



The PULP

HUGE this month:

General Meeting: Feb. 21st

The Flavor of Linux

See you there!

East Hartford Public Library
Main St. & Central Ave., E. 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)

Editor's Corner

This month we'll take a look at several different versions of Linux.

Last month was interesting, sort of good news/bad news and a lesson in having a backup plan. The demo was supposed to reflash the clubs new wifi router with open source firmware. The bad news is that it didn't work (should have tried it at home first). The good news is that the router is not a paperweight. After I re-RTFM, maybe we'll try again (at least it's another meeting topic).

In the news: the Elections Assistance Commission recently released a report critical of the DS200, which it said was prone to freezes, not logging information, and misreading ballots.

Google is changing its privacy and data collection policy, and you may not be able to opt out. Twitter is now able to censor tweets based on a per country basis.

Researchers at MIT say they've figured out how to mimic the synapses in the human brain using a 400- transistor processor that's designed to model a single brain synapse.

A Silicon Valley company in collaboration with a pharmacy chain announced the launch of a 'digital health product' in the UK, a tiny ingestible sensors that can help track medication use and reactions.

Residents of Wilmington, N.C. now have access to the first 'Super Wifi' network. It uses the 'white space' in the UHF TV band with the 802.22 protocol. It allows more range & penetration, but slower throughput.

It may be getting to the point that we say good-bye to the VGA adapter soon. Intel and Advanced Micro Devices are phasing out chipset support for VGA by 2015

I don't normally recommend or advise against a particular product, however, I recently had a scanner fail after 15 months (on a 12 month warranty). I didn't have a great experience with customer support either. So, I am not in the market for any Canon products.

Stuart Rabinowitz, Editor

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A Little Computer Quiz

by Stuart Rabinowitz

Answers to Jan., 2012 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.

1 Ever wonder how people found different sites before Google, Yahoo, Alta Vista? There was "The"?

2 I'm sure many of you have seen the 2 dimensional bar codes -- QR Codes (Quick Response code) in ads, you take a picture & get some data or linked to a web site. What was the first commercial use of 2 dimensional bar code technology?

3 When was it first introduced?

4 What information was it designed to transfer?

5 How much did it cost?

1 In June, 2011, a technology company celebrated 100 years of existence. Which one?

A International Business Machines (IBM)

2 What was the original company name

A Computing-Tabulating-Recording Company

3 Where was it's first manufacturing plant located and what is it called?

A "Plant No. 1" in Endicott, N.Y.

4 In 1957 what computer language did it introduce?

A FORTRAN

5 Who was the first president and chairman?

A George W. Fairchild



Make Your Computer Either Stupid, Useless or a Zombie

By Vinny LaBash, Regular Columnist, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

September 2011 issue, Sarasota Monitor

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There are many ways to make your computer useful and reliable: add memory, buy more storage, and be sure to purchase gear and peripherals from reliable vendors. Some people nevertheless, seem determined to find ways to get into trouble. As a TV ad once proclaimed, "We all do dumb things from time to time," but making your computer useless doesn't have to be one of them.

Inadvertently choosing a wrong key combination, clicking OK in an online dialog box designed to deceive you into unknowingly downloading malware or unthinkingly doing something genuinely dumb are all preventable. They are easily avoided if only a small amount of premeditated thought and common sense are applied.

Are you a "*Nervous Newbie*?" People new to computers are often fearful of damaging their equipment. Don't worry! No matter what crazy combination of keystrokes you activate, the computer will not explode. Short of throwing the thing off a rooftop or beating it with a blunt instrument, it's highly unlikely you could do anything to seriously affect your hardware.

Instead, ask yourself, "What would happen if I lost all my data?" The answer will determine what kind of backup plan you should implement. If all you do is surf the internet, fool around playing games, and spend time on a social network site, you don't need much of a backup plan. If you run a business that depends on data that must be constantly updated, losing it all may mean you will retire much earlier than you anticipated at a reduced standard of living. Your personal situation is probably somewhere between these two examples.

Most people are at least vaguely aware that they should back up their system, but never get around to it because it's too much trouble. System crashes and data loss occur for many reasons. Power surges, lightning strikes, hardware failures, software glitches, and user error are among the common causes of losing information.

Your data is the most important part of your system. You can always reinstall a program, but there is nowhere you can go to buy a copy of your precious data. You must make a copy of your information, and have a recovery plan in place before disaster strikes. You don't have to buy a backup program. Windows 7 has a perfectly good one built-in. You can quickly find it in Control Panel. Use it. You won't be sorry.

Store your backups on a removable disk or flash drive. An increasingly popular alternative is to store data online. Whatever you do, it's important to keep your backups at a location away from your computer to protect against theft of your system or natural disasters. To find the best method for your personal needs there is no better place than your local computer user group. You will find centuries of experience at your disposal.

Losing your data is no fun, but losing your entire system can be much worse. No computer should operate unprotected from electrical surges. The best form of protection is with an Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS). It is internally powered by a battery that ensures a smooth flow of power even if an outage occurs. This gives you sufficient time for an orderly shutdown to avoid not only loss of information, but physical damage to the computer. Most surge suppressors are worse than useless because they give you a false sense of security.

A surge suppressor can protect a system from a voltage spike usually at a cost of severe internal damage to the surge suppressor. There is seldom any visible sign of harm so it's easy to assume you are still protected when you are not. A high quality UPS provides far more safety.

Most of us like a genuine bargain, and a great temptation is to believe free is always better than merely inexpensive. There are many high quality freeware programs, and many of dubious value. Some freeware programs are so sloppily written they can cause your computer to behave erratically or come to a screeching halt. Even if you take care to research and install only the best of the best, too many installs and uninstalls create useless entries in the registry. If not properly removed, these registry orphans can create their own problems such as system slowdowns and strange behavior. For good system performance, install only the programs you really need, and keep your installs and uninstalls to a minimum.

Terabyte sized hard drives have made fragmentation less of an issue than with smaller capacity disks, but it can still be a problem if you neglect it too long. Fragmentation will become a non-issue when solid state drives eventually replace standard hard disks. Until that happy day arrives it makes sense to keep your files neatly arranged so the mechanical parts of your drive can take less time accessing programs and information. Files become fragmented through editing documents and other normal usage of



computers including surfing the web. Excessive fragmentation forces your hard drive to perform extra work that eventually noticeably slows down your computer.

Windows 7 has an excellent built in defrag tool that you can access through the Systems Tools folder. The tool runs on a schedule, but you can run it manually anytime. The tool will defrag your system drive, removable storage devices such as USB flash drives, and almost any external storage device where you can store and delete files. Disk Defragmenter runs on an automated schedule, but you can also analyze and defrag your disks and drives manually.

Even if you own a solid state drive that never needs to be defragged, you can still run into trouble by letting it get too full. If you find yourself with a drive that's using more than 90% of its capacity, applications can suddenly exhibit very abnormal behavior. The system has no place to put temporary files, and if a drive runs out of room, it can simply stop leaving you wondering what happened. An easy preventive is to use the Disk Cleanup Tool once or twice a month.

Are you guilty of indiscriminate link clicking? We all know about the danger of downloading attachments that could cause havoc with our systems, but do you click on hyperlinks embedded in emails? This could take you to web sites having implanted ActiveX controls designed to either damage your equipment, spy on you to collect passwords or track your activities to target you for personalized advertising among other nefarious reasons.

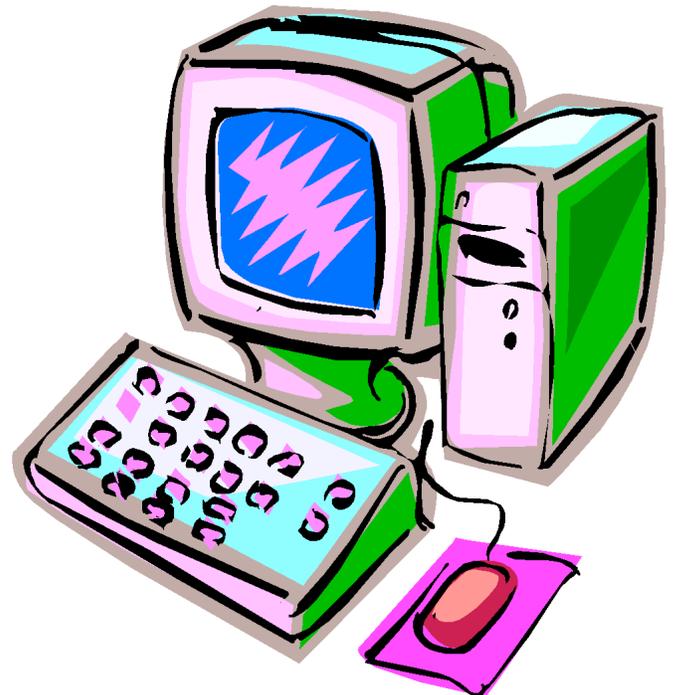
Some hackers are eager to install back-door or Trojan horses designed to allow them to control your computer without you being aware of it. Your computer could end up being a remotely controlled Zombie soldier in an army of similar machines to launch Distributed Denial of Service attacks.

Carelessly clicking on links could get you to very inappropriate sites that feature pornography, pirated videos, music or other kinds of software which could cause you personal embarrassment and even your job. People have been known to get in trouble with the law when a simple mouse click brought them to a child pornography site.

Think before you click. Bring your mouse pointer over the link. Often this simple act will reveal the real URL the link may be trying to disguise. If you aren't sure the link isn't going to take you to www.yourpcistocast.com don't do it.

We've covered a fair amount of territory here, but there is more danger lurking on the web than is dreamed of in your philosophy, Horatio. Choosing weak passwords, surfing the web without a firewall, failing to update anti-virus programs, and creating shared folders that the wrong people can access are among many additional dangers there simply isn't room for in this article.

Don't conclude that the web is too dangerous a place for you. The cautions mentioned here is the web equivalent of telling people to stay away from crime-ridden neighborhoods, and don't step off the curb into oncoming traffic without looking to see if it's safe first. As always, common sense is your first and best defense.





Inserting International Letters into Word Documents

By Nancy DeMarte, Columnist, Office Talk, Sarasota PCUG, Inc., Florida
 September 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor
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In our global society, languages have become more blended. English, for example, has adopted many words of different origins, some of which include special diacritical marks over the letters, as in the French word *passé*. Occasionally words can actually be misunderstood without a special mark over a letter, such as the difference between the "résumé" we provide when looking for a job, and "resume", meaning to begin again. It helps to know how to insert these diacritical marks when using Microsoft Office. Word provides two fairly easy methods to add these marks: the Symbol dialog box and keystroke combinations.

The **Symbol dialog box** (formerly called the Character Map) is easy to find in Word. It can be useful but also a bit tedious when you're in the middle of composing a document. It provides both international characters and other symbols, such as the Euro symbol (€) or Pi (□). To use this dialog box in Word 2007, click the Insert tab, then Symbol to view a few common symbols. Click the one you want to make it appear where your cursor was flashing. Click Symbol, then More Symbols, to open the full dialog box. Click a letter or symbol, then Insert, and it's done. This dialog box contains every symbol and international letter that Office has to offer, but inserting one may involve moving between different

tables of fonts and symbol types before you locate the one you need. It is worth spending a few minutes exploring this box, though, if only to see what's available. Once you insert a symbol using the dialog box, it will appear with recently used characters and symbols in a row near the bottom of the box for easy access in the future.

Although the Symbol dialog box method is the best way to insert a symbol, there's an easier method of inserting international letters using a combination of keyboard strokes. This method involves pressing the Control key (Ctrl) on the keyboard at the same time as a punctuation or symbol key, then releasing these keys and pressing the key of the letter that needs the diacritical mark. Let's use the example of the acute é. First be sure your cursor is flashing in the spot where you want the character to appear. Press the Ctrl key and the apostrophe key at the same time. Release them and type the letter "e", which will appear with its acute mark in place, é.

When learning this method, it helps to have a chart of the appropriate keys and corresponding diacritical marks nearby. The system is so logical that before long you won't need to refer to the chart except for unusual marks. The chart below gives you many of the ones you might need:

International Character	Press these keys, then release and press the letter.
à, è, ì, ò, ù	Ctrl + ` (grave accent key)
á, é, í, ó, ú, ?	Ctrl + ' (apostrophe key)
â, ê, î, ô, û	Ctrl + Shift + ^ (caret key)
ã, ñ, õ	Ctrl + Shift + ~ (tilde key)
ä, ë, ï, ö, ü, ÿ	Ctrl + Shift + : (colon key)
â	Ctrl + Shift + @
æ or œ	Ctrl + Shift + &
ç	Ctrl + , (comma key)

cont. on pg. 9



Backup – Image, What’s the difference?

By Phil Sorrentino, President, Sarasota PCUG, Florida

December 2011 issue, Sarasota PC Monitor
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This topic can be very confusing because of the similarities and the differences between backups and images. Backups and Images are similar in that they are both copies of something. The difference is in the “what” and the “how”. Normally, a backup is thought of as a copy of a file or a folder or a collection of files and folders (that is the “what”). The backup copy is just a copy, an exact duplicate and is not processed in any way (the “how”). The backup files can be used by any programs that could use the original files. The reason for having a backup file is to restore a file if it is accidentally destroyed or deleted.

An Image, on the other hand, is a copy of the Operating System and all of its components (referred to as the Operating Environment), as they exist in the memory of your operating computer (that’s the “what”). The Image can only be created by an imaging program (the how), and the image created can only be used by that same imaging program. The reason for having an image is to be able to re-install your “Operating Environment” if, or rather when, a virus or hardware problem makes your system unusable.

The topic can also be confusing because people, and even the literature, often use the terms backup and image in confusing ways. Often you will see or hear the term “backup image” which is meant to refer to a copy of an image. Well, an image is already a copy of something, so is this an image or is it a copy of an image? In order to keep things straight, I have tried to use the term “backup” to mean an

exact copy of a file that needs to be saved. (I know that sometimes backup copies are “zipped” or compressed to save space, but those files are no longer exact copies of the originals and are not directly usable, so I would not call them backups, I would have to call them “zipped backups” or “compressed backups”, to be accurate.) And I use the term “image” to refer to the resultant file (or file collection) that is produced by an imaging program such as Ghost, or Acronis True Image, or Macrium Reflect, or even Windows 7.

To be completely protected against potential problems (viruses and/or hardware problems) you have to address both issues, backup and image. You have to backup all of your important files, those that you really do not want to lose, and you have to have an image of your Operating Environment for re-installation when needed. (Just as a point of interest, Windows 7 includes the ability to do both, via the Backup & Restore Control Panel.)

The files to backup are those that you have created or collected, such as your pictures, music, videos, Word documents, and spreadsheets. Any file that you would really be hard pressed to reproduce, if it was lost, is a good candidate for backup. How often to backup is dependent on the file in question. Files that are changing daily should probably be backed up daily, but files that don’t change need only be backed up on some weekly or monthly schedule. For backups, in general, follow “Chicago Politics” advice and backup early and often.

Also, be aware that there are many ways



of backing up your files since it is only a Copy operation. However, there are many programs that make the job quick and easy. If you have a folder of pictures and you only add a few pictures to the collection weekly, then there is no need to copy all of the pictures each week, you only need to backup the new pictures. Backup programs such as Microsoft SyncToy, and Synchronagic, check the collection of files to be backed up against the last backup and only copy the new files or those that have changed since the last backup. These programs make the backup process quick, efficient and so easy that you will probably do it often enough. By now you are probably feeling that you have got the idea of backup, but where do you put these backup files? The best place for backup files is on an external hard drive that is normally not connected to the computer. Right before you are ready to backup your file collection, connect the external hard drive and fire-up the backup program and run the backup task. After the backup is finished disconnect the external drive and put it away in a safe place.

Creating an image is a little more difficult than creating backup files because imaging is not just a simple Copy operation. Because an image is a copy of your operating computer memory, the program must know a lot about the architecture of the memory. This is very specialized knowledge and is the essence of an imaging program. The imaging program must be installed on your computer for use in creating an image. And, it must create a bootable disk to be used when your system is not operating correctly. The image it creates can usually be put on a system drive (other than the C: drive), or an external hard drive, or a

number of DVDs. The image created is usually a very large collection of files that may total from 20 to 60 GB. The imaging process can take many hours depending on the size of the image and the amount of compression that is selected. Imaging is a very lengthy process, and it creates such large files, so you probably only want to do it when absolutely necessary. A new image is only necessary when the Operating Environment changes, when you add or delete programs, or when you update your operating system. You may not add or delete programs very often, but the operating system is updated, at least monthly, so you might want to create a new image every 3 or 4 months or whenever a big change is made to the Operating Environment.

So you can see there is a great difference between Backup and Image. But, both are necessary if you hope to completely recover from a future hardware failure or malware infection.



from pg.6

- ? Ctrl + ' (apostrophe key)
- ø Ctrl + / (forward slash key)
- ç Alt + Ctrl + Shift + ?
- ı Alt + Ctrl + Shift + !
- ß Ctrl + Shift + &

A few tips about this chart: 1. Many of the diacritical marks resemble the keyboard symbols that are used to create them, which makes them easier to remember. 2. Occasionally the Shift key is included in the procedure. This is because the keyboard symbol is the top one on the key and needs the Shift key to select it, as it would if it were a capital letter. 3. To get the upper case version of these letters with their marks, such as É, merely press the Shift key while pressing the letter.

If you find that you type in languages other than English on a regular basis, Word 2007 and 2010 offer quite a bit of help. You can see the list of the languages which have editing tools installed in Word by clicking the Office button (File in 2010) and selecting Word Options. Click Popular in the left pane and select the Language Settings button. I found, for example, that limited editing support is provided for more than 200 languages on my computer, including six dialects of French, five of Chinese, and twenty-one of Spanish.

If you need more tools in another language, you can download free Language Interface Packs or purchase Language Packs for about \$25, both of which provide extra editing tools for the language of your choice. Other options allow you to change the keyboard to a different language layout. To do this, open the Control Panel and put it in Classic view so all the icons are visible. Click the Region and Language icon, and then the Keyboards and

Languages tab. English is the default, but you can add other languages from this dialog box. You can also customize formats for specific systems which differ among countries, such as currency and measurement, using the Format tab in that same dialog box.

If you are interested in exploring more about using Word in a language other than English, here is a link to get you started: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/support/change-the-default-language-for-office-programs-HA010356057.aspx>. Meantime, clip the chart included in this article to use the next time you need to type an "international" word. :





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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. Meeting topics, times and places can be found on page 1 of this issue.

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February 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 1972 HP-35 introduced (1st handheld science calculator)	2 1972 TRS-80 Model 1 demo'd	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 1981 1st computerized wedding
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 1977 1st Computerland franchise opens
19	20	21 General Meeting 7 PM	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			