **fear** in Linux. Linux as a desktop operating system is just as easy to use as Windows, not to say it's the same. All major distributions of Linux have a graphical user interface that allows you to do everything with a mouse. As far as installing Linux, I find many distributions to be easier than Windows to install. Oh, I know, chances are most of you have never installed Windows. You had no choice; it came pre-installed. This is due to the FUD tactic playing on the computer manufacturers.

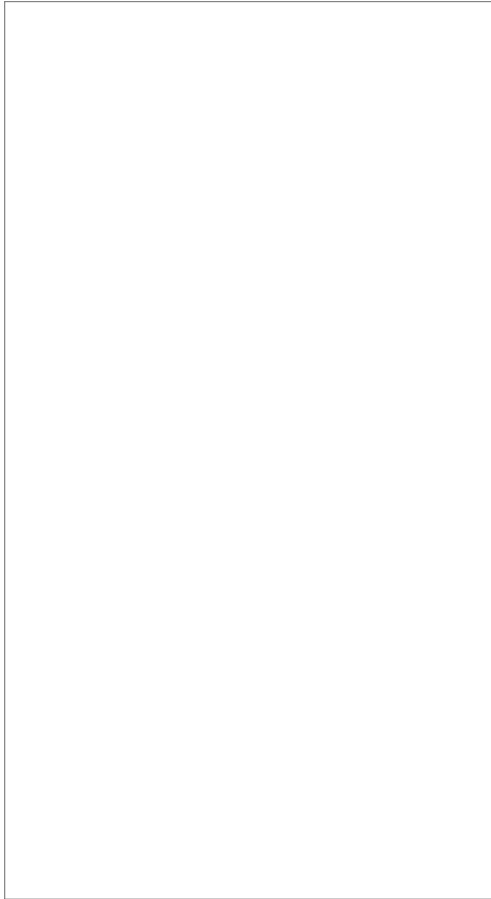
Choice, that's where Linux can shine. I ran a search from [www.linux.org](http://www.linux.org) and found 57 Linux distributions in English that run on the Intel platform that re currently free to download and use on any number of machines with no **fear** of copyright laws. Some require a registration fee to obtain support, but here again you have a choice. There is no **uncertainty** in Linux; one distribution may fade away only to have another take its place. Linux is not going to die – it's here to stay.

Linux benefits from **doubt** since Linux and open source programmers don't simple say “well, this works but so far we haven't looked at other ways.” Now if Linux programmers have doubt that there could be a better way, you too should have doubt that it is a better operating system than Microsoft Windows. . .

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Let me make it perfectly clear that I'm not here to bash Microsoft. I use Windows every day, but am not letting the FUD tactic scare me away from Linux as it did with OS2. In my opinion, Microsoft has more fear, uncertainty and doubts of Linux than we, the users, do. Oh FUD, where do I want to go today? The answer is simple: download a new distribution of Linux, with no Fear, Uncertainty, or Doubts!

--oOo--



## **Using WordArt in MS Word**

**by Carolyn Franklin**

*Excerpted from the August 2004 issue of the Red River Monitor, the journal of the North-West Louisiana Personal Computer User Group, Inc.*

WordArt is a feature in MS Word that allows you to treat text as a graphic. I use it to create and add special effects to text I use as headings in documents, flyers, etc.

You may use the samples already in WordArt, or you can have fun changing the font used as the default.. This will change the appearance of your WordArt.

To create WordArt, follow these general steps (These are the steps for Word 2002; they may be different if you use another version):

1. Open a blank page in Word; name and SAVE the file.
2. Select the WordArt object (it looks like an A slanted to the right), or go to Insert / Picture and click on WordArt. The WordArt toolbar should appear.
3. Select (click on) a WordArt style you like, and click OK.
4. WordArt displays the Edit WordArt Text dialog box.
5. Use the Font pull-down list to select a font to use.
6. Change the font size or color, as desired.
7. Use Bold, or Italics, as desired.
8. Type in your text.
9. Click on OK. WordArt places your WordArt object into your document. SAVE.
10. You may use the Align feature (located right of the Bold/Italic/Underline feature) to change the alignment of your text (left, right, or center). You may move it up or down in the page by placing your cursor at the end of the WordArt, and use Backspace to move up and Enter to move down. SAVE.

At this point it is very easy to delete your WordArt. If this should happen, just do a Control-Z (undo) to get it back.

Remember that if you change the font, all of the text in your WordArt will use that font. This means that you do not have as many options as you do in Word itself, where you can change the font and color in each individual character.

If you do not like what you have created, right-click on your WordArt, left-click on format WordArt. You may then change the color, size, etc.

It is a fun thing and you can impress your kids and grand-kids.

You may also want to go to Page Setup and change the top

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margin to 0.30. This will place your WordArt at the top of your page if you are creating a flyer, letterhead, or poster.

Try it. Make yourself a letterhead.

. . . .

Till next time. . . . Carolyn

*Carolf@sport.rr.com*

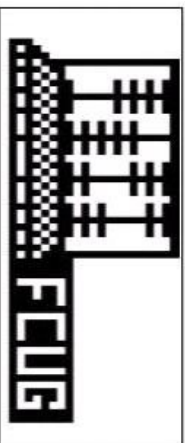
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**THE VOICE OF FCUG**

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