The PULP

Newsletter of the Hartford User Group Exchange

H.U.G.E.

Member of
Association of Personal Computer User Groups
APCUG

UGC

Apple User Group

October 17th General Meeting:
Anniversary Fun!!

Bob Bonato has gathered a couple dozen computer related cables(and connectors) from the past. They will be out for display, reminiscing, and identifying for any computerphiles. Come early and see what you can remember from days long ago.

East Hartford Public Library

Main St. & Central Ave., East Hartford, CT.

Q&A Session: 6PM–7:15PM

Meeting starts at: 7:15PM

Huge This Month:

October 17   **General Meeting** See above; 7:15 P.M.

November 10: Deadline for **ALL** Articles. Please upload articles to editors@huge.org, or give them to the Pulp Editor

November 21: **General Meeting** Starts at 7:15 P.M.

MEETING LOCATIONS

East Hartford Public Library
Main & Central Avenue
in the Upstairs Meeting Room

Wethersfield Public Library
500 Silas Deane Hwy.,
Wethersfield, CT

From The Editor

by Pat Teevan

After some surprisingly warm weather, it appears that Autumn has arrived and once again i've got a bumper crop of acorns. So, if any of you want to start your own personal oak grove, give me a call.

On the computing front, all the trade publications seem to be talking about Vista and the new Microsoft office. …but not all of them seem overly enthused about either.

There is still some grumbling about the stability of the release candidate version of Vista and not everyone believes that Microsoft will meet their delivery schedule–Microsoft maintains that they will.

There have also been some articles about the End-User License Agreement (EULA) for Vista. It appears that it's even more restrictive than their past licenses. Also, if Windows Genuine Advantage (WGA) decides that you don't have a properly licensed copy it goes into a "reduced functionality" mode. I see much fun in the future of Windows users.

Meanwhile, on the Office front, the big news is a major redesign of the interface that seems to remove many of the menus and replaces then

with "ribbons". Some reviewers like them, some hate them. What I find interesting, is that Microsoft has spent years telling everyone how hard it would be to retrain everyone if you try to switch to another OS, another office suite, etc. They've now created an interface so different that everyone will need to be retrained anyhow

.I guess it's not an issue as long as you're still buying their software. I'll probably wind up using both Vista and Office 12 at work, but I'll stick with Mac OS and Linux at home.

Anyone out there a beta-tester for Vista or Office 12? If so, how about writing up your impressions for the Pulp? I'm sure the members would like a first-hand account of the new software's features, bugs, etc. I know I'd like to hear what you think.

Until next month…

Happy Computing!!!

A Little Computer Quiz

by Stuart Rabinowitz

October Quiz

The trivia and minutiae of the computer related world. The answers will appear next month or you can submit an answer sheet at the General Meeting. Good Luck.

9

Something a little different this month--

12

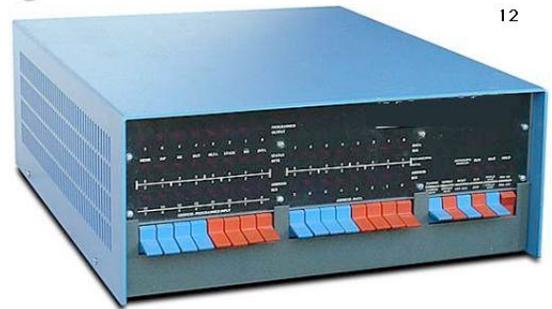Can you match the picture of the computer to the list of names? (Of course I've masked them in the photo). I do like the one with wooden sides.

e   Apple Lisa.

f   Atari Portfolio.

g   Bell & Howell

n   Exidy Sorcerer Dynasty smart-ALEC

z   IMSAI 8080

aa   NorthStar Horizon

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(Images from; Vintage-Computer.com & Oldcomputers.net)

22

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23

September Quiz Answers

1 A 1945 article in The Atlantic Monthly described a theoretical machine that allowed users to store and retrieve documents linked by association. What was that machine called?

  A It was called 'memex' for memory extender and it was one of the precursors to hypertext.

2 Who wrote the article?

  A Vannevar Bush

3 When Larry Page and Sergey Brin started Google they needed a storage device and cobbled together a bunch of disk drives. How many and what size?

  A They combined 10 4 gigabyte drives.

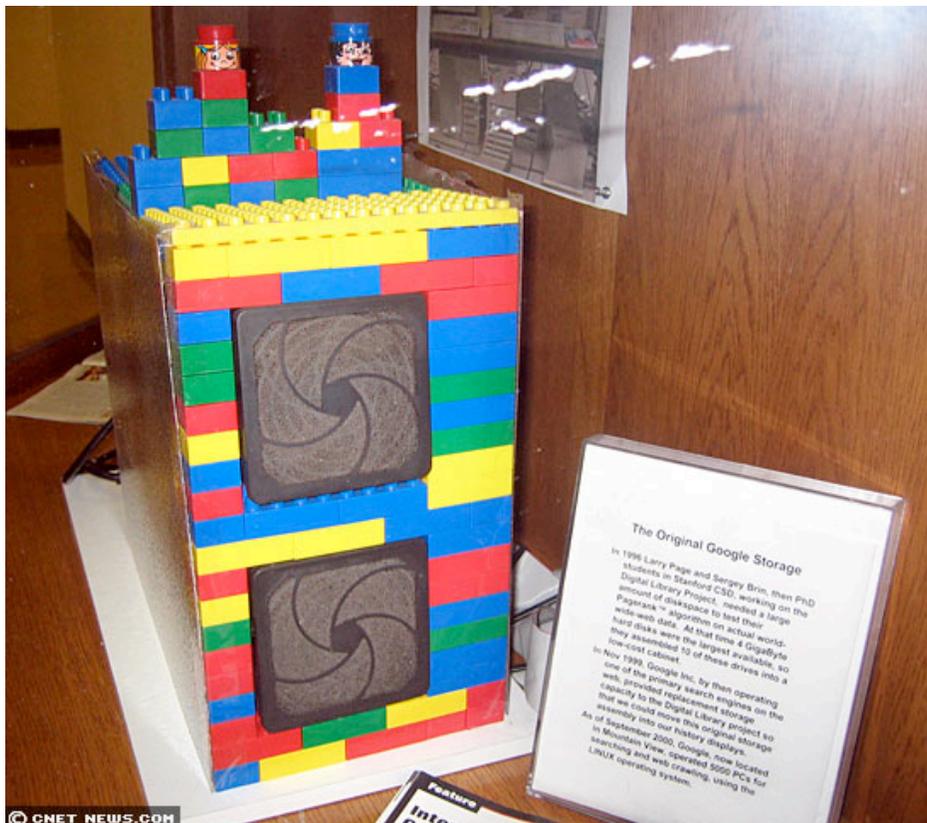4 What did they use to construct the case?

  A A collection of brightly colored Legos (red, yellow, blue, and green).

5 In what year did they start working on Google?

  A In 1996

6 What did they originally call this project (actually the software application) to search the web?

  A The original name was 'Backrub'

My Spyware

By Sandy Berger, Compu-KISS
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Everyone has computer woes…even me. Last week my office computer slowed to a crawl when accessing anything on the office network or on the Internet. It was so slow that I was anxious to begin troubleshooting.

Since we had recently moved to a new office, the first suspect was the network cabling. I replaced cables on both ends and used my laptop to confirm that the network was fine. It was obvious that something in my computer was the problem. So the first order of business was to scan for viruses. Since I always use an up-to-date antivirus program, keep my operating system patched, and don't open uninvited attachments, I felt my computer was probably virus-free. The virus scan confirmed that my problem was caused by something other than a virus.

My next thought was that I probably had some spyware in my computer. These unwanted programs infiltrate computers without the user's knowledge. They can wreck havoc with a computer. So I ran a spyware detection program named Ad-Aware (www.adaware.com). This is a free program that I have used for years with good results. This time, it didn't find anything. So I turned to another favorite…Spybot Search and Destroy (www.spybot.com). Another free program, Spybot has turned up much spyware in the past. Yet, even though I updated both of these programs before I scanned my computer, neither found any spyware.

Now I had a dilemma. Since I could not find the problem, my next step might have to be reformatting my hard drive and reinstalling all the programs. In trying to avoid that time-consuming hassle, I decided to try one more spyware program. On my desktop I had two additional free spyware tools that I downloaded for review but had never used before: AOL's Automatic Spyware Protection (http://daol.aol.com/safetycenter/spyware) and Microsoft's Window's Defender (www.windowsdefender.com).

I decided to start with the AOL program. The scan was faster than either Ad-Aware or Spybot, and it unearthed several pieces of spyware that were not detected by the previous programs. I clicked the button that said "Eliminate Spyware" and my work was done. My computer was immediately back to normal.

It's unbelievable that I would have to use three programs to find the nasty spyware that was causing my problem, but this is the situation in today's spyware-infested computer world. The bad guys are always trying to stay one step ahead of the good guys and in some cases, they are obviously succeeding.

If you want to add the AOL software to your arsenal of anti-spyware tools, it is a simple download at the AOL Safety and Security Center at http://daol.aol.com/safetycenter/spyware. You will need to get a free AOL screen name before you download the software by entering your name, address, telephone, email, and date of birth. Be careful to download only what you need. AOL will offer you virus protection, a firewall, and an email program in addition to the spyware software. These may or may not be valuable to you. I checked out the free AOL Active Virus Shield software which you can download at www.activevirusshield.com. This program is powered by Kaspersky Lab, one of the largest anti-virus providers, and has garnered good reviews. It is an excellent choice if you are looking for a free anti-virus program. AOL's free

Microsoft Windows Vista

By Mike Moore, President, Bowling Green Area Microcomputer User Group, KY
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In many respects, Microsoft's dominance in the areas of Internet Browsers, Office Suites and of course Operating Systems is puzzling, at least in the past few years. Open Source software such as the free OpenOffice.org suite has come into its own and the latest Apple MacIntosh™ computers are brought to market with an operating system featuring iron-clad Unix underpinnings and a cheeky marketing campaign designed to turn PC users away from Windows.

And yet, due to the sheer number of PCs out there with Microsoft branding, Windows still commands a staggering market share, in spite of no major upgrades to either Internet Explorer or WindowsXP in 3 and 5 years, respectively.

Microsoft's answer to the rapidly changing personal computing scene has been a complete rethinking of Windows from the ground up.

Vista, a new operating system due out around January of 2007 and now in beta testing around the world, seeks to redesign the way we use computers, particularly internet and media-enabled computers. Previously code named "Longhorn," this release is about as far removed from XP as XP was from the old text-based DOS operating systems.

Although Microsoft is still hard at work finalizing the features of this blockbuster operating system, you can look forward to these new features, which will in most cases require a pretty beefy computer for support:

Aero

Aero is the name given to a new and visually stunning 3-D like graphical interface, which is currently known as the Desktop and Windows Explorer. In Vista, Microsoft introduces the Desktop Window Manager that will feature new technologies for application developers, transparent window effects, animations and file previews that all told will knock your socks off. See some of the previews of this interface at http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/ .

The full set of Aero features will be available on computers that support DirectX 9.0 and beefy video cards, so prepare to upgrade (and prepare to donate your existing computer to Gene Iglehart!)

Security

Microsoft has completely turned internet security on its head in the new Vista vision, choosing to de-fault a normal windows user to a limited access, virus-armored profile, as opposed to the current de-fault of a normal user having unlimited rights to the file system. Users that require more permissions on their accounts will have to make conscious and hopefully well-informed efforts to undo the protection Vista has built in to each account.

Quick Search

Windows 2000 and XP relied on indexed search techniques that were effective to a point, at a cost of much hard drive overhead and a key-word based search methodology. Vista takes this a quantum step farther and looks for both file content and something called meta-data, which will increase the relevancy of our searches for information on our machines, and will also help integrate local hard drive searches with internet searching.

For example, file name searches are often useless when looking in a directory of photographic image files where the digital camera has named them with non-descriptive serial-number like file names. Imagine describing a photograph to your computer and having it go out and look for, say, a photo with a white church steeple, or a recorded song file that

sounds like a tune you hum into a microphone. With Vista and other search engine companies like Google, we are poised at the brink of an explosion in searchability – a good thing considering all of the information that is out there!

WinFX

WinFX is an applications interface that supersedes the Win32 standard introduced in 1 993. An Applications Programming Interface (API) is a set of standards and library routines that serve to control Windows – everything from the way applications are installed to all of the various standard ways in which a program can manipulate a window. The API is the way that many thousands of programs, hardware drivers and video games are able to communicate with Windows without Microsoft having to license the Windows operating secrets to each vendor. If you think of each way in which a particular windows feature can be controlled as being closed black box, the API standards are the knobs, buttons and dials on that box. WinFX means that developers with designs for software that is to run under Vista ought to be ready to study hard, because WinFX changes everything. The new API also means that we are bidding goodbye to our beloved DOS command line pretty much for good, running Vista.

As different as WinFX is, it should be thought of as a superset of Win32, which means that we won't necessarily have to buy all new software, at least not right away.

WindowsXP is my favorite operating system to date, and I predict that Microsoft will have to float some pretty good deals, and computer vendors will need to price sharply to get mainstream users to up-grade. Computer experimenters, those individuals that get really steamed when their cousin gets a faster computer than they have, will likely upgrade immediately, and hopefully BGAMUG will be able to refurbish what equipment they cast off in the quest for Vista!

My Spyware

email program, however, is probably not as good as the email program you are already using.

Since my spyware detection encounter, I have also tried the Microsoft Window's Defender anti-spyware program and I liked it as well. A year ago I would have scoffed at anyone using more than one or two anti-spyware programs, but perhaps in today's computer environment, it's not overkill to have four anti-spyware programs!

Sandy Berger, The Compu-KISS® Lady… nationally respected computer authority, journalist, media guest, speaker, and author is a seasoned 30-year computer expert. Sandy is a consumer advocate promoting simplicity, ease-of-use, and stability in consumer technology products. She works with hardware and software developers to help them make their products more user-friendly.

Are You "Compuliterate?"

by Berry F. Phillips,
member of the Computer Club of Oklahoma City and a regular writer for the CCOKC website and the eMonitor
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http://www.ccokc.org

"Compuliteracy" Test (unknown author)

1. Who invented the computer? Mr. Chips, E.T., Marquis de Sade.

2. What are microchips? What a herd of micros leave on the prairie, What you eat with a microdip, The reason you had to take all those computer literacy courses.

3. What is a floppy disk? A painful lower-back condition, An album that didn't sell, A great Frisbee.

4. What is the first thing you associate with computers? Bill Cosby commercials, Eyestrain & headaches, Annoying beeps, Three tons of printout where once there was a 3-page report, All of the above.

5. What is FORTRAN? Between 3 and 5 tran, How to get computers excited before interface, Ridiculous.

6. What is Pascal? A leafy vegetable, A foot fungus, A city in southern France, None of the above.

7. When you need consulting help in deciding what to do with your computer, which organization do you think of? IBM, FBI, PLO?

8. What is the most important computer peripheral? Bill Gates, Someone to operate the computer for you, Aspirin.

Some years ago, I was staring at a demo game computer with that blank stare of a computer illiterate in a large computer store. I felt a tug on my sleeve and there was a small lad who asked me rather impatiently, "Why don't you do something?" I confessed with great difficulty being an adult that I did not know what to do. This mini computer user said, "I will show you because I have this game at home." He began killing monsters right and left as I slunk out of the store in humiliation. I vowed from that day forward I would become computer literate because no eight year old was going to be more computer literate than I was!

I suspect you have some hands on computer experience since you are reading my column. Computer literacy is today a necessity when entering the job market. I remember when Time Magazine awarded the computer, their coveted Man of the Year which dramatically illustrated the incredible impact the personal computer has had on our contemporary society. Computer literacy does not mean you need to know everything about a computer but you should master the basics and understand how a computer works. I remember thinking that just because a person used a computer in a business that they must be computer literate. I discovered that many computer users only knew how to do limited applications necessary for them to do their specific work. Further, I noticed that many computer users due to lack of computer literacy were very limited in their use of their computers. Limited computer literacy usually translates into limited use of the computer never experiencing the full potential of the computer and maximizing their return on their computer investment.

What alternatives are available to accelerate one's level of computer literacy? Basic computer courses are offered by most continuing education programs. They are usually reasonably priced and conveniently scheduled. They can be found in your local school district, or community college

on evenings and weekends. There are career retraining programs that often offer computer courses through your local Labor Department Office. There are also online courses and tutorials available and the public libraries have computers available to their patrons with Internet access.

I have found that computer clubs are an excellent choice for developing computer literacy since they are economical, and less theoretical and are more focused on how to operate the computer using various applications. Computer users helping other computer users move to the next level of computer literacy is an incredible learning and motivating experience. All of those who obtain computer literacy were once computer illiterates. As they were helped to reach computer literacy, they enjoy helping others as they were helped. You are never alone in your journey to reach computer literacy in a computer club; there is always another member to ask a question or to get hands on help. Many computer clubs have computer labs as does the Computer Club of Oklahoma City, www.ccokc.org (405-843-4300) which is also affiliated with the national Senior Net Users Group and the Association of PC Users Groups. If you are not in the Oklahoma City area, please contact the Association of PC Users Groups, www.apcug.org (800-558-6867) to check on an affiliated computer club in your area .

The sole objective of computer clubs is to help each other to reach computer literacy. We often hear from our members who have achieved computer literacy how when they started they wondered how they would ever use a computer and now how they will ever get along without a computer! The transition from computer illiteracy to literacy is truly amazing. Our mission is to help each other reach computer literacy with a variety of proven classes that will get you up too speed as soon as possible. The Computer Club of Oklahoma City believes the only unintelligent question is the unasked question! Obtaining computer literacy is not a luxury but an absolute necessity in our rapidly evolving technological society.

I hope that I remain "compuliterate" because those eight year olds are getting more and more "compuliterate" especially the older I get!

There is no restriction against any non-profit group using this article as long as it is kept in context with proper credit given the author. The Editorial Committee of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups (APCUG), an international organization of which this group is a member, brings this article to you.

Fall…

Leaves

Acorns

Yard work

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October 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	**7**
8	9	10	11	12	13	**14**
15	16	17 **General Meeting**	18	19	20	**21**
22	23	24	25	26	27	**28**
29	30	31 **Happy Halloween**				