The PULP

HUGE this month:

General Meeting: Sept. 21st
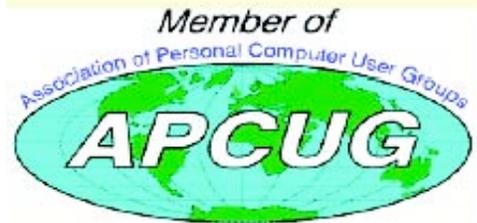
Some of what you wanted to know about HDTV

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

Contents:

Member of

APCUG
Association of Personal Computer User Groups

UGC

Apple User Group

H.U.G.E.

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

Editors Corner

Thinking about getting a new flat screen TV and wondering what type to get, how big, or what connections? Got a flat screen TV and wondering how to take care of it? We'll try to answer both of these questions this month.

On the "what's new(s)" scene: The Merion school system has been sued by a second student & the picture count is over 30,000, Terry Childs was sentenced to 4 years in jail, iPad clones (mostly Android based) for $100 are starting to show up on ebay and for sale by Dell, Google & Verizon have decided to become the FCC, your car finance company maybe installing a GPS in your car in case you miss a payment, Samsung is developing a motherboard based SSD (up to 64 GB) smaller than a postage stamp and weighs less than a paperclip, Toshiba has demo'd a new storage media with a storage density 5 times greater than current drives, and the FCC has reported that based on data from 2009 consumers in the US are only getting half the download speed advertised by broadband ISPs (ads for 7 Mbps vs actual of 3-4 Mbps).

At the Tokyo Wireless Expo in July, engineers at the University of Electro-Communications' Nakajima Laboratory demo'd eyeglasses with a GPS built into the frame. A series of LEDs would guide you to your destination.

For Facebook users, the world may now know where you are whether you like it or not.

For the October meeting we have a directional Wi-fi antenna to demo. I've been trying it out at home, but, I will need a volunteerfor the meeting (Linux, Mac, or Windows makes no difference).

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 This September marks a milestone (18th anniversary) in (HUGE) computer history. What?

2 In March, 1993 what chip made it to store shelves and computers?

3 By what company?

4 Richard Depew wrote a program later in March, 1993 that created a bit of controversy on a couple of fronts. One because of what it did and the other because a bug. What was the program?

5 What were the controversies?

6 In April, 1993 version 1.0 of a little piece of software that changed what computers do was released. What was the program?

Answers to June, 2010 Quiz

1 On March 15, 1985 Symbolics.com becaqme the first dot-com name registered. Can you name the next 5?
  A BBN.com, Think.com, MCC.com, DEC.com and Northrop.com.

2 In March, Richard Stallman publishes his GNU Manifesto in Dr. Dobb's Journal of Software Tools and on Oct. 4 he founded ... ?
  A   The non-profit Free Software Foundation.

3 In 1984 Len Bosack and Sandy Lerner founded what company?
  A CISCO (Cisco shut down for four days during the holidays to save money)

4 At the IEEE 1984 International Electron Devices Meeting Fujio Masuoka, a Toshiba researcher, demonstrated a new product, what?
  A He invented flash memory. Why flash? "The name was suggested by Masuoka's colleague, Shoji Ariizumi, because the erasure process of the memory contents reminded him of a flash of a camera," says Wikipedia.

5   In 1984 2600 The HACKER QUARTERLY debuts. Why the name?
  A The 2600 reportedly refers to the fact that a 2600 Hertz tone (such as that created by a toy whistle tucked into boxes of Cap'n Crunch cereal) could gain one access to telephone network systems.

What I Learned from Having My Laptop Stolen

by David Blatner <david@63p.com>
article link: <http://db.tidbits.com/article/10165>

Someday, somewhere, somehow your computer will be gone. It will be stolen, or the hard drive will self-destruct, or it will be hit by a meteor. While the latter would at least provide you with an excellent story, assuming you weren't using it at the time, having your laptop stolen, as mine was recently, just plain sucks. However, I did manage to learn a few things in the wake of disaster, and wanted to take the opportunity to share them with you here.

Three things are lost with a computer's theft: hardware, data, and privacy. I'll let others deal with the emotional aspects of loss, and instead focus on the practical ones.

Hardware -- The loss of the hardware is, in many ways, the least of your problems. Sure, it's money out the door, but as my mom once told me, you can always make more money. That said, I do encourage you to make sure your computer is insured. Many homeowner insurance policies do not cover computers that are used primarily for work, or those that are stolen offsite (like from a car). Be sure to check your policies carefully. Safeware offers independent computer insurance, if necessary.

<http://www.safeware.com/>

I would also recommend installing tracking software on your computer. Of the various options on the market, I picked MacTrak by GadgetTrak for my replacement computer based on several factors: I liked the company's owner, whom I met at his Macworld booth; I don't like the idea of a third-party company being the mediator between me and the tracking data (as other companies do); and I like the relatively simple and straightforward approach the software takes.

<http://www.gadgettrak.com/products/mac/>

If my new laptop is stolen, I log into the GadgetTrak Web site and report it missing. The next time my computer pings their server, it sees the status and starts occasionally taking pictures (with the built-in iSight camera) and reporting its location (based on whatever Wi-Fi address the thief is using). Those photos and data go directly to me, and it's up to me to give that information to law enforcement.

There are a number of other products and companies that can track your Mac including LoJack and Undercover. While both programs have some interesting features (Undercover in particular does some things I'd like to see incorporated into a future version of MacTrak, such as taking screenshots as the thief works and simulating a hardware failure to force the thief into bringing the machine in for repair), evaluating them should be saved for another article.

<http://www.lojackforlaptops.com/>
<http://www.orbicule.com/undercover/ >

Data -- So tracking helps protect against the loss of hardware, but what about the loss of data? This was my biggest concern at first, considering I kept everything on my laptop and was not that conscientious about backing it up. Lucky for me I had two things in my favor. First, I had been using SuperDuper about once a month to back up the whole laptop to an external hard drive. It's easy, cheap, and painless to back up a complete copy of a computer, or make incremental backups regularly.

<http://www.shirt-pocket.com/SuperDuper/ >

Second, I had installed a copy of CrashPlan a year or so earlier. CrashPlan is one of several programs on the market that sits in the background and backs up your hard drive to either an external drive, another computer (on your local network or one connected to the internet) that has the software, or to a central location (see "CrashPlan: Backups Revisited," 2007-02-26). I chose to store my data at CrashPlan's bank vault in Minneapolis for about $5 per month.

<http://www.crashplan.com/>
<http://db.tidbits.com/article/8882>

About two hours before my laptop was stolen, I had stopped in at Glenn Fleishman's and Jeff Carlson's office to say hello and check my email. While there, CrashPlan quietly backed up a few more files without me even knowing it. Thanks to those few minutes of being online, I was later able to recover about 95 percent of my data. The only significant data I lost was the previous month's worth of photos in iPhoto (which I had for some reason instructed CrashPlan to ignore).

Some of you may be asking, "But what about Time Machine?" Well, to be honest, it didn't work for me at first, and after 5 minutes of troubleshooting I got tired of it and gave up. For those still curious as to how CrashPlan sizes up to Time Machine, you can find a comparison of the two options on CrashPlan's Web site.

<http://www.crashplan.com/consumer/features-timemachine.html>

Privacy -- My next overwhelming sense of loss (and that which stays with me to this day) was the loss of privacy. I did use a program called KeePass to protect my passwords and some other private information (I now use 1Password, which offers far more features, such as autofill in login screens). But what about my Quicken files? Or photos of my family? Contracts and other business documents? Suddenly all of that was in someone else's hands.

<http://keepass.info/>
<http://agilewebsolutions.com/products/1Password>

After about 5 days, I logged into the CrashPlan Central server and saw that all the files it was backing up had been deleted from my laptop. Or at least, it simply couldn't find them anymore. That was a small relief, but ultimately I don't really know what happened to the data, which leaves me with a bad taste in my mouth. So here's how I'm doing it differently on my new laptop. First, in the Security pane of System Preferences, I turned on the checkboxes labeled "Require password to wake this computer from sleep or screen saver" and "Disable automatic login."

Next, I created a new Guest Account in System Preferences. In the guest account, I set up Parental Controls so a user can't really do much beyond log in, use iLife, surf the Web, and so on. More importantly, behind the scenes, I have granted MacTrak permission to run quietly. The idea is that a thief, not being able to log into my account, will find that they can log into the Guest account, which will enable me to capture their whereabouts. It may be a long shot, but it's better than nothing.

On top of that, I have used Firmware Password Utility to lock my firmware, stopping anyone from reformatting the hard drive, launching from an external disk, or even starting the laptop up as an external FireWire drive. (For more information, see Apple's support article about setting up a firmware password.) I'm sure that the firmware password is surmountable, but hopefully any future thief won't know how.

<http://support.apple.com/kb/HT1352>

Going Further -- I've implemented two other security options on my new computer. First, before leaving for a recent overseas trip, I dug out an old Kensington cable lock that I bought about a decade ago but never got around to using. Being able to lock my laptop to a table gives me a little extra peace of mind.

<http://us.kensington.com/html/1434.html>

Protect Yourself From the Safari RSS Vulnerability

by Rich Mogull <rich@tidbits.com>
article link: <http://db.tidbits.com/article/10003>

Programmer Brian Mastenbrook revealed on 11-Jan-09 that he has discovered a security vulnerability that could allow a malicious Web site you visit using Safari to read any file on your system. The flaw affects the latest versions of Safari when used in Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard or Windows, though not in earlier versions of Mac OS X. Mastenbrook wrote that he has reported the details to Apple.

<http://brian.mastenbrook.net/display/27>

The vulnerability apparently could reveal the contents of any file, which includes email messages, passwords stored in browser cookies, or other documents. We have strong indications that the problem is real and you should immediately protect yourself in case malicious attackers figure out the vulnerability's full details before Apple issues a patch.

The vulnerability lies in the Safari RSS reader, and according to Mastenbrook, you may be affected even if you don't use the reader, as long as Safari is set to be your default RSS reader, which it is unless you've changed the setting. This likely indicates that the problem relates to how Safari handles RSS subscription links or feeds, since browsing to those triggers Safari's RSS reader.

The good news is that it's relatively easy to protect yourself. If you are on Windows, just stop using Safari until a fix is released. If you are using Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard, follow the updated instructions on Mastenbrook's Web site, linked above. Simply changing the default RSS reader application in Safari does not provide full protection, unfortunately.

It's always a relief when there is a reasonable workaround to a potentially serious security vulnerability, and we won't be surprised if Apple patches this vulnerability fairly quickly.

Vanity Spreads to Top-Level Domain Names

by Glenn Fleishman <glenn@tidbits.com>
article link: <http://db.tidbits.com/article/9669>

We all know about _vanity_ domain names - www dot yourname here dot com, org, net, info, or otherwise. The Internet authority that oversees domain names is about to let you get a little more top-heavy with your vanity, if you have deep enough pockets.

ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) has voted to move forward on allowing new top-level domains (TLDs), which form the right-most part of a domain name, like .com, .uk, or .aero. The original TLDs included .gov, .com, and .org, and expanded to include all two-letter country codes, such as .au for Australia and .nu for the island nation of Niue. (If you look at "www.tidbits.com", .com is the TLD, tidbits is the domain name registered in the .com hierarchy, and www is the local host name that defines a real or virtual server.)

<http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5gvve1Yb-5RVLc0GTkIwFT6flYwvAD91HR4N80>

For $100,000 to $500,000, a company or an individual could apply for a TLD. Many years ago, when I worked at Amazon.com, I saw that TLD proposals were underway, and I suggested Amazon sponsor .book so that an ISBN number plus .book would result in a search result on the site. That wasn't possible then, it turned out, but would be possible under this new regime.

Names could be turned down in a first-pass review if they were offensive, violated trademarks, or were too similar to an existing TLD (.con for grifters, perhaps? :-)). There's little information now about how two companies that want the same generic TLD, like .book, would work that out. Bidding? First-come, first-serve? Shared delegated authority? These details are expected to be worked out between now and about April 2009. The ICANN page on the topic is unfortunately quite bureaucratic and technical in discussing this issue.

<http://www.icann.org/topics/new-gtld-program.htm>

A Dual Monitor Setup – On the Cheap

by Moe Norris, Member, Topeka PC Users Club, Kansas
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This article has been obtained from APCUG with the author's permission for publication by APCUG member groups; all other uses require the permission of the author (see e-mail address above).

Have you dreamed of having two monitors sitting on your computer desk with all the added screen real estate which that would provide? But that would entail buying a second monitor, then replacing your computer's video card with a dual head model (and if you are using a laptop, forget about it)......all in all, an expensive project that your wallet (or your spouse) may not tolerate. But don't give up hope—there may be another solution.

Do you have two computers in the house? You need two – any two: desktop, notebook, or netbook. You can mix or match in any combination, and turn the second computer into a dual monitor for your primary machine. How? Through the magic of software.

What you need:

• Two computers running any 32-bit or 64-bit version of Windows from 2000 through 7 (you can mix or match).
• The two computers must be connected through a network which supports the TCP/IP protocol. (If you don't already have an ethernet or wireless LAN setup, you can connect the two computers directly using a crossover ethernet cable, Firewire cable, or a special USB-to-USB cable.)
• Forty dollars you can shake out of your piggy

bank for a copy of *MaxiVista*, the magic software that makes the whole thing happen. (There are more expensive versions of MaxiVista with additional features, but you only need the $40 version to enable the screen stretching.)

So how does it work? When you install MaxiVista on the primary computer, it creates a virtual video driver on that machine. This causes Windows to think that an additional monitor is installed. The contents of this virtual video card are compressed and transmitted to the secondary PC via any standard network connection and displayed by a separate MaxiVista viewer program on the second computer. Now you can spread the screen content across two monitors!

The picture below shows a dual monitor setup with a Photoshop image open for editing in the primary monitor, a 24" model running at a resolution of 1920 x 1200 pixels. The secondary monitor is a 15" laptop screen with a resolution of 1024x768 pixels.

Problem: The control panels cover a portion of the image that is being worked on.

Not to worry! Just move the panels to the secondary monitor…

… and *Voila!*

To see videos showing MaxiVista in action, go to http://www.maxivista.com/demo.htm.

If you would like to try out this program, a 14-day free trial can be downloaded from:

http://www.maxivista.com/download.htm

The free trial will allow you to make certain that it works well with your equipment – and decide whether you really want the program – before investing any cash. Have a second computer? Then give MaxiVista a try – it won't cost you a cent to find out if a dual monitor setup is for you!

Second, here at home, I also have two fireproof media safes for backup DVDs and CDs. Note that I said "media safes" - regular safes may be fireproof for paper, but electronic media will melt in them. I had to get two because the space inside is tiny (the majority of the safe is concrete or some other heavy and thick material).

There are still plenty of other security options I could choose to utilize. For example, I know Mac OS X has FileVault, but the fact that it encrypts my entire home folder (including gigabytes of photos and videos) puts me off. Yes, I could move photos and videos out of my home folder, but I'm still not wild about FileVault.

Ultimately, I feel that the measures I've taken are relatively inexpensive, easy to implement, and leave me with a comfortable sense of security. Sure, the NSA could crack it, and yes, a meteor could still do some serious damage, but if some jerk steals my computer again I won't hyperventilate or panic. It'll be okay.

[David Blatner is arguably the world's most-recognized authority on Adobe InDesign and the co-host of the site InDesign Secrets.]

<http://indesignsecrets.com/>
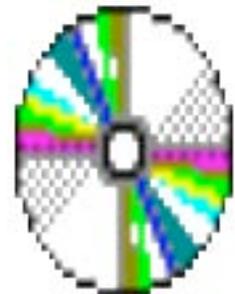
cont. from pg. 6

Is this change necessary? Hard to say. It can be quite difficult to find the appropriate domain name for your business, non-profit organization, social site, or personal domain because of the exhaustion of generic words, and the vast growth in the use of sites to pull in advertising dollars through Google AdSense and affiliate program referrals. Opening up new TLDs could allow ISPs and other organizations to build a little more wiggle room.

For instance, a soccer organization could register .soccer, and then work with a registrar to allow both fans and teams to have domains underneath that. The related problem, though, is that companies controlling TLDs that have a relationship to their product might be more ready to yank domain names that have content or engage in behavior they disagree with. That might run counter to the rules that ICANN requires for domain name handling.

I could also see some interesting cooperative work emerge. Say 5,000 Mac users wanted to register .fanboy - to take back the pejorative - and were willing to pony up $20 each, if the TLD cost were $100,000. That's certainly do-able.

The proposal will also allow the creation of TLDs that don't use English. Domain names and TLDs currently are limited to a through z, and 0 through 9; domain names can also include one or more hyphens. An obscure system currently allows a kind of mapping for non-English characters and letters, and ICANN has been working on a way to allow a more straightforward encoding method. They started testing this in October 2007. (See "ICANN Tests Non-Roman Characters in Domain
  Names," 2007-10-12.)

<http://db.tidbits.com/article/9235>

Part of the new TLD proposal would allow countries to request their two-letter code in characters from their native language or languages. The final report on that proposal was presented at an ICANN meeting. A draft report on the non-Roman character test was released on 24-Jun-08.

<http://www.ccnso.icann.org/workinggroups/idn-time-table-19dec07.htm>
<http://icann.org/en/announcements/announce ment-24jun08-en.htm>

The real question, of course, is how long it takes our fearless leader here at TidBITS to put together enough pennies for .bits.

PULP Staff

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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September 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 1977 first TRS- 80 Model 1 sold	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 1959 Jack Kilby of TI tests integrated circuit	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 Talk like a Pirate Day	20	21 General Meeting 7 PM	22	23	24 1979 CompuServe started	25
26	27	28	29	30		