



The Voice
of
FCZIG

August 2005
Volume 26 No. 3

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Meeting 7.30 pm 2nd 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.

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

Ed Congleton, Treasurer: 203-966-4854,
251 Weed Street, New Canaan, CT. 06840

To submit articles or letters for The Voice send an e-mail message to wdhart@attglobal.net, 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

Let's **start** those cards and letters coming, folks!

The Editor's Desk

A major catastrophe has colored this month's Voice: A day or so before it was due to go to the printer, the hard disk, on which it and all back copies have been stored for some time now, failed. Recovery steps are under way, but at the time of writing this, no news yet. So this issue has been rushed together to fill the gap and at least get the basic information of next month's schedule out to the members.

I had even thrown out my notes from the last meeting, as I had written the copy for the Voice already, so . . .

Still, there is hope that, in a week or two, I will be getting my disk back, as it is the controller which broke, not the platters which were damaged. At least, I hope so! If that works out, stand by for a flood of meeting notes and other horrors.

---ooOoo---

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Program for 5th October 2004

Call to order.Fearless Leader – Dick Booth 7:30

Novice topic: . . Making PDF Files – Ed Congleton7:40
Didn't know it was so simple. . .

Q and A: Moderator – Pete Fuller.8:00
Yes, yes – this time for real!

Epicurean Break . . Chef du Soir – Stan Stanziale 8:20

Main topic: Steam Radio Magix – Walt Graham. 8:30

Replay Radio is an Internet Radio Recorder for the PC, with "TIVO-like" functions. Magix Audio Cleaning Lab is a set of tools for clearing problems like tape hiss, record scratches, etc. – and Version 10 can remove short-duration noises like coughing, whistling and clapping without audibly influencing the result. Both offer real value, offer downloadable demo versions and sell for about \$30.

(Possibly followed by a raffle)

Adjournment. 10:00

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 Lynn Bloom (lennyb2@optonline.net, or 203-380-9306). She can tell you who lives near you, or might pass by on their way.

THE WAY WE WERE – AUGUST 1985

PRESIDENT: Robert Jackson

VICE PRESIDENT: Herman Parks

SECRETARY: Patricia Brinson

TREASURER: Aaron Bisberg

EDITOR: Alan Abrahamson

TBBS SYSTEM: 203/.....

This Newsletter printed by Technical Reproductions Inc. Norwalk CT.

Minutes of May 7, 1985 Meeting – Patricia Brinson

“... the bulletin board is getting calls from all over the country. The club has obtained 40 disks for IBM compatibles which are in the public domain. The 4P from Radio Shack is now being advertised for about \$530. The slate of officers was presented ... and nominations were requested from the floor. Since none were forthcoming the slate remains as it was presented.” [Ed.Note: Sound familiar?]

Minutes of June 4, 1985 Meeting – Patricia Brinson

“Dick Carricato moved that slate of officers be accepted ... the motion was passed unanimously. ... Bob Jackson asked for a volunteer to help Laura Epstein of the Norwalk Senior Citizens Service ... get started using her Model I. Alan Abrahamson quickly jumped at the task. (She couldn't get better help!) ... After a long discussion on how many copies of software can legally be covered by one purchase we concluded that there was no definitive legal answer as yet on this issue. ... John Krause's presentation on random access files brought on great discussion. His 6 page packet for each of us kept the discussion from becoming random, but the use of RSET stirred up a number of our members.”

CompuServe's Model 100/200 board – George Saladino. Two pages.

Competition Corner (Part Two) – Robert A. Fowkes. Answers to last month's three questions – and three new ones. Four pages.

First Annual F.C.U.G. Auction – John Krause. Three pages of rules, etc.

Roger's Ramblings # 5 – Roger Giler. Three pages on “The Old SHELL Game.”

Ask Alan – Alan Abrahamson. Q and full A on word wrap on the TBBS board.

MS-DOS Library. Half a page of rules on how to obtain disks.

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New Voice Format – Alan Abrahamson.

“... Although this new format decreases the content ... by 13%, the cash savings of 40% seem to more than outweigh the loss.”

The President's Page.

Outline of the next meeting:

“1. Dick Carricato to talk about FCUG's new Bulletin Board ... 2. Ed Congleton to get graphic ... FCUG Auction is a-coming in September.”

--ooOoo--

Current Hoaxes and Urban Legends

Ira Wilsker

This article is brought to you by the Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG). There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context, with proper credit given to the author. Thanks are also due to SYDTRUG, the Sydney TRS80-MSDOS Users' Group.

Some of us find them cute, entertaining, exciting and fun, while others of us find them embarrassing, irritating and a waste of time. Many forward them, believing that they are doing good, or warning of harm, or forward them because they came from an allegedly reliable source. A few are so convinced of their truth that I am explicitly requested to put them in this column, or announce them on my radio and TV show. What I am referring to are the hoaxes and urban legends currently circulating on the Internet that many of us seem to love to send on to everyone in our e-mail address books. Many of these hoaxes and urban legends have a grain of truth or logic in them, while many others are totally lacking any basis in fact – yet many of us still enjoy forwarding them without a second thought.

In order to avoid embarrassment I strongly recommend that everybody tempted to forward such e-mails should check out their validity before another mass send to all we know. There are several excellent websites that compile information on these e-mails, and a quick check can save us from the embarrassment of sending out a hoax, and preserve our personal credibility. If we find that some interesting e-mail is indeed true, we should still consider not sending it to everyone, as many of our intended recipients may not find our interests to their liking, and may even be offended that we consumed their valuable bandwidth and time. Typically, when I receive one of these from an acquaintance, if I am not already familiar with it I check it out; if it is true (a minority of the time) I may choose to selectively forward it to those that I

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think may be interested in the topic, but I never send it to everybody in my address book. If it is false I usually reply back to the sender that it is indeed false, and include a link documenting the falsehood. Some e-mailers are so humiliated that I caught them in an inaccuracy that they reply in anger, despite the incontrovertible fact that it was they who had send the bogus story.

To verify the authenticity or falsehood of the oft-forwarded e-mails, I use two primary, and several secondary, resources. Primarily I use the excellent and comprehensive urban legends resource of Snopes, at www.snopes.com. Well organized in an easy-to-navigate menu format, along with a competent search engine, Snopes is an excellent choice to check out the validity of questionable e-mails.

My other primary resource for checking the legitimacy of potential hoax e-mails is www.urbanlegends.about.com. This site is frequently updated with the latest hoaxes in circulation, and can reliably document their validity.

A common topic of these questionable e-mails is virus warnings. For this reason most of the major antivirus software publishers also compile lists of hoaxes, mostly virus-related, on their websites. I utilize these sites as secondary resources. It is also notable that old hoaxes and virus warnings never seem to die out, and periodically reappear.

One that has been documented to be in circulation for over six years, but is again currently making the rounds in mass e-mailings is the “It takes guts to say Jesus” virus hoax. This e-mail, in several iterations, warns that according to CNN, AOL, McAfee and other reputable resources, there is an e-mail circulating with a virus that can not be detected by contemporary antivirus software, and that is you open the e-mail, your computer will be effectively destroyed. Every one of the hoax and antivirus websites list this as a hoax, yet countless copies are being forwarded by well-intentioned people trying to warn their acquaintances. Some of the variations even go on to state that, while it may be false, it is so important that it is being forwarded anyway.

Another similar e-mail warning that does have some validity is the one that says “I’ve Got Your E-mail on My Account.” It goes on to warn that someone is using “your” e-mail account to spread a virus, and I have received ten copies of it, all with your e-mail address and ISP in the header. The e-mail then says, “I have copied all the mail text in the windows text-editor for you & zipped them. Make sure that this mails (sic) don't come in my mail-box again.” Attached to this dire warning is a file, commonly named “your_text.zip”. If opened, the file will infest your computer with the Sober.N worm.

If it infects your computer, Sober.N will terminate the antivirus and firewall software on your computer, rendering it vulnerable to further attack,

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and then forward itself to everyone in your address book! This Sober.N warning is the exception to the rule that most warnings of this type are bogus.

Another dire warning, of which I am currently receiving multiple copies, is the warning that a directory of cell phone numbers is being compiled to enable telemarketers to call us on our cell phones, consuming our valuable supply of limited minutes. This hoax, which is now circulating for the second time, is listed by several sites as one of the top hoaxes in circulation. The grain of truth in this is that most cell phone carriers are instituting a “411” directory service of cell phone numbers; but this list will emphatically not be for sale to telemarketers.

To see the latest hoaxes in circulation, as well as the ones in widest distribution, check out the hoax and urban legend websites, or the website of your favorite antivirus software. You may find some of the hoaxes actually quite entertaining, and wonder how intelligent people could fall for such silly stories.

---oOo---

WEBSITES:

<http://www.snopes.com>

<http://urbanlegends.about.com>

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Questions and Answers

Chuck Davis

From the January 2005 issue of “Bits, PCs and Macs”, the journal of the Sun City Anthem Computer Club of Henderson, NV

Question: My hard drive crashed and I've installed a new one. I don't have the original Windows XP disk. Can I borrow another?

Answer:

First of all, in the future protect your software CDs as you would any other asset.

If you can find your Product Key, you may borrow a like version. Product keys are bound to the specific type and language of CD/license. For example, if your original Windows was installed by the computer manufacturer, you must obtain a like CD. If you originally had Windows XP Pro, the one that you borrow must be the same. If XP Home, the one you borrow must be the same.

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If your Windows was included with the computer when you purchased it, you must contact the manufacturer for a disk replacement. If you had a retail version not originally installed by your computer's manufacturer, you may be able to replace your disk by visiting this web site and reading the instructions:

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=KB;en-us;326246>

Good luck!

Question: I have a couple of hundred entries in my Outlook 2003 Contacts. When I am called to one of their places I go to Mapquest to find the location. Is there an easier way?

Answer:

When connected to the Internet, open Office Outlook, then Contacts. Double click on the contact. In the dialog box that opens, click the Display Map of Address icon.

Question: On my Windows XP computer I have installed Service Pack 2, or at least I think I did. How can I be sure?

Answer:

Right click on the My Computer icon on the desktop. Choose Properties from the list that opens.

Question: Is there any way to alphabetize the All Programs start menu?

Answer:

Start and choose All Programs. In the sub-menu right click on any entry and choose Sort by Name.

Question: I have finally bought a USB Flash drive to back up my important data. After copying files to it, can I simply remove it without damaging the USB port?

Answer:

Yes – BUT! At the hardware level, USB is designed to enable users to plug and unplug with the system running. However, if you are transferring a large file, there is a possibility data may be left hanging. For that reason, there is a “Safely Remove Hardware” icon in the System Tray. Click the icon and click the message that reads: “Safely remove USB Mass Storage Device—Drive(G:).” (Your drive designation may differ.) In practice I use Windows Explorer to transfer data to my small USB Flash disk. When the transfer is complete, I simply unplug. Just keep in mind that the USB device is slower than a transfer between two internal hard drives.

Question: I use MS Word 2003. I would like to know how to make the “2”

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in $e=mc^2$ to be like the numbering in a footnote. Is there a way?

Answer:

There are two ways:

1. Keyboard shortcut:
Select only the “2”
Ctrl+Shift+=
The result: $e=mc^2$ (Also MS Publisher)
2. Otherwise, select only the “2” and choose Font from the Format drop-down menu. Check Superscript and OK: $e=mc^2$

Question: I am using Publisher 2003 to print some flyers. I have tried everything in an attempt to print to the edge of the page. I always get white space around the edges. I've tried preferences, calibrating the printer, changing margins in the Publisher document – nothing has worked.

Answer:

Most printers today will not support printing to the edge of the paper. If your printer doesn't support printing to the edge, you will find your document “cut off” at the limit of the printer's capability.

To determine the printable margins and adjust your publication accordingly, use Wordpad to find your printer's margin:

1. Start – All Programs – Accessories – Wordpad.
2. In Wordpad, choose Page Setup from the File drop-down menu.
3. Click on the Printer button and select your printer. Click OK.
4. Enter '0' for all four margin settings. The margin settings will revert to the measurements that your selected printer is limited to.
5. Use these measurements in Publisher. Choose Layout Guides in the Arrange drop=down menu.

CAUTION: Some printer drivers don't accurately report the margins! If you found the above method ineffective you can find an additional technique here:

http://www.mvps.org/the_nerd/Publisher/horidiag.htm

Question: Since my granddaughter was here over the holidays, whenever I delete messages in Outlook 2003 they do not show up in the Deleted Items folder. Where do they go?

Answer:

Apparently she didn't want you to see some of the messages she received. This seems to be a thing passed around the schools. It's like a lot of other unfounded beliefs that are passed around by youngsters. Never fear; click on your Delete Items folder. Then choose Arrange By on the View drop-down menu, the Current View (near the bottom) and click on Messages.

Please don't tell her that I am the one who told you this. . .

Question: I am still running Windows 98. I want to install MS Word. Are there any versions that won't work?

Answer:

You can install any version up to and including Word 2002. You may use the version that is included in MS Works Suite 2004. If you have Windows 98 Second Edition, you can use the version that is included in MS Works Suite 2005.

Question: I read about add-ins that extend the function of the new Firefox browser that I have installed. Is there a maximum that I can install?

Answer:

I personally have installed no extensions. However, on the MozillaZine forum, a question similar to yours was asked. One person listed 33 extensions that had been installed, by name and function. There were a few that piqued my interest just enough that I may try them. Further down the discussion thread, another individual claimed 56!

What I am getting around to is that I don't know of a maximum. Certainly, with each one being added, there may be some conflicts.

If you would like to join the discussion forum, you can register here:

<http://forums.mozillazine.org/>

Question: I am working on some simplistic building sketches in Publisher and would like to use a font that is like that seen on blueprints. Do you know of any?

Answer:

I have installed and used a free font called Architext from this web site:

<http://www.1001freefonts.com/fonts/afonts7.htm>

Question: I have just switched from Outlook Express and started using MS Office Outlook 2003. Is there any way to have the attached .jpg and .gif images open automatically?

Answer:

Outlook does not display attached images inline. Outlook is a business application, while Outlook Express is targeted toward consumers. Business administrators consider inline display a security issue.

Outlook will show images inline in HTML mail such as in my Anthem Compendium:

<http://www.anthemwebs.com/communitynews.htm#Previous issues>

Question: Using AdAware, I keep removing dozens of adware and malware programs each week. How do I prevent their installation?

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Answer:

It all boils down to money. All business firms need to pay their bills and their employees along with profits for the investors/owners. The freeware and shareware program producers are no different. Therefore, many adware and malware programs are initially installed along with those “free” programs that you download from the Internet. In fact, the makers of Spybot Search & Destroy, a “free” adware removal program, have the following warning on their web site:

“Some software that uses spy- or ad-ware include in their license agreement a general prohibition against modifying the software, or the prohibition against use of the software without those 'bots'. Please read your license agreements first!

“And remember: the best way to remove ads is to pay the shareware fee!”

The last paragraph quoted above caused me to pause a moment. Dollars again enter into the question.

Question: What is the average number of malware programs you find and remove with AdAware?

Answer:

About 65. The range is from 0 to 518!

---ooOoo---

Want a quick source for free truetype fonts? Take a look at <http://www.atomicfonts.com>. The website claims over 25 thousand free fonts, including many of the regular and well-known ones.

Stealthsurfer II

Alexander Censor, M.S. (The Computer Doctor)



*A Feature Article about a portable secure browser in a keychain drive
from the Fallbrook PC Users Group website*

If you have, as most of us do, a spare USB port, surf the Web a lot, and have privacy or portability needs, check this out.

As most of you know, or should, when you surf the Web there are all sorts of records and traces of “who went where and when” -- both within your own computer in the form of cookies, history records, cached (stored copies) of pages you've visited, etc. And on the other end – out on the Web sites and on the receiving end of emails I send I'm also potentially at least identifiable by the IP address associated with my computer. And if you've been paying any attention at all, you're getting tired of having your computer infiltrated with spyware.

Stealthsurfer's main sales pitch might seem to be at least partly set to a shady sort of region: those surfing the Web at work and not wanting the boss to know where they've been, etc. But if you bear with me I'll explain why, even if you don't care if the whole world knows your Web travel habits, you might still like this device.

Essentially, Stealthsurfer is a jump-drive (keychain drive) that includes a Web browser (Firefox 1.0.4). The main security feature of Stealthsurfer is simply that once you unplug it from the computer everything in it is gone from the computer and not accessible by anyone, whether they're a legitimate user of that computer, or a hack in from the Internet, other than yourself. But the security features go beyond that. For starters, the Firefox browser is surely more secure than Internet Explorer – safer from spyware, etc. -- even if that's partly because there are fewer people using it and the spyware and virus makers haven't turned their attention to it.

Interested in Firefox? Check out <http://www.spreadfirefox.com>.

And Stealthsurfer includes three other security guards/utilities: **Anonymizer** safeguards users' identities and Internet activities by shielding their IP, or Internet address, from hackers and online snoops. It also encrypts all exchanges of information between you and the Internet using 128-bit SSL.

technology. It gives you considerable protection against online identity theft, phishing attacks and online tracking. When used with a wireless-enabled laptop, it secures all data sent over a wireless connection while surfing at home, at work, or at the local coffee shop. You can activate it by clicking a single button and it doesn't slow your Internet connection. Thunderbird is a portable email program you can use instead of Outlook, or Outlook Express (or in addition to them) to access an email account from anywhere at any time. It's arguably more secure than Outlook, or Outlook Express, and can even access some Web-based email. Then there's **Hushmail**: if you're really paranoid about email security you should understand that sending an unencrypted email is little like mailing a postcard without an envelope. Although most people will neither bother, or care, to read your postcard, anyone along the delivery route can if they really want to. Your incoming and outgoing email **can** potentially be logged, analyzed and stored by third parties. Stealthsurfer's integrated Hushmail encrypts your email – tight enough that even the CIA might have a little trouble hacking into it. The catch is that anybody to whom you send Hushmail must also be a member of the Hushmail system.

The last goodie on the Stealthsurfer disk isn't really a security tool, but I've been a big fan of it long before I tested Stealthsurfer: **Roboform** (check out <http://www.roboform.com>). Got so many different passwords now that it's a nightmare to keep track of them? With Roboform you memorize just one master password and it memorizes your passwords and logs you in automatically whenever you come to a site you need that password for. It fills out long registration and checkout forms with one click, and encrypts your passwords. It's one utility I'd sorely miss on my computer, so I was delighted to see it was already built into Stealthsurfer.

But what was that I was saying about other uses having nothing to do with security issues?

Well, for starters, having the browser stored on a USB key in hardware makes it much less likely to corrupt and give error messages. And I'm a local Fallbrook computer help/repair guy, and I often go out to others' homes and offices. If I get there and the user's browser isn't working properly, I slip in my Stealthsurfer and try getting on with my own browser. If I can get on with Stealthsurfer not only has it helped me narrow down the problem (clearly there's something configured wrong in their computer, or browser – not with their Internet connection, or their ISP) but I'm also able to get online and download patches, drivers, etc., to fix their machine. If I **can't** get on with my Stealthsurfer either, it means the problem's not in their browser and I don't waste my time or their money trying to reconfigure it, when the problem is further upstream. In short, it's a great troubleshooting and rescue tool.

Finally, if I'm visiting a friend's house and want to do some browsing I stick in Stealthsurfer and have all my familiar Favorites and Bookmarks in there without messing with my friend's settings. Last, and perhaps not least: unlike what

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too often happens when installing some new utilities and programs on your computer, Stealthsurfer doesn't touch any of your system's settings, or modify anything on your hard drive, and it cannot screw up your system.

Stealthsurfer comes in various capacities, starting at 128MB. Keep in mind that with the 128MB model you are ending up with a jump-drive with only a little storage space for porting around spare documents, etc. If your purpose is strictly to obtain its security and portability advantages, there's little reason to go for the more costly higher capacity (up to 1000MB) versions. The only difference is you can tote around more photos or other junk on the same drive. If your primary need is more portable storage you can get large-capacity plain ordinary USG key-drives for less cash than the high-capacity Stealthsurfer.

Downsides? Well, you'll have to decide if the advantages are worth the 128MB version's \$99 price tag. And I did run into a minor conflict: when I ran Anonymizer and, while it was still on, tried to access some sites, not with Stealthsurfer but with my regular Internet Explorer, there appeared to be a conflict between it and my AdSubtract popup blocker. And in general loading of pages seemed a little slower than with Internet Explorer, possibly because I had Stealthsurfer plugged into an older, slower, USB-1 port rather than a USB-2 one. Finally, Stealthsurfer will work only on Win-ME, Win-2000 and Win-XP. If you're still running Win-98, you're out of luck.

Incidentally, if you happen to own one of the older Stealthsurfer devices, the company offers an upgrade to Stealthsurfer-II for \$25.

http://stealthsurfer.biz/buy_now.html

Stealthsurfer isn't necessary for everyone, but if you either have security concerns, portability needs, or just like having a robust toolkit and a spare version of one of your core applications, it might be your cup of tea. Stealthsurfer will send you a trial version for \$10 shipping. If you send it back within 30 days they won't bill the full price to your credit card.

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Digging up Your Family Roots

Lenny Bloom



There are several programs for family tree tracing. For Macintosh, Reunion is considered the best. For PC, I prefer Family Tree 2005 which is \$100 for collector's edition, with data disks. Without the disks, which you may not need, it runs about \$50, but this week, at COMPUSA the basic Family Tree 2005 is one penny back, with a \$49.99 rebate. [Ed.Note: May not be there by the time you read this!]

Yearly subscription to Ancestry.com runs from \$50 to \$200 and they usually send you a "free" basic copy of Family Tree.

To start, you can update with data from previous versions of family tree programs or open the program to "Family View". Enter your name, birth date, etc.. Add your parents. Go to parents page, add other children, perhaps other spouses. Then you add grandparents. You try to add birth dates, marriage dates, death dates, places of death, cemeteries, social security numbers, notes of schooling and achievements. Especially important for further generations is medical information, such as hereditary heart problems. When just guessing add "?" to tentative names or just type "daughter?" or with shaky dates type "abt" for approximate. Birth order, dates and facts can be deleted or changed later on. Sometimes you will be recording multiple birth dates, not knowing which is right. The program lets you attribute or add citations, so that sources can be rechecked..

When you have filled in all that you know, print out the results and pass it on to family members. Ask them what they can correct or add. Cemeteries are very valuable for getting records of forgotten members. St. John's near Darien will search and print out your family plot records for free. Woodlawn in the Bronx charges you \$42 a page. (Their computer search showed nothing, their manual search found Lynn's uncle and two previously unknown Aunts). You sometimes find someone else in your family has already traced the family. Maybe there was a book published, such as the "Fuller Family History". All this data can be inputted into Family Tree. (But remember, even if it is in print, it can be wrong!)

In Family Tree you can "Scrapbook" photos, voice recordings and camcorder clips. You can type in family anecdotes and scan in and preserve crumbling records. From inside the program with "web search" you can go

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online. Accessing the Social Security databases (deceased only) will give you the birth, death dates and place of death (helps locate cemetery records). This information can be copied directly into the program by the "merge" button. But remember Uncle Dick may have been born Richard and there are actually several Sylvia Farringtons born in Massachusetts. As you accumulate ancestors and you can use the "index of individuals" under "views" to hop around faster. Make sure you back up data!

Once you have basic information, you can start researching U. S. Census, immigration records, marriage and property records that come with family tree or can be accessed on line. U.S. censuses are taken door-to-door every 10 years. This information is released 73 years later. Currently you can search up from the 1700's to the 1930s. For indexed records that are searchable, you can sign up with Ancestry.com or Genealogy.com (for \$49.99) . The Genealogy version is better scanned, but Ancestry.com is better indexed (I use both). The census will, at a minimum, give you the street address, names and ages of people (including servants) in the household and the breadwinners' occupation. Each census had different questions, but most of them were all hand written in scripts of variable readability.

There are many informational sites. Start with cyndislist.com, which is a well organized listing of all the genealogy sites in the world. A good, free place to start is the Mormon Church's search engine, familysearch.org. The U.S. military records are indexed on line. You will find information filled sites for most English speaking countries.

For non-English language webpages there are some translation sites. Try Google.com/language_tools or altavista.com for limited translations. Also, if you find a document in Latin-Ukrainian print off copies and hand them out to your Ukrainian speaking friends, asking them to annotate them with their translations. Of course there are professional family tree tracers. (Look for them online or in such publications as Ancestry magazine).

When you have gone as far as you can, take your family tree online to famlytreemaker.com and see if it can match up with any that others have researched. If you are uploading family trees on line make sure you put up a sanitized version, with all living person's addresses, illegitimate kids, social security numbers removed you don't want to encourage identify theft.

Okay, you have taken your generational-with-gaps tree online and hooked up on the maternal side with an old New England line. Good -- with one merge, you've just added 597 new relatives! On the paternal side you are melding with some English guy's thousands of relatives going back to Emperor Charlemagne. Great! No. Whoa. This sound too good to be true! It is too good. Some of these connections you can see aren't right. Fortunately, Family Tree has a "Prune" feature. You can remove whole branches from the tree and keep them to the side, until further evidence of their validity turns up.

When you have gotten this tree all together you may wish to publish

online. Worldfamilytree (off the familytreemaker.com site) and myfamily.com help with creating your own family tree web site. With a good web page you can set up a "contact me" feature and get more feed back from yet unknown offshoots from your ancestors. You can also set up button links from your family web page to distant cousins' pages and generally use the Internet to shake hands across the ages.

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Hey, What's Going On?

Ralph Paidock

Copied from the April 2004 issue of "Read Me", the journal of the Personal Computer Club of Toronto.

For years I have been paying an arm and a leg for software. And I have been fighting to keep my computer working. I constantly update my virus protection. I regularly defrag and clean up my hard disk.

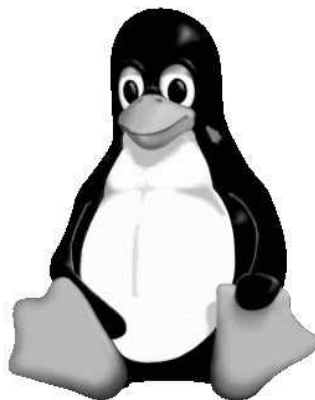
Now you're telling me that there is a system out there that is fast, stable, resistant to viruses, doesn't seem to need defragging – and is free? What's going on?

I wanted to find out. And so I tried Linux.

First of all, I found that Linux is not completely trouble-free. The screen I saw the first time I booted was totally distorted. I called SuSE Linux for help. The technician I spoke to directed me to change the screen resolution settings. As soon as I did, the screen became normal.

The Start menu is similar to Windows, so I had no trouble trying out various programs. Everything looked really cool, except that some of the font rendering (on specific programs) was not crisp. I then tried to connect to the Internet. I called Sympatico [Ed.Note: Presumably his ISP] for help. They wouldn't help me. They explained that they don't support Linux. I browsed through the manual SuSE had supplied. I changed some settings according to the instructions given. Presto! I was connected.

Web browsing is a good experience in Linux. The browser seems to be faster than Internet Explorer and has a lot of neat features, such as tabbed browsing. Plus, you can set it to block pop-ups. You can also use Ghostview



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instead of Acrobat reader. It is much faster for reading PDFs.

Printing was SLOW in Linux. I sometimes had to wait for as long as 10 minutes for a web page to start printing. And when I printed email it somehow reverted to very large fonts. I discovered that most of the problems occurred in one application (the Konqueror web browser). I installed the Mozilla browser and used it instead. The printing is OK now.

Despite the occasional glitch, I am impressed with Linux software. You get a decent Office Suite, CD burners and a Photoshop clone. There is even a program that allows you to digitalize old records and tapes. There are programs for musicians. I am not a musician; but I have been looking for a Midi editor (to alter the tune I used for background music on my web page). Lo and behold, there was a good Midi editor.

All in all, I am enjoying the Linux experience. I realize it's not fully mature, but I get the feeling that it will eventually eclipse Windows. It just seems to be inherently stable. And did I mention, free?

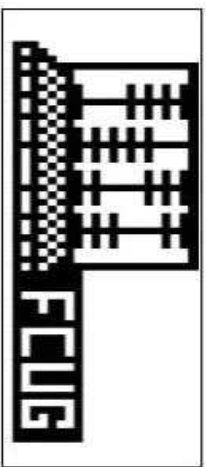
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THE VOICE OF FCUG

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