



The PULP

HUGE this month:

General Meeting: Dec. 15th
Annual Holiday
Gift Suggestions

See you there!

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

Q&A Session: 7:00PM–7:30PM
Meeting starts at: 7:30PM

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MEETING LOCATIONS

East Hartford Public
Library
Main & Central Avenue
in the Lion's
Room(downstairs)

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

Editors Corner

Thanks to Charles Gagliardi for providing an introduction to Social Networks on the web last month.

This month I will be doing our 3rd annual holiday gift suggestion meeting. There's still time to email me a link for one that you've found.

For those of you that missed it (especially the board members), we were all re-elected as punishment for the job we've done.

As an incentive to attend the meeting and get you to send in your dues, the membership voted to provide HUGE imprinted USB flash drives (4 or 8 GB) to paid up members at the next meeting.

Stuart Rabinowitz
Editor-in-Chief

Here is the appropriate copyright citation and a link to the full text. articles from "Tidbits"

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/>

Please note that the clubs PO Box has been closed. When membership renewals go out in the fall the return address will be that of our Membership person Richard Sztaba.



A Little Computer Quiz

by Stuart Rabinowitz

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.

1 In 1996 the Rio Rancho, NM school system equipped a new high school with Macs purchased with donated funds. There was a little (actually a great deal) of controversy over the decision. Why?

2 Walt Disney Studios was an early customer of HP. Why?

3 LEDs (light-emitting diodes) are fairly common these days, but in what year were they first sold?

4 By what company?

5 Charles Simonyi has a place in the history of computer software development. For what projects is he known?

Answers to Nov, 2009 Quiz

1 While Unix turned 40 this year, a computer programming language turns 50. Which one?

A COBOL

2 Actually it's name is an acronym, for what?

A COmmon Business Oriented Language

3 What organization approved the name and specifications, and when?

A CODASYL (Conference on Data Systems Languages) approved the name on Sept. 18, 1959 and the specs were completed a few months later.

4 When were the first compilers implemented?

A In 1960

5 ARM (Advanced RISC Machine) chips are 32-bit RISC processors used in a variety of products (PDAs, cell phones, iPods and iPhones, GPS units, and digital cameras), but what did ARM originally stand for?

A Acorn RISC Machine, originally developed by Acorn Computers (now ARM Ltd)



The Best Things In Life Are Free

Written by Lou Torraca, President, The TUG, HI
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The moon belongs to everyone,
The best things in life are free.
The stars belong to everyone,
They gleam there for you and me.
The flowers in spring, the robins that sing,
The moonbeams that shine, they're yours, they're mine.
And love can come to everyone,
The best things in life are free.

So goes the song, written in 1927, way before PCs were all the rage! Well, guess what, some of the best programs and utilities for your PC are also free, yup, I said free! I have been asked a lot of questions recently about some of them so I decided to do a list of the ones I use plus others I know about and have been tried and recommended.

Thinking about a new computer? Are you a bit techie? If so, you could save yourself some money as well as have the satisfaction of putting your own together by yourself. Not so inclined? You can still save on programs and utilities. Without further ado, here is a list for you to consider.

First for the techie who wants to put together their own PC...an operating system that is totally free.

What is Ubuntu?

Ubuntu is a community developed operating system that is perfect for laptops, desktops and servers. Whether you use it at home, at school or at work Ubuntu contains all the applications you'll ever need, from word processing and email applications, to web server software and programming tools.

Ubuntu is and always will be free of charge. You do not pay any licensing fees. You can download, use and share Ubuntu with your friends, family, school or business for absolutely nothing.

New versions are released every six months. That means you'll always have the latest and greatest applications that the

open source world has to offer.

Ubuntu is designed with security in mind. You get free security updates for at least 18 months on the desktop and server. With the Long Term Support (LTS) version you get three years support on the desktop, and five years on the server. There is no extra fee for the LTS version, we make our very best work available to everyone on the same free terms. Upgrades to new versions of Ubuntu are and always will be free of charge.

Everything you need comes on one CD, providing a complete working environment. Additional software is available online.

The graphical installer enables you to get up and running quickly and easily. A standard installation should take less than 25 minutes.

Once installed your system is immediately ready-to-use. On the desktop you have a full set of productivity, internet, drawing and graphics applications, and games. Pretty neat isn't it? Download: <http://www.ubuntu.com/>

Now for everyone else, here are some really excellent programs and utilities you can have at no cost. (BTW, many of these free programs and utilities have a donation button where you can voluntarily help the developer with updates, new apps, etc. I suggest you try the app first and then if you really like it and decide to keep it, you can make a donation, however this is strictly a voluntary thing.)

First is the number one priority...anti virus. I've used both AVG and Avast for a long time and, knock on wood, have never had a problem. Both also have pay versions that include lots of other stuff, but I'll be listing all those types of apps as we go along.

To download AVG: <http://free.avg.com/download-avg-anti-virus-free-edition>

To download Avast!: <http://www.avast.com/eng/download-avast-home.html>

Both of these work well and provide you with protection from viruses, but do yourself a favor and read the information that both provide and follow the



instructions...this applies, of course, to all programs, apps and utilities!

Next, you need a firewall and the most popular and the one I use is Zone Alarm which for a free app, provides a lot of flexibility and prevents the bad guys from getting into your computer as well as making your computer invisible to anyone on the internet. To download the free version: <http://www.zonealarm.com/security/en-us/zonealarm-pc-security-free-firewall.htm>

10 years of malware experience combined in one dynamic application. Ad-Aware - Anniversary Edition offers radically improved performance and efficiency, along with comprehensive malware protection. With real-time monitoring, threat alerts, and automatic updates you can rest easy knowing that you are protected. Download: http://www.lavasoft.com/products/ad_aware_free.php

SpyBot-Search and Destroy complements adaware.

...if you see new toolbars in Internet Explorer that you didn't install, or you experience other problems, you may have spyware. This program helps prevent marketing companies from gathering information about your Web surfing and purchasing habits, and selling it to advertisers. Download: http://download.cnet.com/Spybot-Search-and-Destroy/3000-8022_4-10122137.html

Windows Defender is a free program that helps you stay productive by protecting your computer against pop-ups, slow performance and security threats caused by spyware and other potentially unwanted software. All 3 of these programs work to keep your PC running smoothly. I use them and they definitely make a difference.

Now you have your PC pretty well protected, how about productivity apps? No problem; OpenOffice.org 3 is the leading open-source office software suite for word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, graphics, databases and more.

It is available in many languages and works on all common computers. It stores all your data in an international open standard format and can also read and write files from other common office software packages. It can be downloaded and used completely free of charge for any purpose. Sounds like the big

guys Office? It does and it also does pretty much everything that other guy does! Download: <http://download.openoffice.org/>

Next, a free program that rivals Adobe Photoshop...and we know what that costs!

The name is a bit misleading but the program is spectacular! GIMP can be used to process digital graphics and photographs. Typical uses include creating graphics and logos, resizing and cropping photos, changing colors, combining images using a layer paradigm, removing unwanted image features, and converting between different image formats. GIMP can also be used to create animated images using an improved layers method. The full capabilities of the GIMP extend much further, however, and include advanced image editing, manipulation, and professional graphics creation. It is often used as a free software replacement for Adobe Photoshop, which is the dominant bitmap editor in the printing and graphics industries. Download: <http://www.dphotojournal.com/download-gimp-photo-software/>

To keep your system running at its best, CCleaner is a freeware system optimization, privacy and cleaning tool.

It removes unused files from your system - allowing Windows to run faster and freeing up valuable hard disk space. It also cleans traces of your online activities such as your Internet history. Additionally it contains a fully featured registry cleaner. But the best part is that it's fast (normally taking less than a second to run) and contains NO Spyware or Adware! :) Download: <http://www.ccleaner.com/> While

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**Social Networking – What is it, really?**

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Social Networking is all over the news; Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter are the ones that get the most play. So what are they, really? Well, they're websites that provide another way of keeping in touch with friends, family, and associates. What are some older social networking methods? Maybe, the Telegram, the Telephone, Visiting on Sunday, Writing Letters. These are all ways of keeping in touch with your family and/or circle of friends. Yesterday we had these less technical ways of keeping in touch. Today we have the computer to help us keep in touch via email, instant messaging, Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) telephone, and social networking. Social networking has encouraged new ways to communicate and share information. Social networking websites are being used regularly by millions of people, and it now seems that social networking will become a regular part of everyday computer life.

Social Networking is probably the newest technology and revolves around an internet website that provides social networking services. How about this for a definition of a social network: A site that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system; to create a list of other users with whom they have a connection; and to view their list of connections and those made by others within the system. With that in mind, a social network focuses on building online communities of people who share interests and/or activities. Most social network services are web based and provide a variety of ways for users to interact, such as e-mail and instant messaging.

On many of the large Social Networking sites, participants are not necessarily "networking" or looking to meet new people; instead, they are primarily communicating with people who are already a part of their extended social network, such as on Facebook and Twitter.

While it could be said that email and regular websites have most of the essential elements of social networks, the

social networking sites make it easy to use. Here's a look at some of the more popular sites.

LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com) – LinkedIn is mostly for business people and professionals. People use it to maintain contacts and to develop new business opportunities. To use LinkedIn, you create a profile where you describe yourself, listing work and education history, skills, specialties, etc. Just like a resume. Once you have your profile, you start connecting to others. That's the driving force behind LinkedIn. You use your connections to promote yourself and build relationships.

Twitter (www.twitter.com) – Twitter is a micro blogging service. When it started out, people used it to tell others what they were doing at various times during the day. Now it has evolved into a way to tell people about your activities and then provide a link to further details. SPCUG as a group could have its own Twitter account. Once we had it, interested members could "follow" it and receive our group information known as "tweets" delivered to them. A Twitter "tweet" has a limit of 140 characters. This may possibly be a substitute for our use of Constant Contact to contact the membership for changes in educational class schedules.

Facebook (www.backbook.com). Facebook is sort of a cross between LinkedIn and Twitter. Facebook used to be mainly for students, but has become more mainstream. Like LinkedIn, you build a profile of yourself, where you talk about what your interests and hobbies are. Like Twitter, you can do micro blogging about things you want people to know. In Facebook, you have friends as opposed to connections or followers.

Users of Social Networks, in general, can upload a picture of themselves, create their "profile" and can often be "friends" with other users. In most social networks, both users must confirm that they are friends before they are linked. For example, if Alice lists Bob as a friend, then Bob would have to approve Alice's friend request before they are listed as friends. Some social networking sites have a "favorites" feature that does not need approval from the other user. Social networks usually have privacy controls that allow the user to choose who can view their profile or contact them, etc.

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**Why security precautions are necessary**

By Bob de Violini, a member of the Channel Islands PCUG, California

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First off for the holidays, there's a story that illustrates just why you should always enable encryption on your wireless router (for those who use one) AND why you should be leery of any public computer for Web sites you need a password to access. A college student in Kentucky has been charged with identity theft, among other crimes, for planting malware on computers in his school's library. The malware was a keystroke logger that captured usernames and passwords for any pages fellow students logged into. He then used this information to access their e-mail accounts and send out e-mails attempting to extort these same fellow students. He also used an unsecured wireless router to access these accounts, making it look as if someone else were actually sending the e-mails. The attempted extortion took the form of a threat to divulge personal information the thief had stolen from the compromised e-mail accounts. That leads me to our next item, WPA encryption.

As of the beginning of November, a pair of computer security researchers in Europe disclosed a technique they'd developed to partially hack WPA encryption used by a great number of wireless routers today. Before anyone thinks the sky is falling, rest assured it isn't. Their hack involves only the traffic being sent from the router to a computer and only a small number of data packets can be cracked before the router resets its encryption. However, it is enough to be able to send just enough rogue data to a computer to compromise it with any number of known vulnerabilities. Specifically, it involves the TKIP protocol that WPA and WPA2 are allowed to use. The specifics of just how this trick is accomplished have been made available to hackers in many areas of the Internet, so it's just a matter of time before it begins spreading. TKIP and AES encryption are selectable by the user in many wireless router configurations, and some have WPA with TKIP selected by default. I strongly recommend you check your wireless router's encryption configuration, and if it's set to use WPA with TKIP, you switch to WPA2 with AES if at all

possible. This is especially important if you use a wireless router to run a network for a business. I have my Linksys wireless router set to use WPA2 with AES encryption. AES is significantly harder to crack than the older TKIP protocol. One final note on this, however. For AES encryption to work, both the router and the network adapter in the computer must be able to use it. Some older hardware may not support AES encryption, so an upgrade may be needed. If you'd like some more information, please drop me a line at the email address at the top of this article, and I'll gladly send you a link or two.

Scare of the month department

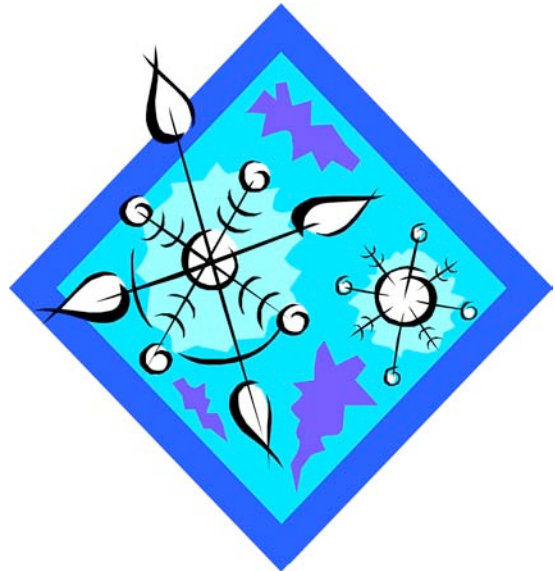
Even though Halloween has already passed, we have the Scare of the Month Department chiming in with some news. There is a new phishing e-mail making the rounds disguised as a warning from the U.S. Federal Reserve. The message bears the usual dire warning of a scam and contains links for readers to follow to get more information. However, there are a few clues that give the message away as a hoax, the biggest one being poor grammar. The links in the e-mail lead unsuspecting readers to a fake site that will redirect them to a search page for porn, which will download a PDF file with malware to their computer. The malware comes in various forms, including one that attempts to make your computer a member of a botnet. A brief notice can be had here, courtesy of USCERT: <http://tinyurl.com/66lzv9>. The link does go to the US-CERT site; I just used TinyURL to shorten the URL's length.

Patches Galore Department

As I mentioned above, there have been some exploits on the loose for a bit for Adobe Acrobat, and the full program and the reader have been updated as a result. The latest versions are 8.1.3 and 9.0. Adobe has also updated its Flash player, standard fare in most browser installations, to version 10.0.12.36 to patch publicly reported vulnerabilities last month as well. Not to be outdone, Mozilla has also issued a patch for its Firefox browser and Thunderbird e-mail client. These patches address several bugs that have been brought to light in the past month to month and a half. The latest iterations of Firefox are 2.0.0.18 and 3.0.0.4. The latest version of Thunderbird is 2.0.0.18. I have read



reports of some problems with version 3.0.0.4 and 2.0.0.18 of Firefox, with most of the reports being about version 3.0.0.4. The solution for those having problems after upgrading to 3.0.0.4 has been to go back to 3.0.0.3. I have updated my version to 2.0.0.18 and have had no problems. Some patches take longer than others to develop and test, however. One of the patches issued by Microsoft on November's Patch Tuesday took them seven years to develop and test. The bug it patched was first reported by a security researcher in March 2001. Microsoft claims that it tried patching it when it was first reported but wound up killing off most networking applications with the patches when they underwent testing. However, they didn't give up and finally found a way to patch the vulnerability earlier this year.



While we're speaking of Microsoft, it has announced plans to abandon its One Care concept of computer protection service and develop free anti malware applications for release in 2009. The new concept is code named "Morro." As usual, folks are coming down on both sides of pro and con when it comes to this development. Microsoft hasn't given a firm release date for the new software, but has said that One Care will come to an end on June 30. Well, that's all for now. Here's wishing everyone a joyous Holiday season and a Happy New Year! Always practice safe computing by keeping your applications and your anti-malware applications fully up to date. Make sure to run your anti-malware scanner(s) once a week, even if they don't flag anything in between scans.





cont. from pg 6

Privacy of Social Networks is a big concern. On large social networks, there have been growing concerns about users giving out too much personal information and the threat of sexual predators. Users of these networks need to be aware of data theft and viruses. However, large networks often work with law enforcement to try to prevent such incidents.

Access to one's information is also of great concern. Many social networks such as Facebook, provide the user the choice of who can view their profile. This prevents unauthorized user(s) from accessing their information. To edit information on a social network account, the site usually requires you to login or provide an access code. This prevents unauthorized users from editing an account such as posting pictures or changing personal information.

Social Networking is a promising new technology for staying in touch. Give it a try, there must be some group of people you would like to keep in touch with.

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you're there, I'd also recommend downloading their defragger, another app which will help keep your system running smoothly. You can schedule daily, weekly or just manual defrags...it's pretty easy to use and does an excellent job.

Last, but not least, a program I can't live without. Yankee Clipper III, a powerful Windows clipboard extender/memory-now in its third generation. Handles Pictures, Richtext, URLs, etc-any size. Features printing, drag and drop, optional permanent storage of clippings. Familiar "Outlook" interface. Just a couple of its features: Saves past 200 text and RTF, 20 BMP and Metafile, and 200 URL clipboard entries. Has the ability to save and re-use "boilerplate" clippings. Simply right-click on the item and select "send to boilerplate". Unlimited boilerplate collections can be created.

Download: <http://www.intelxual.com/products/YC3>

That's it until next time. If you like the freebies on this list, login at the top of the page and let me know; there are lots more out there. Enjoy all the goodies, but remember to be careful as the bad guys are lurking!

Aloha, Lou





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Editor	Stuart Rabinowitz
Distribution	George Carbonell

Membership: Anyone may become a member. Dues are \$12 per year and include a one-year subscription to The Pulp as well as access to the HUGE Public Domain disk libraries and BBS. Meeting topics, times and places can be found on page 1 of this issue.

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December 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 1858 1st electric arc searchlight	9	10	11	12 1980 Apple goes public
13	14	15 General Meeting 7 PM	16	17 1903 Wright Brothers fly	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26 1951 DPMA (Data Processing Mngt Assoc) founded
27	28	29	30	31		